

The Red Mole

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**THE LULL
BEFORE
THE
STORM ?**



The old old story again ?

The floating of the pound and the renewed negotiations between the TUC and the government provide the backdrop to what is an only too familiar story for the British working class. It threatens to be the old, old story of missed opportunity. Having built up through tremendous rank and file struggle an extremely strong position the unions threaten to throw it away because of the politics of their leaders.

At present the press declares that what is involved in the economic conflict is a struggle between the trade unions and the government over law and order. This is actually completely incorrect. What is involved is a struggle between the working class and the bourgeois state over who will rule and who will have the state power to enforce a law. In this contest however the ruling class has one great advantage. It can continue to run things through the State. The working class however cannot overthrow the rule of the employers through their trade unions. It is only in this context that the government's negotiations with the TUC and its decision to float the pound can be understood.

WHAT DOES THE FLOTATION MEAN?

One of the most stupid responses of trade union leaders to the present situation has been the belief that what is required is "growth". In fact all employers want "growth" but the problem for capitalism is always to generate the profits necessary to maintain the accumulation of capital. At present the level of investment, which has been at an all time low, shows that the companies do not consider that the rate of profit is sufficient to warrant investment in the decisive sectors of the economy. This has frequently occurred in the past. Then however there was a conflict within the ruling class on how to deal with the question. Those sections of the ruling class most tied to finance capital and investment in traditional Commonwealth areas had a common interest in ensuring that attempts to solve the problem did not involve any attacks on the 'world role' of the pound. They wished to maintain the possibility of making their profits and needed a stable and high valued pound for this. They were able to ensure that deflation of the home economy as opposed to changing of exchange rates was used to attempt to deal with any crisis. It was the home economy orientated sections of the ruling class who suffered the stagnant economies and slow rate of rise of profit and productivity. The Wilson and Heath governments measures have however decisively changed the relation of forces within the ruling class (See Robin Blackburn's article on Heath in *The Red Mole*, 29). Now the dominant sectors of the ruling class are those orientated to the home market and to competition in areas such as Europe where no decisive technological superiority is held over rivals. This is why the remnants of the Sterling area have been so unceremoniously dumped and why the decision to float the pound was taken so swiftly. For the ruling class now it is the manufacturing sectors of the bourgeoisie which are decisive. Economic policies must be geared to their interests.



Bank rate rises in preparation for the flotation

A SIDE ATTACK

We have argued frequently in *The Red Mole* that the Conservative government differed from the Wilson government in dealing with the trade unions in that while Wilson used fairly subtle methods of attack, Heath has always aimed to use the big stick right from the beginning. Strangely enough however the working class are in one sense better prepared to deal with a frontal attack than a more subtle one. A straight up fight over wage rates is what trade unions are designed to deal with. Where they are relatively helpless however is when attacked on the broader economic front such as via a de facto devaluation which will add enormously to prices. Here the trade unions remain locked within the struggle at the point of production. Only an organised control of the entire economy could be used to prevent the deterioration of the world economy forcing more and more harsh economic measures on the British ruling class. At present the de facto leadership of the working class in the trade unions is not putting forward any policy capable of dealing with the economic problems facing the working class. A real working class leadership would be explaining just how the economy could be reorganised on the basis of nationalisation, attempting to win over the 'middle' classes by showing that actually the expropriation of a mere 1 or 2 per cent of individuals would be necessary and that a workers state had no interest in crushing shopkeepers, individual self-employed workers and so on. Instead the TUC and the Labour leadership sit back in an economic situation which continually gets worse and one, furthermore, which they do not understand.

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STOP PRESS

A national meeting of the rank and file paper, *The Carworker*, was held in Birmingham on July 2nd. First reaction of some delegates was that although it was a useful meeting, to get together carworkers from all over the country, not nearly enough time had been devoted to working out a political response to present struggles in the motor industry. IMG members who were delegates spoke at the conference and will continue to support the paper. A full report will appear in the next issue of *The Red Mole*.

Indira Gandhi--Bhutto Summit

Uniting against a formidable common enemy

The recent summit between India and Pakistan represents an important victory for United States imperialism. For many years now American leaders had been becoming more and more irritated with the refusal of the two major bourgeois states in the sub-continent to come to terms with each other and devise a common strategy against both external and internal threats of "subversion". Since the imperialist *detente* with China, however, the "external threat" has now mysteriously disappeared and the real threat is now seen as the development of revolutionary mass movements in India, Pakistan, Bengal and Ceylon. Imperialism has thus used the disintegration of Pakistan and the humiliating defeat inflicted on the Pakistan army to compel Pakistan's leading chauvinist politician, Z.A. Bhutto, to visit India and participate in a summit with Indira Gandhi. This fact on its own is a fairly decisive rap on the knuckles for the slightly anachronistic and individualistic ruling oligarchy which has developed in Pakistan and which has been unable to perceive its own long-term interests.

Of course the summit should only be seen as the beginning of ruling class co-ordination in South Asia. The Simla declaration pledges the withdrawal of troops to pre-December '71 zones, renounces the use of force, pledges non-interference in each others affairs, bilateral talks on all disputed issues, removal of travel restrictions, etc. On their own these statements do not amount to very much, but the purpose of the summit was essentially to prepare public opinion in both countries for what could follow within the next few months and years. As an immediate follow-on it is obvious that Pakistan will recognise Bangladesh and sign a trade pact. It is also clear that the medium-term aim of all the Big Powers, including China (though their reasons are not the same), is to maintain the existing social structure in South Asia. This necessitates, particularly given the present strategy of U.S. imperialism, the creation of a united and powerful indigenous unit of repression for the whole of South Asia. This means getting India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ceylon to agree to a joint defence pact which continues to allow separate armies, but under a unified if clandestine High Command. The enemy, imperialism

constantly tells its client states, is at home. It is the poor peasants, the workers and sections of the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia. These are the people against whom you should fight and *not* against each other. The fact that this summit has taken place shows that this message is beginning to get home.

At the same time as the two bourgeois leaders meet, the social crisis in their respective countries continues to deepen. The week before Mr Bhutto left for India nearly thirty workers were killed in street battles with the police in Karachi, repression continues to mount in West Bengal, and in Bangladesh the extreme left is beginning to feel the whip of the Awami League. It is this situation which compels Bhutto, Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Mujib not to allow their past differences to impede the long-term interests of the social classes they represent in South Asia. It is interesting, of course, that while Pakistan's President can travel to Simla to meet India's Prime Minister, Comrade Tariq Ali, a Pakistan citizen and a revolutionary militant of the Fourth International is prevented from entering Pakistan.

The Indo-Pakistan summit should be sufficient to convince those on the left who have up till now adopted chauvinist positions and supported the wars of their ruling class against a neighbouring bourgeoisie, that the only unity which socialists are in favour of is the unity of the workers and peasants of South Asia *against* an increasingly united and repressive bourgeoisie. Those who refuse to accept this and make blocs with sections of the bourgeoisie will be further surprised when, in the near future, the Chinese heal their breach with the Indian regime with their peaceful co-existence "of a new type", and relations once again become as friendly as they were in the early Fifties.

Despite the extremely favourable objective conditions which exist in South Asia, the forces of the left are in complete disarray. Unless they analyse their past mistakes and learn from them they will discover that the enemy is always several months ahead. Also that the enemy cannot be defeated by stale clichés or parrot-like repetition of the thoughts of either Brezhnev or Mao Tse-tung. What is needed is revolutionary organisations capable of developing a revolutionary strategy bearing in mind the strategy of both imperialism and the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies.



STEEL Pamphlet

This pamphlet is written with the aim of helping workers in the steel industry to work out a strategy for fighting against the thousands of redundancies which the British Steel Corporation is now announcing and carrying out. Week after week, the BSC announces the closure of steel plant up and down the country. Many workers in the industry will be unaware of the extent of this redundancy programme, and this fact gives BSC an enormous advantage at the moment. We therefore publish at the back of this pamphlet, an internal document of the BSC which has come to be known as the *Confidential Report*, which few people outside government departments and BSC headquarters will ever have seen. It provides an exact and detailed account of the fate which BSC has in store for each and every steel plant up and down the country. Although BSC will not stick to every detail in the plan, the basic strategy will remain unchanged. Although the report doesn't give any figures, we can estimate that the planned redundancy is in the region of 70,000 to 80,000 men over the next three to four years.

The historical section of the pamphlet is designed to show how the British steel industry got into such a state that British capitalism is having to make such drastic

technical changes. It therefore puts the strategy of BSC into an historical perspective. The nationalisation of the steel industry in 1967 is also dealt with at some length, showing that this move by the Labour Government, far from being in the interest of the workers or of socialism, was designed to provide the setting in which the massive change and huge redundancy could be carried through. This section aims especially to provide information and discussion which should help steel workers to deal with the many false arguments that they will meet the minute they start talking about organising a struggle.

The chapter on strategy starts from the assumption that it is necessary to start fighting now in such a way that the interests of the workers are put before all else. It puts forward one central idea—the demand for the *sliding scale of hours with no loss of pay*—and argues that this is the sort of strategy which is needed, explaining in detail what this involves, what sort of organisations are required, and its wider political significance.

We hope that the publication of this pamphlet will make a contribution to the fight against the strategy of the capitalist class on this particular front.

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STEEL CLOSURES

Redundancies in Scotland

The British Steel Corporation has finally announced its closures of most steel plants in Scotland. The main effect is to cut down production to a 1.8 million-ton plant in Ravenscraig, Motherwell; an integrated plant producing ingots for the mills at Gartcosh, and using modern Basic Oxygen processes. The factories which are closing all use the old Open-Hearth method. The only remaining production is a certain amount of small-scale electric-arc production.

Altogether, at least 7,000 jobs are directly involved: however, this does not present a true picture of the damage done. Firstly, almost all the production is concentrated in the Lanarkshire area, in small tight-knit units. Unemployment in this area is already amongst the highest in Scotland; furthermore, there is no new industry being created in the area. Secondly, the workforce is on the whole old, highly-trained, and unlikely to find jobs easily outside the steel industry. Thirdly, there are a substantial number of dependent industries in the area which will also be strongly affected. In other words, the overall effect is to smash up and consign to the scrapheap, not only individual workers, not merely families, but whole communities: such as at Glengarnock, a Lanarkshire town which will virtually cease to exist.

BSC is working to an overall scheme of rationalisation which started when it was set up. It

embarked on a programme of ruthless modernisation and cutbacks, leading finally to its recently approved plan for a total capacity of 28 million tons per year (cut, because of the drop in world demand, from the original proposal for 33 million). The initial stages of this were carried out when BSC was organised on regional lines: this made it very hard for BSC to carry through its overall plans, because regional organisation led to local managements fighting tooth and nail for plants in the locality: it was during this period that the economically untenable plan for an integrated steel works at Hunterston was first floated by BSC Scottish regional management. BSC has now reorganised along product lines (hence the closure of the Glasgow Office), and brought out a detailed plan for reorganisation and closure, in the form of an internal report, about six months ago. It is this plan which is now being put into effect.

The redundancies were actually announced last month—but the plans were known well in advance. The internal report had been widely circulated amongst rank-and-file action committees in England; it had been put out by IMG militants in Lanarkshire to rank-and-file steelworkers and union officials. IS claim, somewhat optimistically, to have circulated it to Union branches in all the major steelworks; it also appeared in the magazine *Inside Story*.

No action was taken until the news broke (if BISA KTA¹ wish to take us up on this, we are willing to open our pages to any explanation of the policies they have been pursuing); now, the main actions undertaken are the calling of a mass meeting of stewards and Union officials in Motherwell on July 10th; the initiation of a series of mass rallies with a demonstration in

Glengarnock on July 8th; and the possibility of the setting up of action committees in the localities. The STUC² has taken up the question and is proposing to reconvene the Scottish Assembly it called earlier this year.

The main demand being canvassed, however, is for the siting of a large steel complex at Hunterston, in conjunction with a deepwater port facility. Although completely squashed by BSC internally, they are too scared to admit this publicly; which is why such a series of waffling assurances have issued from Whitehall. Enjoyable as it is to watch the government and its BSC stoolpigeons playing cat-and-mouse to see who will first admit publicly that Hunterston is not on, the demand has very grave defects. Firstly, it can't be done: there is a recession on the world steel market, and EEC finance chiefs are already desperate to prevent any surplus being created. Secondly, it divides the working class: to argue for a steelworks at Hunterston is to argue against it elsewhere, and to accept BSC's right to close existing plant. It is unlikely that the present campaign, taken up by every gravy-train driver from the *Daily Express* to the Communist Party, will do anything but divert the attention of the workforce from the far more real and difficult task of taking the situation in its own hands and making it impossible for BSC to carry through the sackings.

Alan Freeman

NOTES

1. BISA KTA: British Iron, Steel And Kindred Trades Association, now more commonly known as the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (ISTC).
2. STUC: Scottish Trades Union Congress.

What kind of fight

June 26th should go down in history as the day in which Willie Jack and Jimmy Jack reached complete agreement—on a policy for steel in Scotland. Unfortunately, William Jack is President of the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce, whereas James Jack is Secretary of the Scottish TUC—which leads us to ask a few sharp questions about the way the fight to stop the closures is being conducted.

Of course, steelworkers are entitled to demand every ounce of weight from the trade unions in and out of the industry in a fight to save their jobs. But at the same time, they should consider the following questions:

What conceivable role in the struggle is there for the series of Productivity Deals, particularly the Green Book Agreement, conducted by BISA KTA? Why is it only now that the fuss is being created? The rationalisation plans were laid a year ago in detail, and have been BSC's goal ever since it was created. Union chiefs knew of the plans, knew what was being done in England, and almost certainly what was planned in Scotland. Copies of the BSC internal report giving details were there for the asking, and the STUC had considered a report a year ago in which the likelihood of big steel redundancies was raised. What is more, the proposals in the report are along the same line as those proposed in the Benson Report, published as far back as 1965.

There was every chance to begin a year ago setting up structures to lead the fight: action committees in the industry, support committees in dependent industries, etc. There was every chance to begin laying plans: there was every chance to begin informing the men of the plans and any proposed strategy to fight them. The UCS stewards had laid plans for their action months before the closure of the yards was announced—as a result it was possible to launch immediate action when the news broke officially.

