

IPS

Britain

## Miners Union Sets Brazilianization Trend to Drain British Workers

July 10 (IPS) — Last week Britain's National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) moved to implement the infamous Tavistock Institute's recommendations for the mining industry, voting to accept Brazilian-style wage indexing covering every mine in the country.

The NUM's adoption of Tavistock co-participation schemes in 1963 led to a two-thirds drop in the total mining workforce between 1963 and 1970 — from 600,000 to 200,000 — while output **expanded** despite turn-of-the-century technology. Now, in the midst of a depression collapse, the miners are leading the rest of the British working class decisively closer to Tavistock-planned concentration camps. To ensure a smooth journey, the trade-union leadership has already begun forging an alliance with Tavistock creation Enoch Powell and his fascist National Front.

### Trist's Prescription

The NUM vote is the realization of studies carried out for the Tavistock Institute by Eric Trist in the immediate postwar period to determine how modern British mines could be turned into labor-intensive pits resembling those of Dickens' day. Central to Trist's recommendations for the coal industry was the creation of coal-face "teams" pairing experienced and inexperienced workers: each team would compete with the others to increase output. Trist reasoned that not only would this raise productivity, but it would have the added benefit of reducing worker militancy and other "unhealthy attitudes" outside the pit, because workers would take out their aggressions on the guy next to them. To encourage a communal atmosphere, Trist further recommended that modern mining equipment be phased out in favor of more labor-intensive methods.

### Productivity Deal

Since the bitter strike earlier this year, the National Coal Board (NCB) has conducted a vigorous recruitment campaign to bring new workers into the mines. The resulting influx of inexperienced workers has caused a drop in productivity, as the British press has been quick to point out. The NUM, faced with the possibility of massive layoffs, has assured the NCB that they will increase the productivity of the workforce, and on top of that will require the government-owned enterprise to pay only for the increased productivity of the miner, not the coal produced.

Specifically, the NUM is proposing that workers in individual pits set their production levels; they will be paid bonuses only as they exceed that level. Nationally, workers will be given raises for production above the national minimum. Competition will force every miner to raise production quotas continually to beat out the other teams in his own mine, and other mines across the country, while "democratically" deciding which "slow" workers will get laid off and which "unproductive" collieries will be shut down.

### Miners Set The Pace

The coal industry was first brought under government control by the 1945 Labour Government, and ever since, miners have been used as guinea pigs by both their union leaders and the government in determining acceptable wage and labor policies. It is clear that the NUM's latest move is meant to set a pattern for all trade unions. A prime mover in the NUM decision was Len Murray, a miners' union executive and leader of the Trades Union Congress (TUC), which has been pushing the productivity/workers' participation line throughout the country. Since Murray announced the existence of a "social contract" with the Labour Government (the full content of which has never been revealed), the TUC has refused to give national backing to any strike, with the expected result that most unions have been forced to wage local splintered struggles with settlements at or below the austerity-level government guidelines.

Despite the TUC's obvious success in controlling its members, the *Economist* and the *Financial Times* claim that even more is needed to ensure that thoroughgoing fascist economic policies are implemented in Britain: nothing less than a national "Brazilian" indexing of wages. The trade union leadership is eager to prove its willingness to push such a scheme through.

### Government Toughening Up

As the TUC gears up to sell the new NUM productivity plan to the rest of the class, there are rumors that the government is also preparing for tougher tactics. The British press is airing reports that current Prime Minister Harold Wilson will resign before the Fall elections to permit a stronger figure to head the Labour Party. Foreign Secretary James Callaghan, whose collaboration with European austerity experts Giscard of France and Schmidt of West Germany has been docu-

mented in IPS, has been suggested as Wilson's replacement. After the election, Rockefeller agent Callaghan will be excellently positioned to form a coalition government capable of carrying through fascist economic programs.

**Enoch Powell Fronting  
for Labour Government**

Enoch Powell apparently has a similar, if longer-range, strategy in mind. The former Conservative MP is already out campaigning for the Labour Party, telling the public that no matter how grave the economic crisis might seem, the **real** issue is whether Britain is in the Common Market or not! Building on Britons' insular notion that inflation is an exotic disease smuggled in on every banana boat arriving from foreign parts, Powell is deliberately obscuring the real crimes of the Labour Party.

His accomplices in this confidence game are TUC leader Jack Jones of the transport workers' union and a representative of Hugh Scanlon's engineering workers' union, who are appearing on the same platform with notorious fascist Powell on his speaking tour to "Get Britain Out" (of the Common Market). Together, these two unions control the majority of unionized workers in Britain.

Powell knows that Callaghan and his Labour cronies have no intention of pulling Britain out of the Common Market, at least not until after Rockefeller's control over the European economy makes such an institution meaningless. But Powell is so eager to implement in Britain the "democratic" rule he helped to develop in Kenya, India, and most recently Northern Ireland that he regards the effect of such short-term maneuvering as inconsequential.

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