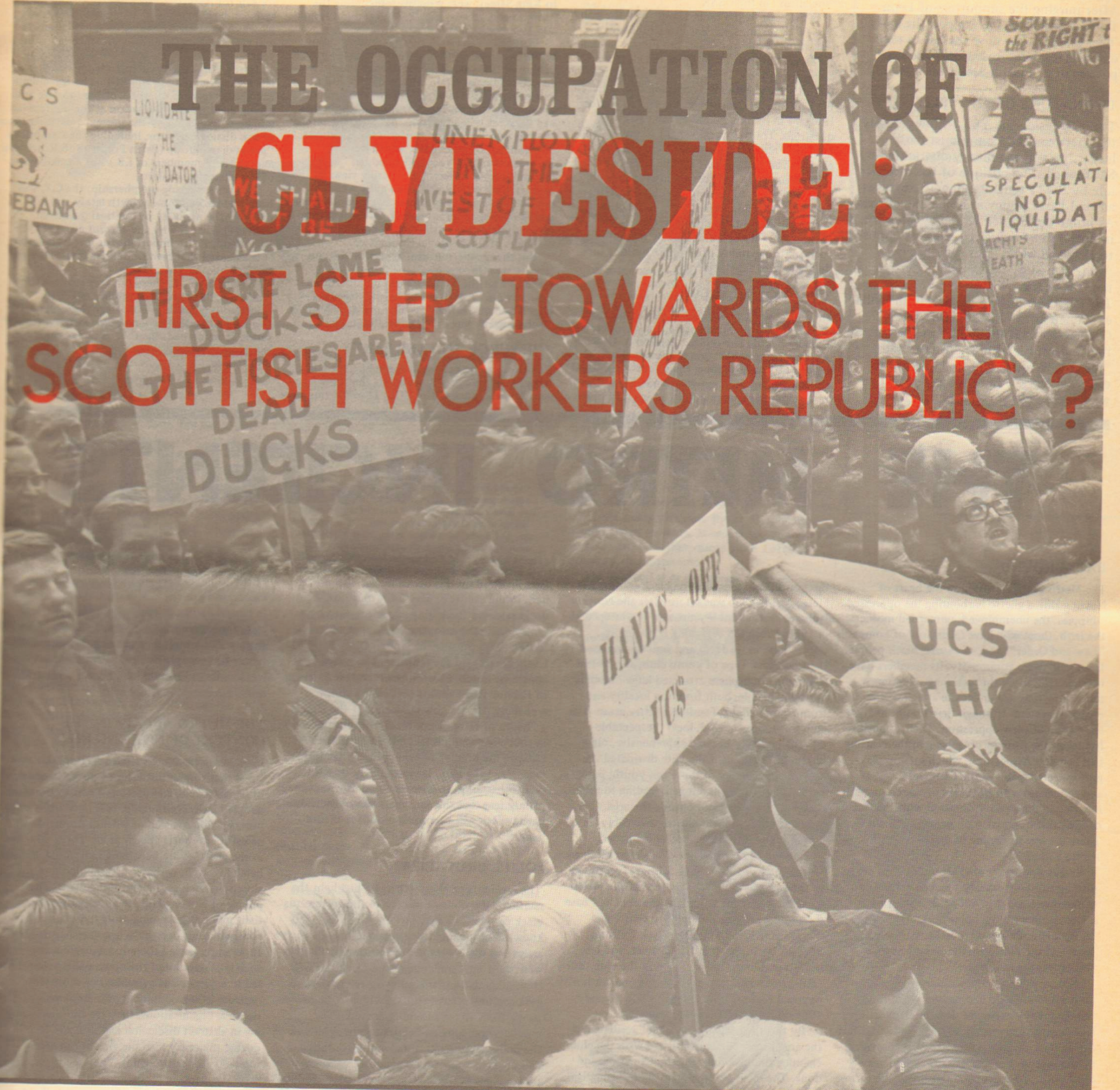


# The Red Mole



## THE OCCUPATION OF CLYDESIDE:

## FIRST STEP TOWARDS THE SCOTTISH WORKERS REPUBLIC ?

### CLYDESIDE

Origins of the Crisis

Interview with shop steward

How to extend the struggle

LITTLE RED SCHOOL BOOK / YCL PURGE  
VIETNAM AND THE PENTAGON PAPERS

THE  
METRO

# CP PREPARES ITS CONFERENCE

## YCL PURGED

History repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce. In the case of the Young Communist League, however, it just goes on happening, becoming more farcical on each occasion. After purging the supporters of Leon Trotsky and Mao Tse-Tung in the early '60s, the YCL has now started to take disciplinary measures against the supporters of ... Joseph Stalin!

### THE NATURE OF THE SPLIT

The split inside the YCL follows closely that between the Communist Party leadership and the Surrey district led by Sid French. The critique of the official line by the "French tendency" revolves around Party policy at home and abroad. At home the French tendency stress the importance of industrial work as opposed to electoral work. This view has been strengthened by the appalling debacle of the C.P. at the 1970 General Election. The C.P.'s General Secretary John Gollan explained at the London District C.P. Conference that the failure of the C.P. at the General Election was due to the "failure to relate day-to-day work to electoral work". In other words Gollan wants *more* electoral work!

The French tendency originated from a group which supported the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia, repeating the Russian argument that it was made necessary by the "counter-revolutionary" nature of the events of the spring and summer of 1968. They also invoke the good works and heroic actions of Stalin in building "socialism" in the USSR.

Is the split then a useless split from the point of view of revolutionaries? For a number of reasons we think not. First, the French tendency are *correct* in their criticism of the electoral cretinism of the C.P. leadership. Second, the fact that they realise the contradiction between the C.P. line on Czechoslovakia and its line on Hungary in itself is bound to raise awkward questions. Third, it is important to understand that the French tendency see their critique of electoralism and support for the USSR as *connected*. They consider themselves, for all their Stalinism, to be more revolutionary than the C.P. leadership. Apart from the fact that such attitudes aid the disintegration of the C.P. (which can only be welcomed by revolutionaries) such splits inevitably offer opportunities for dialogue with the dissidents.

### TROUBLE IN THE YCL

In 1968, the YCL leadership, guided by Barney Davies the National Secretary, took an exceptionally hostile line on the invasion of Czechoslovakia in its publication *Challenge*. Further, under the Davies regime, the discussion journal *Cogito* became increasingly liberal, spending vast amounts of space on discussing Christianity,

and even devoting two whole issues to Monty Johnstone's "analysis" of Trotskyism.

But all this, as the pro-French minority *correctly* saw, was a response to *liberal*, rather than revolutionary, pressure. As a result the minority since 1968 has been going from strength to strength inside both the YCL and C.P. student section. Whole districts, formerly abjectly loyal to King Street, were won over, including the Kent, Surrey, Essex, West Middlesex and Hants and Dorset districts.

The split in the YCL reached boiling point at the bi-annual conference held in Scarborough in May of this year. The conference itself was an extraordinary affair. The first hour and a half of the conference was taken up by minority accusations that delegates from some branches had been refused admission. But the real hatchet job was done on the minority in the Elections Preparations Commissions, which despite promises that the "recommended list" would be produced to reflect the differing views in the organisation, in fact produced a list which all but excluded minority representatives. Throughout the voting, approximately 40% of the delegates supported the minority, including several members of the National Committee.

But the most significant aspect of the conference was the organisational report which revealed that the YCL's formal membership is now down to 2,900—half the 1965 figure. The circulation of *Challenge* is down to 6,000-7,000—substantially less than the 10,000 target.

### THE PURGE AND THE PARTY

The latest purge has taken the subtle form of King Street telling C.P. members that they should cease work in the YCL. Thus the minority

can be organisationally smashed without anyone being "expelled". The depth of the YCL crisis can be seen from the fact that amongst the victims are people like *Morning Star* reporter Mike Ambrose (West Middlesex), who in the past has himself been engaged in expelling the "ultra-lefts". The Stalinist chickens are coming home to roost. The YCL has another two years to wait for its next conference, so the leadership can be confident that things will have blown over by then. The really decisive action will take place at the C.P. conference later this year.

In the Party the French tendency is much less influential than in the YCL. The leadership can always rely on the votes of the inactive and ageing majority. The situation at the conference will be complicated by the presence of other more or less dissident groups, including the Cambridge "pro-Italian" group (Brian Pollitt, Bob Rowthorn and a few ex-members of I.S.) and a small group of dissidents in London.

Despite its ageing membership, the C.P. has been undergoing some growth lately and still contains the majority of political industrial militants. That is why the current events in the YCL and C.P. are important for revolutionaries. It is essential that revolutionaries find a way to the C.P. and YCL dissidents.

As for the YCL, there is a very real question mark over its continued viability, given its organisational decline and internal problems. It may well be that as far as the youth radicalisation is concerned, the C.P. is already out of the game.

Phil Hearse

# THE METRO INCIDENTS

### BACKGROUND

The Metro Club is situated in the heart of Notting Hill, a ghetto harbouring the oppressed—hippies, the unemployed, unmarried mothers, the Irish, those who have fallen foul of bourgeois "Law and Order", and, of course, black people. It is a self-aware community; its members have become radicalised through their experience; they know they are under the attack of the capitalist system, although they do not analyse the nature of their oppression. Their opposition has taken the form of organising in the Notting Hill People's Association, which sets up play-groups, participates in the Claimants' Union, and solidarises with members of the community involved in direct confrontation with the forces of capitalist oppression, in particular the police. There is a strong feeling of commitment to collective action.

Social workers, probation officers, all those paid by capitalist society to channel the anger of the oppressed into self-negating acts of cooperation with the oppressors, are despised in Notting Hill. Bourgeois morality has no place here, and the police are the enemy, as they themselves are well aware.

Not surprisingly, the wielders of capitalist authority have been alarmed for some time at the potentially explosive situation in Notting Hill. Various attempts have been made to divert the militancy in the area into outlets provided by the system. For example, George Clark—clerk to the Council—tried to impose the forms of bourgeois democracy onto the People's Association by engineering a local election to form a Council—to be manipulated by himself, of course—to run the Association's affairs. This attempt failed. Then, two years ago, the Neighbourhood Law Centre was set up; with the backing of the Law Society. The function of the Law Centre was to socialise those who fell foul of the system, to win their confidence by admitting that the system was corrupt, then to persuade them that the way to work, however, was not to challenge its foundations but to work within it, getting round it by finding loopholes in its technicalities. This liberal plot, too, has been seen through.

the youth and especially the black youth. The Metro Youth Club was set up after the Notting Hill race riots about 9 years ago. It was opened in 1968. From the beginning it was more unorthodox in its decor and functioning than the traditional type of youth club, and its less alienating atmosphere attracted large numbers of young people, both from the locality and from farther afield. Tensions swiftly arose. The club was too successful, local "respectable citizens" quickly became apprehensive, older black leaders thought the club dissipated the energies and money of the black youth, parochial attitudes developed, leading to resentment of teenagers from outside the area. Consequently the club was closed, ostensibly for air-conditioning, three weeks after it opened.

Conflicts developed between the youth leader, Laurie Little, and Ian King, who was recruited to the staff, having been involved in the Metro from the beginning. King saw the club as a base for a multi-purpose community centre and wanted activities to include Black Cultural Studies. He supported Black Power, and left leaflets and literature lying about the club. But Little, not wanting to lose his personal authority, opposed King, who was dismissed in January 1969, and refused access to the club.

By this time the "respectable" residents of the area had become dissatisfied with the club, claiming that nothing constructive was being done. The feeling in the "Grove" (Notting Hill Gate) was that Little and the management committee were intruders as they were not from the area; resentment built up and Little was removed. The club became predominantly black (95%). Because of its tremendous popularity, it was frequently overcrowded, with resultant noise, some uneasiness inside and skylarking outside it.

Initially the project had been approved enthusiastically by social workers, police, the local so-called "crime prevention officer" and so on, but very soon the pillars of capitalism became alarmed at the potentialities of the club. The fuzz began looking for trouble in and around the club. Several incidents of harassment and repression occurred. Six black youths were imprisoned after being accused of rape in

fuzz involved on this occasion was also prominent in the events of May 24th this year. A drugs raid and the killing of a black man by a police car in the area, then the arrest of two more youths outside the club in October 1970 further increased the tensions. The police kept continual watch; Chief Superintendent Paterson of Harrow Road admits that cops patrol the area daily. He has now claimed that the club is a "haven of retreat" for black youths involved in robberies, and has taken it on himself to criticise the holding of two political meetings recently in the club. It seems likely that the pigs will attempt to have it closed down, as they plainly fear that the concentration of radicalising black youth will become too hot for them to handle.

