



BRITAIN WAGES COLONIAL WAR IN IRELAND

INTERMENT WON'T STOP THE IRISH STRUGGLE

James Fintan Lalor wrote:

"ANY man who tells you that an act of armed resistance - even if offered by ten men armed only with stones - any man who tells you that such an act of resistance is premature, imprudent or dangerous, any and every such man should at once be spumed and spat at, for remark you this and recollect it that somewhere and somehow and by somebody a beginning must be made."

IRELAND DIVIDED SHALL NEVER BE FREE and the resistance to British rule by the Irish people has been met by force, by internment - prison without trial, by torture as a report from a distressed housewife from northern Ireland shows: - "They came to my house early morning. They smashed in my windows, kicked down my door, dragged out my husband, beat up my son and gave me a black eye. They searched my home. No, they did not search it. They tore it apart. They smashed everything they could lay their hands on. 'Looking for guns,' they said. They didn't find any but they took my husband away unconscious. I don't know where he is. Notin Crumlin Road or on that ship. God only knows."

WITH their backs to the wall the British occupation authorities in Northern Ireland have introduced internment as a last ditch means of stemming the rising tide of struggle. Despite the honeyed words of Jack Lynch, internment is also being mooted by the authorities in the South of Ireland. This savage act of repression will not succeed in quelling the Irish people. To suppress the struggle through internment, they would have to intern the entire nationalist population.

Over the last two months the British troops have failed in a desperate bid to regain the initiative that was taken from them by the I.R.A. in February and March of this year. The much ballyhooed offensive of house-to-house searches and dawn arrests yielded little or no results, and even the "Daily Telegraph" has admitted that the British Army are on the defensive. Heavy fighting has taken place in Derry, Lurgan, Newry, Strabane, Armagh and Belfast, and casualties have been inflicted on the British occupation army.

Meanwhile, South of the border, the workers of Mogul Mines Ltd, at Nenagh Co. Tipperary, have returned to work after a six week strike, having won most of their demands. This victory in an epic and at times violent battle against a West German employer is yet another body blow for imperialist interests in Ireland.

In a nutshell, the situation in Ireland is that British rule there is entering its last bloody phase. This is the background against which internment has been introduced. Repressive measures like internment are not a sign of the strength of imperialism, but of its weakness. The Irish people will have to fight a protracted war to liberate themselves.

DERRY AT WAR

DERRY in the days immediately following the introduction of internment had all the appearance of a city totally at war. All British troops had been driven from the Bogside-Creggan area and pinned down in their strongholds, Rosemount Police Barracks, the Essex factory, the Fountain area and the City Centre.

Whenever they ventured out onto the streets they came under attack. Every now and then bursts of automatic fire could be heard from rooftop snipers aimed at the few army patrols still operating and at a military helicopter circling over the Bogside. Barricades had been erected at street intersections and above the Creggan Estate a trench had been dug to prevent an attack on the Bogside from the rear.

No rents or rates are being paid in nationalist areas and on Monday, August 16 all Derry ground to a halt in a one-day general strike in protest of internment.

The last time the barricades were up in Derry was in August 1969. At that time the leadership was in the hands of the Civil Rights Association and many people had confused ideas about the role of the British troops. This time there is no such confusion and the leadership is in the hands of the Irish Republican Army.

This is a people's war in every sense of the word. The spectacle of an entire people involved in fighting for their freedom is magnificent. British workers must support the liberation movement in Ireland. The time has come to build a movement in this country to bring the British occupation of Ireland to an end.



Workers under the gun. What is happening to workers in Belfast today can happen to workers in Britain tomorrow.

CLYDESIDE WORKERS FIGHT ON AS UNEMPLOYMENT TOPS 900,000

WITH unemployment up to more than 900,000, the highest August figure since 1940, the battle of the Clydeside workers to keep their jobs in the ship yards gained greater significance.

Already the unemployment totals are reaching the proportions of the slump years of the 'thirties when the whole capitalist system nearly ground to a standstill. The capitalist class and its Government stand convicted of criminal waste and gross inhumanity in this crisis of willing hands with no work to do. Workers must make the capitalist class and its Government redundant.

U.C.S. - NOT ONE AT A TIME, BUT ALL TOGETHER!

The occupation of U.C.S. is right. If anything there has been too much talk and too much notice of the intention. The occupation is an act of strategic defence. All who take direct part and all who support must be clear, otherwise defeat and consequent disillusion will turn what is an advance, a turning point in the workers' struggle for the right to work, into stalemate.

The right to work, and the fight for it, whilst having special significance in Scotland where unemployment has bitten most deeply, concerns workers all over Britain and they too must join the battle.

From the factories and mines all over Britain support is coming in the form of expressions of support and financial assistance. This, good in itself, is not enough. The AEUW have given a positive lead in this respect in not only condemning the U.C.S. closure but endorsing all necessary action to secure the right to work.

