

# DIRECT ACTION

SYNDICALIST WORKERS FEDERATION

British Section of the International Workers Association

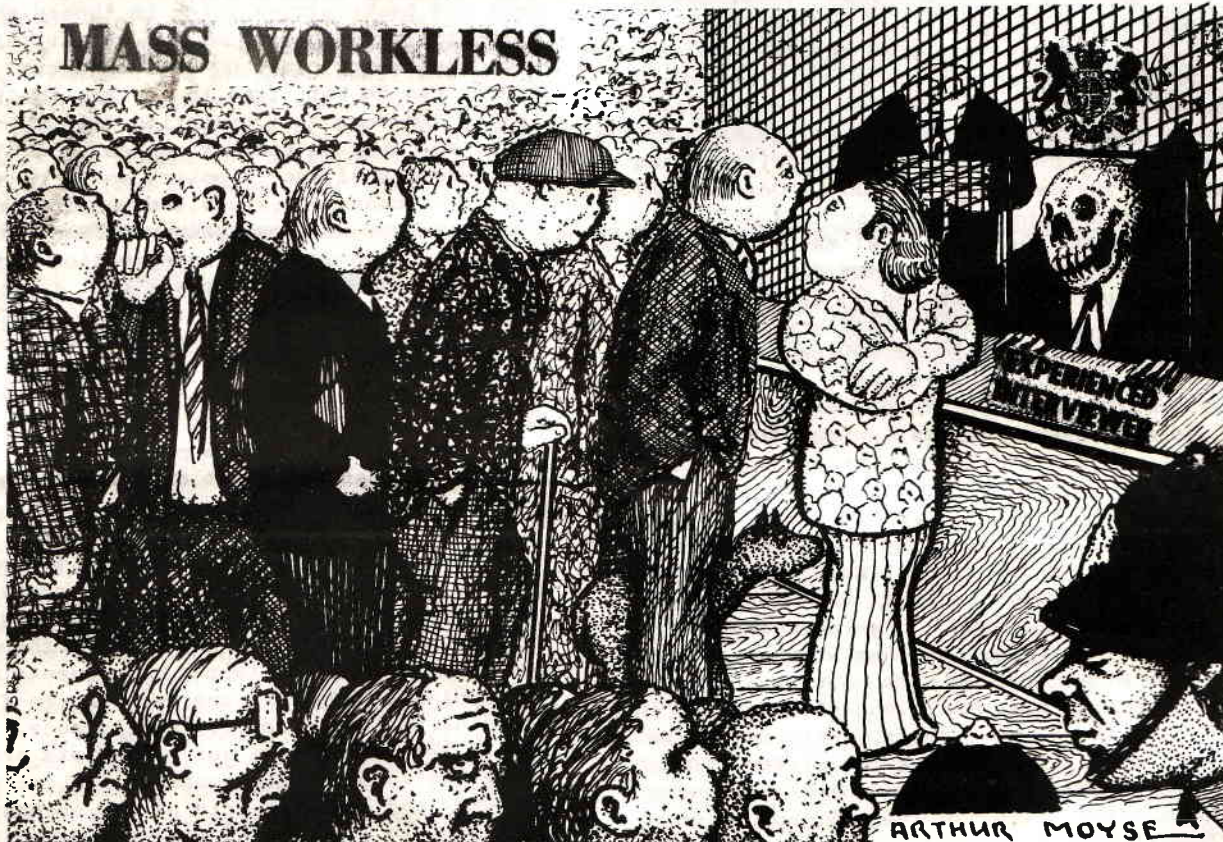
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As defined by H.M. Government

EVERY PACKET CARRIES A GOVERNMENT HEALTH WARNING.

## MASS WORKLESS



## WHO'S NEXT ON THE DOLE?

MILLIONAIRES?

British Workers are once again in the millionaire class. On the Dole! Within the next 12 months, the number of unemployed in this Country will almost certainly reach 2 millions. This is a direct result of the Labour Government's refusal to reflate the economy until the remaining workers have regained their "profitability". This means producing more for less wages. The TUC, endorsed the £6 increase limit will cover only a fraction of the cost of living increases during 1975-76.

In the second quarter of this year prices rose by over 50%. Wage settlements over the last 12

"WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOU DAD BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR?

"THE SAME AS FOR MY DAD AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR - STANDING IN A BLOODY DOLE QUEUE"

months have averaged less than 20% and it must be remembered that the greatest wage increases went to those already in the top income bracket. Police, Civil Service, Local Govt. salaries all increased by up to 40%. The top brass of course got the largest share of the cake. If shop workers were granted the whole of the permitted £6 increase - which they won't - it would mean a wage rise of 25% for most of them. We must applaud the militancy of the House of Commons in "winning" their huge wage rise at the last possible moment.