### POLICE BRUTALITY

The incidents of May 24th again highlight the racism of the police and their brutality towards black people. The sequence of events is widely known, but it should be explained that the first arrest was made *completely arbitrarily*; the pigs were out to get someone, it didn't matter *who*. It was this that inflamed the other youths and gave rise to the battle during which 70 reinforcements from all over London arrived. (The numbers give some indication of the desire of the police to provoke a major confrontation, and of their respect for the collective force of the local population.) Those arrested, including the white people, were all roughly handled, abused and humiliated in the vans and on arrival at the station. One cop taking part was heard to shout, "Let's get those black bastards!", another was known to an onlooker as an "agent provocateur". Of course it was the black youths who got the worst treatment. One was taken to the van unconscious, and three or four pigs sat with their feet on him all the way to the station. On arrival he was propped against the wall and left there, in clear contradiction of the regulations instructing police to obtain immediate medical attention for unconscious prisoners. When he came to, he was taken to a detention cell, and systematically punched in the ribs, in the presence of the police surgeon. Subsequently

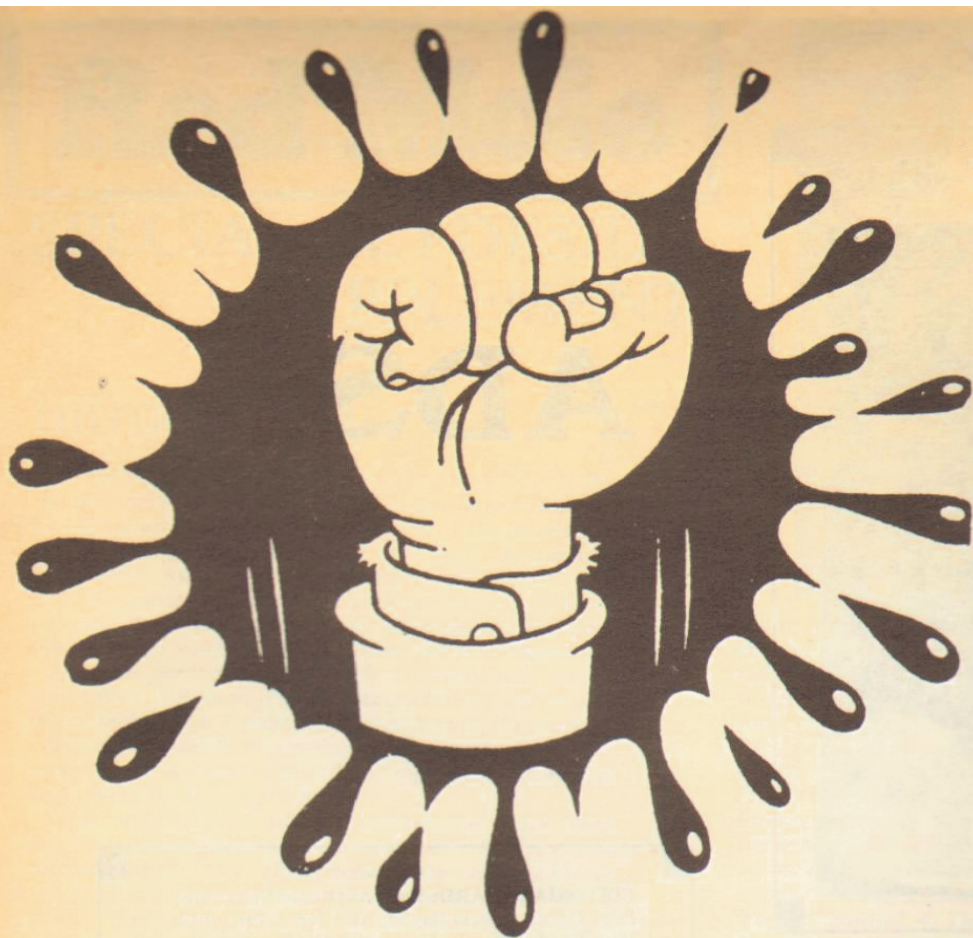
of the scene. Others who were arrested were kicked and punched in the van. All were kept in custody without appearing before a magistrate for longer than the period stipulated by the law (24 hours), but this is a common occurrence. Bail was phenomenally high and prisoners were made to sleep on bare boards with inadequate coverings, in filthy cells.

### THE METRO AFFAIR IN THE CONTEXT OF NOTTING HILL

In assessing the Metro affair it is important to stress that similar instances of police harassment of black people, and indeed of other oppressed people, occur *continually*. It is only when large numbers are involved or a death occurs that newspaper reports appear at all. Those who live in the ghettos are becoming radicalised through being involved, perhaps just as onlookers, in situations such as the Metro incidents. The people of Notting Hill are already organised; their mood is becoming more militant as the contradictions in society become sharper. Their experience has led them to an awareness of how society is structured and some will no doubt be led to a deeper analysis. Most of those who organise in the community are impatient of political organisations; they see these as indulging in abstract discussion and analysis, as bulldozing their way into the area at opportune moments for selfish gains. They see these organisations as lacking in the understanding of the existing reality and out of touch with the day-to-day oppression of the people in a ghetto. In particular, organisations sending speakers from outside the area to explain aspects of repression experienced by those living within are resented. But support and solidarity from "militants on the periphery", as one resident has put it, are welcome, provided such support is based on understanding and correct factual knowledge of what goes on.

Mohd. Akhtar





## A CRITICAL REVIEW

The furor created by the publication of *The Little Red School Book*, (by Soren Hansen and Jesper Jensen, and translated by Berit Thornberry, (Stage 1, 1971), is, in fact, out of all proportion to its actual content. The decision to seize the book can only have been motivated by the current wave of puritanism that is sweeping the minds of the powers-that-be, particularly with respect to educational matters. The objections to the book can only be seen as, on the one hand, a response to its admirably frank and uninhibited discussions on Sex and Drugs—presumably the sections upon which any anticipated prosecution must rest—and, on the other, as violent resentment against the idea that pupils could be viewed as rational human beings.

*The Little Red School Book*, (LRS), has very many strong points, notably its genuine potential for stimulating discussion about the social and political situation in our schools. In particular, the section on Sex and Drugs are models of the way in which these matters should be approached, although it could hardly be said that the book goes, in its treatment, beyond liberal specialists in this area.

There are however, in its approach, fundamental weaknesses which effectively preclude it having anything like the explosive impact that the authorities appear to fear. Similarly, those who are interested in the revolutionary restructuring of the school system will find neither serious insight nor thoroughly satisfactory propagandistic ideas in the LRS.

The single most marked characteristic of the book—which defines its basic structure and orientation—is that it is written from the standpoint of the liberal teacher. In fact a considerable portion of the first part verges on special pleading for the dilemmas of the liberal teacher in an authoritarian school system. Consequently, the book tends to define the central problems of the school system in terms of the pressures on teachers which force them into illiberal and authoritarian roles and obstruct communication between them and their pupils. Much of the discussion of the inadequacies of teaching is directed towards re-establishing and improving the channels of communications between teachers and pupils.

What this approach to the problem totally overlooks are the three problems of social structure that must be the starting point of any critique of the school system:

1. The fact that both the content and structure of education are determined by the class-structure of the society within which the schools operate. Thus, whilst there are piecemeal references to the "interests of big business" (p.203-4), the tone of the whole book locates problems as results of neglect, disinterest, apathy and, above all, poor communications and a lack of understanding. For example, the discussion on "Careers Advice" (p.181-4) begins by referring to a scene from the film *Kes*. This particular scene exempli-

institutions. Yet the LRS version utterly misses the class basis of the episode, interpreting it as the Careers Officer's failure to understand. The analysis thence continues along the lines "if only more consideration was given, there are many opportunities...." Consider, for example, the following lengthy quote:

"Few schools provide a proper careers advice service. Some schools have information, in the form of leaflets and booklets on this career and that one. But few of these leaflets seem to be written in good plain english, let alone tell you what you really need to know about the jobs. Besides, you need advice on which general areas may suit you best and be worth investigating further."

Some schools have a teacher who is responsible for careers advice, either full-time or part-time. But often these "careers advisers" don't have either the time or the patience for the big long discussions most pupils need to find out what would suit their interests and abilities best.

The local council runs a youth employment service, with officers whose job is to help school leavers find a job. They sometimes don't have enough time for proper discussion either, so often all they can offer is a production-line job in the local factory, a clerical job in a bank or the council offices, a future as a brush salesman—or a career "going places with the new army". In some areas there just aren't enough jobs for all the school-leavers." (p.183).

2. The fact that within the schools as a structure teachers and pupils exist as distinct groups with genuine, independent sets of conflicting interests. The tendency of the book is to dissolve this genuine structural conflict into a morass of pluralist and functionalist conflict patterns:

Disagreements and conflicts of interest don't only arise between teachers and pupils. They also arise between different groups of pupils, and between groups of teachers. Both among pupils and among teachers, there will always be some people who are content with things the way they are and who therefore disagree with those who want things changed.

Disagreements are not bad in themselves. They only become bad if they're not sorted out. If a disagreement gets sorted out, everybody learns from it. (p.49).

3. The fact that any real move beyond bourgeois education must involve going beyond its defining structure—the teacher/pupil dichotomy of roles and the atomization of pupils in the face of knowledge, the learning process and the "teacher". In this way, the LRS analyses the learning process according to behavioural models: thus one simply plugs out "authoritarianism" and plugs in "humanitarianism":

The best way of teaching is to use encouragement and rewards, not punishments. Psychologists discovered this a long time ago. (P.62).

Perception of these basic problems is much more acute in the recently published *Letter To A Teacher*, translated by Nora Rossi and Tom Cole, (Penguin Educational Special, 1970), produced by a group of Italian schoolchildren. Here, problems of the class structure are in the forefront, the very core of the analysis. Similarly, the real basis for the conflict of interests between students and teachers is con-

A full-time school assumes a teacher's family obligations will not be a hindrance . . . . . Ghandi did it. He mingled his own children among the others at the price of seeing them grow different from himself . . . . The other solution is celibacy . . . . The day celibacy becomes a selfless choice, teachers might grow passionately fond of the school, might love the children and be loved by them. Above all, they would have the joy of running a school that succeeds. (p.72-3).

This solution may be seriously inadequate, but it has the crucial advantage of flowing from an acute perception of the necessity to revolutionise the structure of educational roles, a problem that does not even exist in the liberal ideological framework of the LRS. What is of even greater importance is the actual practice of the children of the School of Barbiana—they have built a school around the integration of students into a functioning group involved in the joint project of education and self-education. *This is the real prototype of revolution in education.*

The comparisons between *The Little Red School Book* and *Letter To A Teacher*, are highly instructive because they underline one immense advantage of perceptions and responses that flow directly from the concrete struggles of the oppressed and exploited themselves. LRS always rings with a certain paternalism that on occasion becomes a kind of uncritical acceptance of "alienated" patterns of behaviour:

" . . . if you really can't persuade the teacher to make his teaching less boring, then you always have the possibility of escape . . . . Escaping is understandable in these circumstances. Here are a few more suggestions on how you can escape from boring lessons: work out how you're going to spend your pocket-money; plan your spare time . . . ." (LRS, p.24-5).

The stance of LRS is "Understanding"; *Letter To A Teacher* is based upon struggle. Compare the following passage for its tone:

On extreme provocation at our school we even use the rod. Now don't play squeamish. Forget all those pedagogical theories. If you need a whip I can give you one, but throw away that pen lying on top of your record book. That pen leaves its mark throughout the year. The mark of a whip disappears by the next day. (Letter, p.70).

Notably lacking in LRS is any serious discussion of the content of bourgeois education or of the goals that new forms of education should strive towards. It seems too appropriate to end with a further quote from *Letter* on precisely this question:

The right goal is to give oneself to others. In this century, how can you show your love if not through politics, the unions, the schools? We are the sovereign people. The time for begging is gone; we must make choices—against class distinctions, against hunger, illiteracy, racialism and colonial wars. (Letter, p.79).

*Politics in Command!*  
Brian Slocock



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# LETTERS

## Irish Republicanism

Comrade Editor,

Regarding recent developments within the Republican Movement, one must be very careful about hailing the turn of the "Officials" toward the espousing of revolutionary politics. This if anything is the contradiction. Maureen De Burcha talks about using Dail Eireann as a means of furthering the cause of revolutionary socialism in Ireland. This is a bit ironic since in fact the Dail has had the role since the sellout of the Free State of accommodating British imperialism in Ireland. Do these Republicans think that by sitting in the Dail that they are going to make an impression on the reactionaries like Lynch and Cosgrave? Perhaps they think that they will swing (God save us!) that great Irish socialist, Brendan Corish and his pale-pink social democrats in the Labour Party to the cause of socialist Ireland.

Maureen De Burcha should not forget that Sinn Fein's "parliamentary successes" in the past have been based on the very fact that its deputies refused to sit in Dail Eireann. They were elected by people who saw the treaty as a farce and the so-called seat of democracy an insult to the people of Ireland.

One can understand the frustrations of people who know that parliamentary procedures have done nothing to impress British imperialism down through the hundreds of years of Irish history. Redmond's big mouth talked for ever about the reasonableness of British democracy and gloated about how it would be persuaded to concede political independence for its off-shore colony. Yet it wasn't the efforts of the Redmondites which initiated the movement of liberation. It was the people like Connolly who knew that the barrel of a gun was the only kind of diplomacy which spoke with effect.

If Sinn Fein is not careful it will find itself taking the road of the revisionist parties of the West, if indeed it is not already going that way. In trying to make the prospect of a socialist Ireland respectable it might achieve a complete sellout of the ideals to which it supposed to subscribe.

Does Sinn Fein think that it can capture the idealism of youth by waving at them the images of umbrella and walking stick? What impressed me at Easter when in Ireland was the great appeal which the Provisionals seem to have for younger people. Although they may be regarded in many ways as being politically naive, their approach with regard to British imperialism is unequivocal. Being certainly in no way in sympathy with the narrow concept of nationalism which ones sometimes finds in Provisional circles, I nevertheless find myself commending their approach to the removal of imperialism from Ireland. There is simply no other way.