The policies of BISA KTA could not have been better designed to pave the way for the closures. The Green Book Deal (signed without any consultation with the workforce) gave the BSC management precisely the control over manning and siting that it needed in order to set up the closures. Unless the unions now begin to demand absolute veto over movement of labour and plant, unless they systematically deny BSC the chance to carry through the terms of the Deal, then not only are they left with no sanctions to use against the management, but they allow BSC to create a situation in which it has trained and organised the workforce and shifted the plant so that the closures flow logically, easily and naturally from the set-up it has created.

How is it that now the news has 'officially' broken, everyone from BISA KTA to the STUC cannot move fast enough to set up 'action' committees, whose main function, far from organising the workers for struggle on the factory floor, is to repeat the ageworn demand for a steel plant at Hunterston—and campaign for it entirely through rallies, National Assemblies, deputations and cosy chats with Labour MPs? Steelworkers may be very surprised at the reaction of these same people if they imitate what has been done in other parts of the industry and begin organising their own rank-and-file action committees to organise a real struggle.

The struggle can be fought: if the steelworkers are determined to put their own livelihood first; before the profits of the industry; before the profits of British industrialists receiving cheap subsidised steel from the BSC; against the hygienic visions of the BSC planners of a rational industry with the workforce on the scrapheap. Some obvious measures, for example, are:

1. A refusal to observe the terms of the Green Book agreement; total refusal to implement management proposals for manning, workloads, plant siting until there is a guarantee of no redundancies in Scotland. This particularly applies to movement of plant and overtime working.
2. Worksharing according to a Sliding Scale of Hours with no loss of pay—which is being advocated strongly in action committees in other parts of the country; this means the work should be divided up amongst all workers in the industry in Scotland. This means an initiative by Ravenscraig (the main factory remaining open) in taking action in support of this demand, and in implementing it in conjunction with workers from elsewhere in the Scottish industry. The workers should fight for the right to the sliding scale—after which the BSC can distribute its plants and its work as it pleases.
3. This cannot be fought for unless the workers in the industry have full access to the Union and the Action Committees. If BISA KTA is serious about the Action Committees it is setting up, then the first move must be to make them subject to democratic control by the workforce. If, as we sadly suspect the Committees are little more than cheerleaders and pressure groups, then rank-and-file in the industry have a tough fight on their hands: setting up their own action committees will become an important first step.

We should say, unlike other left groups, that it will not be easy for shopfloor militants to wage struggles on working class lines in a union like BISA KTA. There are two years in which to create a fighting base to smash the closures: the time to start is now.

BUILDING WORKERS STRIKES

At the end of the first week of strikes it is clear that the response from the men to the call for selective strikes has been excellent. All 60 of the building and civil engineering sites selected have stopped, and there have been token stoppages in many areas—in Merseyside about 12,000 workers supported a half-day stoppage on Monday, 26 June. It is expected that there will be 180 sites out at the end of three weeks.

The strikes began after the breakdown of negotiations at national level. The unions are claiming £30 for a 35-hour week, while the employers' latest offer was £5 in two stages (£2.40 now and £2.60 in February), making the skilled rate £25 and the unskilled £21. The unions also wanted a guaranteed earnings minimum and a cost of living clause¹. The employers have yielded on the principle of these, but want a longer agreement in return, probably until March, 1974. The unions' strategy is to hit such buildings as hotels, commercial building and speculative housing, where timetables are strict and penalty clauses heavy². In many parts of the country individual employers are already beginning to crack. A small Cardiff company has already signed an agreement, and firms in Wales, Liverpool and Manchester are engaging in talks. These, however, are small firms, and the key to the situation is the big national firms such as Laings, Taylor-Woodrow and Wimpey. UCATT³ appear to be settling for '5 and 5', that is for £5 on the basic pay of £20 (craftsmen) and £5 by way of a guaranteed bonus.

The present situation underlines the changes in the industry in the last few years. When the last agreement was made in 1969 the men were hardly consulted, the unions were extremely weak, and the industry completely unorganised. The emergence of UCATT as the biggest union in the industry with 260,000 members has been of major importance⁴. UCATT is still extremely weak financially, and is still in the process of consolidating its position. If it can bring these strikes to a successful conclusion, it will have greatly increased its strength and influence. UCATT, which has funds of only £3 million—less than £20 per member indicates a weak union—and has had a deficit of £500,000 over the last two years, desperately needs to expand. If it does not, it will almost certainly face a T&G take-over.

UCATT is also concerned at the growth of the Charter which, as a genuine rank-and-file movement, could be a threat to the bureaucracy. This is why the Union is being extremely militant at the moment, and why the UCATT bureaucrats in some areas have friendly relations

with Charter leaders⁵. The Charter is demanding £35 for 35 hours but is supporting the Union's £30 for 35 hours as a first step towards this. While the unions remain weak and the industry badly organised there will be little conflict between the bureaucrats and the Charter. The latter is CP dominated, and is concerned to stress its support for the official movement, while criticising the 'weakness' of particular leaders. The growth of Charter will not have passed unnoticed by the employers, and will strengthen the unions' hand when they get together at national level again.

Both employers and unions have an interest in getting an effective national agreement. The unions, because a factor in their weakness has been the fact that their influence on rates actually earned has been minimal. The present rate of £20 for craftsmen and £16.40 for labourers is well below that earned by most men in the industry. Earnings are raised by bonus agreements etc., on individual sites. This kind of arrangement gave the employers plenty of money to play about with on sites, so that they could play off one group against another, and buy peace on militant sites while keeping basic wages down. As a result, the unions have had little influence with employers. A government report four years ago showed that 75 per cent of small companies, 50 per cent of medium sized companies (25–300 employees) and 9 per cent of large companies never made contact with trade union representatives.

The employers need national wage agreements on which to base tenders, and with the present trend in the industry towards the equalization of conditions nationally, and the consequent breaking down of local isolation, a viable and effective national agreement will look much more attractive than hitherto. In addition, they will be keen to re-establish the kind of easy relationship they enjoyed with the National Federation of Building Trade Operatives⁶. In other words, the changes in the building industry are leading to attempts to establish the kind of employer/trade union relationship which characterises other industries, and which the bourgeois press calls "a rational approach to industrial relations".

The present struggle is, therefore, crucially important and will have a major influence on the future of the industry. Relationships are being established which will have a fundamental effect on the outcome of issues such as decasualisation which will be raised in the near future. A successful outcome to the present strike will greatly increase the strength and influence of Charter, and will be a major step forward in organising the industry, ending casual labour and killing the 'lump'.

Pat Hickey

NOTES

1. This to take the form of a 'threshold' clause, i.e., an automatic rise if the cost of living rises above a certain point during the life of the agreement.
2. It should be noted, however, that most agreements allow for the possibility of extensions if the work is delayed by strikes—the employers' form of class loyalty! The effect of penalty clauses is due more to the possibility, if the strike is a long one, of loss of labour force and consequent delays after the return to work.
3. Union of Construction and Allied Technical Trades.
4. Its nearest rival is the T&G which has about 50,000 building workers. Only about 500,000 out of a workforce estimated at 1.2 million are organised.
5. E.g. Ken Barlow in Birmingham; and in Glasgow Charter demonstrations have been addressed by UCATT and T&G officials.
6. This body was dissolved by UCATT. It was a completely degenerate body and was responsible for a large number of sell-outs.



Work in down the Old Kent Road

On Wednesday 21st June, the FOCs¹ of the Briant Colour Printing Co. were invited in to see the managing director and introduced to the Official Receiver. They were then bluntly told that the company was entering into voluntary liquidation and they "might as well all go home" except for a dozen or so workers who would complete the work in hand.

There was an immediate meeting of all Chapels (Factory Union Branches) where the workers decided to occupy the factory, conduct a work-in and start the fight to keep their jobs. Within ninety minutes of the liquidator's announcement the factory was completely in the hands of the workers, the gates were secured and manned and the work-in committee was in operation.

BACKGROUND

BCP is a modern printing factory employing about 150 workers. Although previously successful, the company ran into difficulties in 1970/71 and was taken over in July 1971 by a Mr. D. G. S. Syder who also owned other printing and printing sales companies. The money for the takeover actually came from the Robert Hornes paper merchants group although the deal was handled through a "front" company called "Hurstville Investments". Robert Hornes was one of BCP's major creditors.

The takeover resulted in a great deal of work in the factory, and the workers were led to believe that Syder would be merging all his interests into the one company based at BCP in the Old Kent Road. It was therefore totally unexpected when the Briant workers were told that the company was financially insolvent, that it would be closed down, and that the company couldn't even afford redundancy payments (workers were told to claim from the Board of Trade!).

WIDESPREAD SOLIDARITY

It is important to understand that the work-in strategy adopted by the Briant workers accurately reflects both the strengths and the weaknesses of the British trade union movement. The strength of British trade unionism has historically been its militancy and organi-

sation and here the Briant workers have excelled. The examples are numerous: the factory itself is very organised, disciplined and solid; the dockers rang up on the first day of the occupation to ask one simple question—what do you want blacked!; the Kent miners have pledged solidarity as has the UCS Joint Shop Stewards Committee. All four print unions have made the dispute official². Bernie Steer of the dockers has addressed mass meetings there, UCS stewards have been down to give advice and last but not least, Kevin Halpin of the Liaison Committee has pledged the support of the LCDTU. All this besides the day-to-day solidarity of the local labour movement.

MILITANCY NOT ENOUGH

It's not enough, however, just to organise general solidarity. That is only the beginning. Problems such as: *who or what is the struggle against; and in what context does the struggle take place*, are crucially important in determining the aims of the struggle and the methods employed in carrying it out. This is an area of traditional weakness in the trade union movement and this weakness is reflected in the BCP dispute.

The theory held by the majority of Briant workers is summed up in the following quote from a leaflet they produced: "Up until the announcement today we have been very busy in the Factory, and have had to turn work away, our members have been working overtime and have had in casual labour from our unions. Therefore our attitude is that there is no earthly reason why the company cannot be run on a *viable basis*, we must therefore conclude that we, like so many other workers, are being conned out of our jobs in the interests of the speculator." (*Our emphasis*)

This theory says that the problem is one of *bad management*, and justifies working-in as showing to the employing class at large how modern, efficient and viable the firm is, and how respectable and disciplined the workers there are. The aim of all this is that a new employer will be impressed by this and will wish to buy the firm, and in fact there have already been some discussions in the

work-in on the pay and conditions negotiations with any new management.

PROFITABILITY AND CLOSURES

There is obviously a confusion here: what does "viable" mean? In a capitalist economy, a firm is viable if it provides an adequate return on capital invested, i.e. if it is profitable. There have been innumerable examples of factories and plants that have had the most modern equipment and skilled work-forces yet employers have closed them because they became unprofitable. The point to get absolutely clear is that it is the operation of the capitalist economy which causes closures, and it is quite unreal to blame one set of employers (the speculators) and simultaneously look to other employers to act against their own class interests to solve workers' problems.

THE OCCUPATION-STRIKE

The sit-ins at Plessey and Fisher-Bendix were excellent examples of the way to fight closures. The occupations had two functions: to prevent the company removing machinery and to force management to bargain jobs for machines. Since the workers controlled the capital represented in the machines and factory itself, they were in a very strong position. By sitting in, the workers showed in practice that they in no way recognised the right of capitalism to divert capital to where profits are highest, this was clearly understood by the Plessey Convenor when he said, "We're no employees, we're trespassers." A sit-in of this kind is not only highly effective—in both cases the employers capitulated—but it also provides a way forward for working class struggle by making it possible to identify correctly the enemy.

This sums up the general problem with work-ins. To struggle *successfully* against declining living standards and increasing redundancies, it is essential to struggle against the capitalist system itself. A basic precondition for this is that workers should in no way recognise the right of the capitalist system to operate, nor should they therefore in any way take any responsibility for running a company under capitalism. Any workers occupation which continues to operate commercially therefore does not even begin to lay the basis for serious struggles in defence of the jobs and living standards of the working class.

IMG SUPPORT

South London IMG has worked consistently in support of the BCP occupation; members with experience of the Kent Miners Strike Claimants Committee have been aiding the workers in claiming from the state in order to continue the struggle, other members have been active in the local labour movement organising financial and other kinds of support.

All donations and messages of support should be sent to: W. Freeman, Joint Chapels Committee, Briant Colour Printing Company, 651 Old Kent Road, London SE 15. A paper, *BCP Workers News*, produced by the workers is also available from this address, price what you can afford.

South London IMG

NOTES

1. FOC — Father of the Chapel, equivalent to shop steward.
2. Unions involved are NGA, NATSOPA, SOGAT, SLADE, and the AUEW.

State Intervenes In Stanmore Occupation

On May 13th the 130 workers at the Stanmore Engineering (Die-Casting) Ltd. factory in Wembley, Middlesex, began an occupation in support of the national pay claim of the AUEW and also in order to change the bonus system operating in the factory. The reasons for the decision to occupy were two-fold, firstly, the influence of the other occupations around the pay claim, noticeably in Manchester, and secondly, because of the experience of a previous strike in November-December 1971. During this strike the workers had picketed the factory but the management had continued production with non-union labour. The failure of this strike had led the workers to consider other means of struggle, which in this case resulted in the occupation.