NOT ONE OFF BUT A PROTOTYPE

The action of the Clyde workers will not be viable if they are left to struggle alone. The next stage must be solidarity ACTION throughout Britain. To this end all factories should have mass meetings of workers to plan supporting action of all kinds including the occupation of their own factories, especially where they too are faced with redundancy and attack on their right to work. All over Britain sackings are proceeding so all are involved therefore all should be in the fight appreciating the lead given by the Clyde shipyard workers.

VISITING CELEBRITIES OUT!

In this fight for the right to work the shots must be called by those involved, the workers. Their politics must be in command for their own aims and nobody else's. Visiting celebrities from the Labour Movement should be treated with suspicion. Their conversion to the principle of the right to work dates from their own loss of office. They led the fight for the employers when it was the Scottish miners who were being thrown on the dole; the workers in G.E.C., the Aircraft Industry and many others found them indifferent to their plight when they were in office. What credibility can therefore be attached to their present demagogic postures? The road to Westminster does not run via the Clyde; any who try to make it so may find themselves in the River.

RIGHT TO WORK MEANS WORKERS' RIGHT TO RULE

The right to work can and must be won. The government must quickly learn that action against closures may happen anywhere in Britain and that solidarity will take many more tangible forms than resolutions and collections. The action on Clydebank is a lead that must be followed to the day when it will not be the employing class which is sacking the workers but the other way round.

To the Clyde workers and to all getting into the action we say:

DARE TO FIGHT - DARE TO WIN

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EDITORIAL

CLYDESIDE AND BOGSIDE

FROM the moment the Labour Government sent the army into Northern Ireland in August 1969 our Party has consistently demanded their withdrawal. We are still demanding it and we shall continue to mobilise British workers for action on this issue — British troops out of Ireland now!

British workers have a direct interest in the struggle of the Irish people against British imperialism and its repressive forces. The same Government which stations troops in Ireland to murder Irish people in the attempt to prop up the puppet Stormont regime also closes the Upper Clyde shipyards swelling the massive unemployment of British workers and tries through its Industrial Relations Act to beat down all efforts to fight back. The same Government, whether Labour or Tory and whether operating in Ireland or Britain, serves the same interests of capitalist profits and if people get in the way it shoots to kill.

COLONY FOR 800 YEARS

For 800 years Ireland has been oppressed as a British colony. How long are the Irish workers to let it go on? For hundreds of years the workers of Britain have been exploited by the capitalist system. How long are they to go on enduring it? These two questions are inseparable because the class enemy of Irish and British workers is one and the same — British monopoly capitalism. The emancipation of the working class in Britain is closely tied up with the liberation of the Irish people from British imperialism. Every blow struck against our common class enemy in Ireland is a blow weakening that enemy in Britain. Every action we take against the monopoly capitalists and their Government in Britain is also action for the liberation of Ireland.

The class enemy understands this very well. The weapons developed in Northern Ireland to smash and disperse crowds and subjugate people protesting at injustice will be used against workers in Britain as the militancy of their struggle increases. The divide and rule tactics of setting one religious grouping against another are the same tactics that are used in Britain to try to split the working class.

IRISH WORKERS IN BRITAIN

To the Irish workers in this country, driven here by the economic conditions created by British imperialism in their own land, we say particularly: "Brothers, you are part of our struggle against the attacks on the working class by employers and Government. We are part of your struggle against British imperialism."

The Irish people are demonstrating that they will not passively tolerate the military presence of British imperialism. They cannot be fooled, as have some professing sympathy with them, by the pretense that British troops are there as a peace-keeping force. When have British troops been sent anywhere abroad — Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden, Dhofar — as other than the brutally repressive arm of British imperialism?

When for that matter have liberation fighters in any of these places not been called "terrorists"? The only answer to the counter-revolutionary violence of British imperialism is revolutionary violence. In so far as the I.R.A. or any other force in Ireland directs its efforts against British imperialism and mobilises the Irish working people, irrespective of utterly irrelevant religious differences, to fight for their liberation, they deserve and will have the support of British workers.

CROCODILE TEARS

The hypocritical capitalist class sends soldiers to crush the people of other countries and then wants everyone to go into mourning everytime one of them is shot. We say if they really care about the lives of British troops, they had better bring them back at once because British troops will never find anything in Ireland but Irish bullets.

We are being treated to the usual imperialist combination of an escalation of repressive violence, like the concentration camps for internment without trial, accompanied by boasts that resistance has been almost crushed. We have heard it all before. MacArthur's speech on invading North Korea that the boys will be home by Christmas. President Kennedy's promise that the G.I.s would have pacified Vietnam and be on their way back in 18 months.

IRELAND & VIETNAM

This is a valid comparison. British troops have no more right to be in Ireland than American soldiers in Vietnam. The division between North and South is the same in both countries — an artificial boundary dividing what is in both cases one nation in the interest of imperialist aggressors. The results of military occupation can only be the same in both cases too — victory for the people and bloody defeat for imperialism.