When right-wing mobs were murdering and pillaging in Belfast three years ago, what positive help did the defenceless get from Dail Eireann? or indeed where was the expected help from parliamentary republicans of Sinn Fein?

These arguments surely are powerful and yet there are comrades who wallow in the belief that Leinster House is to be the crucifix on which imperialism in Ireland will expire.

—Sean Hill, 23 Craven Avenue, London W.5.

## Lancaster University

Dear Mole,

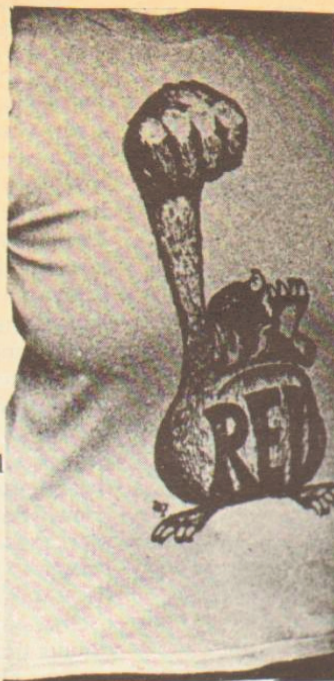
Unfortunately, there is already a sequel to the article on the student-worker unity at Lancaster University. As soon as the students had left for the summer, the management broke its verbal agreements completely, denied that it had ever negotiated, and made an offer reduced by 22p for "equal pay", to go to women workers only. Apart from the dishonesty involved, this offer was intended to split the workers. If the women cleaners accepted it, the men cleaners would be angry, and unity, and thus union strength reduced. If they rejected it, the women catering staff, who would get the increase, and who are not yet in the union, would be alienated. At the present time, the cleaners have decided to instruct their official to accept the offer towards equal pay, on condition that this does not in any prejudice their claim for free transport. If the management refuses to progress the claim as seems only too likely, the students will

students remains significant, as the first action of concrete solidarity which students have taken with workers in a British University. For a long time it appeared that there was a downturn in the student movement, although this downturn did not reflect a depoliticisation, but a lack of clarity as to how to act in a situation where the capitalist crisis has made working class struggles overwhelmingly dominant. This occupation therefore represents a real political advance in the student movement.

Yours fraternally, Carol Singh.

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# The Red Mole

## SPECIAL CLYDESIDE SUPPLEMENT

### Introduction

The Red Mole is pleased to publish the following articles on the present situation on Clydeside. These have been written by the members of the Glasgow branch of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International. The third article is an interview with a representative of the Shop Stewards Committee at the Govan yard of UCS. We publish it because it reflects the level of consciousness of the Clydeside working class and their full intention to occupy the yards as soon as the first redundancies are announced. However, it also reflects a lack of understanding of the technical and political implications of the proposed occupation which is lamentably current, both among the sector of the working class directly engaged in the struggle and among the left in general.

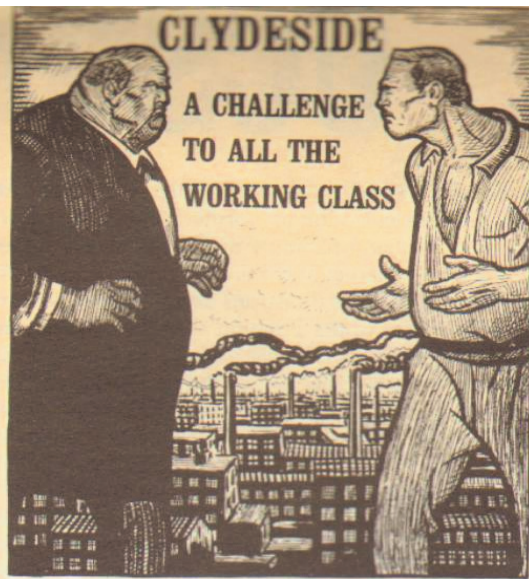
It is vital that the Clydeside working class realises that British capitalism has no future whatsoever for the Clydeside shipbuilding industry. This is argued very cogently below. It is false to assert that the British economy needs the British shipbuilding industry. The Chamber of Shipping have announced that British shipping lines are in no way dependent on an indigenous shipbuilding industry. The Tory government have deliberately closed the yards. It should be remembered that the £6 million needed to keep UCS running could have been obtained easily if the Tories had given instructions to the banks to make a loan. As it stands now, the Tories are paying up to £5 million to keep the yards turning over while the liquidator makes the plans for closure. That is, the Tories are no longer following the path that the Labour Party took of investing and hoping—they are paying £5 million to close it. British capitalism no longer has the gift of time that it had during the years when Labour happened to be in power. It has to rationalise very rapidly and shed whole sectors of its industry which act as a drag on investment in the remaining profitable sectors.

As our Scottish comrades argue below, the closure of UCS will mean a blow for the whole economy of the West of Scotland and for the whole Scottish working class. The willingness of the Clydeside workers to occupy the yards springs directly from the fact that the unions have no room left for defensive demands (work-sharing, productivity concessions, etc.), and from the incredibly high rate of unemployment already prevailing on Clydeside (10%). It demonstrates most dramatically that the spirit of "Red Clydeside" is still very much alive. But more than that, the whole working class in the West of Scotland recognises that shipbuilding has been, and still is, the lynchpin in the economy of the region. The number of redundancies that will follow in industries supplying the yards with materials has been estimated at around 20,000. Moreover, the rate of rationalisation and redundancy that is proceeding apace in light engineering, textiles and electronics, means that none of this redundancy can be absorbed in the other industries of West Scotland. The effect of massive unemployment on the wages and conditions of workers still retaining jobs needs no stressing. Clearly, the closure of a section of Rolls Royce is in no way comparable to a closure of UCS. With the future of UCS goes the whole future of the economy of West Scotland and the whole future of the Scottish working class.

As far as can be judged, an occupation seems almost certain. But what does an occupation involve? An occupation of the yards is, de facto, workers' control. To keep the yards running, moreover, necessitates the workers in the surrounding supply industries forcing their bosses to continue supplying materials to the workers in the yards. This raises directly the question of workers' control in these surrounding industries. Furthermore it requires that the workers in electricity and gas supply continue to supply the yards with power in direct defiance of Government orders to cut it off. It also necessitates the river workers refusing to tow unfinished ships away (Glasgow tugmen have already agreed to this). Again, because no wages would be paid for work done in occupation, enormous financial support has to be prepared all over the country.

If such preparation is made, a situation of de facto workers' control emerges. The continued working of the yards under workers' control would transform the demand for keeping the yards open into a demand for nationalisation under workers' control. The Tories would not at first confront this demand. They would probably attempt two lines of negotiation. Firstly they would try to negotiate high redundancy payments. If the union leaders refused to accept this—and the pressure of the rank and file would force them to refuse—then the Tories would announce that they are "reconsidering" the economic implications of keeping one or two of the yards open. Since this would still involve redundancy, and since the unions have already over the past two years given every possible concession (redundancy, productivity measures, etc.) this line of approach is unlikely to disarm the workers. These two lines of approach would buy the Tories time. The longer they can create the impression that they are willing to "reconsider", the more chance they have of seeing the occupation cave in. Sooner or later, however, they would be forced to confront the demand for nationalisation under workers' control.

In the meantime, Wedgwood-Benn, in order to increase his own power base inside the Parliamentary Labour Party, would probably press for an emergency debate on his Nationalisation Bill. However, it should be pointed out that 1) contrary to what our interviewee imagines, the Parliamentary Labour Party is not only not under the control of even the Annual Conference of the Labour Party (which would



Bevan stated that the notion that Annual Conference could control the PLP was not only ridiculous but unconstitutional. 2) Even should the force of occupation push the PLP to agree to Wedgwood-Benn's lead and then in turn try to force an emergency debate in the Commons, the PLP would itself be split over the question. The Labour Party have always regarded nationalisation only as a measure to service British capitalism and never as a solution to unemployment. Consequently a section of the PLP would either sabotage the debate or vote with the Tories. 3) Even assuming they agreed to fight a nationalisation campaign, Wedgwood Benn and the existing leadership of the PLP would never accept workers' control. 4) The Tories have a majority even if the PLP was united.

Meanwhile, workers' control on the Clydeside would be daily threatening to ignite the British working class. Already, the idea of occupations has caught its imagination. The steel workers of Sheffield are threatening occupation if a BSC hiving off operation goes ahead.

Under these circumstances, the Tories might take the initiative and nationalise UCS. But they cannot permit workers' control. Firstly, continued workers' control would perpetuate a "detonator" effect on the English working class. The pressure of rising prices, the massive redundancies being announced and fought week after week, mean that the British working class is in constant struggle. The rising unemployment is not having the expected effect of cooling the wage militancy of the workers, perhaps, ironically, because the traditional sectionalism of the British working class insulates one section against the defeats of another. They cannot allow workers' control politically. Neither can they afford workers' control of UCS economically. British capital has as a priority the shedding of British shipbuilding. In order to make the Scottish yards profitable to British capitalists, millions of pounds would be required. If, under nationalisation, the government footed the bill, it would be seriously weakening its own ability to financially support other industries in which the capitalist class see a future, only in order to saddle itself with a financial embarrassment for many years to come. Neither Tory nor Labour will do this. The Tories would nationalise only in order to run it down over a longer period of time. And they would only nationalise in return for de-occupation, i.e. the surrender of the very workers' control which alone could ensure that a newly nationalised shipbuilding industry survived for more than a few months.

What emerges from this discussion of probabilities is that even if the Tories nationalise UCS, it will not be under workers' control. Without that (even with a measure of integration of trade union bureaucracies into the management, etc.) the Scottish working class will find itself in exactly the same position in a few months time, if not immediately. And as we said earlier, the future of UCS is the future of the Scottish working class.

If the workers are to keep the yards open and avoid this catastrophic defeat, then they must keep control. The dangers of being disarmed and sold out by the existing leaderships is very great (their performance up to the present time is discussed below). The dangers of Tory nationalisation when the working class has already advanced to a situation of de facto workers' control (and the technical demands of occupation would quickly lead to the creation of elementary organs of dual power), across key industries throughout a region, are even greater.

If the working class are not defeated by surrendering their control for "nationalisation" or by the union bureaucrats through defensive demands, then clearly the Tories will be forced to send in the Army, firstly to intimidate the workers, then to clear the yards by force.

Thus the implication of the present situation is that only by pursuing the question of power in Scotland can the Scottish working class avoid catastrophic defeat. It is make or break. At the same time, this battle over the future of the lynchpin in the economy of Scotland raises the national question. The British bourgeoisie have no future for Scotland. At the same time they can't tolerate the loss of it. Its future must lie in the hands of the working class.

It is clear that preparations for the occupation cannot be purely technical. They demand education. They will involve the creation of an embryonic workers' militia, a high degree of political leadership which understands the revolutionary logic of the situation. John Maclean's view that Scotland was the weak link in British capitalism may be proved to still hold true. It is clear that the Communist Party with its present preoccupation with lobbies and chauvinistic objections to the Common Market, does not understand the logic of the situation; that its claim to be a Leninist party is grotesque. It holds a powerful position of leadership and will very probably reach some kind of compromise with the British bourgeoisie.

It is not the job of revolutionaries however to gear their horizons to what will probably be, given the existing leadership, but to point out what the particular combination of objective and subjective factors makes possible and necessary.

### Extend the struggle

The struggle inside UCS is now only a part of the wider struggle against unemployment and against the general Tory anti-working class offensive. The facts are plain to see. Many firms of "repute" are bound to suffer the same fate. For instance the British Leyland factory at Bathgate looks as though it is heading for trouble. Therefore what we are confronted with in the West of Scotland is the need to generalise and develop the struggle against unemployment.

#### THE WORTHIES OF THE GLASGOW TRADES COUNCIL

It is regrettable that in this respect we have not seen any real initiatives from the organised trade union movement. The Glasgow District Trade Council has to date done absolutely nothing on the question although it has had many requests to give some lead. The demonstration on Wednesday 23rd June was a more or less totally spontaneous effort. This confronts the Trades Council with the spectre of independent working class mass action and actually highlights its total failure to date to act as a coordinating body for the trade unions in the area and to give any sort of leadership to the struggle over the previous period. The unemployment situation in the West of Scotland has been grim for many years—it is vividly clear that had the Trades Council taken the initiative in organising a campaign at an earlier date than a far greater mobilisation could by now have occurred. The Trades Council has constantly refused to organise an Unemployed Trades Council. They have sought time and time again to prevent unemployed workers from meeting together in the Social Club. They refused to allow a public meeting of the newly formed Claimants' Union of unemployed to take place on their premises. In fact one of the most important features of the demonstration on Wednesday 23rd June was the very noticeable lack of unemployed workers who were totally absent from the march in any organised fashion. This poses the urgent need to combine the struggle of the employed and unemployed. Nobody's job is safe. No sudden turn in the tide is predictable on the basis of the present economic prospects.

#### LOBBIES AND PETITIONS ...

However, what steps are the "leaders" of the trade union movement taking now after the most virulent display of hatred by the working class for the Tory government this side of World War Two? At a special meeting called by the Glasgow District Trades Council the day following the June 23rd demonstration, they (Reidford, present secretary of the Trades Council, and Wyper, ex-secretary, both Communist Party members) called for a ... lobby of Parliament! How much closer can you get to actually heading off any militant movement which was actually on the road to organising really massive protests by the working class in the Glasgow district against the threat to its livelihood?