A CAPITAL OUTLOOK

Though the outlook is bleak for British workers, for the Capitalist class the future looks quite rosy. Since we joined the E.E.C.

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# ECONOMIC PROBLEM: NO SNAP SOLUTION

"What do you think about this Labour Government then?" queried the girl selling 'Workers Press' outside Manbre Sugars, in Hammersmith, as I came off the night shift last month. No doubt the question, which must have been inspired by the Governments current economic measures, required detailed treatment, but all I could muster was a sickly sexist smile as I fled after the number 11 bus. Leaving my mate to mutter that it was a bit early in the morning to be thinking of things like that.

## MANBRE

Of course unknown to these trots, the process workers of Manbre had just acted out a little drama over pay in which the Labour Governments policies played no small part in influencing the outcome. The workers who had at first been reluctant to accept the managements offer of a £5-6 per week, non-negotiable and with no further pay rises until October 1976, suddenly snatched the bosses hand off.

Over night the workers at Manbre had become aware that some kind of wage freeze policy was in the pipeline and wanted to get their increase before it came into effect. This is unlikely to be the end of the matter, since the lads at Manbre are sure to be pursuing another rise well before the October 1976 deadline is reached.

As with all authoritarian solutions the basic problem has been shelved, hidden and disguised, until the conflict is resumed at a later date.

## SOCIAL CONFLICT

National economics is a mystery to most of us, few feel genuinely obliged to put themselves out to prop-up our current economic crisis. Most people, I suspect consider the present economic system set-up cheats them, in some way or other. But to date most have been content with to make small and slow inroads into the wealth of the country, while we try to get our own back by fiddling the system through hidden techniques of job control, expences frauds, and lying to the SS. and so on.

What has now started upsetting this traditional game is the growing power of some sections of organised labour which has begun disrupting the structure of rewards. One of the results of this of this has been the current inflationary situation in which the British middle classes struggle to maintain their pay differentials against strong groups such as the miners.

In other words, what we are now witnessing is a conflict in which elements in the middle-classes fight for their privileges and a lions share of scarce resources, against the challenge from well organised sections of the working classes.

## THE EXPERT REMEDIES

In this situation two main schools of thought compete for the attention of the government, offering themselves as instant solutions to the Nations problems.

First, those who advocate incomes policies like the one currently being tried by the Labour government, J.K. Galbraith argues that a permanent incomes policy would reduce inequality, help the low paid, avoid large scale unemployment and is vital to any stable economy. This approach looks

to the State to determine income levels and deal with dissatisfied elements. One snag here is that all the five previous post war incomes policies have failed. It is likely that the current one is largely a shot in the dark and that its effective life will be short. Also, as soon as the novelty begins to wear off for the trade unions and their members, it will become impossible for the government to enforce it.

The monetarist position rejects this state interference on incomes, and claims that the correct method is for the government to limit the money supply -controlling the credit and cut back on public spending. This could produce mass unemployment and bankruptcies which in theory should solve inflation by way of the market. This is pure economic theory based on the assumption that the market can be left free to operate the 'laws' of supply and demand in isolation from all other human activity. In reality of course, the probable consequences of such a policy would be widespread factory occupations, riots, and possibly revolution.

The essence of these authoritarian solutions, be they based on State intervention and incomes policy, or monetary policy, are that they are presented as instant remedies to human problems. That is they imply that the government by waving a magic wand and tightening money supply or adjusting taxes or passing a law on incomes, may solve the economic situation. The history of the past ten years has shown us the poverty of such ingenious schemes and short cuts from both politicians and economists.

## THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

A Spaniard once told me that his father was not angry after he'd been cheated by a gypsy because the fraud had been carried out elegantly with an element of charm. The charm which the labour govt. and various capitalist managements once had for ordinary people is wearing thin, in fact it is becoming an insult to our intelligence.

What the politicians and economists are doing is trying to solve the problems of economic scarcity and other aspects of the economy by resorting to a series of clever tricks and short term remedies, which help maintain a power set-up largely unacceptable to the majority. At the same time most workers often seem to regard their own management as either unimaginative or incompetent.

Now in this situation how can there be any lasting or satisfactory solution to either the overall economic situation in the country or at factory level? Clearly there cannot.

The Syndicalist position on this question is that the root of the problem can only be tackled

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