As the pattern of colonial repression and popular resistance becomes ever clearer in Ireland, many who were at first confused are now also saying: British troops out of Ireland! Now it is time to act on this correct understanding. The workers of Britain have the strength to force the withdrawal of British troops. They must use it — in their own interests. As Marx said: "Reaction in England has its roots in the subjugation of Ireland."

**March to demand:
BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND
Sun. Sept. 5, 2 pm. Speakers Corner
Organised by CPB(ML)**

STRUGGLE ON THE CLYDE

ALREADY, the tenacity of the workers on the Clyde, and particularly those directly engaged in the present occupation of Upper Clyde Shipyards, has brought about alarms and excursions, promises of solidarity, visiting celebrities of the Labour and Trade Union Movement — none of which would have come about but for the determination and declared intention by the workers to occupy and prevent closure.

The significance of that intention and decision can not be underestimated. It is within the British Working Class that there has been the first direct, sincere show of strength and most practical. Consequently, those who now come ostensibly to render assistance and support, must show by 'intent' and not in words. It must never be forgotten that, in the main they come entirely because the act of the workers themselves is real and conducted in unity.

Such an act strikes fear in the heart of capitalism in Britain. They fear its consequences and its contagion. The workers, now heroically involved, must know that their act is defensive strategy and in defense of a living and the 'right to work' — denying the probable impoverishment of the Clyde and Scotland. They can secure a change which will not be fundamental within this capitalist society but can be the beginning of such. Under no circumstances, must they move from the



Massive demonstration of workers in support of the Clydeside occupation.

defensive strategy of 'no closure, no redundancy'. Formulas which are subtly being advanced, steadily in their nature of change to diminish and weaken this class position must not be permitted. They must not suffer the formula of "no redundancy until alternative work is forthcoming" — this is a departure from the fundamental within a defensive strategy. There is no alternative except that one insists the yards shall not close.

Only from this positive act can anything real emerge. The flitting about

of some of the rank and file leaders, up and down the country, conversations with industrialists — real or self-styled, should not cause a diversion or slackening amongst the workers to control their own fight and their own destiny and to stand determined in protection of their livelihood.

Everybody knows that, in finally, there will always be unemployment while there is capitalism. The fight is a long one. The answer and the solution obvious but the struggle to achieve it is zig-zag and

arduous — in end the destruction of capitalism itself.

The act of the workers on the Clyde and the essential solidarity it must engender to be even partially successful are the beginning of the destruction of capitalism.

Beware then of the visits, the promises, the interest from industrialists — all these are inspired solely with the desire to lose that struggle in interminable conversation and words and to demoralise that great army in ineffectuality and inaction.

DOLLAR CRISIS

After the Second World War, US industry least damaged in the war, began to develop and expand at a very fast rate, not only because of the new markets opened for its goods and capital, but also because of western Europe's need for aid and capital goods to rebuild their economies. This fast expansion and technological development put the US in a monopolistic position for some time as regards other western countries. However, as is the case under capitalism, expansion means a high capital intensive economy leading to a fall in the rate of profit. American monopolists' answer to this is to raise prices to recover profits thus causing inflation and to hold back new investments thus causing the economic recession leading to closures and bankruptcies.

Add to that the waste of productive resources in the war of aggression in South East Asia and the enormous cost of America's military presence all over the world together with the increasing productivity of the other still expanding economies in Germany and Japan and US goods became less and less competitive in the world. This is of course the same course the British economy has been following for years.

Nixon's 'new economic policy' is not new at all. It is the same as Wilson's devaluation of the pound in 1936, the surcharge, the prices and incomes policy etc.

As a remedy from the threatening economic slump, Nixon's policies will have about as much success as the Labour and Tory economic policies: increased unemployment, inflation and greater attacks on the working class.

Nixon's new economic measures have the aim of shifting the consequences of the crisis first on to the US working class through the wage freeze (prices will not be controlled as we know from our experience of prices and incomes policies), and secondly onto the lesser imperialist powers. The working class in America has already made it plain that they will not sacrifice their jobs and livelihood to bail US imperialism out. As for the lesser imperialist powers, they have their own monopoly class to look after. Nixon's demand that other countries revalue their currencies keeping the dollar intact is intended to make the dollar synonymous with gold with its hegemony unquestioned. While this might suit the short term purposes of some western countries such as Britain, it does not correspond to the interests of the other imperialist powers. US desire for a civilised realignment of the world monetary system has not materialised. After all a band of thieves is not the best grouping to act in a collective manner. Even the Common Market countries who are supposed to be moving towards monetary unity have split, France introducing a two tier system, Germany floating and so on. If these lesser imperialist powers refuse to toe the line for the US, a new age of imperialist rivalry and scramble for markets, called by the press a "trade war" will begin.

In the empty rhetoric that goes with all such announcements, Nixon promised that his policies will bring the dream of full employment, economic prosperity and peace true. Under capitalism this will remain a dream.