No doubt these same trade union leaders will be supporting wholeheartedly the idea of a petition which is being organised, as a means of pressure against the Government on the question. Make no mistake, we are not against a petition which enables the UCS shop stewards to make contact with other sections of the class, to solicit their financial support, etc. What we do oppose is to see this method of protest as an end in itself. It only has any value insofar as it helps in the task of mobilising the class for active resistance to Tory policies. Certainly the petition will represent a passive reflection of the feelings of people concerned about UCS; however, the only strategy for ensuring a successful outcome to the struggle will be to organise the mass participation of the working class in the factories and on the streets.

#### OCCUPY THE YARDS!

The demand for occupation of the shipyards, or, in other words, a demand for workers' control, is indicative of the militancy in UCS. The historical precedents for such attempted takeovers are numerous—although unfortunately few of them are to be found in the history of the British working class movement. They include the widespread occupations by French workers during the General Strike of 1968 and the attempted occupation at GEC-English Electric on Merseyside in response to the redundancies declared in 1969. In the latter case the failure of the occupation attempt came about particularly because of a lack of links with and support from other industries which would have enabled the GEC-EE workers to go ahead with any confidence. The tremendous demonstrations of support for UCS shown already in the West of Scotland and the consciousness of the stewards that this is a crucial issue, should enable UCS workers to make a big stride forward in this respect. The situation is assisted by the fact that at least three times the number of workers employed in UCS are involved in a variety of supply industries. In the first instance it is necessary for these workers to mobilise and prepare themselves for the militant action which would be necessary in order to keep up supplies to UCS. In the course of this action it is of course vital to demonstrate that the disappearance of the yards as an outlet for their products would also sound the death knell for many suppliers, causing more redundancies. Thus the workers in supply firms actually have a clear direct interest in supporting in the most militant possible fashion the struggle to keep the UCS open. In preparation for the possibility of an occupation it is necessary to take immediate steps to organise the strength of the trade union to coordinate such action.

Full solidarity with the UCS workers!

No Redundancies!

Extend the Struggle!

# UCS: THE ORIGIN

The massive and militant demonstration in Glasgow on Wednesday 23rd June reflected the total hatred felt amongst the organised working class of the West of Scotland for the Tory government. At least 30,000 trade unionists took part. The main slogans heard throughout the length of the march were "Heath Out" and "Tories Out" (with many more



fanciful variations on this theme). The total number of workers who left their factories and offices has been estimated at 150,000, bringing the Glasgow area to an almost total halt.

The size and militancy of the demonstration becomes even more impressive when it is remembered that this arose out of a more or less spontaneous call from the UCS shop stewards to other shop stewards in the area and without any important organisation being done through the official channels of the trade union movement; further that it took place within a matter of only a few days from the announcement of the liquidation of UCS. The response to the call showed clearly that the working class in most sections of the movement feel that the fight to retain the jobs of the UCS workers is their fight. They recognise furthermore that the plight of UCS is only the most spectacular aspect of the entire Tory attack on the working class and its organisations.

The reasons why the fight over UCS has become a symbol for the workers of the West of Scotland becomes clear on examining the general employment situation in the area. Numerous well-known firms who have been major employers are now beginning to feel the pressure of the present recession. Rolls Royce have made approximately 1,000 workers redundant, Burroughs Machines 1,500, Singers about 1,000. (There used to be 15,000 employed in this multi-national monopoly's Clydebank factory, now there are 6,000). Babcock and Wilcox paid off 1,400 workers when they moved from Dalmeir to Renfrew. Here we have mentioned only a few of the larger redundancies. There are of course numerous smaller concerns which depend to a large extent on supplying ancillary equipment and components and who are liable to be badly hit in the present period—for instance the marine engine builders, Kincaid and Barclay Curle, J & T. Lawrie, Weir Pumps, etc.

Now we know that the Albion Motor works at Scotstoun, employing 2,700 workers, is in serious financial difficulties. The Burroughs factory site at Strathleven has a lease of 22 years due to run out at the beginning of 1972. No doubt the remaining workers will find themselves queuing at the local "buroo". Babcock and Wilcox at Renfrew are threatening to pay off a further 500. Plessey at Alexandria has just announced plans for total closure. The *Financial Times* has reported the "one bright spot" as being "John Brown Engineering (Clydebank) Ltd., hived off from the shipyard at the time of the formation of UCS". There has been an increase in its labour force since its formation from 1,000 to about 1,400. However even this company, which has won the Queen's Award for Industry for two successive years, had the audacity at the time of the latest presentation to declare that a general cutback would take place in the near future. This threat looks likely to be made good with pay-offs certain in August of this year. All this will take place in a firm whose return on capital invested currently stands at 21%.

Altogether therefore the future in the West of Scotland looks bleak for companies—even those supposedly doing well. The latest unemployment figures for the area illuminate the particularly disastrous situation. According to the figures published on 24th June, there are in Scotland as a

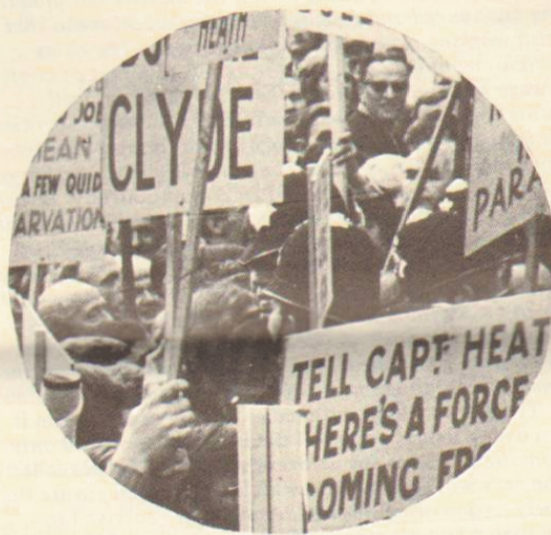
overall rate for Britain (3.6%) and more than for any other region with the exception of Northern Ireland. They are likely to be further inflated by the school leavers decanted onto the labour market at the end of June.

However even these disastrous overall figures do not reflect the gravity of the situation in the central industrial belt and particularly the Clyde Valley area. In this area, containing just under one half of the population, 67,000 are unemployed. Of these, 36,000 are in Glasgow alone (male unemployment rate 10%). In Clydebank the overall rate (males and females) is 10%—if John Brown's shipyard (the Clydebank Division of UCS) closes down this will immediately increase to 17%. Other areas with rates well above the (Scottish) national average are Greenock/Port Glasgow and North Lanarkshire. It is worth mentioning further that all available evidence from the experience of the "depressed areas" of other European countries indicates that when Britain enters the Common Market, Scotland's relative position will be worsened by the centrifugal forces which will tend to concentrate industry within the wider community nearest to the largest centres of population (the Birmingham/Ruhr/Turin triangle so frequently quoted by economic experts).

## THE STRATEGY OF BRITISH CAPITALISM

So much for the general background to our economic position within Britain. How then did UCS find itself in such a state and what are its prospects? We cannot begin to answer this question without first taking a brief look at the specific problems of British capitalism and the strategy of the capitalist class and their governmental allies in attempting their solution.

Throughout the world most countries are facing the difficulties caused by inflation—nowhere does this create more acute problems than in Britain. Indeed it is causing a



good deal of controversy amongst economists. On the one hand we see the Tory die-hards stating that the attitude should be the "lame duck philosophy"—i.e. reliance purely upon the operation of the law of the market with the weakest going to the wall. On the other hand we see the TUC programme of a reflationary policy to stimulate a rise in the growth rate. The quandary for the British ruling class is deepened by the fact that we have the phenomenon of cost inflation accompanied by rising unemployment. Most economists have insisted on the "lame duck" philosophy stating that the way to combat inflation is to increase the level of unemployment, thereby reducing the effectiveness of trade union strength in wage bargaining and thus reducing the rise in real wage levels. Unfortunately for their theories this has not happened to date, for while the level of unemployment has increased from 350,000 in 1966 to 820,000 today, the rate of inflation has been increasing dramatically.

The TUC and various individual trade union leaders have plugged the idea that if the growth rate was increased greatly there would be a reduction in inflationary trends. They should of course know that such a policy is in the present period impossible of adoption by a Tory government who would thus be selling out the interests of big business. However the TUC and their hangers-on appear to prefer having cups of tea with Ted Heath and his cronies, to coming forwards with a programme for mass working class action to defeat the Tory government.

They should also know full well that the main concern of the Tories and big business is the defence of their rate of profit. Related to this is the fact that the gross trading profits of companies as a proportion of national income declined from 13½% in 1968 to 12.6% in 1969 and to 11.6% in 1970. In other words, although actual profit may have increased, the rate of profit has fallen very considerably.

This fall of course explains the ferocity of the Tory propaganda against the trade unions and the Government's aggressive policy against wage claims together with the introduction of the Industrial Relations Bill. It explains the Government's rejection of any form of price control because the employers must be left free to raise prices in order to

What of course makes the whole situation even more acute for the British capitalist class is the chronic backwardness of industry in a country which at one time headed the world league in industrial production and technique but has now fallen way behind its leading competitors. This situation which for a whole period was covered up by the profits from Britain's imperial investments has now come to a head. The urgent need is for massive investment in new capital equipment to shore up British industry's ever-declining competitiveness. Naturally this investment is to be paid for, not by the capitalists who skimmed off such handsome profits in the past but by a structured attempt to depress the living standards of the working class.

If the capitalist class in general in Britain is in acute difficulties, that section involved in shipbuilding is in an even more pressing predicament stemming from the particular problems of that industry.

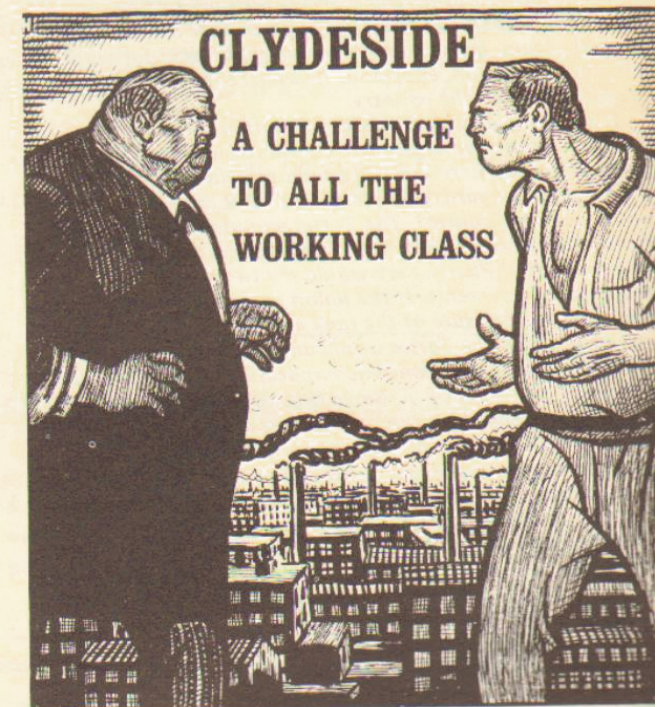
## POST WAR SHIPBUILDING

In the post-war years there was a big boom in shipbuilding to replace war losses. British yards took advantage of this and made huge profits, but never ploughed them back into the industry so that capital equipment is now possibly the most out-date of any industry. In particular they never made the necessary investments to adapt to production of the new selling lines in shipping—tankers, bulk carriers, etc. The result was that Britain, which in 1938 produced more than a third of all ships built in the world, now produces about 5%.

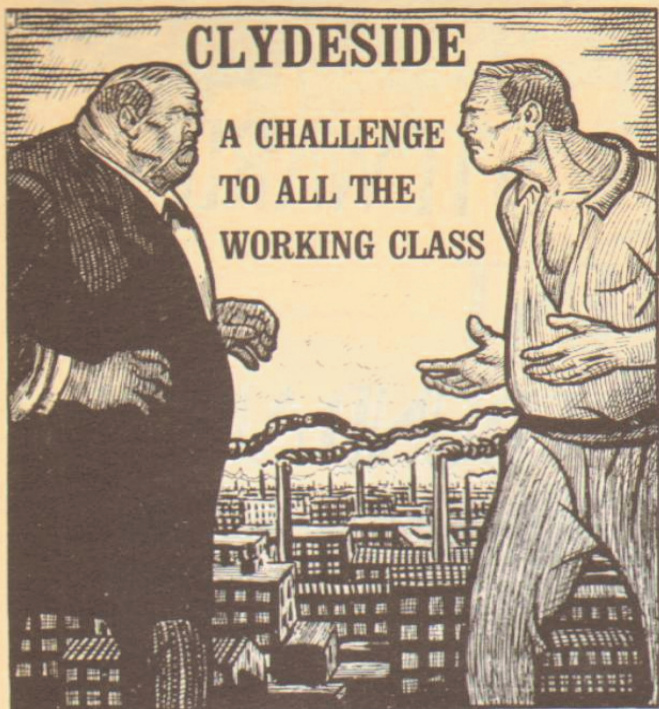
One of the most noticeable features of the yards is their absolute inability to produce a ship on time. Most ships are based on fixed price contracts with penalty clauses for late delivery (some contracts now have clauses to deal with cost inflation). It is therefore of the utmost importance that to compete with foreign shipyards and to maximise profits, the time taken to build a ship is minimised. Because of the archaic nature of the UCS yards, this problem is more than ever incapable of solution. The liners "Kungsholm" and "Q.E.2" lost £4 million and £3 million respectively because of late delivery.