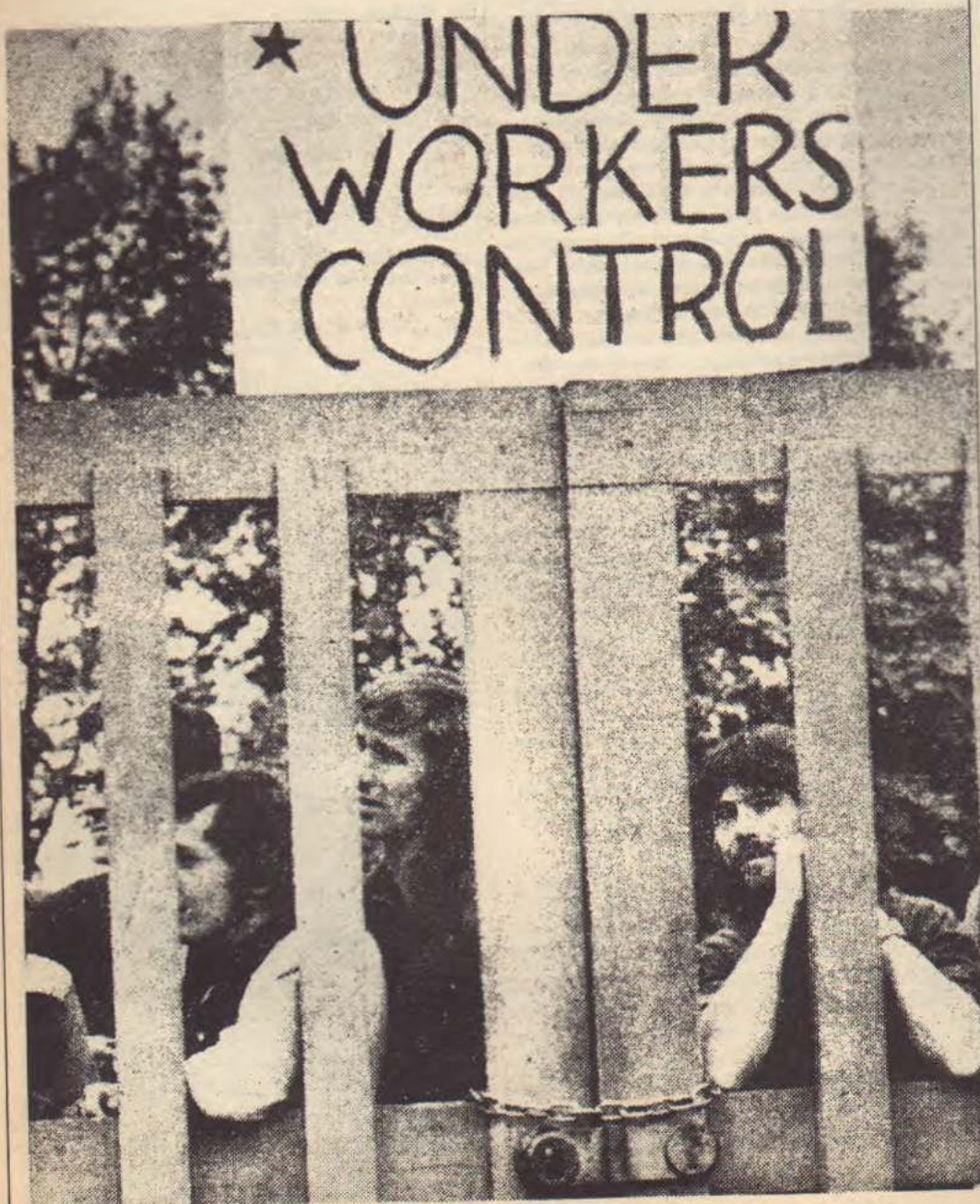
The first response of the management was to sack one of the workers for hitting a foreman who had been sent into the workshop to cause trouble. The workers replied by refusing to negotiate on their grievances until the man had been reinstated and then occupying the factory when the management refused to reinstate the man. The management then sent for the police in an effort to intimidate the workers, who are 80 per cent black, into leaving. But faced with the prospect of removing all the workers by force the police decided just to caution the occupiers that they were technically trespassing and then left.

All production of carburettor parts at the Stanmore factory had now stopped and this combined with the pressure of the parent company, Zenith Carburettors Ltd., for the return of the aluminium dies and the fulfilment of their contracts, forced the management to seek the intervention of the State in order to evict the workers quickly. On June 22nd court injunctions were issued by the High Court of Justice against the Stanmore occupiers on the grounds of trespass, possible damage to the premises and loss of earnings to the company. The injunctions were delivered, by the Court Bailiffs, at 6.00 am on June 23rd and with the aid of the police the workers were evicted. By an odd coincidence the local AUEW officials also arrived on that Friday morning to pay the workers their first strike pay (although the occupation had already lasted for over six weeks).

The fact that the management used the High Court of Justice rather than the National Industrial Relations Court shows that certain sections of the bourgeoisie have learnt that the militancy of the workers can stop the effective use of the Industrial Relations Act. The case of the dockers and the NIRC shows this very well. The present function of the Industrial Relations Act and the NIRC seems to be to force the unions to police their membership. The result of this would be the closer tying of the unions into the State apparatus, which could in no way aid the working class. At the present time the union bureaucrats are afraid to organise their membership to fight this attack because of the very militancy that this would release. This is well shown by the case of the AUEW and their national pay claim. When negotiations between the Union and the Engineering Employers Federation were broken off the response of Scanlon was to avoid a direct confrontation between the Union and one of the most powerful sections of the bourgeoisie, the EEF, by adopting the tactic of plant bargaining. The adoption of such a tactic meant that the AUEW workers lost their greatest strength—solidarity. And all of Scanlon's mouthings at the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions conference about more militant plant bargaining are mere words if the Union is going to continue to treat its membership as it did the Stanmore occupiers. By not paying these strikers until after the occupation had ended the Union has concretely shown that it does not condone the tactic of occupation (but what else can more militant plant bargaining mean?). The role of the Communist Party, in seeking a rapprochement with the Labour lefts and the left wing of the TUC (which includes Scanlon), was well shown by the fact that they were conspicuous by their absence throughout the whole of the Stanmore events (obviously you can't seek to work with the union leaders if you also seek to raise the militancy of the rank and file).

The increasing tendency for the owners of industries to seek State intervention in their disputes with workers shows concretely that the State is not impartial in such disputes. Consequently, only a strategy that clearly identifies the State and is prepared to fight that State will ensure the victory of the workers in their struggles.

A. Lenz



Defend the revolutionary socialists of Yugoslavia!

Three students from Belgrade University have been arrested and charged with 'counter-revolutionary' activity. They have now been held for six months in solitary confinement without even a date for their trial being announced. It is claimed that police are still looking for other members of the 'conspiratorial group'. A government-controlled weekly, *Svet*, has accused these students Nikolic, Isimirovic and Klačic of forming an alliance with extreme right wing nationalists and of having "a common hatred of the Yugoslav democratic system based on the principle of self management". In fact, however, these students are merely "guilty" of putting forward the very same socialist ideas on which the Yugoslav government of Tito claims to be founded. It is in the interests of every socialist, and particularly every member of the Communist Parties of the world, to defend these students.

WHAT CRIMES

Firstly we have to get clear the attitude of revolutionaries to the question of real right wingers in Eastern Europe. Are we in principle opposed to the trying and imprisoning of fascists, and pro-capitalist counter-revolutionaries in Eastern Europe? Not at all. Even the government of the most democratic workers state could not give up the right to use the power of the state against counter-revolutionaries and fascists. However, although we give no support whatever to any genuinely right wing organisations which exist in Eastern Europe, nevertheless it has to be pointed out that the particular way in which the bureaucracy represses these movements can only strengthen their political influence and not weaken them. At a time when such organisations are not so strong as to represent a genuine counter-revolutionary threat the real way a workers party would deal with them would be to allow them to express their views in free debate so that it could be shown that the policies they suggested offered no real way forward for the working class. Instead however, at present the government is suppressing the viewpoint of all forces, including socialists, and this is most likely to have the effect of driving certain sections of the working class into the hands of right wing forces and depoliticising the mass of the workers. It is a sign of how far such a government must feel itself being cut off from the working class that it does not feel it can defeat any right wing forces in an open debate in front of the working class. However, in any case all the evidence shows that there is not the slightest basis for believing that the arrested



Penthouse magazine's new luxury resort opened as revolutionary students were being arrested.

students are right-wingers. They are accused of having had contact with 'Enrik' Mandel and with the "International Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International". In addition they are chiefly accused of having formed an 'initiative group' for building a revolutionary workers party aimed at "the unconstitutional overthrow of people's democratic institutions" and also threatening the "national unity of the Yugoslav people".

First we should note that not a single shred of evidence of a 'subversive Trotskyist network' has been produced. Furthermore, with regard to the accusations of plotting with right wingers Nikolic in fact wrote an article in the student journal *Praxis* which strongly condemned nationalism for dividing the Yugoslav

workers. Supposing however, that the charges of contact with the Fourth International were in fact true, what is the real position of 'Enrik' Mandel and other Trotskyists on Yugoslavia. In the first place they give unconditional support to Yugoslavia against any attempts by capitalism to overthrow its present economic system. They consider that the overthrow of the Yugoslav bourgeoisie was a great step forward for the Yugoslav workers. Trotskyists certainly have fundamental disagreements with the Tito government but they would completely fight alongside them against any fascist or nationalist attempted counter-revolution.

As far as the removal of the Tito government is concerned the position of the Fourth International is clear. One of the greatest enemies to socialism in Yugoslavia is precisely the type of persecution and trials taking place at the present time. The Fourth International holds to the principles of the right of all parties which accept the socialist system to freely express their point of view in Eastern Europe. It calls for democratic decisions of the workers over all the aspects of the economic plan. It calls for the cutting back of the privileges of administration and technical experts and the narrowing of wage differentials within the working class. In all this it merely follows the views of Marx and Lenin, and the actions of the Bolshevik Party in the early years of the revolution. It says that these measures are the way to solve the problems of low wages, 20 per cent illiteracy and the situation whereby there are a million workers forced to work outside Yugoslavia and unemployment is soaring at home.

What is the programme of the Tito government? It imports foreign capital and allows *Penthouse* magazine to set up a luxury resort!!! The Fourth International is perfectly prepared to let the Yugoslav workers judge which of these two solutions is socialist and which counter-revolutionary! If the imprisoned Yugoslav students have had any contact with the Fourth International, and the Yugoslav police have not produced one piece of evidence for this, then it is socialism and not counter-revolution they will have been putting forward in Yugoslavia.

LONG LIVE THE WORKERS STATE OF YUGOSLAVIA!

FOR EVERY MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST AND LABOUR PARTIES TO DEMAND THE FACTS ON THE YUGOSLAV TRIALS! FREE NIKOLIC, ISMIROVIC AND KLAIC! J. Burns

The New Opposition in Eastern Europe

Despite its small size, Yugoslavia has been in the last thirty years politically one of the key countries in Europe. The Yugoslav Communist Party led a victorious struggle against the Nazi occupation. Under the leadership of Tito it then became the first Communist Party in the world to break with Moscow. This split opened up the first big divisions within the world 'communist' movement and prepared the way for the bigger splits over the Russian invasion of Hungary in 1956, the Russian-Chinese split of the 1960s and the invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

Yugoslavia however also showed first the types of crises that now affect all the countries of Eastern Europe. On the one hand in order to gain the popular support necessary to get any independence at all from Moscow, the local party bureaucrats are forced to give some small concessions to the workers. However the small improvements in conditions only whet the appetite of the workers who all the time can see the higher standard of living and privileges of the bureaucrats. A movement of unrest develops and in many cases some political issue of repression or national oppression provides a spark for the discontent. The Party leadership then turns to repression. This however runs the risk of leading to the launching of an uprising by the workers against the rule of the party. But these risings are spontaneous and uncoordinated and are either crushed or not pushed home. If however the repression is successful it only produces new problems for the bureaucracy as the workers become totally disinterested in production and labour productivity falls.

In recent years however a new element has appeared in the situation. This is the existence of small groups of revolutionary socialists who are able to draw the lessons of the struggle and explain its significance to the workers. In Poland two young communists, Kuron and Modzelewski produced a long analysis in the form of an open letter to the party. In Czechoslovakia militants produced a "Manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Party". In Yugoslavia, too, groups of revolutionary socialists have been formed and an important analysis of Yugoslav society has been produced. Inside the USSR it also now appears that clearly revolutionary ideas are being clearly worked out and many socialist manifestos are beginning to circulate. The impact of even these small groups of revolutionaries can be enormous in countries in which the entire working class is taught, even in a completely distorted form, the foundations of socialism. It is therefore on these revolutionaries that the repression of the bureaucrats falls. In Poland Kuron and Modzelewski were imprisoned. In Czechoslovakia also the socialist militants were put on trial and imprisoned. Now the same is happening in Yugoslavia. In Russia Vladimir Bukovsky was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and five years in exile for protesting against the sending of oppositionists to lunatic asylums.

Self Management and Repression

The reason why the imprisoned Yugoslav socialists have not been brought to trial already is almost certainly because the government wants the term at Belgrade University to finish before starting the prosecution. They fear that the trials would provoke the militant Belgrade students into demonstrations which would threaten the government's actions. This fear represents the increasing anxiety at the discontent rising inside Yugoslavia both from the workers and from students and other groups.

The particular manoeuvre in Yugoslavia by which the bureaucracy tried to huy off the workers was the so called system of 'self-management'. Here the workers in individual plants were given paper control of some aspects of the work of the factories. However these concessions were almost worthless because all the central, and therefore important, economic decisions were taken by a bureaucracy outside the control of the workers. Nevertheless, because to some extent the workers gain from the self management system as compared to a simple system of bureaucratic centralism, the government tries to claim that any revolutionary opposition is 'anti-self management'. It has had some success by these means in keeping under control and localising the discontent in the working class. Nevertheless discontent continues to rise. In the last 10 years there have been over 2000 strikes in Yugoslavia.

The second source of danger for the bureaucrats comes from the students, artists, writers and so on. A series of left wing magazines such as *Praxis*, *Tribuna*, *Studentski List*, *Student*, *Index* have all been established in the last few years. Now the government is trying to stamp these out by a tighter control of the public information system. They are trying to add bureaucrats from the local administration and the party to the Editorial Boards of these papers. Also the government paper *Svet* is also calling for tough police action to be taken.

However real measures can be taken in the defence of the prisoners. Solidarity action and mobilisation of socialist workers and writers did undoubtedly help to reduce the sentences passed on the Czech oppositionists tried last year. The present charges brought in Yugoslavia carry maximum sentences of five years but the Yugoslav regime is, if anything, even more anxious to preserve a respectable face in the capitalist west than was the Czech party in avoiding the re-opening of the wounds in the world 'communist' movement caused by the Russian invasion. For this reason giving maximum publicity to the imprisonments, particularly inside the Communist and Labour parties, is a measure of immediate practical, as well as political support to the prisoners. We ask every member of the Communist and Labour Parties to demand the full facts about these arrests and to demand the release of the prisoners.