COVENTRY TOOL ROOM AGREEMENT

IN Coventry, 10,000 skilled engineers have been operating an overtime ban in protest at their Employers' intention to end a 30-year old wage agreement on September 1. As the curtain falls on the agreement weekly one day strikes have been planned. But in the face of a rampant employer, are overtime bans and one day strikes enough? And should the struggle be confined to Coventry when the agreement is national in its character?

APPENDAGE

The Coventry Tool Room agreement of what is called the Tool Room Operatives agreement which came about 1940. It arose from the experiences of the first Imperialist War 1914-18 when, because of a boom in Engineering Munitions, less-skilled workers and those drafted into War Industries Manufacture earned relatively high wages.

This caused an exodus of skilled engineering workers from maintenance (Millwrights and Tool-makers) into the seemingly "lucrative" production field. A skeleton of skilled men was necessary to keep the wheels turning. But the exodus threatened to denude this very skeleton itself.

TRIPARTITE

Accordingly, when the 1939-45 War began, a tripartite agreement immediately saw that the Tool Room workers should not be left out in the cold. The wages of these skilled workers were to be adjusted monthly on the basis of an average of piecework earnings among production workers.

The Coventry agreement

had a subtle difference from the rest of the country in that it was given an automatically blanket application throughout the District, not just at each individual plant. Favourable though it was it contained the seeds of complacency, for it removed the obligation of skilled workers in each factory to secure its application.

The skilled workers of Coventry were able to sit back and boast of their pre-eminence for, while they were handed it on a plate, workers in other areas had to fight for its implementation in their own factory. This despite its being a national agreement with the blessing of no less than Ernest Bevin, Minister of Labour in the National Government of that time.

EROSION

Now Employers in Coventry seek to discontinue. This follows the steady erosion of simple piecework agreements and the introduction of measured daywork. In fact the Employers have always attempted to sabotage the agreement. They always opposed its application and sought to dishonour it by many pretexts.

Why now pick on Coventry? Precisely because the Employers now believe the Coventry workers have grown soft. And they know that defeat for the workers here will be the precursor of elimination throughout Britain.

So the action of the Coventry workers in banning overtime is just pussy-footing around. The Tool Room workers in Coventry must withdraw their labour completely and the custodian union, AUEW, must take up the fight on a national level. Let the battle begin.

FROM THE WORKERS

A leading shop steward at C.A.V. commercial vehicle equipment manufacturers, discussed with THE WORKER some of the problems of workers at this Acton plant and the tactics workers are employing to deal with them.

C.A.V. is part of the Lucas group and supplies diesel pumps and other ancillaries for diesel engines. However the Acton factory is concentrating more on the electrical side, traction motors for milk floats etc. and the diesel components have been increasingly dispersed to other factories. For example, the development of an injection pump which seemed to have possibilities led to an extension at Sudbury where injectors and filters could be mass produced quickly but at a low standard for the world diesel market. But due to a sudden drop in sales of lorry and bus equipment the Sudbury factory is being used for storage. Similarly, a new factory at Gillingham has been leased as a warehouse.

But as the shop steward pointed out, the anarchy of capitalist supply and demand is not the only source of trouble at C.A.V. Management took the decision to shift certain operations to the Liverpool factory thinking labour would be cheaper there. They ran into a disciplined work force which wrecked this scheme for super profits and now work is being diverted back to Acton and the Liverpool factory is operating at only about 50% capacity.

"One of the consequences of our experiences here at C.A.V." the shop steward pointed out, "as of other workers throughout industry, is that any illusion of special managerial know-how has been dispelled for ever. The mystique of management based on skills the ordinary worker does not have has been exposed as pure fraud. Any workers' committee could do a much better job of management".

THE FIGHT OVER WAGES AND REDUNDANCY

C.A.V. employs large numbers of immigrant workers—mainly Irish and Welsh in the 'Thirties and, since the war, many Poles and Hungarians. Up till recently organisation was very patchy. There have been great disparities in wages and conditions and in many sections there was the vicious circle of low wage rates and high turn over in labour.

The shop steward interviewed by THE WORKER played an active and militant role in strengthening unity to the point where claims could be pressed with more success. A £6 demand was met by management with productivity proposals. A one day stoppage over the whole factory produced a small part of the demand without concessions and, following on a factory gate meeting, a further strike produced another £3. This strike was strategically organised for the end of the holiday period so that agreed time off could also operate in the workers' favour.

At this time the fall off in sales of lorries and tractors in the States and the shrinking demand for diesel parts led management to declare 100 workers in the assembly grades redundant. This attempt to divide assembly grades from production machine grades was defeated and the whole plant stood firm on the principle that no one was to be made redundant.

Having established the principle "if one goes all go", the shop stewards then found 20 or 30 workers who either wanted to retire or were thinking of changing jobs anyway and collected redundancy pay on their behalf.

So successful was this fight over redundancy that at present when management could well dispense with some 200 workers, particularly in the starter section, they have not dared to raise the matter.