While the various governments have pumped money into the UCS, they have only done so at the expense of the workers. The sums of money invested have all been on condition that the trade unions are willing to "rationalise". The facts of rationalisation are that while the throughput of steel in 1970 averaged 867 tons per week, the throughput this year is averaging 1,300 tons achieved with a 16% reduction in the steel work force (it had reached 1,450 tons per week before liquidation). The number of ships delivered from the yards since the formation of the consortium was 3 in 1968, 7 in 1969 and 12 in 1970, with a cutback of 25% in the labour force (15 ships would probably have been delivered in 1971). Productivity has increased by a staggering 87%. All this has been achieved through successive bargains with the unions involving greater flexibility of working (particularly the introduction of "interchangeability" in the steel working trades, e.g. platers doing their own tack-welding) and cooperation in phased redundancies. In other words the workers of UCS have themselves paid for the recent expansion of reduction.

A crisis of liquidity has hit UCS. The main reason for this problem is the type of ship built. The order book for 1971 consists of 7 "Clyde" class all-purpose cargo ships (18,000 tons), 16 bulk carriers (26,000 tons), 1 drilling rig, 1 train ferry and 2 suction dredgers. The production of standardised ships indicated above has been one of the main aspects of UCS management's attempts to get the consortium out of the red. However, this type of ship is not at all



# S OF THE CRISIS



profitable. The trend in world shipping is towards larger ships which can take advantage of the economies of scale. Over the past 20 years tanker design for instance has undergone tremendous changes that illustrate this trend. In 1949 a tanker of 18,000 tons deadweight was considered a big ship, but the pace of development has been such that many ships built in the early 1960s are now considered obsolescent and uneconomic. It has been reported that one company's change in the size of ships is as follows. In 1957 ships of up to 25,000 tons deadweight represented over 70% of their fleet whereas in 1970 they were only 11% and the number below 15,000 tons was an insignificant proportion. It is clear therefore that UCS are building for a declining category of world shipping.

Recent years have witnessed an hitherto unprecedented increase in the size of certain merchant vessels. For example oil tankers of 326,000 tons deadweight have been built and tankers of even greater size are projected. The increase in size is not confined to oil carrying vessels. Ore carriers, container ships and cargo liners also show a similar marked tendency towards increased size, while demand for the passenger liner, a one-time speciality of the John Brown yard in particular, has virtually dried up due to competition from the airlines. Building costs for all vessels decrease up to a size of about 200,000 tons. For those over this weight they may increase in the first instance because of the need for new capital equipment to handle the huge prefabricated hull sections, higher quality steel, etc. But such increases will tend to diminish with time and experience.

## THE GENERAL DECLINE AND THE BOURGEOIS PRESS

As well as swimming against the tide in this respect, UCS is, like the entire world shipbuilding industry to a greater or lesser extent, faced with the problem of a spectacular decline in the demand for new tonnage. The shipowners have been hit by a dramatic decline in freight rates, which has reduced their willingness to buy. Indeed this has reached such proportions that in a recent edition of the *Scottish*

tonnage. In order to launch the "QE2" at Clydebank, the opposite side of the river bank had to be continually dredged. We should remember that this ship was only 58,000 tons and is certainly much shorter in length than today's oil tankers. In fact it would be absolutely impossible without the most massive investment to modernise all these yards and undertake the capital development of the river itself which would be necessary to enable them to compete on the world market. In simple terms we can only conclude that the "progress" of world capitalism in relation to this industry has far outstretched the bounds of the thinking or potentiality of the British shipbuilders.

A recent edition of the *Financial Times* suggested that £5 million should be put into the modernisation of the Clydebank Division. This is an utterly fanciful suggestion. Half the capital equipment in this yard is more than 40 years old. The cost of modernisation has been grossly underestimated in regard both to the yard itself and to the limitations imposed by the river. It is absolutely clear that John Brown's will close in the very near future with the eventual phasing out of the other yards comprising the UCS. By this method the Tories will succeed in finally concentrating all shipbuilding production on the Clyde in the Lower Reaches (Scott-Lithgow of Port Glasgow & Greenock).

Even to the most naive observer the plans to close down UCS should come as no surprise. The Tories' ideas on this have been no secret for a long time. In the *Guardian*, June 15th, it was reported that Mr. Nicholas Ridley, now Under-Secretary at the Department of Trade and Industry, had said before the last election that the Cabinet should put in "a Government butcher to cut up UCS and to sell cheaply to Lower Clyde and others the assets of UCS". It was further reported "the plan foresaw that after the dispersal of UCS assets the Government would sell the public's 48.4% share of UCS 'even for a pittance'."

Mr. Ridley's concluding plans were: "I believe we should do the following on assuming office: (i) Give no more public money to UCS; (ii) Let Yarrow leave UCS if they want to and facilitate their joining Lower Clyde if they still wish to do so; (iii) This would mean the bankruptcy of UCS. We should accept this in which case Lower Clyde will take over one or two of the yards. (iv) After liquidation or reconstruction as above we should sell the Government's holding in UCS even for a pittance."

## TORY OPTIONS AND PLANS

The Tory Government has been faced then with either (i) attempting to continue phased subsidies to keep the yards going; (ii) sinking tens of millions of pounds into a few of them; or (iii) suffering the political consequences of doing neither. The *Financial Times* also reported rumours which have been circulating on Clydeside to the effect that the 2,600 employed at Brown's would be transferred to Govan and Linthouse and placed on a double shift system. However it is fairly clear that the majority of workers would not accept this move since not only has this system been rejected before, but it is extremely likely that a 3-shift system would be imposed eventually.

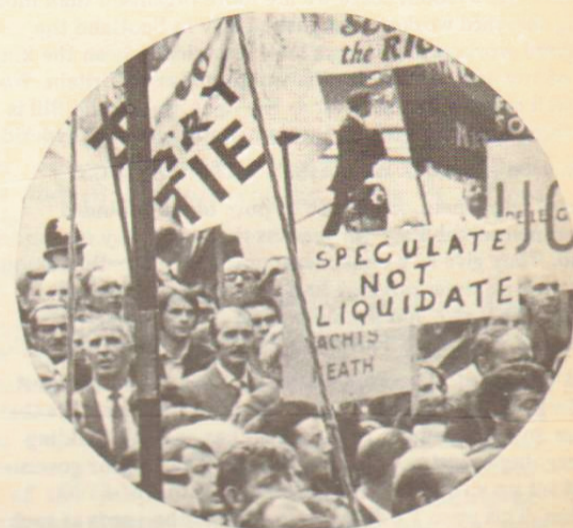
It looks obvious from the above that the Tories' plans are first to close Brown's, then Connell's and finally the whole of the UCS. At the moment there is a large differential between the wage rates in the UCS and those at Scott-Lithgow on the Lower Clyde. The future redundancies envisaged for the UCS will mean that Scott-Lithgow can employ skilled labour at lower wage rates, holding the heavy stick of the lack of jobs over the heads of redundant UCS workers.

Connell's, or as it is now known, the Scotstoun Division of UCS, is undoubtedly the next yard to be threatened after the Clydebank Division. At this moment, reports from the yard confirm this prediction. The management

have announced the suspension of work on one of their "Clyde" ships, which means that a surplus of labour will occur, creating inevitable redundancies.

Some of the bourgeois newspapers still cling to the idea that what is needed is some individual to come along and help UCS out of its troubles. We had Iain Stewart, who attempted to sort out Fairfield-Rowan and only managed temporarily to shelve the problem after many concessions by the trade unions. We have Kenneth Douglas (who became managing director after gaining the reputation of having saved Austin Pickersgills on Wearside) and Anthony Hepper, with a further figure added now in the familiar shape of Lord Robens. The newspapers are now asking for the return of "Sir" Iain Stewart.

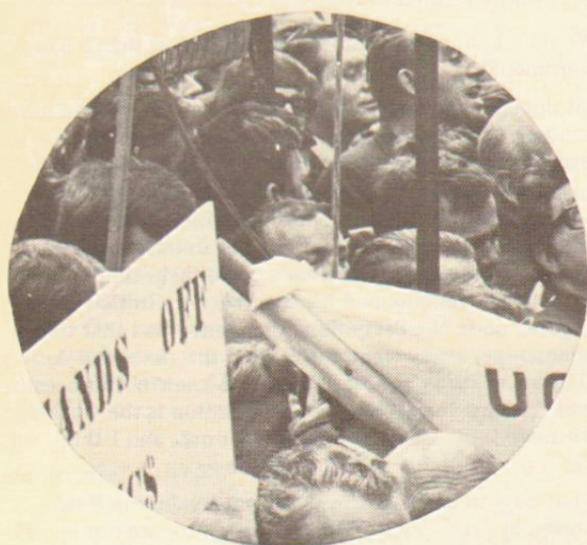
The "great individual" theory never did warrant serious consideration. The decision about the future of UCS will not be taken by one or two men—it will be resolved through a struggle between different classes of the population. Right now it is plainly obvious that for the British capitalist class and their Tory governmental representatives, the UCS has become redundant. The pumping of huge sums of money into industry is only done by such governments when the prospect is that at some point in the future they will themselves reap their owners worthwhile profits. No such prospect exists for UCS. In fact one of the most indicative features of the situation has been the way in which the old



owners have slowly been wriggling themselves out of responsibility for an enterprise which has now become a liability to them. Every time the government put money into the consortium it increased the size of its own shareholding proportionate to that of Stephens, Connell's, etc. In this way our old shipbuilding families have been gradually relieving themselves of the liability for UCS and off-loading it onto the state.

It is equally utopian to expect any capitalist government to follow the solution of nationalisation. The only industries which history shows the British capitalist class as being prepared to have taken over by the state are those which are essential to the continued profitability of other sections of industry. Such was the case with the railways and the pits after the Second World War.

No. As far as the Tories are concerned the question is no longer whether to get rid of the UCS. It is how to get rid of it with the least possible upheaval, particularly from the working class. We have to start from the position that only the independent action of the working class movement itself can save the yards.



*Daily Express* it was actually suggested that the liquidation of UCS might come as a blessing to certain shipowners who would be better off accepting the loss of their initial down payments on a vessel under construction than having to pay out the full price and saddling themselves with an expensive but unprofitable ship.

Jim Rannie, the ex-manager of John Brown's, has suggested that the solution to the disastrous unprofitability of the Clydebank Division is to scrap the out-of-date section of



# Interview with Shop Steward

The following interview is an edited version of one obtained by a Red Mole correspondent with John Brown, representing the Shop Stewards Committee, UCS, Govan Division.

—Could you give us some idea of the composition of the labour force and of trade union membership within UCS?

There are thirteen unions in UCS. The largest one as far as membership is concerned is my own union, the Boilermakers Society, which organises roughly one-third of the labour force. There are eight trades within the Boilermakers' alone. The other important unions are the Engineers, DATA (the Draughtsmen's Union) is involved with them as a separate unit within the union, the GMWU (General and Municipal Workers' Union) which organises the labourers and general workers, the ASW (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers), PTU-ETU (Plumbers and Electricians). All these unions have a big representation within the consortium. You have somewhere between 7½ and 8½ thousand workers within the UCS at the moment, and that is after a cutback of 25% in the labour force over a twelve month period.

—Do you think the Tory policy of unemployment and union bashing has affected the militancy of the UCS workers?

No, I think it is quite safe to say that the militancy of all workers in Britain has not been headed off in any way. Here we tend to mirror what is going on in the rest of the country. As a labour force we are more organised than most, being shipyard workers and particularly in Scotland the shipyard workers and miners have historically been the king pin of any action taken by the working class in Britain. We are well organised, and as far as the fight against the Bill is concerned, we helped lead the demonstrations on Clydeside.

—What do you think are the main problems in UCS?