Before the revolution: Yugoslav partisans (Tito right) in 1944

Reading on the crisis in Eastern Europe

The June 1972 issue of *International Socialist Review*, published by the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, is entirely devoted to analysis of Eastern Europe. It includes articles on 'The Soviet Economy Today' by Ernest Mandel, 'Bureaucratic Reformism' and on 'Alexander Solzhenitsyn'. It is

available price 20p from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Also the recent issues of *Intercontinental Press* have been carrying the full transcript of the trial of the Russian oppositionist Vladimir Bukovsky. These are also available from Red Books price 15p.

IRELAND: THE EYE OF

The war in Ireland is not over; it has taken new, more complex forms, but the underlying contradictions, far from overcome, have sharpened. It is only through a very careful analysis that we can come to any logical conclusions. A good example of how to misunderstand is the *Workers Press*, which for months has been denouncing the IRA as "terrorists", and now accuses them of selling out for calling off their military campaign. This impressionism is a different aspect of the same methodology used by those other forces within the British labour movement who believe that Whitelaw has already won and that the war is over. The experience of Vietnam is opposite; the mere fact of a cease fire and/or negotiations does not mean either that the war is over, or that the liberation forces have sold out.

The Provisionals are a particularly important factor in this situation. If they have called a cease fire because they are demoralised, and are unable to carry on a military campaign, then Whitelaw has won. But the evidence points the other way; they have the volunteers and equipment to carry on the fight, and they have declared constantly that this time the Republican forces will not stop short until victory over the British forces in Ireland has been achieved. The peace movement shows the fraying of the political unity of the catholic minority, but it does not demonstrate a hostility to the IRA, or unwillingness to support military action in the event of the British Army or the RUC trying to get into their areas, or if punitive action was to be taken against the IRA. In the face of these facts it would be foolish to assume that the Provos have thrown in their hand.

If the Provisionals had accepted Whitelaw's terms for negotiations there would have been some justification for such a view, but what they have actually done is to counterpose to Whitelaw's terms a set of proposals which British imperialism cannot concede. First they have demanded an All-Ireland conference as opposed to a six-county based one, and second they have presented as the basis from which they will negotiate a programme of demands which, while not posing a socialist revolution in Ireland, do pose the destruction of the entire settlement imposed on Ireland in 1922, and the achievement of self-determination by the Irish people. Both of these will seem eminently reasonable to the mass of the catholic minority but would not be acceptable to British imperialism. So long as the Provisionals maintain these positions they cannot be accused of having sold out.

The present cease fire then is unique; previous truces have been called with Britain's knee on Ireland's throat, they have been compacts between a bleeding and exhausted resistance movement and a British imperialism able not only to dictate the terms of the peace, but to ensure that those terms were later interpreted to its own advantage. This cease fire has been preceded by a clear demonstration of the capacity of the IRA to hit hard against the enemy, and to make any encroachment on the free areas a profitless exercise. Of course, precisely for that reason the political aspects of the struggle are now thrown into sharp relief, and history will judge more harshly any political failures today than has been the case in the past.

CONCESSIONS

The bilateral cease-fire has been accompanied by important concessions from the British. In effect West Belfast and other 'no-go' areas are being handed over to the Republicans for them to control. Internment will be ended. All Republican prisoners will be effectively given political status (something that has never been conceded in previous campaigns), there will be a de facto amnesty for men on the run and the Provisionals will be offered a seat, in their own name, at any talks. This last concession means first of all that the sacred British principle of not negotiating with "murderers" bites the dust yet again, and secondly that the Provisionals will be able to affect the course which such talks would take, and can prevent the SDLP using them to pose as the representative of the minority.

WHITELAW'S PURPOSE

The purpose of these concessions is clear, Whitelaw is trying out a new and different method of deflating the IRA; we have analysed his strategy in previous issues of *The Red Mole*. As we have stated, he has to maintain the balance until the local elections in the Autumn, when he hopes to integrate a section of the minority back into the system.

In these elections proportional representation would assist the emergence of a strong force in the centre of Six County politics, in other words the SDLP and the Alliance Party would be strengthened against the Unionist Party on the one hand and the Republicans on the other. Having thus eroded the base of support for the IRA amongst the catholic minority, the British would then proceed to smash it, both as a military and a political force. But Whitelaw's timetable has run into difficulties, it was predicated on pushing Stormont aside, but did not take full account of the effects of pushing the Unionists aside. Whitelaw has run up against the problem that has bedevilled British imperialism time and time again, the fact that any programme of change which would dilute support for the IRA leads to mass disaffection on the part of the protestants. Thus he is at present trying to publicly maintain a balance between the contending forces, at a time when his two props, the SDLP and the Alliance Party, are not able to sustain their own weight let alone his.

Far from the cease-fire representing a prospect of peace in the North, it is more likely to be the lull before new storms. The demands of the Provisionals on the one hand and the UDA on the other are totally incompatible. But only through the erosion of these organisations and the strengthening of the middle class forces in the centre can Whitelaw gain stability, and such an erosion has not yet taken place, and is unlikely to take place before the delicate balance has tipped over, and the North is plunged into a new crisis.

We must now proceed to an examination of the contending forces.

THE DEATH THROES OF UNIONISM

The UDA represents the death agony of Unionism. Superficially it might appear surprising that a Protestant movement which aped the IRA has not appeared before, the answer to that question casts light on the real significance of the UDA. The Six County state had been based on a set of sectarian institutions, these included a protestant praetorian guard, the RUC, and a mass armed militia, the 'B'Specials'. The protestants therefore had always relied on state institutions to do the catholic-bashing job for them, and so had no para-military tradition. The mass military displays of the UDA have to be seen in this light, they are a product of the despair of the protestant workers, and their loss of faith in their old institutions. The effect of the abolition of Stormont has been deep and historic. Unionism will never be the same again; the UDA is a demonstration of the weakness and demoralisation of protestant sectarianism, and not a reflection of its growth or strength.

The agonising problem for the protestant extremists is how to persuade Britain to maintain the old ascendancy. They have chosen to carry on a campaign of bluff, constantly issuing ultimatums and constantly withdrawing at the last moment. They calculate to put pressure on Whitelaw and/or the British ruling class, to win a change or drastic modification in their policy. The problem for them is that Whitelaw knows that it is a bluff, so far the only effect of their actions has been that Whitelaw has used them in turn to pressurise the SDLP. The creation of protestant 'no-go' areas is such a bluff, the British can permit the existence of these in the short term, so long as there seems a prospect of solving the major problem of the catholic free areas.

More and more the UDA is being challenged to put up or shut up, either they will have to take direct military action, or a section of their rank and file could get out of hand and take their leadership's rhetoric literally. Given the present tactics of the British ruling class they would probably run themselves onto the bayonets of the British Army. Such a defeat would seriously damage the sectarian monolith. Whatever settlement emerged afterwards it is unlikely that the protestants would be capable of carrying on a long-drawn-out resistance.

THE MIDDLE CLASS

Of the other forces on the political scene the Alliance Party's potential can only be realised if the Unionist bloc is fragmented. As for the SDLP they are trying to ensure that Whitelaw succeeds in his plans, so as to emerge as the sole political representatives of the catholic minority. They will engage in any deal, any sell out to achieve this. That was why they risked their base in the catholic community in order to go over to Whitelaw before the ending of internment. So far their strategy has not yet been defeated, and they have been able to maintain their position while cuddling up to Whitelaw.

THE OFFICIALS

The Official Republicans grabbed a few brief headlines with their cease-fire. However, the reasons which they advance for it represent a wrong assessment of the situation, which if followed to its logical conclusion will destroy their capacity to intervene effectively in the struggle to come. It is true that the North was close to a civil war; but then sectarian violence has been endemic since the foundation of the state. The real difference in the present situation is that the catholics can defend themselves, and the unionist forces are weaker than ever before. Whatever the regrettable effects of a civil war in terms of lives lost, it would neither be a qualitative change in the situation which has existed for fifty years, nor would it lead to the defeat of the catholics; rather the reverse, it would probably represent the last despairing act of Orangism.

Worse, because more subtle, is the argument that it is necessary at this stage to unite protestant and catholic workers in order to achieve a socialist solution of the Irish problem. The entire experience of the last three years, never mind the last century is that until the Orange state, and the sectarian institutions linked to it, are smashed the protestant workers will seek to preserve them, and that while society in the six counties is sectarian any demand for equal rights means less rights for the protestants and the protestants will resist any progressive demands. There can be no programme for meaningful united struggle of protestant and catholic workers which does not include the smashing of the state, and unfortunately the numbers of protestant workers who will cross the sectarian divide before the smashing of the state will be infinitesimal. To raise unity between catholic and protestant workers as an immediate priority can only lead to one of two conclusions. Either experience will show the impossibility of such a perspective, and demoralisation will set in, or in order to get such unity the demands of the catholics will be de-escalated in an attempt to lessen the gap, thus playing into Whitelaw's hands and preserving the unionist monolith. The most important contribution made by the Official Republicans in the last period was their participation in the armed struggle against British imperialism, now that this has been suspended, they will become less and less able to contribute to the struggle, until they overcome their political errors.

THE PROVISIONALS

The fact that the Provisionals have been better able to intervene in the last period will surprise only the dogmatists on the British Left who insist on misunderstanding everything which happens outside their editorial offices. During the present phase of permanent revolution in Ireland, when national struggle is in the forefront, it is only to be expected that the most consistent nationalists will play the leading role. The weaknesses of the Provisionals should not blind anyone to the importance of what they have been able to achieve. They have built up the most effective military resistance to British imperialism seen in Ireland since the Black and Tan war; never for more than fifty years has the British Army faced an adversary so formidable as the Provisional IRA.

We refuse to criticise them for their military strategy; we do not accept that their bombing campaign was sectarian, and we despise those on the British left who have echoed these slanders. The targets of the campaign were on the one hand the British and Six County state forces, and on the other hand the business interests, and the institutions of British imperialism in Ireland. The facts have been confused, because bombs set off by the British SAS and Orange fanatics have been attributed to the Provisionals. The most common accusation is

that the Provos have bombed protestant pubs and factories. First they have not bombed any pubs because they were used by protestants but for military and/or security reasons, and second they have bombed factories which represented British investments. That they should directly affect mostly protestant workers in this way reflects the sectarian employment policy of the state, which the bombs were trying to smash.

The weakness of the Provisionals is not that they are the sectarian, reactionary caricature presented by those who should, but never do, know better; but that their political understanding is not sufficient to enable them to fight in the most effective way for their objectives.

Their political weakness is of two kinds, weakness of programme, and weakness of cadre. We will try to explain this.

EIRE NUA

The programme which the provisionals have advanced is not capable of achieving a socialist transformation in Ireland, therefore it is inadequate in the long term. But because it poses the destruction of the entire framework set up by the treaty of 1922 it is capable of moving into action the forces which, with a different programme, could achieve a socialist revolution. Because British imperialism wishes to modify, but not destroy the 1922 settlement it will not accept the demands set out by the Provisionals. In order to fight for these demands the Provisionals will need to face up to and overcome problems which will require a far deeper understanding of capitalist society, and the nature of socialist revolution than their programme reflects.

A revolutionary programme not only has to set up a model for the new society, it has to create the forces capable of carrying out the transformation, in other words it has to move the masses into revolutionary action. To do this it needs both to pose a viable alternative to the present partitioned and exploited Ireland, and to answer the immediate needs and problems of the Irish people. Their programme *Eire Nua* sets out an elaborate plan for regional government, and an ambitious set of constitutional proposals which would give more real democracy than the people enjoy at present, but such a programme is an abstraction when viewed from an embattled street in Creggan. To give any programme of this kind meaning it has to be based on the extension and strengthening of the present organs of direct democracy which exist in the free areas; this is the primary method by which the masses can be involved in revolutionary action.

No doubt many British revolutionaries will denounce us for giving credence to this kind of "community" politics. It is important to understand that the catholic workers are, in the mass, excluded from work in the factories, shipyards, etc. The history and structure of industry in the North affects the consciousness of the working class and means that the main strength of the catholic workers lies in their communities, and not at the point of production. This is an exception to the general laws of revolutionary struggle within capitalist society. Let us make it clear we do not go along with anarchist or centrist concepts of "community control", or try to apply the particular strategy required in the North of Ireland outside that context.

DIRECT DEMOCRACY AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

The Provisionals will find the danger cropping up, that they could become identified by the masses as responsible for the entire running of the free areas, and therefore responsible for all the problems which arise in these areas, from failure to prevent pilfering, to political confusion within the community. It is here that the other main weakness of the Provisionals will show itself: they do not have the developed political leaders at local level who can act as a means of two way communication between the leadership and the people.

To overcome these problems it is absolutely vital that the people themselves are made responsible for their areas, and that the IRA is not seen as a force imposing its will from outside the community. The only way to solve such problems is, again, the creation of local structures of direct democracy.

It is here that a traditional element of Republicanism comes into conflict with the

THE HURRICANE

needs of the moment. The authority of the IRA has stemmed from a mandate given by the Irish people in the past. The basis on which the two previous campaigns were fought was that the surviving Deputies of the Second Dail, who had voted against the Treaty, transferred their mandate to the Army Council of the IRA, and the actions of the IRA were thus based on that authority. This complex argument was a re-furbishing of a much older Fenian doctrine; the head of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (the conspiratorial inner core of the Fenian movement) had always been regarded as the president of the Provisional government of the Irish Republic.

While this doctrine may not be cited in this literal way today, the method involved still has deep influence. The Republicans think that they can take action in the name of the people, and expect the people to support them, while not being linked to the people in a way which enables them to keep in touch with their desires and anxieties, and to persuade the people that the IRA is fighting for their interests. In the present situation it can lead to a dangerous elitism, which will serve only to separate the Provisionals from the people. The effect of this would be to create the kind of demoralisation which will feed the SDLP. The IRA has constantly to get a fresh mandate from the people, by convincing them, through political leadership, that their programme, strategy and tactics are correct, and can lead to victory. Again we stress, only local structures of direct democracy can achieve this.

THE WIDER STRUGGLE

Whether or not the struggle breaks out anew in the immediate period it is necessary to make a broader assessment of the prospects for the Irish revolution. It is now clear that the key crisis in Ireland is the unresolved national struggle, the contradictions created by the abortion of the national/democratic revolution between 1916 and 1922. These contradictions transformed a peaceful civil rights struggle into a raging war which has blasted out of existence the repressive Stormont parliament, only a short time after its fiftieth anniversary. This war has cut large areas of the Six Counties off from the operations of the forces of the British and Six County states, and has claimed the lives of over a hundred British soldiers. It has nearly brought down the Government in the Twenty Six Counties, in a crisis caused by the gun-running operations of cabinet ministers. No other political or social issues within Ireland have shaken the foundations of capitalism and neo-colonialism as has the crisis in the North.