There has also been a battle over the mutuality principle by which piece work rates could not be fixed by management unilaterally. When a worker on night shift was hammered in an argument with a foreman over rates, instead of, as was expected, a request from the shop stewards for negotiations over the matter everybody simply came out. "Act first and then negotiate is the only way". Not only did they get the mutuality principle re-affirmed but strengthened it by ruling out the fixing of rates by a single worker talking to a foreman—a collective agreement suitable to all had to be arrived at.

POLITICAL INDUSTRIAL ACTION

THIS shop steward made no distinction between industrial action for economic and political ends. Ultimately all action of workers against the class enemy is political. In 1968 on May Day a one day stoppage was organised against the Labour Government's anti-trade union legislation, In Place of Strife. Many workers at C.A.V. had ceased to accept Labour as their government and were highly critical of its anti-working class policies. But the Shop Stewards' Committee was split on the issue and the stoppage was only about 85% effective.

The lessons of this split were taken to heart and when the Engineers called for two one-day strikes against the Industrial Relations Bill drafted by the Tory Government, unity was achieved on the Shop Stewards' Committee. The shop stewards of the General and Municipal Union which was opposed to the strikes also joined with the AUEW stewards to unite the factory which was solid on both days.

"We still have to fight this legislation against the working class", the shop steward said. "They'll try to use the question of agency shops to get unions fighting among themselves; but we have shown how these tactics can be defeated. The Government may want to take it easy on implementation till the dust has settled a bit; but some employer some where is going to want to use its provisions against workers so we have to be ready for a fight at any time".

IRISH WORKERS

THERE are many Irish workers at C.A.V. and the shop steward interviewed was trusted by them because he has always taken an uncompromising anti-imperialist stand and says openly that British troops should be withdrawn from Ireland now.

He ended the interview by pointing out the dangers of people talking revolutionary action before there was a revolutionary movement among the workers which would insure success. "It will have to be a mass movement. More and more workers are seeing the need for revolution ultimately. But differences in tactics and strategy on the left and the divisions among groups are still dividing the working class. Too many would-be leaders who think they know it all go on trying to work in water-tight compartments, cut off from the workers whose experience will have to be taken into account in any programme of class action".



ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

REDUNDANCY

IN the first 6 months of this year 164,000 men and 94,700 women have lost their jobs. Since the total number of women in industry is just under half the number of men, this means the employers are getting rid of a higher proportion of women. In Bristol, with unemployment rising and blacklists operating it has been said that "Friday morning down the Labour Exchange is beginning to resemble Shop Stewards' Quarterly more each week". To fight this the local District Committee of the AUEW has placed a total ban on overtime in excess of 30 hours per month being worked. Any employer wanting permission to exceed this is told that the work should be done by taking on unemployed. Overtime where redundancies have taken place is completely forbidden until jobs are offered to those made redundant. Those unemployed might spare a thought for Lord Aldington, Chairman of G.E.C., the "take-em-over and close-em-down" combine. In 1968 he got a meagre £10,000 a year, in 1969 it was £19,000 and by 1970 his pay had gone up to £40,000. And no outcry about "exorbitant increases" to disturb him while he counts the money.

BENRATH MACHINE TOOLS

At this factory in Trafford Park, Manchester, four fitters were declared redundant because, as the company put it "they could not be employed economically". Twenty men then walked out demanding reinstatement and brought the factory to a standstill. The management then threatened to close the factory. The workers knew that if they submitted to this blackmail it would simply be used again and again so they stuck to their guns.

UP UP AND AWAY—BUT WHERE TO

100 of 300 BOAC trainee pilots have been told that there will be no work for them when they finish

their two-year training course. The reason given is "the world-wide recession experienced by all airlines". Worried by the same thing 80 electricians working on the Concorde at the BAC factory at Filton, Bristol have been operating an overtime ban. On 4 August they staged a one-day strike as part of their campaign for a guarantee against redundancies.

RICHARD JOHNSON LTD

For three months, workers at this factory in Bradford, Manchester have been on strike for a £4 a week increase. The latest management offer, which would have meant accepting 100 redundancies was rejected as "totally unacceptable". Workers are not selling their jobs any more, they are fighting for them.

INTERNATIONAL COMPUTERS

In April ICL announced 1,200 redundancies, now a further 1,800 workers are to be dismissed, 600 of these are in Castle-reagh, N. Ireland (so much for new investment in Ulster), 400 at Stevenage, 300 in the North-West (an area where there are already 116,000 unemployed) and 250 in Croydon. At the same time the government announced continued financial support for ICL and told the banks that the government would not do another Rolls-Royce. Presumably, having got the redundancies, there was no need to push things to the stage of bankruptcy. But things did not go so smoothly for the computer bosses at the Post Office Giro headquarters at Bootle, Lancs. There 130 computer operators went on strike, holding up revenue of £1½ million a day. After two days they won complete victory for their 9% claim.

TRIUMPH MOTORS

90 internal drivers at Triumph Motors, Coventry as part of a manning dispute, refused to drive cars away from the end of the

production lines. As a result of this and the overtime ban by Coventry tool-room workers, Triumph production was brought almost to a standstill. The effects spread to British Leyland's Swindon car body plant where 150 men were laid off. In retaliation 900 workers came out in sympathy.