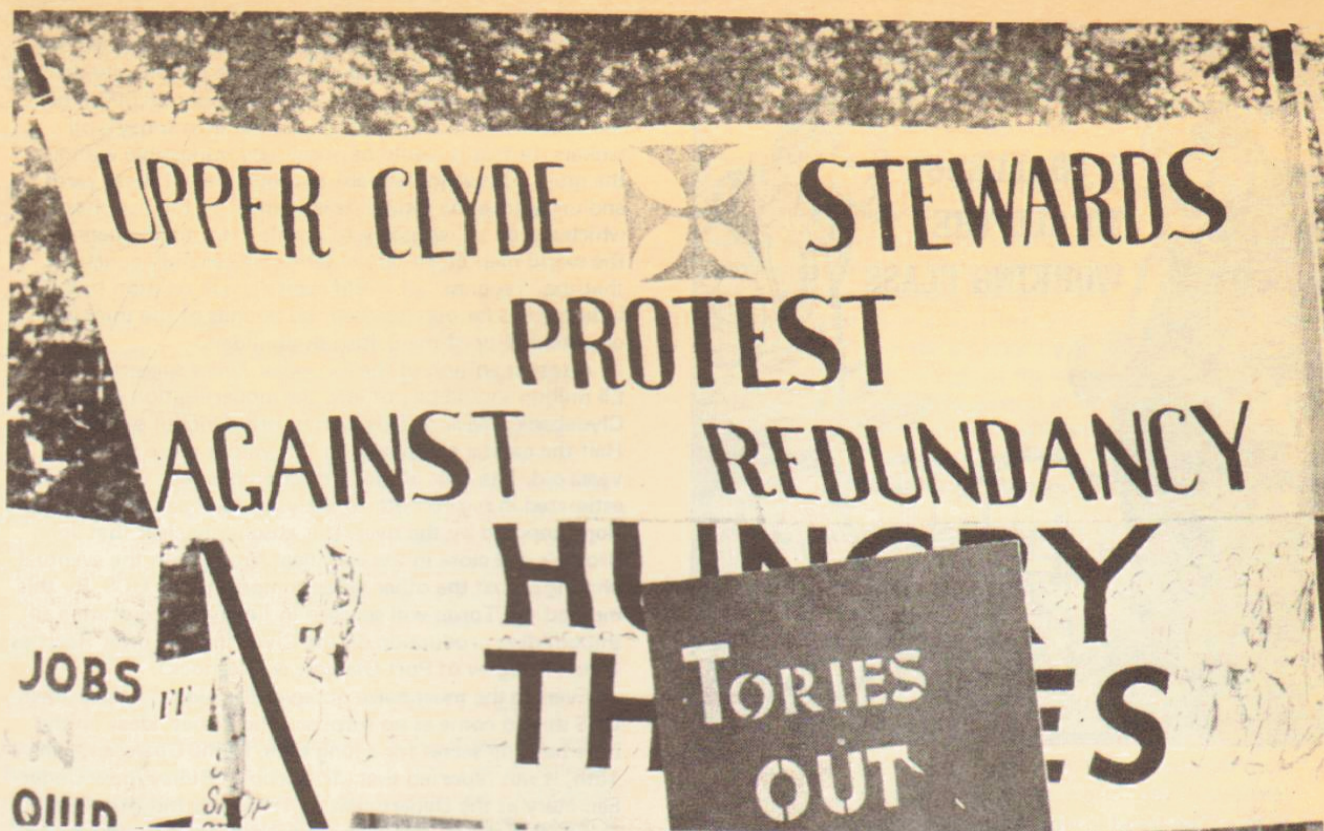
Capital investment. It's a case of pure bloody-minded governmental sabotage for reasons that only they can understand. They give us a certain amount of money—the Labour government under pressure had to stand back and say, "Right, we'll give you so much, now prove yourselves. Once that's done we'll give you £5 or £6 million more." So, what happened? The Tories came in, took the money out of the kitty and we don't get it any more. The point is that where any government in the world has any shipbuilding or seagoing industry, they subsidise it. The Labour government set up a fund to build ships to the tune of £100 million. This wasn't a direct cash flow to the yards as such—it was on a credit basis to the shipowners. The Tories came in and they froze that sum at around £30 million so our first crisis was that half the orders on our books had been taken on on the basis of that scheme and we started to lose these.

—Do you think that if the Tories had given UCS £6 million this would have kept it running?

It would have kept it running meantime but I personally don't think it's enough because we're desperately needing money for capital equipment. As far as I'm concerned, the only way the government can put in money of that kind is through nationalisation. This is where the Labour government went wrong.

—What are the likely repercussions of the closure of the yards?

80% of the cost of the ship is brought in in component parts—e.g. machinery, lightbulbs, harnesses, carpets, anchors, etc. Many firms, especially in the West of Scotland, work for shipbuilding—maybe 20% or 30% of their output is for the yards. Take that off and they too become non-viable. There's only 7,500 of us but we reckon it's a modest estimate to say there are in effect 30,000 shipyard workers in Scotland. Shopkeepers in Govan have got notices up in the windows saying, "If UCS closes, we close"—that's genuine, they mean it. *To build ships in themselves is uneconomic, to sail ships is uneconomic but without the ships getting built and without the ships sailing the whole economy grinds to a halt.*



—The big demonstration on June 23rd shows there's a growing worry about unemployment and yet so far the trade unions don't seem to have shown any real leadership on this question?

The workers are worried though. I myself was getting signatures for the UCS petition yesterday in Cumbernauld town centre. There you have a situation of an American-owned industry, Burroughs, declaring redundancies. A bunch of Burroughs workers, Labour Party boys, left wingers, middle of the road boys, etc. came along and said, "Let's have a meeting" so we went away and got a box and held a meeting. That's how workers are feeling today about unemployment—unplanned meetings. The June 23rd demonstration proved that. What happened on that demonstration was that we stewards said, "I wonder how much support we would get from Scottish industry for UCS?" so we simply called a meeting on the Monday morning of all the shop stewards and we sent word out by the press and phoned around, contacted the Trades Council, etc., and sent word around that we wanted shop stewards from anywhere to come and discuss the question in the Rosevale Cinema. We packed the Rosevale Cinema! A few fellows got up and made militant speeches saying they'd ask the lads to come out and that sort of stuff—well, that's the boys talking. So what happened on that demo? 100,000 workers at least were off their work. There was a 2-mile demo—at least 40,000 strong. Well, that wasn't even organised, that wasn't the result of union action or that of anyone else—that was shop stewards, rank and file boys talking to their rank and file lads on the floor. It was a straight case of "If you want to come with us, join us"—no matter what your organisation is, whether you're parliamentary candidate, trade union official, whatever, come with us, join us, but you're not taking the leadership off our hands." That demo was a straight case of worker participation. We weren't organised. But they came out.

—At the demonstration Wedgwood Benn said the Labour Party had a motion before Parliament to nationalise the UCS. Is Parliamentary action sufficient?

No. The fight's got to come from the workers. I think we've reached the stage in Britain right now where the fight is going to be on the side of the workers. We didn't follow Benn, Benn came to us. Any fight that we've got at the moment has got to be a workers', class fight. The fight has got to come from the grass roots. Ideas have not got to come from up down the way—they've got to come from down here.

—Are the workers in UCS still threatening to occupy the yards if closure comes?

We mean that. We genuinely mean that. As far as I'm concerned and most of the stewards we have never had a loyalty to one yard—most of us have worked in three, four, five or six shipyards—we have a loyalty to an industry perhaps and through that industry to our class. This is our industry. In the post-war period it's shrunk to 25% of its former labour force but we recognise its major importance to us and to the rest of the economy of Scotland and we recognise the fact that as workers we're the king pins in this and we also recognise the fact that there's been a bloody murder job done here.

—How would the occupation be organised technically? For instance how would you overcome the problem of maintaining supplies?

We'd be working—that's the thing. And the government's going to be hellish daft if its workers are working and it's not paying them. As far as equipment's concerned: people say "They'll turn off the electricity." Well, even if they put it off they've got to get somebody to do it, haven't they? Well, you see the feeling Scotland has about unemployment

If one worker sees leadership by example through one group of workers defending his right to work, he's going to say: "I'm being asked to kick them in the teeth and I'm a worker, I'm a worker too, why am I turning that off?" Same with the oxygen people, etc. The Tory Government have got to look at this and say—"Do you mean it?" And I'll tell you straight, we mean it. We're going to give them a showing up. We're not going to just capitulate. An hour ago we got a request from Holland. The Dutch workers want a speaker to go over there. You heard during the demo that the Dutch workers sent us their moral support, they sent financial assistance, they offered us food and clothes, they even said they would adopt our weans while we manned the barricades. Well, as far as I'm concerned, if the Dutch workers will do that, what the hell will the British ones do? The Tory government, in fact all the political parties, have got to look at this and start changing their view because we're not kidding. They can prattle on all they want as far as I'm concerned about gold reserves, but my education, my ability to use my hands, my native skills, are what builds this country and are the wealth of this country. The misuse of the wealth of this country is when I'm not working to better other people's conditions and to put up the standard of living. Just now they say our gold reserves are up—but unemployment's up too. Try to make that into any form of real economics that anyone can understand! It's my skill to do the job I'm doing, your skill to do the job you do, not the gold reserves, which are the real wealth of the country.

—The occupation of UCS would raise the issues of workers' control very clearly?

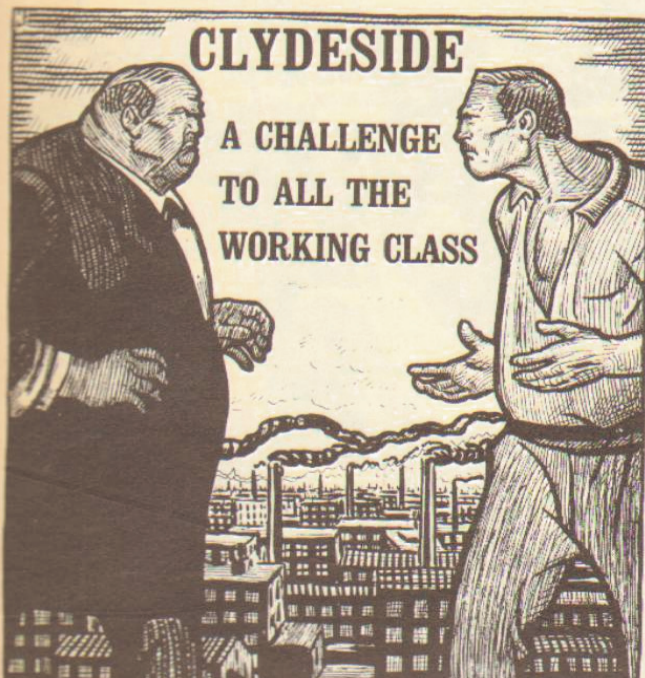
That would be workers' control, wouldn't it? And the Government would have to say, well, this can snowball. Do they mean it? If they do, we've got a revolutionary situation on our hands. *With unemployment growing, as far as I'm concerned they'll have to watch—you'll get a revolutionary mood growing. But that isn't our first aim—our aims are the continuation of work for our members—if the other comes I might smile!*

—Would a Labour government do any better than a Tory government?

That depends what sort of a Labour government you have. I don't think the Labour government last time actually mirrored the views of the Labour Party members. But I think things like Wedgwood Benn's speech in the shipbuilding debate and the reception our boys got when they were down in London on the lobby is an indication that things are changing. This defeat's made them think again. I don't think the rank and file members controlled what was going on in the Party. What happened was that the Parliamentary Party went adrift from the views and desires and needs of its own party, thought it knew better because it was "serving the nation". But the nation is the working class movement, Party card holders or not, and I think we have to get around to this conception again.

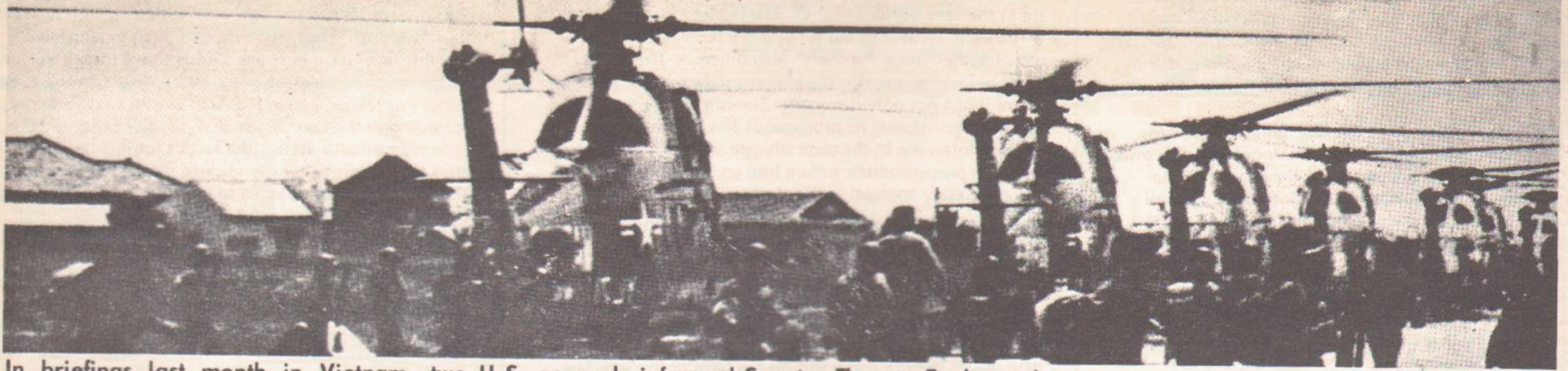
—What do you think of the statement by Jimmy Reid reported in *Tribune* on 27th June that "we are not in business to indulge political dogma either from the Right or the Left, we are in business to retain shipbuilding on the upper reaches of the Clyde"?

He's quite correct there—that's our job. For instance, we'd a Labour M.P. in here this morning and he was on about nationalisation. We told him in no uncertain manner, "This isn't the important thing—the important thing is to keep this industry because of the need of the working class of Scotland—not just for this one, but because of the chain reaction. At the moment we have one job to do and that's to save the industry." If this in itself poses all the questions, it isn't necessarily us as a group that have to answer them.





# VIETNAM Why did the Times do it?



In briefings last month in Vietnam, two U.S. generals informed Senator Thomas Eagleton that "the plans under which they were operating called for a residual American force indefinitely into the future and for a protracted period of massive American air power, including helicopters. . . ."

By GEORGE NOVACK

The Vietnam war has been the longest in American history and is still not over. It has provoked the most widespread organized antiwar movement during hostilities in any imperialist country since the Russia of 1905 and 1917. The mightiest military machine ever built faces defeat at the hands of a revolutionary, predominantly peasant people fighting for national independence and social liberation.