However it is also clear that the minority in the North cannot overthrow capitalism North and South and smash the imperialist grip if they fight alone. The very intensity of the crisis in the North poses the problem of how the Northern minority can rapidly link up with fresh forces who will enable them to win.

The key problem is how to generalise the struggle throughout the thirty two counties of Ireland. How on the one hand to mobilise the mass of the workers and small farmers in the Twenty Six Counties in solidarity with the Northern minority, and on the other to organise and centralise their struggles on their own problems to assist the defeat of British imperialism in the North, which is inseparable from the smashing of the collaborationist Fianna Fail regime in Dublin.

FAILURE IN THE SOUTH

The glaring failure of the Republicans to begin to organise this was evidenced by the response to the Derry massacre. In effect the British Embassy was thrown to the mob, and the tide of anger receded, permitting Lynch to stabilise his rule, and to prepare to go on to the offensive against the Republicans. Because the masses in the South had not been educated into an understanding of the reality in the North, their anger was directed at limited targets: internment, Bloody Sunday, political prisoners. Once British imperialism switched its strategy, illusions that the minority were to get justice became widespread. This enabled Lynch to collaborate more openly, and to start the job of curtailing IRA activities in the South.

Lynch has two motivations, he wants to assist British imperialism, but he is also very conscious of the need to smash the potential threat to his own regime which the IRA represents. In the absence of a mass movement in

the South, to support the struggle in the North, the struggles of the Republicans become ineffective, or even counter-productive. Thus the riot in Mountjoy Jail in Dublin, initiated by the Provisionals, in which the entire internal structure of the prison was destroyed, not only did not spark off wide scale resistance to Fianna Fail repression, but was used by Lynch to re-open the Curragh army prison for Republicans and made it clear that he could start up the special courts with impunity.

The entire political activity of the Republicans in the South has militated against the kind of support needed. The Officials have only fought on the issues which affected the workers and small farmers in the South. They have tried to invoke moral support for the North, but have not shown the direct relevance of the struggle in the North for the South. The campaign on the EEC referendum is the most important example. This was fought within the terms of reference laid down by Fianna Fail, the campaign tried to convince people that there would be a drastic increase in food prices, and that there would be serious rural de-population. Unfortunately the bourgeoisie was able to demonstrate that much of the propaganda about food prices was exaggerated, and while it is true that the countryside will be severely affected by entry, in the short term there will be both increased outlets and higher prices for agricultural exports. Had the campaign concentrated on spelling out the fact that a "yes" vote was a vote for special courts and concentration camps, it might not have succeeded in defeating the Fianna Fail/Fine Gael alliance, but it would have helped to coalesce opposition when the foreseeable repression came following the referendum, and would have made Lynch much more circumspect in moving towards repression.

The Provisionals have in the main kept a low profile in the South, they have had the idea that not attacking the Dublin government would preserve their training and supply bases in the South. That concept has been very severely shattered. In the EEC campaign the Provos did not distinguish themselves from the kind of campaign carried on by the Officials.

TURN THE TIDE

It is not too late to turn the tide. A campaign to defend Free Derry from the UDA threat to cut off gas, electricity water etc, could not only

get a ready response, it would paralyse the Lynch regime. It is one thing to take action against the Republicans when the masses in the South have illusions in Whitelaw, it is quite another to stop action against the Orangemen. If electrical equipment, Diesel generators, and other material was seized for Free Derry Lynch would either have to take action, and meet with widespread wrath, or show the Special Courts up as a farce.

The structures of solidarity created by such a campaign, if maintained, could form the bones around which the flesh of a mass movement would form in the event of some new crisis such as the Derry massacre.

IN THE LONG TERM

But Irish revolutionaries, and those who support their struggle in the international revolutionary movement, have to face up to the possibility that even if the present peace leads to a new outbreak of struggle, the forces set off in the North would not be capable of creating the prerequisites for an all-Ireland revolution. A new war would wind the spring of the contradictions in the North up again but unless that spring can move the cogs and wheels of an all-Ireland struggle it will simply uncoil back to the present situation.

What would happen in this case would be that the Six County state would be stabilised, by virtue of the exhaustion of the forces opposed to its existence. There can be little doubt that there would be changes, the Catholics would get an instalment on their rights, and the middle class political organisations would take the centre of the political stage. This would not mean the defeat of the Irish revolution, but a postponement. Two important changes would take place:-

1. A new, more politically aware revolutionary leadership would emerge as the lessons of the last three years were absorbed by the new forces who have been brought into the struggle. This new vanguard might or might not develop within the form of the Republican movement, but it would have to understand the key importance of the theory of permanent revolution, of the nature of dual power, and the uneven development of revolutionary consciousness. It will also take as its own the heroic tradition of Irish Republicanism, transforming it with Marxist theory.

2. A more heterogeneous crisis would develop throughout Ireland, as the hollow nature of a "reformed" six counties became clear, and as the effects of EEC entry began to show themselves North and South. Given the development of a new leadership it would be possible to mobilise a more generalised struggle throughout the 32 counties.

The preparations for such an eventuality must be made now; this means a more intensive study and analysis of Irish history and the struggles in that country. This is the respon-

sibility not simply of Irish revolutionaries, but of their comrades in other countries. Such a contribution is necessary if the theoretical gap between the development of the revolutionary movement in Ireland, and the tasks to which it is called, is to be overcome. It is a very necessary form of solidarity.

IN BRITAIN

There is a short term need in Britain to maintain the solidarity movement. Every action taken now, every contribution to the building of the movement made now will weigh ten times more when the need arises for mass actions. That is why the recent actions carried out by the Anti-internment League are important. The demonstration in Slough, which was met with the united hostility of the National Front, and the upper class yobboes of Eton College, and the series of meetings in defence of Free Derry were very positive achievements. Although great masses cannot be mobilised at this moment, small actions can keep the forces together, and can prevent organisational dissolution. It will be found that there will be a thirst for knowledge and information, as the situation becomes more complex. Patient explanation and propaganda work in small meetings can pay big dividends in the future. Of course this argues the need for a higher level of awareness within the AIL.

"STAB-IN-THE-BACK" LYNCH

But on another issue it is possible to make a positive contribution. As the internees in the North are released Lynch is left holding the baby. He was so reluctant to open the Curragh that he left it too late. A vigorous campaign against the special courts and for release of political prisoners in the South could force him to back track. Once having retreated it would be more difficult for him to start them up again in the event of a renewed struggle. Pickets on Irish Tourist and Aer Lingus offices would be particularly unpleasant for Fianna Fail, given the problems they are having with the fall in tourist revenues. Such activities ought to be organised on a wide scale, they will not only have a positive effect on the struggle in Ireland, but will help to build the solidarity movement here. This is in line with the requests of the Republicans leaders in Ireland.

The struggle in Ireland is not over. The present peace is the calmness at the centre of a hurricane. New storms will lash out over Ireland, storms which can sweep away the oppression and exploitation imposed upon Ireland for eight hundred years by foreign domination and native collaboration. Once more we re-assert the cold plain fact, in the words of Padraig Pearse, that "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace".

Bob Purdie
Gery Lawless



Michael Farrell speaks outside Portlaoise Jail on Saturday, 1 July, to a demonstration which had earlier been involved in scuffles with gardai (Irish police) and Irish Army troops outside the Curragh army prison. The demonstration of members and supporters of People's Democracy and the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish supporters of the Fourth International) was protesting against the continuing detention of Republicans by the Lynch government in the South.

BRAZIL COMMUNIQUE

The purpose of this communique is to attempt to save the life of A Brazilian militant in jail at this moment. His name is Cesar Queiros Benjamin.

Comrade Cesar was arrested on 30 August, 1971, in the state of Bahia. The dictatorship had already planned his murder at that time, following its policy of systematic extermination of revolutionary leaders. At the same time as army intelligence officers were submitting him to the most refined and hideous tortures, they were also denying to his family any knowledge of his arrest. It was admitted by the army only after a month, under the pressure of undeniable evidence presented by his family.

In the nine months since his arrest, comrade Cesar has been treated as a "special case". Although very young (17 years old) he had assumed important tasks in our organisation in the liberation struggle of our people, to the extent that he was considered "highly dangerous" by the enemy. His attitude in the face of torture was extremely courageous; no information whatsoever has been 'obtained' from him. For all these reasons he is considered to be a "dangerous element who would sustain the morale of other prisoners" and he has therefore been kept in solitary confinement since August 1971.

But the whole case has another particular aspect: he was arrested at the age of 17. Therefore, he was a minor at the time when all the acts of which he is accused were committed. So even under the very laws of the dictatorship he cannot be tried.

All possible devices have been used to keep Cesar in jail, such as a "psychological test" in order to prove that his mental age is really 35 and so "he was responsible for his acts". They have also charged him on no fewer than 32 counts in order to keep him in prison indefinitely.

But the law is clear in this case: "the kid" cannot be tried. The military dictatorship is astonished to discover that it had not prepared to face minors in struggle against its oppression. The fascists discover that even with their own repressive legislation they cannot condemn comrade Cesar.

The other alternative is plain murder. We have evidence of plans worked out by high ranking officers to stimulate an escape attempt that would justify this crime. This method is frequently used by the military dictatorship. It was used to 'cover up' the murder under torture of the former Labour Party deputy, Rubens Paiva, the hideous assassination of the revolutionary leader Eduardo Leite and others.

In order to counter this threat we publish this communique, understanding that the massive exposure of these facts may help to save comrade Cesar's life. Against his firm determination, before and after his imprisonment, the dictatorship is impotent; unable to subdue him, the military fascists now want to murder him. International sympathy is very important; on it depends in part his life. Extensive condemnation of these muderous intentions will make their execution more difficult.

This solidarity will be at the same time an act in the defence of elementary human rights and another act in the arraignment of the military dictatorship that oppresses the masses of the Brazilian people.

8 October Revolutionary Movement, Brazil

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Ceylon Trials Start — Then Adjourned

On Monday June 12th the trials started in Ceylon of the first of the 16,000 prisoners detained before and after the uprising of April 1971. 5,000 of those interned are to be tried in batches of about 30. The first batch (of 41) includes Rohana Wijeweera, Mahindapala Wijisekerz, S.D. Bandaranayaka, a former M.P. and others of the alleged leaders of the insurrection. The charges are of conspiring to wage war against the Queen, and conspiring to terrorise the Government by the use of force. They will be tried under two new laws which were hurried through Parliament in the spring of this year bringing further repressive measures into being. Under the Criminal Justice Commissions Act special courts have been set up to deal with such offences which have the power to hold trials in secret and to accept evidence from hearsay, and confessions however obtained. The second Act, the Interpretation (Amendments) Ordinance, does away with Habeas Corpus applications or other writs (see *The Red Mole*, 42). Thus it will be possible to condemn to life imprisonment those whom the government consider guilty even if they are never brought to trial. Many of the offences for which these special courts have been set up carry the death penalty and in cases where the Attorney General feels the judges have been too lenient he is empowered to over-rule their decision.

The fact that the Government has had to detain these prisoners for over a year, and to make changes in the legislation for a framework in which to hold the trials makes it quite clear that they are still feeling the threat of the growing discontent among the mass of the Ceylonese people. Furthermore, imprisonment has made many more people politically conscious. Under regulation 7 of the Emergency Regulations anyone could be arrested without a warrant, for committing any offence or if the person making the arrest (either a policeman or any member of the armed forces) had "reasonable grounds for suspecting" that an offence had been committed. It is therefore obvious that many of those arrested were not necessarily dedicated revolutionaries. Their experience in prison however, together with activities such as the educational programme organised by the JVP, will quite obviously be having a politicising effect.

The trial of this first batch of detainees has now been adjourned in order for the prosecution to bring further evidence. After a whole year the Ceylonese government was not sufficiently confident to bring out the questions in public, even with the aid of the new laws and of the new Constitution, under which the judiciary has no powers to investigate actions by the executive (police and armed forces). They have good reason to keep quiet about this. The government's recent statement that censorship was being lifted (to show that it could present its case to the world) is shown to be pure propaganda for consumption outside Ceylon.

It is important to understand that the insurrection was *not* a carefully planned operation aimed at overthrowing the State, but rather a defensive act resulting from a campaign of arrests and intimidation, particularly of the JVP militants who were campaigning against the betrayals of the self-styled "socialist" coalition of the SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party), the LSSP and the pro-Moscow CP. The JVP had been openly propagandising against the policies of the Government (cut-backs in social expenditure, austerity measures such as a wage freeze in a period of rising unemployment—the stranglehold of neo-colonialism preventing the growth of the economy, hence the dependence on loans from the IMF and the World Bank for social expenditure), and it had been winning support particularly among the rural and unemployed youth.

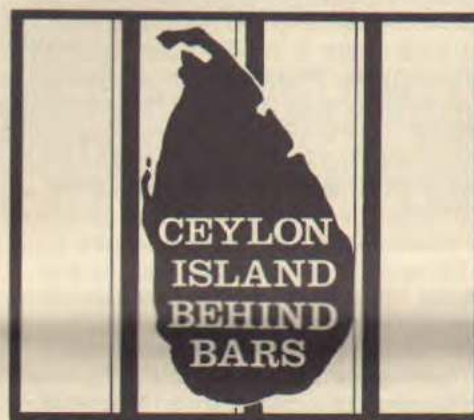
As a result the government began to clamp down, imposing first a partial and then a total State of Emergency, which in turn provoked the uprising. For the JVP it was a question of political survival as well as physical survival, realising that the State of Emergency would be maintained as long as the Government felt it necessary to prevent the coordination of political opposition.

The Ceylon Government was already heavily dependent on loans from the IMF and World Bank, and of course very strict requirements were required by its creditors as to the political stability of the regime. The result of the uprising was to further exacerbate the economic crisis, with the result that the Ceylon Government was forced to apply for

external aid over and above that which the IMF and the World Bank was willing to grant. After a number of diplomatic missions, deals were concluded with the Soviet Union and the Chinese Government, whereby military and technical aid as well as financial aid was granted—in the form of an interest-free loan of 150 million rupees in the case of China. Mrs. Bandaranaike, during her recent visit to China in the last week of June, has concluded a further loan of one hundred million dollars.