SWAN HUNTER

Swan Hunter's Tyneside shipbuilding yards were shut down for a fortnight by a strike of 2,800 ancillary workers—cranesmen, staggers and labourers. The strike was for parity at £21.40 with mending similar work at the ship repair yards. The strike began on August 2 when the men rejected an offer of £20.17. On the 4 this was raised to £20.60 with further increases to £21.60 in January and £22.60 in January '73. The shop stewards replied that this would be unacceptable to the men and on the 6 the offer was raised to £21. £22 and £23 which would mean an 11% increase immediately, rising to 16%. But at a mass meeting only three men voted for acceptance. The management then withdrew the offer and Mr. McIver, the joint managing director said "we simply cannot afford any more". But the workers called this bluff and within a few hours McIver was forced to raise the offer to £21.15, £22.15 and £23.15. A week later some extra concessions were made on overtime rates, and the men decided to return. Yet again one of the traditionally less militant—and therefore lower-paid—sections of the working class is starting to flex its industrial muscles.

The other Swan Hunter workers haven't been idle either. In February 3,850 Swan Hunter boilermakers (traditionally the highest paid) won a £27 basic rate. In May, after a 6 week strike 650 fitters won £27, followed by the plumbers, painters and electricians. Now the boilermakers are

demanding an extra £2 to restore their differential. The employers are screaming blue murder about "leapfrogging". So the workers have a few tricks up their sleeves too. So why not? But whether the slogan is "Parity" or "Differentials" this will not come by itself. The reality behind the slogans is a demand for more money and this can only be won through struggle.

ALCAN SMELTER

"The men are ready for drastic action" said one of the shop stewards leading the electricians strike at £65 million Alcan smelter complex, Lynemouth. The strike of nearly 400 electricians and labourers employed by contracting firm N.G. Bailey and Co. on the Blyth Harbour power station or on the main smelter site started early in July, over a pay claim. The men's main grievance is with the Joint Industry Board (see January Worker) which controls pay and working conditions of constructional electricians.

PORT TALBOT

2,000 white-collar workers at the BSC steelworks at Port Talbot went on strike on 16 August forcing a heavy cutback in production. Recently BSC hourly paid workers negotiated pay increases of more than 8% to "top up" their wages to cover rises in the cost of living since the last agreement. The clerical workers are demanding 8% on the same basis. They are not waiting for next year's pay negotiations, they want their money now.

THE following resolution was passed on July 25th by the Camden Town 3 Branch of the AUEW:

"This branch condemns the continued acts of aggression against the people of the occupied six counties of Northern Ireland by British troops and we call for the complete and immediate withdrawal of these troops."

C. A. PARSONS: SIX WEEKS STRIKE

C.A. Parsons Ltd, based at Newcastle, are among other things contractors to the Central Electricity Generating Board. They manufacture and install generating plant and also employ men to travel to Power Stations all over the country to maintain and repair this plant.

The CEGB is, as we have earlier reported, hell bent on reducing its regular labour force by means of its productivity agreement and redundancy based bonus scheme. This is bound to result in growing reliance on contractors to take on the work of maintenance and repairs when and where the depleted labour force of the CEGB is unable to cope.

The travelling maintenance workers of Parsons are paid on a wages structure which is composed of elements taken from national engineering agreements, the minimum of course, and supplemented by what Parsons consider necessary to recruit and maintain the skilled craftsmen necessary to undertake the work. The workers have never been satisfied with this wages structure but whenever they have challenged it,

the employer has used the procedure of the Engineering Employers Federation to thwart them, that is, they have insisted that any dispute must be dealt with not nationally but on a particular site. When the issue is advanced on site the employers then refer to the national character of the "agreement" and claim that it cannot be changed on one site in one area since it applies at all other sites everywhere.

STRATEGY

The Parsons workers have hit on a strategy to deal with this situation. They presented a claim at the West Thurrock Power Station site with the prior knowledge and agreement of fellow workers on the other sites. The nature of the claim challenges the pay structure as well as advancing a claim for higher pay.

The site conference with the employers at West Thurrock (in the South Essex District) blew out. The employers were not willing to consolidate the bonus into the rate and meet the wage claim.

Following the meeting with the employer the

workers met and decided on strike action. At the meeting were stewards from other sites, and decision was taken to stop on all sites together. There are seven sites involved, five in South East England and two on Tyneside. As evidence of their determination to hold out until they win they met one week after the strike started, reaffirmed their decision and then decided to hold their next meeting a month later unless favourable news was received by the stewards. In the meantime, they requested that this decision be made known to the employers, and it was also conveyed to the CEGB who have been expressing much anxiety as the Parsons lads when they walked off the jobs left some very important work unfinished.