These circumstances are the setting for the confrontation between the government and the press that has arisen from the publication of the Pentagon papers. This fight dramatizes the division among the rulers of this country that has been widening and deepening ever since some of their more perspicacious heads began to realize that Vietnam was a losing venture. Secretary McNamara's project to search the Defense Department's secret files for a critical review of the events and decisions leading to the failure was itself a product of this mood at the summits of power.

Johnson, who was obliged to abdicate, was the first political casualty of this situation, and the defeat of his vice-president, Humphrey, in the 1968 elections the second. Those elements of big business and high finance favoring disengagement were then willing to give Nixon the time he asked to extricate the U.S. armed forces from Vietnam.

Nixon, however, has pursued a different course. Though promising a phased withdrawal, he and his military chiefs still aim at achieving a military victory to save the mercenary Saigon regime and force the Vietnamese to accept a Korea-style stand-off.

According to an article by Noam Chomsky in the June 17 *New York Review of Books*, Senator Thomas Eagleton reported that in briefings last month in Vietnam, two U.S. generals (Weyand and Milloy) informed him that "the plans under which they were operating called for a residual American force indefinitely into the future and for a protracted period of massive American air power, including helicopters, based in Thailand and Okinawa and various places in Indochina."

Chomsky quoted William Selover of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who wrote April 1, 1971, that selected correspondents who have attended confidential briefings report that the president apparently has in mind between five and 10 years of continued war, and he is strongly hinting that the long-term U.S. presence in South Vietnam "could remain at the 50,000 level indefinitely."

## Growing fears

As the months have rolled by, the highly placed "doves," whose ranks have greatly increased, have grown more and more impatient with Nixon's maneuvering. They note that, despite the reduction in the number of troops, he has extended the war to the rest of Indochina and stepped up air operations. They fear that the president does not intend to get out of Vietnam but to stay on under cover of "Vietnamization."

spondents of the *Times* have been better informed about what was being done in Washington and Southeast Asia than most members of Congress.

The publication was a deliberate political act in a campaign to pressure the Nixon administration to change its diplomatic and military orientation, stop stalling, and speed up the timetable of disinvolvement. They're putting the president on notice that he has little time left for retreating in good order.

This was emphasized by George Ball, under-secretary of state under Johnson, who said over CBS June 27: "They haven't got a great deal more time to get American troops out of this situation without a real blowup in the United States."

The White House has replied by taking steps to stop further printing of the documents. Its unprecedented effort to suppress the news prior to publication on the specious ground of national security has posed the issue of freedom of the press and of the people's right to know, in its purest form.

This constitutional question of democratic rights is exceptionally important. But much more is involved in the conflict.

## Deep divisions

Nixon's military policy is now being opposed by a powerful phalanx of media that speak for the central core of America's ruling families. The *New York Times* that initiated the revelations is closely associated with the Rockefellers, Morgans, Lehmans and the rest of what is called "the Eastern Establishment." It has been backed up by some of the most prestigious of the press baronies: the *Washington Post*, the Knight chain, the *Boston Globe*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, and even the *Los Angeles Times*—all of which have been calling for a liquidation of the Vietnam venture for some time.

They are questioning not the fundamental international strategy of American imperialism but its results in Vietnam. They are saying that the 25 years of intervention there have failed to attain its objectives of crushing the insurgency of a colonial people. The war has turned out to be too costly and politically risky to maintain. So the boss is instructing his agents in high offices: your mission has failed. Cut your losses and get out before greater disasters occur.

The "doves" were apparently prompted by a still more immediate concern. This was revealed by Daniel Ellsberg, who made the Pentagon papers available to the *New York Times*. Nixon and his advisers have been discussing a reescalation of the war to strengthen their position in "negotiations." As Ellsberg told *Newsweek*: "I smell 1964 all over again."

After the public revulsion against the aggressions in Cambodia and Laos, Nixon's opponents in the ruling class fear the consequences of so reckless a move. The domestic price would be too heavy. According to all recent polls, the ma-

sake of national security but to guard the security of its own operations. It wants to keep its real plans hidden and prevent the airing of its own secrets.

## Siege

Its success is dubious because the White House is under siege from a diversity of forces. The attitude of defeatism toward the war extends from the ruling circles to the GIs. The organized antiwar movement that assembled half a million protesters at the Capitol and three hundred thousand in San Francisco April 24 voices the sentiments of the bulk of the people. Even Congress is taking action, timid though it is, against the war, as indicated by the Senate vote June 23 advising the president, under certain conditions, to pull out all troops from Vietnam in nine months. As the stream of disclosures signify, the administration cannot even rely upon the loyalty of its "think-tanks."

The Pentagon papers not only reveal the class consciousness of the rulers and the cynical deceptions practiced upon the American people. They show that the sovereigns of capitalism have behaved, ever since their victory in the Second World War, as though they could do anything they pleased with impunity. They considered themselves inviolable and invulnerable.

These insolent conspirators are now having to learn that their freedom of action is not unlimited. They thought they could crush any and all revolutionary struggles of the oppressed in the colonial world. They have not succeeded in breaking the will of the Vietnamese, the vanguard of the colonial revolution. They counted on a docile and inert people at home that could be tricked into tolerating any military adventure for any length of time and at any sacrifice. The ever-expanding antiwar sentiment proved they were wrong. The American masses refuse to be sheep that can be led to any slaughter.

The revelations have shaken the nation to the depths. As James Reston observed in the June 27 *New York Times*, "the nation is seething with distrust of the government." The extent of the distrust and discredit of the capitalist politicians is something new in American politics. Its effects will be felt in many ways from now on.

The conflict in the ruling circles has been exacerbated by a growing fear of the usurpation of power by the executive that has enabled successive administrations to drag the country into large-scale military operations hatched in secret behind the backs of Congress and the people. The pressure campaign mounted by Nixon's opponents also seeks to impose certain restraints upon the abuse of presidential power.

Both Nixon and his critics are part of the same system. The *New York Times* and the other media supported the Vietnam war with its skullduggery until it clearly became a losing proposition for big business. Nonetheless, the anti-imperialist forces ought to take full advantage of the sharp

# Interview with Matzpen militant

Interview with Arie Bober, 25th May 1971 in Paris

*The Israeli Socialist Organisation (ISO—Matzpen) has been in existence since 1962 and is fighting under conditions which are, to say the least, difficult. Its various international positions and its courage in leading an anti-Zionist and anti-capitalist struggle within Israel are well-known.*

—Even after the appearance of the Palestinian Resistance, the ISO (Matzpen) has continued to develop itself in its own field of action. The ISO is at the same time a part of the vanguard in the Middle East, and an indomitable political force within Israel. Could you define the nature of your links with the revolutionary Arab movement and your role within Israel?

The ISO sees itself as a group—an organisation—which hopes to construct a vanguard party within Israel. It will be a part of a Revolutionary Organisation in the Middle East which we see as a necessary instrument for a victorious anti-imperialist struggle and for a socialist revolution, or transformation, within the area. The war of June '67 has placed the whole of the Palestinian people in the vanguard of the struggle in the area. For the first time it no longer expected others to solve its problems but endeavoured to carry out concrete political actions such as illustrated by the whole struggle of the Resistance. This is why we have unconditionally supported the Palestinians in their struggles against the Zionist occupation. At the same time, however, we have criticised the political programme of the various Palestinian organisations. Our main criticism was the limitation of their field of reference to the Israel/Palestine conflict. The solutions which they proposed bore relation only to Palestine. This is why, for example, we criticise the programme of El Fatah. Moreover, we believed that a political struggle was important both for clarification and for the purpose of education, and that is why we have engaged in a dialogue of this nature with the Popular Democratic Front with both our organisations publishing articles to clarify the position of El Fatah. The imperialist offensive of '70 and the tragic consequences for the whole of the Palestinian movement, and especially for its left wing, have proved the correctness of our criticisms and have shown that one cannot hope to launch the Palestinians alone against imperialism, Zionism and the Arab reaction and expect anything else but a defeat. And naturally the illusion persists, notably amongst El Fatah, that as long as they don't intervene in the internal affairs of their Arab "brother" countries, then it is possible to unite all the classes within the different Arab regimes in a united front against Zionism. This shows that they have totally misunderstood the profound nature of the links between Israel and imperialism. Israel is the watchdog of imperialism in the Middle East. We who are in Israel see it as one of our objectives in the struggle against Zionism and its links with imperialism to try and tear the Israeli masses away from the ideology and practice of Zionism.

—The imperialist offensive of September '70 whose repercussions are just about starting to be felt with the events in Egypt has not failed to have direct consequences in Israel. What are the qualitative changes which have taken place there since?

Since last September the main role of the ISO within Israel and abroad has been, as I have said above, to demystify Zionism—especially amongst the youth. Although according to our analysis Israel is a class society, we say that the internal class contradictions are overdetermined by the fact that the Israeli nation as such is a privileged society, a colonial power vis a vis the Arab world and the Palestinians.

After the first phase of the imperialist offensive of '70, followed by the truce and ceasefire in the area of the canal, the internal contradictions within Israel came again to the foreground, as was shown by the trade union action in Israel, the intensification of the strikes, and the open struggle between Oriental and Sephard Jews against the Israeli capitalist system. What is important to bring out is that the internal contradictions, as well as the radicalisation of the youth, are directly related to the Zionist nature of Israeli society, not just to the nature of all capitalist societies. Israel is a capitalist society, but not a "normal" capitalist society, a colonial society. This is why while the external crisis was taking place, necessitating the maximum security, rigid control, etc., all the internal contradictions were stifled, including its external manifestations such as strikes, etc. This explains why until last year the only layers of society to radicalise were the youth and the Arab population of Israel who were direct victims of Zionist repression, just as the Arabs in the occupied territories. Confronted with an endless war, youth sees itself being given ideological explanations to justify this. But as soon as the outside crisis has

the Oriental Jews who live under bad conditions and who are at the very bottom of the social ladder in Israel are told that they must await their turn: this has created the social basis for the "Black Panthers" phenomenon. This is why over the last few months the Matzpen group is in a position where it can not only demystify Zionism in a general way, partly by orientating its propaganda towards the youth, but can also intervene in the class struggle and in this way transforms its propagandistic nature into an active force directly and concretely engaged in the class struggle.

—What are the dynamics and the meanings of the Sephard ("Black Panthers") movement in Israel?

The majority of the Jewish population (64%) in Israel are Sephard. The overwhelming majority are wage earners, proletarian or lumpen. In Israel the Sephards have been exploited as a wage force under the capitalist system, and their whole culture and tradition has been destroyed. The price they have to pay to become "accepted" in Israeli society has been that they "Westernise" themselves. (To cite Zionist propaganda, "to avoid the danger of 'levantisation'".) One of the principal means of obtaining some sort of stability in the face of the ever-increasing inequality in Israel has been by playing on the chauvinist elements so as to try and unite Israeli society vis a vis its neighbours. The cease-fire, which I have already mentioned, a new influx of immigration coming especially from the USSR and from western societies have suddenly brought all the internal contradictions into the open. While the Oriental Jews all over the country live in disgusting conditions and in hovels, new projects to house the new immigrants who have smaller families and large incomes have materialised. Israel is now confronted with a contradiction: to put into effect one of the aims of Zionism, namely to achieve the integration of the Diaspora (the reintegration of all the dispersed Jews)—which is an aim Zionism has chosen to implement—puts the Sephard community in contradiction not with a "normal" capitalism system, but with a Zionist capitalist system. The first slogan of the Panthers was: "When will Abuthol be the equal of Faigin?"<sup>1</sup> This conflict transcends the immediate problem of housing shortage and small reforms because the Israeli society, being a Zionist society, is incapable of solving the problems of Oriental Jews. To solve this problem would first of all mean changing the whole capitalist system in Israel. And, more important, even a bourgeois "reformist" policy would be unable to implement the priorities such as "the reassembling of all immigrant Jews" and would put into question the whole *raison d'être* of the Israeli society. And therefore our organisation supports the "Black Panther" movement, or any other group fighting for the self-organisation of the Sephard masses. And this is why we say that: "Abuthol will be equal to Faigin when Mohammed is equal to Abuthol." In concrete terms this means that the role of Matzpen in the struggle is to mobilise support for the defence of the "Black Panthers" and then to instil in them the need to go beyond the ethnic conception of Eastern Jews to a class conception, which in Israel can only be an international conception.

—The ISO has recently experienced a split which witnessed the departure of two tendencies. Which political considerations caused this split, and what is the real nature of your divergences with the two groups that broke away?

With regards to the two tendencies which left Matzpen: the first is a Maoist tendency. Basically it shares our analysis of Zionism and of the nature of the Israel/Arab conflict. But they are less critical than we are of the petty-bourgeois regimes and tendencies in the Arab movement. They are not "real" Maoists because they have no role to play as Maoists within the Israeli society (they should join up with El Fatah, for example). This explains why they are at present negotiating to join up with Rakah [pro-Moscow C.P.]. It is totally contradictory for revolutionary Maoists to adhere to a Stalinist organisation which is a partisan of the Rogers plan and American imperialism. It is only in Israel that one can find "new left Maoists" who have links with imperialism.

