



FORD of Britain profits in 1971 dropped a few million pounds, but Sir Leonard Crossland, chairman, wasn't unduly worried. He kept himself cheered up by awarding himself a £6,156 pay rise. His wage slip now reads £35,956 a year.

One nation for some

'One Nation' was the theme behind the Tory manifesto at the general election and what have we got?

Unemployment at its highest summer level in 30 years. The ending of free school milk. The Housing Finance Act which in some parts of the country is going to force rents up between £8 and £12 per week, a lot depending on how many wage earners there are in the family.

The Industrial Relations Act which was brought in to cut down strikes, when in actual fact it has turned out the reverse, as there were 13 million days lost last year and in the first five months of this year 15 million days lost as a result of industrial disputes.

Financial

Come October, people who have had to resort to financial aid from Social Security during industrial disputes, very often not of their own making, will have to pay this money back once they start work. We should bear in mind that all these people, when they are working, pay taxes, National Insurance and graduated pensions into the national kitty.

As though that wasn't enough, we have got the introduction of V.A.T. in January 1973, which is going to cost housewives £40 m a year in extra charges on the same amount of children's clothing as they bought this year.

This is all very well for the masses, but what about the loopholes for the wealthy who can retire to the tax havens of Switzerland, Malta, Channel Islands, the Bahamas and the Isle of Man.

In finality I would like to mention the appeal of Sir Alec Home, the Foreign Secretary, not to be too greedy in our demands for jobs, reasonable wages and fair rents while he has a stroll round his garden of 58,000 acres.

How 'One Nation'?

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A red under their beds

Open a smart new hotel in London and then what do you find? — Reds sleeping under the beds!

It was all pretty embarrassing for that true-blue brewery, Scottish and Newcastle, when they found that the spot they'd chosen to build a new hotel was where Lenin had slept in 1905.

And just to make sure everyone

knows about it, the Soviet Ambassador and his staff went along the other day to unveil a commemorative plaque.

● Scottish and Newcastle make no bones about their own politics. Last year they gave £8,200 to the conservatives and £348 to the Economic League.

Falkner Place — the causes still remain

by Chris Elphick

(A DETACHED YOUTH WORKER)

THE TROUBLE in Falkner place was attributed to two main causes — race riots and jealousy over new houses being given to black people.

The present problems are not racial although some tension is ever present in Liverpool 8.

Undoubtedly there is jealousy by some people in the atrociously designed pre-war blocks of Myrtle House and Gardens and Windsor Gardens towards the fortunate people allocated the new houses of Falkner Place. But this has never been an issue in any recent trouble and certainly isn't racially orientated.

As well as ignoring the series of gang fights and their causes, immediately preceding the Falkner Place incidents, the press and councillors chose to disregard more far-reaching and serious problems such as police training, the quality of life and provision, education, the role of outsiders in social work, and social work as a community asset, violence and its causes, etc. They attempted to wrap up what happened in neat phrases and suggestions and to keep the people happy without delving into questions that could prove embarrassing for the authorities if the truth were widely realised.

Just a word about the gang fights. From Easter to Spring Bank Holiday there had been many clashes between black and white youngsters. However after the Bank Holiday the situation eased greatly until 3-4 weeks before the reported trouble.

Gang fights

Following incidents involving black and white individuals, gang fights flared up again. While these fights were in progress public attention was directed to Falkner Place. The reason why Falkner Place was involved was geographical — it happened to house some black people and be at the centre of the fighting at that moment.

Before ever arriving in the city I had heard of Liverpool 8. Like Glasgow's Gorbals, Newcastle's Scotswood Road and Manchester's Moss Side, it has acquired a history and reputation of deprivation, vice, criminality, violence, etc. Like most reputations, Liverpool 8's has become exaggerated.

Negative

This affects people's opinions and expectations of the area. It means that most conversations about Liverpool 8 concentrate on the negative side of the area, that certain behaviour is expected from the people living there and that teachers, social workers and youth workers alike come there with pre-conceived ideas. 'Deprivation' has become the norm, as far as outsiders are concerned, of the inhabitants of Liverpool 8 and has meant that the many virtues and values of the people have been neglected.

Having been in Liverpool for only 13 months I cannot talk of what was happening in the city before that, but I have witnessed several incidents linked to what has happened by their root causes.

Throughout the summer term of 1971 there was much trouble based

around Paddington Comprehensive School with black and white groups. This spread to other schools and the police were involved several times.

While this was taking place a dance was held at the Dehon Centre in Park Place to which black and white groups were invited — and the dance was designed to improve relations between the two. All went smoothly until the end, when, as the black youngsters were leaving, they were bombarded with stones and bricks by a well prepared waiting group of white youngsters. It was with this as background that four black young people were arrested for alleged petrol bomb offences and sent to prison for a total of 17 years.

Activities

Also at the same time, under new group leadership, Stanley House Youth Club, which traditionally is mainly black, began to cater for many more young people and to offer more activities to a wider age group.

At the beginning of 1972 when the club reached its new peak there were many people, including the police, who said how much better the situation in the area had become. Unfortunately, although these people were prepared to congratulate us on what we were doing, they were not prepared to offer us any positive help or even to try to understand our situation.

Closure

In the end it was their ignorance that caused us to close the club shortly after Easter [Reported in Free Press No 9]. After the closure friction increased between black

and white groups and there were many incidents in the Granby Street area.

This situation eased when the black youngsters began to use Princes Park Methodist Youth Club regularly and only flared up again with the events I mentioned earlier.

Throughout last summer meetings were held between councillors, police, social and youth workers and young people. Many promises were given about future help. Promises that have been made before and that have been made again recently — promises that most young people have learned to treat with contempt.

I have dealt mainly with incidents involving black young people, as these are the ones I have most contact with. But I know that other areas such as Earle Road have suffered from severe lack of facilities and amenities. Black and white alike have had to endure the same broken promises.

Missing

The question is: What now? The Falkner Place incidents are not isolated. Obviously each incident has its own peculiar causes but the root problems are always present. The thing I have found missing is any concentration on human values and relationships. It doesn't matter how much is provided in terms of materials or facilities because unless this is part of a scheme for utilising human resources and values it is irrelevant.

Recent clashes between groups of youngsters may be cries for help. If this is so, how often do these cries go unheeded — or are answered by broken promises?

We must forget the tag 'deprived' and consider everyone as human individuals with the equality that that implies.

Instant experts

FOUR DAYS after the disturbances around Falkner Place had started, a motley band of councillors, corporation officials and outside social workers appeared on the scene.

They soon made a difficult and sensitive situation worse — possibly hardening racial attitudes — by suggesting that jealousy over housing allocations was behind the trouble.

Residents in the area knew the trouble was just an extension of the running fights between black youngsters from the Granby area and white youths from Earle Road and the tenements, which had been continuing on and off for several months. But many councillors, police and some social workers did not grasp this.

Abercromby councillor Sidney Jones told a Radio Merseyside reporter: "People living in the area are seeing nice new houses alloc-

ated to others and are concerned and a little jealous, perhaps rightly so".

Another member for Abercromby, Councillor William Burke, agreed that the housing allocation had been fair, but said to the Daily Post reporter that 85% of the houses had gone to coloured or mixed families.

Comments such as this did little to lower the temperature between the groups.

He also promised to ask the housing manager to see whether there could be more integration,

None of these instant spokesmen said — or probably bothered to find out before opening their mouths — that 47 white families had already turned down offers to be rehoused in Falkner Place.

Their quick-fire comments made it easy for the press to play up the troubles as a 'race clash', so encouraging division amongst communities.