DUSTY

The CEGB have endeavoured to get this unfinished work of the most urgent character performed by their own regular maintenance men in consultation with the union. But the union concerned represents both CEGB and Parsons workers, in fact

the official involved was the same official who presented the claim on behalf of his members at Parsons at West Thurrock. Not surprisingly the answer was singularly dusty. The strike is still solid and backed by the Union involved, the AUEW.

BILL

This strike takes place while the Industrial Relations Bill is in process of becoming law and taking effect. It is interesting for all those involved to look at all the features of this strike in terms of the provisions of the Bill. While there is no doubt the action of Parsons workers is completely justified in working class terms as is the position of the CEGB workers who rightly refuse to do the strike-bound work, there is equally no doubt that in terms of the Bill workers and Stewards of Parsons, CEGB and the officials of the Union are all subjects to the penal clauses of the Bill. The struggles of the workers must of course go on, but so also must the struggle to defeat the Bill. The two are inseparable now as the Parsons strike fully illustrates.

PALESTINE

(PRESSURE of space meant that an article on Palestine in our last issue had to be severely cut. That article was written in a spirit of emotion to show our solidarity with the Palestinians at their time of greatest danger. The following article lays out for our readers some of the special problems and achievements of the Palestinian struggle).

The Palestinian revolution is not crushed. News reports are coming in every day of victories over Israeli forces in South Lebanon, of a general strike in Gaza, of successes against the Jordanian army in North Jordan. The strength of any genuinely mass movement is that it keeps its courage and its ideals it can weather any temporary reverses. As Yasser Arafat once said, the Palestinians can lose twenty times and win victory on the twenty-first occasion whereas the enemy can only lose once.

The main problem the Palestinians face, one not easy for us to grasp, is that their population of 2½ million is divided in two. Half live in concentration camp conditions in Palestine under Israeli Gestapo rule. The other half live in the refugee camps of Jordan and Lebanon. Few in numbers, divided before they can start, compelled to launch their struggles from territory under foreign and hostile rule—despite all these handicaps they have scored remarkable achievements. In six years of intensive struggle they have destroyed the image of themselves as a pathetic band of refugees and have shown themselves a proud and courageous people in the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in the Middle East.

Armchair "revolutionaries" are full of "theo-

ries" about the setbacks the Palestinians have suffered. They batten on them like vultures. They say the Palestinians "had too much faith" in the Arab governments* or "did not understand the treachery of the Soviet revisionists" or are "not Marxists". From the relative comfort of London it is easy to make such charges. But comrades from our Party who have been to the front line and have discussed at length with the Palestinian revolutionaries know how false these charges are.

The Palestinians have lived for twenty years under the Arab governments. They understand their vacillating character better than anyone in this country could. For years they have withstood Soviet attempts to sabotage their struggle. Al Fatah have described how Breznev offered them infra-red guided missiles if they would publicly accept a "peaceful solution" and how they spurned his offer. In so far as Marxism is, as Lenin said, the "concrete conditions" the Palestinians have shown themselves outstanding Marxists. Early in 1970 one of their leaders told us that 1970 would be the crisis year for the Palestinian revolution that the decisive battles would be fought in Jordan, and that their immediate problem was "escapism to the 'Left'" which threatened to alienate their struggles from the mass in Jordan. Events proved him to be a true Marxist. The hijacking stunts and other infantile behaviour prepared the way for Hussein's barbarous massacres. Both 1970 and 1971 have been crisis years for the Palestinians. But with the wisdom learned in struggle and the science of a proletarian people's war they will carry through their revolution until victory.

March to demand:

BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND!

SUNDAY, 5th SEPTEMBER, 2p.m.
Assemble Speakers Corner

Albanian Delegation

IN August a delegation of British workers sponsored by the CPB (ML) visited Albania on the invitation of the Central Council of Albanian Trade Unions. The following are some of their impressions.

To visit Albania, for someone born and brought up in a capitalist country like Britain, is not just to visit another country but to see a whole new world. Everywhere the freshness and vitality of the people is striking. The commitment to building socialism, the ability to take a serious approach to problems yet, at the same time, to be able to enjoy life and retain a sense of humour, are all qualities that socialism has helped to develop amongst the Albanian people.

Before liberation Albania was one of the most backward countries in Europe, yet the Albanian people were able to force out the Italian fascist and German nazl invaders, without outside help relying entirely on their own efforts. After liberation the Albanian people were faced with the problems of industrialisation and building socialism.

To visit Albania today is to see the success the Albanians have had in



solving these problems, yet above all it is to see the leading role the Albanian working class takes throughout society — how the proletariat really does dictate.

It is in the factories and workplaces that one gains the deepest impressions of life under socialism in Albania — how the factory directors (mostly having been originally ordinary workers themselves) are not separated from nor stand above the rest of the workers in the enterprise; how the workers' control works at all levels (something that is only possible when the workers have state power). In every factory there are large notice boards where the workers write their

criticisms, which the management have to take notice of and do something about, or else they may find themselves replaced.

What is most impressive is the friendly spirit and atmosphere, combined with a high political consciousness amongst all the workers. It is the fact that in Albania the working class really controls its own destiny that makes tiny Albania such an important example for the workers of the entire world.