The other group, the Lambertists group [French Healyites], has gone in the opposite direction. Their analysis of Zionism is worthy of a tightrope-walker. That is to say, they undermine and even ignore the whole reality of Israel as a colonial country. And hence they look at the situation in very mechanistic terms, as being a conflict between Zionism, the Palestinians and, of course, the Arab world. Their analysis of the June war, for example, is that it was a war between the Israeli and Egyptian bourgeoisie. When they define Zionism as the ideology of the Israeli bourgeoisie, not only do they falsify history but moreover they are making

the Palestinian people is only a form of 'barbaric socialism'. This divergence has strategic implications within the revolutionary groups. They can conceive of an independent socialist revolution in Israel. For us this is totally inconceivable. A socialist revolution depends entirely on the revolutionary developments in the Arab world. And secondly, according to the Lambertist analysis, given that Israel is a "normal capitalist state", the tactics for intervening in the class struggle are purely syndicalist tactics. Consequently all their efforts are directed to concrete work in the factories where they are unsuccessful. This is hardly surprising considering that 80 years of Zionist work has shown the inefficacy of such tactics.<sup>2</sup>

In our analysis we must confront Zionism at its roots. Until we have overcome the Zionist pretensions and ideology we will not advance in our intervention in the working class. The radical development of the struggle of the Sephard Jews for equal rights, as shown by the "Black Panthers" movement has proved our analysis to be a correct one.

—Can one say that the SIAH is a Zionist movement?

Absolutely. They are Zionists because even the most radical amongst them see the solution to the Jewish question in purely Zionist terms and in the framework of the pre-1948 frontiers.

—The Israeli government has on several occasions "missed the opportunity" to conclude a "peace" negotiation with the Arab states. To what extent is it disposed to meet the strategic and economic interests of imperialism?

We must understand that Israel is not a normal puppet of imperialism. There is a political alliance between imperialism and Zionism. To be able to create an independent, exclusively Jewish state (which has been the aim right from the beginning) by chasing off the indigenous population, the Zionists had to have the support of the four great powers in the matter. This is why early on the Zionists, first Herzl, and then the partisans in Balfour's declaration, tried to get an alliance with the dominating powers in the area. When the conflict between British imperialism and the aim of an independent Jewish state intensified, the Zionists turned to American imperialism, which took over the British heritage after the Second World War, as the police of neo-colonialism. It is a political alliance founded on a common political aim: the imperialists want to maintain the Middle East as backward as possible so as to be able to safeguard their political and economic interests. The Zionists want exactly the same thing so that the Arab world accept a Zionist state which is as large as possible. They also see the danger of any revolutionary development in the Arab world. But there are oppositions which explain the "American pressure" and the "independent Israeli policies". According to use there has been no real American pressure on Israel to impose a neo-colonial solution, at least up till now. American imperialism is not only trying to maintain its domination over Jordan, Lebanon and Saudi-Arabia; it is equally trying to oust the Russians from the area. The recent exchanges with Egypt were only a beginning. Their intention is to maintain the imperial neo-colonial status quo in the area, a status quo which is favourable to their interests. When they have achieved this aim there will be no problem whatsoever for them to impose their solution on the Israelis. Israel is tota



# ISRAEL

dependent on the U.S., politically, economically and militarily. The Israeli government attempts to play on the oppositions between the "hawks" and "doves" in the U.S. government with regards to the acceptance of a plan of this sort. It hopes to reject any pressure and to botch any "solution" for as long as possible—that is, to decline it until after the American elections and then continue to maintain the status quo.

Basically on the question of Zionism there are no divergences between the Israeli political parties. Both the GAHAL and the Labour Party, the MAPAI, see as their aim a great Israeli nation, and cannot envisage any old reconciliation which might oblige them to renounce their Zionist objectives.

Another factor in the internal struggle in Israel between the right wing and the Labour Party (MAPAI) is the question

of tactics to adopt: namely, to what extent can one try to resist U.S. pressure by playing on the right and anti-communist elements within imperialism? This is certainly not a new factor. Right from the beginning the framework of development of the Zionist enterprise has been to present the Arab world and the Palestinian masses with a fait accompli, wherever possible with the temporary support of the imperialist powers. As you see, today they stand for a policy for "independent Israel". They hope to botch any partial solution until after the '72 elections in the U.S. Who knows, there might be a new President? But at the present moment, there is no possibility of the Israeli government acting independently for even 24 hours without the support of American imperialism, especially when one considers its economic and military budget.

This is why anti-Zionist Matzpen, in spite of its numerical weakness, is the only ideological alternative to this set-up. We are in the position to offer our anti-Zionist viewpoint to the masses precisely because Zionism itself is a

failure—it has not resolved the Jewish question, it has not created a democratic State, it has not united the Jewish communities of Diaspora, and it has not even been able to guarantee the physical existence for the Jews. At present probably the most dangerous place anywhere in the world for the Jews is within Palestine itself. This is why one is witnessing an intensification of the class struggle in the factories, in the organisations of the radicalised youth, in the Sephard Jewish communities and this is why we believe that the only possible reconciliation between the Jews and the Arabs will be achieved on a revolutionary and international basis.

1. Abuthol: Eastern Jew. Faigin: Russian immigrant Jew, one of Israel's heroes.
2. The anti-Histadruth position of Matzpen calls for the setting-up of a new trade union.

# molehills

## THE PSEUDO INTERNATIONALISM OF INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

One of the concomitants of the theory of State Capitalism is the denial of any transition period between capitalism and socialism. Consequently the only prospect for a socialist revolution anywhere is simultaneous international revolution. An objective contradiction has, then, always existed between the purely British phenomenon of the I.S. current and the vital necessity of an International party. It is because of this burning need for (any) international connections that I.S. (together with Lutite Ouvriere and I.S. [U.S.]) sponsored an international conference in September 1970, the proceedings of which have recently been published.\*

It can only be I.S.'s desperation which would give them the gall to publish this record which reveals such a wide divergence of views that not one participant holds to the theoretical views of any other on any single question: they couldn't even find individuals from various countries to agree with them (or anybody else). All this is excused because "It was particularly valuable to exchange views and experiences of groups attempting to build revolutionary organisations in different circumstances and different countries" (p. 1). Of course everyone is in favour of differences and debate, but unless this leads to action it is totally useless and reveals a petit bourgeois conception of politics (cf. Women's Lib. groups), as Lenin pointed out time and again.

This divergence is not surprising, however, since the lynchpin of I.S.'s theory is State Capitalism, the reverberations of which affect all aspects of their theory and practice. None of the participants accepted the State Cap. thesis as applied to the Soviet Union. But this is not to deny the imaginativeness of the other groups. Indeed all permutations and combinations were advanced. Lutite Ouvriere supports the view of Russia as degenerated workers' state, whilst the rest of Eastern Europe is characterised as State Capitalist. I.S. (U.S.) holds the Schachtman-Burnham view that the bureaucracy in the Soviet Union (as elsewhere in Eastern Europe) is a class of a new type. Avanguardia Operaia submitted that it was Stalinist theory (sic) which delivered the death blow to proletarian power in Russia; China had an authentically proletarian party. An individual from the U.S. interjected that all these views were advanced to emphasise their anti-Stalinism, which marked a capitulation to their essentially student audience to which, in reality, they were all oriented. And finally, a spokesman for the Labour Committee (U.S.) questioned the usefulness of a debate about abstract issues (so much for the exchange of views!) but for his part was a degenerated-workers-state man.

One could, of course, document the differences on all positions but it would be far too tedious—and anyway would probably stretch this review to the length of the original. What is important is to understand this reality as a consequence of their international isolation.

Internationalism is not a moral postulate. It stems from the *de facto* internationalism of capitalism. Capitalism is not, however, a homogeneous undifferentiated whole but develops in an uneven and combined manner on both a national and international scale. Consequently, workers' struggles and consciousness also manifest this unevenness. It is for this basic reason that a democratic centralist party is demanded

directing function for these isolated struggles. And this is where international practice is of the essence. It is the lessons gained in applying postulates in struggle, their generalisation and acquisition which is vital. This misunderstanding of the political dimension is the basic mistake which these groups fall into. For an implantation in the working class does not, of itself, lead to proletarian politics—such a conception, in fact, leads to workerism and ultimately syndicalism (a fair characterisation already of many of these groups) and exhibits a mechanistic view of Marxism. Consequently even a fight for the historic political gains of the working class would be justified and even if carried on by only one or two individuals. But, in fact, the Fourth International (United Secretariat) as it exists today can do far more than defend these gains; is, in several of its sections, able to lead struggles and pose as the revolutionary alternative to Stalinism. This reality explains the final irony of the conference: two of the (six) participating groups (as opposed to observers) admitted, albeit rather sheepishly, to be negotiating with the United Secretariat of the Fourth International. J. R. Clynes

\*International Bulletin of Revolutionary Socialists (June 1971).



### POLICE HUMOUR

In quiet suburban Egham (Surrey), the local police, apparently not satisfied with merely joining in the current appeal for money for the Ghurkas, hatchetsmen of British imperialism, are appealing instead for prisoners who, they imply, will be treated by the Ghurkas in the way that they treated all their victims: by bumping them off. They have attached an appeal poster to the in-tray of one of the offices in their police station, where two of your Male reporters happened to be being interrogated, and meticulously stuck on their own accretions, so that it reads as follows:

A Ghurka police appeal:  
A debt of honour:  
"Jahannie" Ghurka needs YOUR help. There is great hardship amongst the police Ghurkas. Every prisoner donated goes direct to their welfare.



The inhabitants of Warwick Square, Plimlico, have recently acquired a new landlord in the form of a company owned by Jack Dunnet, Labour M.P. for Nottingham Central. According to the *Evening News*, Brother Dunnet paid some £2½ million for the property in the hopes of making it a fashionable equivalent of Belgravia or Mayfair. There is only one obstacle to this plan—the existing tenants. However, Dunnet has already begun to ease them out so that he can sell off the individual flats at a huge profit. Old people have been told that their leases cannot be removed and all tenants have been invited to buy their flats instead of acquiring new leases.

A member of the Warwick Square Tenants Association approached a leading member of the Nottingham Labour Party about this, only to be told: "I'm afraid we can't do much about this. Jack Dunnet owns us as well as Warwick Square, because he's proprietor of a local football club."

An interesting light on the tedious self-justification of the Wilson memoirs is contained in a new biography of Denis Healey. This biography itself is a pure exercise in sycophancy—its evident intention is to build up Healey as the British answer to Strauss. In Wilson's memoirs he argued at quite exorbitant length how impossible it was to use force against UDI in Rhodesia. Now we learn that Wilson did think of using force in Rhodesia—but to defend Smith, not remove him:

"Almost certainly the Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, told Ian Smith as early as his visit to Rhodesia in 1965, and at subsequent meetings on HMS Tiger in 1966, that British military assistance was available if there was an attempted right wing coup to throw out Smith and the 1961 Constitution, or an African attempt to rebel which might lead to a Communist

## EVENTS

MONDAYS: Birmingham Red Circle, 7.30, The Black Swan, Bromsgrove Street, Digbeth.

MONDAYS: West London Socialist Woman Group, 8 p.m., 10 Milton Road, Acton, W.3.

TUESDAYS: Portsmouth & Southsea Red Circle, 8 p.m., Rutland Hotel, Francis Ave., Southsea (going down Goldsmith Ave. from Fratton Bridge, Francis Ave. is the 2nd on the right).

THURSDAY: Stafford Red Circle, Dog & Partridge, South Walls, 8 p.m.

THURSDAY: Central London Socialist Woman Group organisational meeting, 8 p.m., George IV pub, Pentonville Road, N.1 (Kings X). (See below for discussion meetings).

THURSDAY: Norwich Red Circle, Festival House pub (opp. St. Andrews Hall), 8 p.m.

THURSDAY: Glasgow Red Circle, 7.30 p.m., Christian Institute, Bothwell Street.

FRIDAY: Manchester Red Circle, 8 p.m., Wheatsheaf pub, High Street, Manchester 4.

FRIDAY: Black Defence Committee, 8 p.m., George IV pub, Pentonville Road, London N.1 (Kings X).

JULY 17th-18th: Spartacus League London Area School on REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION. Contact Debbie Dodge, 01-837 6954.

JULY 18th: BANGLA DESH demonstration to U.S. Embassy, 2 p.m. from Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. (Central Bangla Desh Action Committee).

JULY 20th: UNEMPLOYMENT: HOW TO FIGHT IT. North London Spartacus League public meeting, Coop Centre, Seven Sisters Road (129 bus between Finsbury Park & Holloway Road), 7.30 p.m.

JULY 25th: ALL OUT AGAINST THE RACIST IMMIGRATION BILL. National Demonstration against racism in Britain, starts 2 p.m., Ackland Road, Ladbroke Grove.

JULY 25th: "The Family"—Central London Socialist Woman Group meeting. Contact Felicity Trodd, 837 6954 (day) or Jackie Haymen, 607 3553 (evening).

JULY 31st-7th AUG: Spartacus League TRAINING CAMP FOR REVOLUTIONARIES. Contact Debbie Dodge, 01-837 6954.

AUGUST 7th: WOMEN'S LIBERATION EVENING at The Roebuck Pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren Street tube), 8 p.m. 20p. London Socialist Women Group.

GENOCIDE IN BANGLA DESH. Don't just watch it—help stop it. Sunday 1st August, 2 p.m., Trafalgar Square. Eye witnesses, speakers, films and Bengali music.

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