This money will go to subsidise the strengthening of the repressive apparatus of the bourgeois State, the police and army, who are daily murdering revolutionary militants. The betrayal of the bureaucracies now acquires a new enormity. The urgent need is to prepare the masses—politically and with arms—for the struggle against the repression and against the Ceylonese bourgeoisie itself. Since April last year there has apparently been relatively little open struggle by the working class movement, while the right to strike and all democratic freedoms won by decades of struggle, have been removed under the State of Emergency. This does not mean that the working class and its allies are totally defeated—the

RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS



CEYLON SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

very strengthening of the repressive apparatus is an indication that the bourgeoisie is using this period to the fullest to prepare for coming struggles. What the working class and its allies do lack is leadership. The traditional leadership of the labour movement—the LSSP and the CP—have consistently failed to understand the nature of the State and the role of the Ceylonese bourgeoisie, and fostered illusions in parliamentary democracy and the 'United Front' government coalition with that bourgeoisie.

The LSSP (in no way to be confused with the LSSP(Revolutionary)) always had a centrist wing tending towards opportunism, under the leadership of N.M.Perera, even during the period of the affiliation of the LSSP to the Fourth International after the Second World War. The LSSP was expelled from the F.I. in 1964 after the revolutionary wing had lost the battle with the Perera wing, which gained the support of the majority of the party for its policy of governmental coalition with the SLFP. Since then the LSSP has further degenerated—it is in no sense revolutionary or Trotskyist—while the LSSP(R), which split away in 1964, has remained the Ceylonese section of the Fourth International, under the leadership of comrade Bala Tampoe.

The pro-Moscow CP has consistently taken the parliamentary road, and has supported the

government's repressive measures. Recently, however, there has been serious dissension among the rank and file, and criticism of the leadership of the party remaining in the coalition. This has resulted in the CP's decision to vote against the Criminal Justice Commissions Act and the Interpretation (Amendments) Ordinance. In fact of the six M.P.s, two voted against the government, one voted for, two abstained and one was conveniently absent. An open split in the party has temporarily been avoided, but the left elements developing in the direction of revolutionary marxism are certain to contribute to the disintegration of Ceylonese Stalinism.

The pro-Peking CCP, although they claim to be in favour of extra-parliamentary activity, and attack imperialism in general terms, have attacked the JVP leadership as being 'counter-revolutionary', using exactly the same terminology as the government—no doubt in response to Chou-en-lai's statement of support for Bandaranaike. It is noteworthy that the general secretary of the CCP, Shanmaguthasan, has recently been allowed by the government to leave Ceylon and to come to Britain. Here he addressed three meetings in London, during which he reiterated the positions of his party, and called on the audience to support the Ceylon Committee.*

The LSSP(R), through the Ceylon Mercantile Union, in which it has a solid base, has by contrast consistently criticised the government and demanded an end to the State of Emergency Regulations. This activity is clearly distinguishable from the collusion of the pro-Moscow CP in all but the most recent repressive measures and the unprincipled, liberal demands of the CCP.

It is the responsibility of all revolutionaries to express unconditional solidarity with all political prisoners and other victims of repression in Ceylon, and to campaign for an end to the State of Emergency and the immediate release of all the prisoners. The Ceylon Solidarity Campaign is organising to this end, and holds public meetings, arranges pickets and issues regular bulletins to publicise the situation in Ceylon and expose the class nature of the coalition government. Material on Ceylon and further information are obtainable from the Secretary, Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, 9, Dennington Park Mansions, London N.W.6.

J.Symonds

*The Ceylon Committee is composed of elements who broke away from the Ceylon Solidarity Campaign in September 1971 and organised with the aim of diverting opposition to the repression in Ceylon, separating the police and army from the State and raising no criticism of the government. Their demands are for the restoration of "normal" bourgeois democracy in Ceylon and "fair trials" for the prisoners against whom the government is bringing no charges.

The themes of this article will be developed at greater length in further material shortly to be published, which will include an exclusive interview with Bala Tampoe, secretary of the LSSP(R), and an article on the Ceylonese economy by Brian Davey. This can be obtained after 13 July from your nearest IMG branch or 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE IN S.ASIA;

The Revolutionary Struggle in South Asia; its significance for the World Revolutionary Movement. Public Meeting 7.30p.m., July 18th. Conway Hall. Speakers—Nigel Harris (IS) Tariq Ali (IMG) and others. Organised by the Ceylon Solidarity Campaign.

The arms the Soviet Union won't send

THE SEVENTH FLEET

The Vietnamese have more than once attacked the Seventh Fleet and damaged some of its vessels. There are coastal artillery posts which can reach them, and special torpedo boats and three Mig 21s were also used in these attacks. But the very fact that such actions have been the exception rather than the rule, proves that the Vietnamese army does not have the necessary equipment to stop the Seventh Fleet happily cruising around the Gulf of Tonkin.

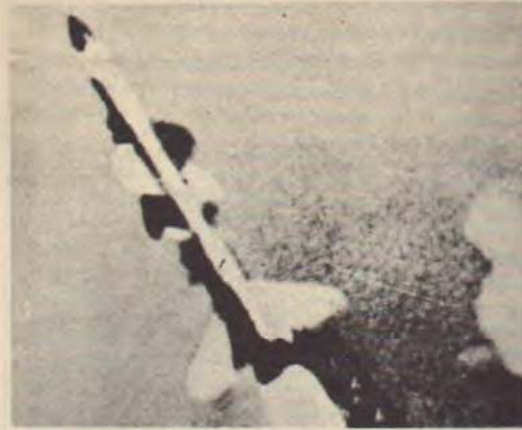
Vietnam has never, so far as we know, had the famous STYX missile used by the Egyptian navy (to sink the Israeli destroyer *Eilat* in 1967) and the Indians (who recently sank the Pakistani destroyer *Kaila*). These are subsonic missiles, 24 feet long, with a range of 15-25 miles and an automatic tracking device (the perfected version probably has an infra-red tracking device). They can be launched by the 'OSA 1' and 'OSA 2' type cruisers supplied to Egypt. The STYX is declared 'exceptional' in the international defence review. There are still none in Vietnam, nor are there any 'Shaddock's', or the latest SS N9 missiles.

There are also planes which are better suited to attacking battleships than the Mig 21, which is not well protected against the US defences, and was designed as a fighter plane, not for ground attack and tactical support: in particular the Sukhoi SU 7 (used in Egypt before the Six Days' War) and SU 11 (used there since). They have not been seen in Vietnam, either.

MINE-SWEEPERS

The North Vietnamese ports have been mined. At Vladivostok, on the Pacific, there are special mine-sweepers. For many weeks now the North Vietnamese ports have been blockaded, but there is no word of the Soviet Pacific Fleet escorting the Vladivostok mine-sweepers towards Haiphong.

According to military experts, Israel would in an emergency destroy the defences of the Suez canal by long-range cannon from the east bank of the canal, rather than risk her planes beyond the defence lines, which would be too dangerous. But every day, hundreds of planes cross over into North Vietnam with minimal losses. Contrary to some press reports, this is not because the B 52s are protected from missiles by electronic screening. EB 66's and Intruders in fact accompany every wave of air attacks. Moreover, the classic anti-aircraft missiles, which don't operate by electronic detection, have become extremely inefficient against the use of laser-guided bombs and target-seeking devices. According to the Pentagon, it takes an average of 280 North Vietnamese missiles to score one hit against a US plane!



Griffon (above) and Ganef missiles: their use against B 52s could make all the difference



The SAM II is apparently the best missile the USSR supplies to Vietnam. It dates from 1951, is very sensitive to electronic interference, has easily detectable launching pads, cannot be used above 1,000 metres, or at the height of the B 52 flights, and experiences very strong inertia which allows planes to evade it at low and medium altitudes. The SAM III missile, supplied in large quantities to Egypt, is much less susceptible to interference, has stronger acceleration and suffers less inertia. Neither the SAM III nor the SA 4 and SA 5 are present in Vietnam.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE

As for the missiles which could be used against the B 52, *Le Monde* has this to say: "Apart from interception attempts by Mig 21s, a possibility excluded by the presence of Phantom fighters alongside the B 52s, the situation could only be modified by the use of the Ganef or Griffon type Soviet missiles. The Ganef—there are a few in Egypt—is a 30 foot rocket with a range of up to 50 miles, and operative to a height of 15 miles. The Griffon is a very big anti-aircraft missile, 54 foot long, 2-stage, and capable of destroying a plane at 18 miles altitude. Their detection and tracking equipment includes 'counter-counter' devices which the Americans are some way from developing..."

FIGHTER PLANES

The Americans are using their best planes in Vietnam, such as the F-4F with its 'attacking beak'. According to the official description, this Phantom's special flying qualities enable it "to make quicker and tighter turns when necessary, while it is considerably more stable and manoeuvrable throughout its flight performance". The best fighter plane supplied to Vietnam by the USSR is the Mig 21. The Six Day War demonstrated its inferiority to the French Mirage, which is itself far inferior to the American Phantom. It has a relatively low flight speed. The Phantom can carry much better weaponry, has much greater freedom of action and jet power. The Mig is no match for the American planes.

The Russians do however have a Mig 23, which is apparently the best fighter plane in the world today. It is used with impunity over Sinai, and according to the Israelis a third of those supplied to Egypt are already piloted by Egyptians. It has very high flight speeds, and can go up to at least 15-18 miles altitude, well beyond the B 52, and cannot be intercepted by Phantoms. It is so worrying to the USA that they have started a special programme to try to catch up (with the F 14 and F 15). There is even a Mig 28...and vertical—or short-run-take-off planes, which unlike the Mig 21 are not dependent on long runways. But none of these are available to the Vietnamese.

The above article is taken from the 17 June issue of *Rouge*, weekly newspaper of the *Ligue Communiste, French Section of the Fourth International*.

The Nixon visit

Despite intense pressure from the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union, the Vietnamese liberation fighters have refused to back down in the face of Nixon's blockade and all-out-bombing campaign. In response to Nixon's blockade and trip to Moscow, the Vietnamese have refused to accept the Soviet bureaucrats' urgings to stop their struggle and negotiate on the terms of the U.S. imperialists.

Nhan Dan, the organ of the North Vietnamese Communist Party, published a sharp criticism of some of President Nixon's pronouncements during his recent trip to the Soviet Union. The criticism was signed "commentator", the designation used for semi-official statements.

"At no time does the newspaper point out that the statements of the American chief executive were made in the USSR", noted *Agence France-Presse*, "but the preciseness of the quotes leaves no room for doubt."

The article referred, for instance, to Nixon's hypocritical commiseration with the children who died during the Nazi siege of Leningrad.

The commentator, in an unmistakable message to the Kremlin bureaucrats who were wining and dining America's number one war criminal, wrote:

"It is obvious that in order for the children of the world to be able to avoid being massacred and to live in peace, the adults will have to oppose the American imperialists and not recoil in the face of their threats. All men of conscience must distinguish between what is reasonable and what is absurd, between what is good and what is evil, between friends and enemies."

"During a banquet, Nixon bragged that he would like to create a world of peace for all peoples", the newspaper observed, adding that "the president's fine words are being drowned out by the noise of the American bombs that day and night are plunging the Vietnamese homeland into mourning."

After noting that "Nixon says that the great powers must set an example and not let themselves be drawn into confrontations provoked by small powers", the commentator asks: "Does he want the great powers to follow the example being set by the United States in Vietnam? He threatens other countries so that they will let the United States have its way, and he denies them the right to support the victims of aggression. This kind of talk is coming from an international hooligan."

Another North Vietnamese statement was reported by syndicated columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak in the June 14 *New York Post*. According to Evans and Novak, the North Vietnamese "accused the Soviet Union of putting its own 'national interests' over those of the world revolution". They quote the following from the May 21 North Vietnamese army newspaper:

"Communists always consider the revolution of each nation an inseparable part of the world revolution. They never set national interests against the interests of the world revolution nor place private national interests above the common interests of the world revolution, much less serve their own national selfishness."

The only way to answer Nixon's latest offensive in Vietnam, it says, is by "a relentless attack against the U.S. imperialists."

The refusal of the Vietnamese to give up in the face of the brutal U.S. aggression continues to inspire and set an example of struggle for all people fighting for freedom from oppression around the world. The Soviet government's denial of adequate military aid to Vietnam and its collaboration with the U.S. ruling class against the Vietnamese is a despicable betrayal of this international struggle.

The above is taken from the 30 June issue of *The Militant*, weekly newspaper of the *Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in the United States*.

Britain and the Gulf

June 9 was the seventh anniversary of the outbreak of armed struggle in Dhofar, part of the Sultanate of Oman. From its base at Salala on the coast, Britain is leading an army of local mercenaries against the guerrillas of the Popular Front. As the guerrilla war enters its eighth year, reports tell of intensified fighting along the boundary between Dhofar and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. In May British piloted planes and British-officered troops crossed the frontier into Yemen. They attacked the border town of Hauf, destroying the school, the literacy centre and the medical centre, and attacked the Lenin School, where 300 Dhofari children study under a system of pupil self-management. In other fighting Yemeni forces are reported to have destroyed an Omani fort at Habrout, forty miles inland.

These border clashes are the culmination of a British campaign that began at the end of last year's monsoon in early October, and has lasted up to the start of this year's monsoon, at the beginning of June. Code-named "Operation Jaguar" the campaign had three aims.

1. To establish a line of fire-bases along the Dhofar-Yemen border and block all communication between the two. Although the total border runs for 200 miles inland it is only the first 40-50 that are vital since they are mountainous with tropical vegetation; the rest is desert and provides no cover for guerrillas.

2. To reoccupy parts of the eastern province of Dhofar, the most populous zone, and because it had seen the least fighting up to last year, the one where popular mobilisation was weakest.

3. To terrorise the population by intensified bombing, sudden helicopter-borne attacks, and an economic blockade designed to starve them out and force them to surrender.