THE OTHER COMMON MARKET-- COMECON

THE retreat from a socialist economy by the revisionist rulers of the Soviet Union and the development of state monopoly capitalism necessitated changes in the economic relations between the Soviet Union and other East European States. The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance — Comecon for short — is composed of the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland, Rumania from Eastern Europe and Mongolia, Yugoslavia, while not a member, participates in some Comecon activities.

While the accent is supposed to be on the words "Mutual assistance" there is nothing mutual about the economic links which have been forged over the

years. The economies of these states have deteriorated from the early days of building socialism. Agriculture has ceased to be collective and the role of private industry is expanding. Inside the state sector the introduction of material incentives and the profit motive have made socialism meaningless. Overriding all else is subordination to the Soviet Union.

MILITARY THREAT

The invasion of Czechoslovakia exactly three years ago in August 1968 revealed the military right of the Soviet Union which underlies Comecon. Soviet tanks removed Dubcek and his ilk not because they were restoring capitalism. Novot-

ny had started that in a big way and Husak was to continue the process. No, Dubcek's crime was to restore capitalism under U.S. and West German dictate and not the Soviet Union's.

The people of Poland, when they rebelled against economic hardship-rising

prices and new taxes to pay for the restoration of capitalism and tribute to the Soviet Union — last December showed their spirit which kept Soviet tanks away. In the end that is the only answer for the people of both common markets — in East and West Europe.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"SMASH CAPITALISM — BUILD THE WORKERS' PARTY" Public meeting and discussion. Speaker: JOHN HANNINGTON (AUEW)

Tuesday Sept. 7th., 7.30 p.m. at TELEGRAPH HILL NEIGHBOURHOOD COUNCIL 170 New Cross Road, SE 24 (corner of New Cross and Queen's Roads)
Refreshments available.
Organised by CPB (ML) South London Branch.

BRITISH TROOPS OUT OF IRELAND NOW! — Public meeting and discussion. Friday Sept. 10th., 7.30 p.m. at BELLMAN BOOKSHOP, 155 Fortess Road, NW5
Organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

"RED DETACHMENT OF WOMEN" — Revolutionary ballet film from China. Friday Sept. 17th 7.30 p.m. at SEYMOUR HALL (nr Marble Arch)
Organised by CPB (ML) West London Branch.

REVOLUTION IN INDIA — Public meeting on the situation in India, with a speaker who has recently returned from there. Saturday Oct. 2nd, 7.30 p.m. at BELLMAN BOOKSHOP, 155 Fortess Road, NW5.
Organised by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist)

ADVERTISEMENT

THE Society for Anglo-Chinese Understanding is organising a season of Chinese films starting on Sunday September 26. The programme will include "The Red Detachment of Women", "The Red Flag Canal", "The Red Lantern" and possibly "Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy", "The Red Detachment of Women" has been shown here to private audiences. None of the other films has yet been seen in England.

The season will run for two weeks at the following cinemas: Week commencing Sunday September 26: Classic Cinema Baker Street, Notting Hill Classic and Brixton Classic. Week commencing Sunday October 3: Classic Cinema Baker Street, Notting Hill Classic and Hampstead Playhouse (Classic).

S.A.C.U. 24 Warren Street, London W1P 5DG

VIETNAM

ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

ON the 26th Anniversary of the founding of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam we salute the courageous Vietnamese people who have never wavered in their long struggle against imperialism. Their defeats of the U.S. imperialist aggressors have not only been blows in their own liberation but in the liberation of all people suppressed and exploited by imperialism.

Now that final victory for the Vietnamese people is so much nearer and the U.S. imperialists have been forced to admit that their plans for subjugating South East Asia have been smashed we can mark this Anniversary in no better way than by quoting from the Testament of the great revolutionary leader of the Vietnamese, Ho Chi Minh.

"The war of resistance against U.S. aggression may drag on. Our patriots may have to face new sacrifices of life and property. Whatever happens we must keep firm our resolve to fight the U.S. aggressors till total victory.

Our mountains will always be, our rivers will always be, our people will always be.

The American aggressors defeated, we will build our land ten times more beautiful.

"No matter what difficulties and hardships lie ahead our people are sure of total victory. The U.S. imperialists will certainly have to quit. Our Fatherland will certainly be reunited. Our fellow countrymen in the South and in the North will certainly be reunited under the same roof. We, a small nation, will have earned the signal honour of defeating, through heroic struggle, two big imperialisms — the French and the American — and of making a worthy contribution to the world national liberation movement."

BELLMAN BOOKSHOP

now open all day

Beginning September 6th we shall be open
Mon. 10.30 a.m.—4.30 p.m.
Tues.—Sat. 10.30 a.m.—6.00 p.m.

THE STRUGGLE IN IRELAND

New pamphlet published by the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) — 5p

New posters—"British Troops out of Ireland Now"—7½p

Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, Tufnell Park, NW5

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