In October-November of last year British-officered Arab troops and a detachment of the British Special Air Services attacked into eastern Dhofar. But by the end of the year they had suffered heavy casualties: several SAS men were killed, although the British were able to keep this information quiet until it leaked out in January. As in Vietnam, it is always possible for the imperialist forces to penetrate specific parts of a liberated area provided they devote sufficient fire-power to it. In the eastern province of Dhofar they have been able to seize a certain number of strong points. But as elsewhere, these are subject to constant bombardment by guerrilla forces. In the new year the British attacked westwards. To reinforce their eastern and western campaigns they built a line of fire-bases in the desert—the "Leopard Line"—north of the tropical mountains in which the popular army moves. While these bases were in themselves away from the strategically key zones, they were relatively inaccessible to the guerrillas because of the lack of cover. And from them the British were able to cut into the mountains, southwards, to meet parallel thrusts coming northwards into the mountains from the coast. In the west the main new British camp, at Thaqbeet, became the focus of continued forays, ambushes and shellings, through the first months of this year. The British tried a series of landings on the coast of the western province, and stepped up aerial attacks on

supply lines from Yemen—as the US had done along the Ho Chi Minh trail in Vietnam. As in the eastern region, the imperialist forces were able to seize specific strong points and inflict considerable suffering on the population. But the People's Liberation Army and the Popular Militia, which make up the guerrilla forces, have been able to keep supply lines open, and in the middle of May they reoccupied the key British base of Thaqbeet. With the start of the monsoon the level of fighting will slow down, until the beginning of October.

The intensification of the war in Dhofar is only one part of a more general imperialist plan to strengthen its position in the Gulf, and to ensure "stability" in the aftermath of Britain's partial withdrawal from the non-Omani parts of the Gulf last year. A key target on the imperialist agenda has been the elimination of the government in People's Yemen. Attacks from Oman, from northern Yemen and from Saudi Arabia have taken place in the past six months. And British officers in Dhofar have openly said that the precondition for ending the guerrilla struggle there is that there be a change of regime in Democratic Yemen.

In the Gulf itself, the US has stepped up its presence. It has taken over the running of a naval base on the island of Bahrain, which the British evacuated at the end of last year. And it has given \$150 m. in aid to the Sultan of Oman, to help him finance his anti-guerrilla campaign. A US fishing firm, *Mardello*, of which Shirley Temple's husband is the boss, has set up a fleet of "trawlers" off the 1,000-mile Omani coast to carry out anti-guerrilla

and anti-Russian naval surveillance, under the guise of carrying out deepsea fishing. Nixon's visit to see the Shah after his trip to Moscow has also underlined US concern about an area on which the US will increasingly have to rely as its own oil production runs down while its demand shoots up.

The key to revolutionary strategy and therefore to counter-revolutionary strategy is the state of the mass movements in the Gulf states. On its own Dhofar does not directly menace the oil monopolies. But if its example can be followed by mass action and urban guerrilla attacks in the Gulf states then the position of the monopolies will be threatened. Since the start of 1972 there have been two waves (mid-March, mid-May) of strikes and demonstrations in Bahrain, the first since 1965. These have been met by armoured cars and mass arrests. In Dubai oil workers have been on strike demanding the right to unionise and higher wages; the ruler Sheikh Rashid has tried to replace local Arabs by bringing in scab labour from India. In Oman itself corruption in the state apparatus has been causing increased anger: the Minister of Health has appointed himself sole authorised supplier of medicines to the ministry and is believed to have embezzled several tens of thousands of pounds. It is too early to say how strong these different trends are. But the extension of the war from Dhofar to the Gulf is the strategic priority.

THE FUTURE

Ernest Mandel considers bourgeois fears about the threat that present production of material goods represents for the future of humanity

The letter sent February 9 to the president of the Common Market Commission by Sicco Mansholt, a Social-Democratic member of the commission, continues to make news.* It is the first time that a political leader with some international authority has publicly given voice to the fears that a series of scholars have expressed continuously for years. This gives Mansholt unquestioned value as a publicizer. The fact that he has since become president of the commission lends his act still more importance.

THE GREAT FEAR OF THE 21st CENTURY

Mansholt's letter is based on the "Club of Rome Report", which in turn is an extension of the "Meadows Report" published in June 1971 by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The various reports summarize the fears current today in scholarly and "enlightened" capitalist circles about the threat that present production of material goods represents for the future of humanity. (The fact that these fears may be so widely trumpeted at the moment when capitalist growth is again slowing down is not at all a fortuitous coincidence.)

The population explosion and a potentially increasing shortage of food, pollution and the rapid degeneration of the human environment, the exhaustion of certain sources of raw materials—these are the bases of this "great fear of the twenty-first century" that is being propagated in technocratic circles. The future, even the physical survival, of the human race seems to be threatened if things keep going the way they have been.

Certainly, it is easy to underline some errors in reasoning and some doubtful, even inadmissible, extrapolations in the Meadows Report, which Mansholt has reproduced with an obvious lack of critical spirit. The Malthusian idea of a population growth that outstrips progress in food production—propounded ceaselessly for two centuries—has been proven false historically. There is no reason to suppose that it will be verified during the next fifty years.

The notion that the current rate of population growth can be simply extended without taking account of the radical effects that social, economic, ideological, and moral changes can have on the development of the world's population is absurd. Not only the example of Western Europe, but even that of the Soviet Union demonstrates clearly that population growth tends to decline, and then stabilize relatively once the threshold of civilization and urbanization has been crossed.

There is not the slightest scientific basis for the notion that 500 years from now the earth will be able to sustain a population of only 500,000,000 to 1,000,000,000 human beings—and that only at a very low standard of living. Such a notion extends present-day technology and the present lack of balance between the use and renewal of natural resources.

But to suppose that no other technology is possible is to demonstrate an appalling poverty of imagination.

In fact, the superpessimism of the Meadows Report, reproduced by Mansholt, has exactly this social root. Capitalism is obviously in the process of undermining all the bases of civilization. It threatens humanity not only with nuclear death, but also with strangulation by pollution and with the murderous waste of the fundamental sources of wealth: nature and people.

The "great fear of the twenty-first century" is based on the thesis that no social system other than capitalism is possible. If this manifestly apologetic hypothesis is abandoned, the problem changes and must be formulated as an alternative: either capitalism survives, in which case the decline of material civilization seems inevitable; or else capitalism is replaced by socialism, and then there is no reason to suppose that we are threatened by cosmic catastrophe. For a long time revolutionary socialists have formulated the problem in these terms—socialism or barbarism. The value of the Meadows—Mansholt Report is that it fundamentally confirms the validity of this alternative.

IRRESPONSIBLE CRITIQUES

The Marxist critique of the Meadows Report and the Mansholt letter must start from the contradictory nature of their analysis, from their cowardly refusal to draw the revolutionary social conclusions dictated by capitalism's obvious bankruptcy on a world scale. Mansholt and Meadows must be reproached for not having gone very far in their critique of capitalism, of its technology, its motivations, its fatal socio-economic logic.

On the other hand, it is irresponsible—not to say worse—to reproach Mansholt with having "exaggerated", with having gone too far, with wanting to create an atmosphere of panic so as to "discourage" workers' struggles—or even to see the whole business as nothing but a pretext for rejecting wage increases! Still, this is the position adopted by the representatives of various official Communist parties, particularly in France and West Germany.

This suggests an analogy with the same sort of position adopted by certain ultraleftist circles (above all, but unfortunately not only, Maoist circles) on the question of nuclear weapons. Saying that the revelation of the real threat of extinction of all advanced forms of life on earth in the event of a nuclear war is an "invention" of bourgeois ideologues aimed at forcing the masses to "capitulate to nuclear blackmail" is an irresponsibility in the same vein as asserting that the problems of the pollution of the atmosphere and the ocean "divert" from workers' struggles.

Such remarks reveal a sad reversal of responsibilities. The capitalist system and the bourgeoisie are not attacked for manufacturing genocidal arms; the capitalist ideologues—they are bourgeois!—are attacked for alerting public opinion to the danger of these arms. The capitalist mode of production is not attacked for threatening the survival of the human race; the scholars—they are bourgeois!—are placed in the dock for calling attention to the threat. A very fine way to "combat bourgeois ideology"—hide the crimes of the capitalist system and the bourgeoisie!

REFUSAL TO GO ALL THE WAY

The basic weakness of the Mansholt report, which in effect makes it a document without a future, lies in its refusal to go all the way in its analysis and in the solutions it proposes. In fact, after diagnosing the disease as terminal, it prescribes a few aspirins as a cure: tariffs and fiscal measures to ensure that we choke to death a few decades later!

Mansholt begins by postulating that we must plan the use of resources and the major products of consumption, both agricultural and industrial. But he refuses to ask whether such planning is possible in the framework of a system of private property, competition, and the market economy. It is not through ignorance or stupidity that all over the world automobiles and petrochemical detergents that pollute the atmosphere are manufactured, that all humanity's primary energy sources are burned up at full speed. These are iron laws of competition, of the quest of each trust, each capitalist firm for individual profit. They are forced to take this road.

To want to rationalize the use of resources and means of production without touching these bases of the disease is to want to commit suicide rationally as opposed to blindly.

In the same way, Mansholt recommends that agricultural production be increased, even when it is not profitable (which, by the way, is exactly the opposite of what the Common Market has done for nearly fifteen years); that industrial products of consumption that do not wear down so rapidly be manufactured; that collective consumption be given priority over private consumption; that scarce resources be "rationed" so as to give equal opportunity to all; that scientific research be reoriented.

But all these nice things are completely unrealizable in a system founded on the private appropriation of social surplus product, on the market economy, and on the rule of profit. This system must stimulate lack of satisfaction and permanent want in the area of material

commodities; it must favour private enrichment, the struggle of all against all, and the other beautiful "values" of civilized bourgeois society. It is that society that has produced all the poisonous fruits that Meadows and Mansholt denounce. To want to proceed with the same system but under different laws is to hope that apples will produce pineapples.

Yes, economic growth is not an end in itself. Ten years ago, well before Meadows and Mansholt, we asserted this elementary truth of Marxism in *Marxist Economic Theory*. The aim of humanity is humanity—and not a continually rising accumulation of less and less useful material things. The automatic and assured satisfaction of basic material needs is a precondition for the full flowering of human capacities and potentials. But the latter can in no way be confused with the former. And this has nothing in common with the Stalinist thesis, taken over from bourgeois economists, of the endlessly growing needs of humanity for material commodities, a thesis that can be based on just one thing: the impossibility of communism.

Yes, worldwide planning of resources and of the principal instruments of human production is an urgent necessity. But this presupposes the totalization of both the costs and the results on the level of the whole society, and not on the level of each factory or each company. It presupposes the suppression of the crying inequality of consumption within nations and among nations. It presupposes the ending of that monstrous waste: the underutilization of human and material resources or their use for aims that are inimicable to humanity (like armaments). It presupposes that production be no longer oriented toward effective demand, but toward previously established, rational priorities.

It would also presupposes that construction of reasonably comfortable housing for all not be discontinued under the pretext that there are too many unoccupied luxury apartments, or that too much is spent on constructing banks, administrative quarters, and office buildings. In other words, it presupposes capitalism's replacement by socialism, rather than partial "rationalisation" of the former.

Mansholt proclaims his rejection of "state socialism", by which he means socialism in transition from society under a bureaucratic management, such as exists in the Soviet Union. By all evidence, that society exerts no attractive power on the labouring masses of Western Europe. Mansholt, in fact, renders it more attractive when he asserts the necessity of lowering the standard of living in the West (no doubt to the level of the Russian workers?).

But he shows his bad faith by ignoring the fact that there are other "models" of transitional society besides that in which the bureaucracy wields a monopoly of political and economic power (and in which, we might point out in passing, the principle of individual profitability of factories has resulted in pollution problems similar to those of the capitalist societies).

A strict planning of resources and economic choices such as is suggested by the "Mansholt bomb" can be completely democratic. It can issue from the masses of producers and consumers managing their own factories and their own affairs, mutually consulting to coordinate their plans and wants, establishing their priorities after wide public discussions in national congresses and international workers' councils. Furthermore, this is the only effective form of planning in today's world, the only form that can deal with competition and the market economy. And all the ills denounced by Mansholt flow in the last analysis from the market economy, from competition, and from profit—that is, from Capital.

*Mansholt, who was formerly the Dutch minister of agriculture, advocates a "closed circuit" economy of recycled products, to be created by tax measures. He acknowledges that his plans would entail "a sharp cutback in material wellbeing per head of population and limitation in the free use of goods".

Prison Interview

Mike 'Sirros'—a Turkish citizen and left wing activist—awaits deportation in Pentonville Prison, ostensibly because his permit has expired. But, the Special Branch are convinced he is connected with the Angry Brigade. He was recently given 14 days in solitary confinement after a demonstration in the prison.

Why do you think the State has decided to deport you?

I think my general left wing activity is especially important, it is so obviously 'sane' that the State cannot easily portray me as a mad bomber—deportation is much simpler. This is quite common; there are in Pentonville at any moment about 100 'immigrants'—last year about 350 were deported.

What are the reasons for this situation?

It's imperialism manifested at home—hundreds of foreigners come here thinking they can make good and they don't know what is happening to them. British imperialism at present wants *skilled* workers, so there is a tendency to send home *unskilled* surplus labour. The ones who are deported are those who present the greatest threat—for instance black people who have kept part of their own language and culture, or are involved in left wing political activities.

It's impossible to be liberal about it, it's part of a tactic of imperialism, people are being shipped around the world like leaves. It's something the left has ignored; they should take it up and explain it—not leave it up to the liberals.

Could you say something about explicitly 'political' prisoners?

Right, in this prison for instance there are two such prisoners, myself and Tony Soares of *Grass Roots*, a black community paper. We are both under constant observation, we have two 'screws' to 'show us around' instead of the usual one 'screw' to 'show around' five prisoners. When other prisoners realise that we are not in fact raving murderers—it makes them think!

What do you think the left should do about 'political' prisoners?

Well, the first thing is to clear up a whole lot of confusion about legality and guilt. For instance, the Angela Davis campaign was largely based on propaganda that she was innocent, whereas this is absolutely irrelevant, just as it is for the Stoke Newington Eight. They are all victims of the capitalist state's oppression of resistance to itself, that's why we support them. Solidarity with political prisoners is very important. For instance, in the case of Pauline Conroy (originally charged along with the Stoke Newington Eight) it was indispensable. It helps the final result of trials by giving strength to the person on trial, impressing the jury, and enabling political points to be made.

What do you think is the reason for the present upsurge in struggle in prisons?

Well, in Britain the whole social peace seems to be breaking up. The upsurge in prisons is largely a reflection of the struggle outside. Over the last two months quite a few concessions have been gained *through struggle*: increased visits, better conditions, etc. Soon demands will be made for privacy of communication and conjugal rights. It would be very useful for left militants to talk to a few prisoners—to understand the significance of all this.

The next issue of *The Red Mole* will carry an article examining the role of prisons in capitalist society.



Recent demonstration in Stockholm against inadequate city planning policies

Tariq Ali Expelled From Pakistan

On the morning of June 25th, 1972, Comrade Tariq Ali, a member of the International Executive Committee of the Fourth International and the political bureau of its British section, was arrested at Karachi airport, held for five hours and then expelled from the country. Comrade Ali is a Pakistani citizen and was intending to spend a few months in the country discussing with political associates and meeting members of his family. The police officials at the airport informed Tariq Ali that the order for his expulsion was part of a series of orders issued against him by the Yahya Khan military dictatorship because of his activities in support of the Bengali liberation struggle. Comrade Ali strongly protested his expulsion and issued a statement to the press, which we publish below. In Pakistan itself his expulsion has received wide publicity and has been condemned by all the groups on the left. Meanwhile legal action against the Pakistan government is being considered and supporters are being requested to send cables protesting the expulsion to the Minister for Law, who was a member of the International War Crimes Tribunal on Vietnam and, in the past, was well-known for his defence of civil liberties. Telegrams should be sent to:

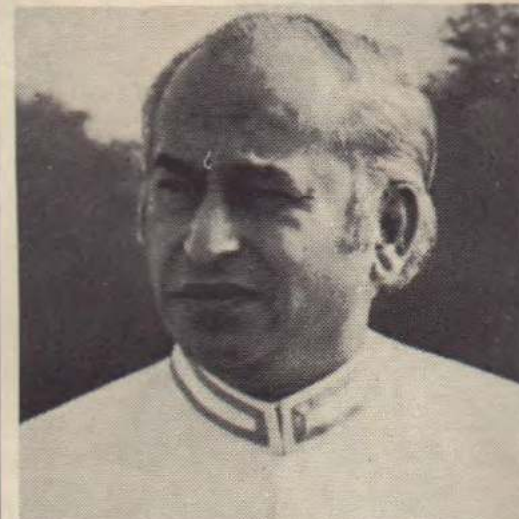
Mahmud Ali Kasuri,
Minister for Law,
Government of Pakistan,
ISLAMABAD

Press Statement

The decision to prevent me from entering Pakistan, despite the fact that I am a Pakistani citizen and hold a Pakistani passport, represents a gross violation of civil liberties which the present regime claims to defend in Pakistan. The fact that my expulsion was carried out by police officials who blatantly stated that they were simply carrying out orders issued by the military dictatorship of General Yahya Khan, clearly shows that in the art of repression, as in many other fields, the present government is simply continuing the policies of its predecessors. Yahya and the clique of Generals who helped him rule Pakistan are no longer in power, but many of the laws with which they governed continue to remain in force today and are also applied from time to time as my expulsion clearly indicates.

I have been prevented from entering my country, but what are the charges against me? The main accusation levelled against me is that I unceasingly and relentlessly opposed the genocidal war waged by the Pakistan Army against the Bengali people. That I wrote articles in *The Red Mole* and numerous other publications, defending the right of the Bengali people to national self-determination and urging support for the struggle against the military dictatorship of Yahya Khan. To this and other related charges I plead "guilty" and am quite prepared to defend myself before the Pakistani workers, poor peasants and students, who alone have the right to judge my actions. But my expulsion cannot hide the fact that the real criminals are still free and have not even been brought to trial, leaving aside the question of their continued residence in Pakistan. These are the military and civil officers who unleashed the war against Bengal thinking that they could drown the Bengali national movement in blood and thereby save their own skins. Some of those

whose crimes were too blatant even for the Pakistani ruling class, have been dismissed or forcibly retired. Others continue to hold office even today. And if Pakistan is not allowed to be contaminated by those who, like myself, supported the struggle of the Bengali people against Yahya's oppression and continue to support it even today against the repression of the Awami League, why is the Pakistani President in India talking with Mrs Indira Gandhi, the very person who engineered the military defeat of the Pakistan army.



Bhutto: meets Mrs Gandhi in India but expels Tariq Ali from Pakistan

It is also stated that I am guilty of having written a book against Pakistan. It is true that I wrote a book directed against the Pakistani landlords and capitalists, but here again it is not the Pakistani masses who decide, as the book, *Pakistan: Military Rule or People's Power?*, is still banned and only recently permission was refused for it to be published in Pakistan. Once again I repeat: I stand by every word in the book which was written in the interests of the oppressed and toiling masses of Pakistan. Banning the book or its author will not prevent revolutionary ideas from being disseminated in the country as people are not great respecters of frontiers and policemen.

I demand that the Pakistan government immediately lifts the ban imposed on me and enable me to return immediately to my country. If there are any charges against me then let them be brought out into the open so that I can defend myself before the people of Pakistan. My political views will not change. I have been and remain a revolutionary militant, a member of the Fourth Communist International and regardless of whether the ban is removed or not I will return to Pakistan one day.

Tariq Ali
27 June, 1972

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Irish Film

A new thirty minute colour documentary film about Irish political activity in Britain, *Bringing It All Back Home*, is now available for showing. A Goodtimes/Time Out Magazine production, it focusses on the activities of the Anti-Internment League earlier this year, particularly those leading up to the March 26th demonstration for which the use of Trafalgar Square was banned.

Bringing It All Back Home is a well-made film, with some welcome light interludes such as the interview with a Special Branch man, but its main effect unfortunately is to reinforce the real weaknesses from which the AIL is only now beginning to break. In some cases, for instance the statement in the accompanying brochure that "The campaigners stated that the way to find an acceptable solution to the Irish problem would be by bringing the crisis back to the seat of political power in Westminster", what was merely implicit in the AIL's failure to take up a full solidarity position (and its resultant confusion when direct rule was introduced) becomes an explicit position. And generally, the film tends to concentrate even more exclusively than the AIL at one time did on the question of internment. It thus deals with Irish political activity in Britain purely at the level of protest (at one form of British oppression), ignoring almost completely the fundamental issues of national self-determination and even British troops, and those who have consistently campaigned on these.

Despite these grave weaknesses, however, this film can play a useful part in our activity in Britain—but only if it is used in the right way, as an introduction to a discussion on the kind of Irish solidarity movement we need to build and the considerable mistakes on this score that have been made in the past.

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A year ago few seasoned observers of ruling class politics in America would have predicted that by summer '72 George McGovern would be in the lead for the Presidential nomination of the Democratic Party. After all it wasn't long ago that he was debating neither Hubert Humphrey nor Muskie, but Linda Jenness, the trotskyist Presidential candidate of the Socialist Workers Party (SWP), on important issues such as the war in Indo-China, Nixon's domestic policies, abortion laws, etc. Since then George McGovern, the "non-serious, fringe candidate", has become a frontrunner for the U.S. Presidency. And this despite the hostility of a large chunk of the Democratic Party machine and the unprincipled combination Humphrey, Wallace, Shirley Chisholm and Muskie created as a last desperate bid to try to harness this hostility and prevent McGovern from being nominated at Miami Beach next month.

McGOVERN: CHILD OF INFLATION AND VIETNAM

There are two interrelated reasons for the rise of George McGovern. While he himself always was and still remains an extremely clever capitalist politician, the overwhelming support he has obtained in the primaries reflects, to a certain extent, the dissatisfaction of the electorate with the continuing inflation and the war in Indo-China.

McGovern's consistent opposition to the war within the framework of bourgeois politics has undoubtedly won him enormous support. This has been further multiplied by the North Vietnamese and NLF military offensive which led to the fall of the province of Quang Tri and once again brought back the war as a major issue within American politics. This fact enabled McGovern to counteract the effect of Nixon's visits to both Peking and Moscow, which were and are used by the Republican administration for internal electoral purposes. Thus the effect of the offensive inside the United States should not be underestimated and the decisive votes cast for McGovern in the Californian primary may well have been decided by the fall of Quang Tri.

The second important fact which has aided McGovern's rise has been the economic measures carried out by the Nixon administration from August 15th, 1971 onwards. The cumulative effect of these has brought new gains for McGovern and it was undoubtedly the first flush of these which made him rashly promise far-reaching new reforms such as a minimum guaranteed wage, which would be the biggest reform in the entire history of capitalism.

THE AMERICAN WORKERS AFTER THE FREEZE

Nixon's wage freeze has only legitimised a situation which has been developing since 1967, namely, that for the first time over three decades the real disposable income of the American working class has stagnated and has now begun to decline. This represents an extremely significant break for American politics as it implies that for the first time in 35 years we could begin to see political opposition developing from within the American working class. Thus after Nixon's measures were announced even the most reactionary of reactionary trade union leaders, George Meany, was forced to make demagogic references to the class struggle! None of this will happen overnight, but the very possibility of large scale radicalisation in the working class is enough to give the American bosses a whole series of nightmares. Already the militancy of the young workers in the General Motors plant in Lordstown (see *The Red Mole*, 37) is an indication of what could follow. An additional and extremely serious complication for the American ruling class is the fact that a politicisation of American workers would take place in a context where social layers on the periphery and the margins of the working class have already undergone a certain process of radicalisation, particularly ethnic minorities, students, and women. A working class radicalisation would thus take in the experiences of these layers and transcend them. That is why a

USA: Election '72



Muskie and Humphrey exchange pleasantries with McGovern (right) while in reality linking up with Wallace (above) to organise some of the dirtiest infighting the Democratic Party has seen in recent years.

THE MEANING OF GEORGE McGOVERN

political orientation to the problems faced by the working class is vital for all revolutionary groups, which have, up till now, mainly recruited their members from non working-class layers. If this orientation is applied it makes it possible to win over the most politicised workers direct to the revolutionary movement and enable them to fight against capitalist politics in the trade unions and the factories.

AN UNDECIDED RULING CLASS?

The potential dangers inherent in the political and economic situation of the United States at the present moment make a politician like George McGovern attractive to certain sections of the American ruling class. The reforms proposed by McGovern are related to the extent of the crisis which has gripped American society. If a large enough section of the American ruling class feels that reforms, of the sort proposed by McGovern, are the only or, at any rate, the easiest way of curbing militancy in the working class, co-opting some of the radicals of yesteryear, and generally taming the situation, then they would undoubtedly opt for them and boost McGovern as the man to bring in a new New Deal. Of course for the ruling class to decide on such a course would be an extremely serious step and the best indicator of American capitalism's crisis. Up till now the reaction of the millionaires has been the opposite and as McGovern appeared as the most likely Democratic presidential candidate, so his financial backers pressured him to retreat on some of his domestic proposals. As *The Guardian* commented approvingly in a leader: "...the McGovern delegates at the party's pre-convention committee meetings have surprised observers with their restraint and readiness to compromise. Several of the more controversial McGovern proposals have been dropped or fudged by the platform committee." (July 1, 1972)

MILLIONAIRE SUPPORT/BACKSLIDING/MORE CLARIFICATIONS

McGovern himself has been backtracking on a whole series of proposals and as Dick Roberts writing in the American Trotskyist weekly, *The Militant* noted: "The senator from South Dakota must convince the wealthy rulers of this country that no matter what he says in

public, he is a loyal servant of the capitalists and has no intentions of rocking the boat if elected. So McGovern's real views are being aired in the financial press—safely distant from the overwhelming majority of American voters."

Roberts went on to provide a summary of the thoughts of McGovern as revealed to the financial press. For instance the May 27th issue of the important *Business Week* summarised an interview with McGovern thus: "Now, with the 49-year-old South Dakotan out in front in the primaries, his thoughts on such matters as tax reform and income redistribution carry much more weight—and he is trying hard to sound less radical...."

"The closer he gets to the nomination, the more he seeks to broaden his political base and the more he modifies the details of the economic positions he has staked out."

McGOVERN AND THE AMERICAN LEFT

McGovern's campaign has not only attracted the liberals as one would have expected, but has also won over many of the "ultra-left" critics of revolutionary Marxism. Thus a section of the Black Panthers, Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, *Ramparts* magazine and numerous others have declared their support for McGovern and his campaign. This failure to break with capitalist politics shows up the weakness of spontaneism and similar ideologies which have emerged from the massive radicalisation in the United States. The same people who opposed Leninist organisations and the mundane tasks connected with party-building with the illiterate slogan, "The groups are nothing, the movement is everything" are revealing their true colours by jumping on the McGovern bandwagon.

The largest group on the extreme left in the United States today is the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance (YSA), its youth organisation. The SWP has put its own candidates for President and Vice-President in

the field, Linda Jenness and Andrew Pulley respectively, not because it has any illusions in the American electoral system, but to use this period of heightened political interest to present socialist ideas to large numbers of people, and to stress at the same time its complete disdain of all the capitalist candidates. This has won them the wrath of the American CP, which has declared the necessity of building "independent formations to keep McGovern 'honest'," and accuses the SWP of helping Nixon and Wallace by their attacks on McGovern. This attitude of regarding Nixon as the main enemy and his defeat as the main priority lets the Democrats completely off the hook and is contradictory to the C.P.'s decision to run its own candidates. But the CP slanders and Trotsky-baiting cannot cover up the fact that the SWP campaign is probably the largest campaign ever waged in the United States on a socialist platform. In Massachusetts, for instance, the SWP collected 100,625 signatures to get its candidates on the ballot, nearly 50,000 more than were necessary. All this shows the enormous possibilities which open up for making revolutionary propaganda to explain the futility of the choice being offered to American workers, namely, of electing representatives of different sections of U.S. capitalism to the White House for another four years.

McGovern's candidature is designed precisely to obscure this fact and to prevent the emergence of independent working class politics. That is why the SWP candidates and their weekly newspaper *The Militant* are absolutely correct to lay stress in exposing the real nature of the politics represented by George McGovern and his party.

Clarissa Howard

American students in Britain interested in helping the SWP campaign should write to: SWP Campaign, 706 Broadway, Eighth Floor, New York, N.Y. 10003.



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