

# The Red Mole

Paper of the International Marxist Group No. 53 16th October 1972 Price 5p.

## The Political Fight

The Red Mole has so far concentrated heavily on exposing the economic meaning of the government's incomes policy proposals. But Heath's package is part and parcel of a political attack on the trade unions. Anyone who doubts this should take a look at the speeches at the Conservative Party conference. Lord Carrington, Heath's right hand man, let the cat out of the bag when he said that the fight against 'inflation' was a battle against "industrial unrest and anarchy"

### POLITICAL FIGHT

For the capitalists, inflation means rising wages and the fight against it must mean a political fight against the organisational strength of the Labour movement. For the working class, inflation means the rising cost of living in a capitalist economy, and the fight against it and the struggle for higher wages, inevitably involves a political fight against the organisations of the capitalists: the struggle on the picket line against police strike breaking; the fight against the courts which have been trying miners, dockers and building workers over the last months; the battles against the Social Security which has been trying to prevent trade unionists from claiming their rights when on strike; and the struggle against Parliament, the main political centre of capitalism for passing the laws which are designed to attack the workers on many different fronts.

So far this year, workers' struggles against inflation for higher wages have succeeded in out-manoeuvring the ruling class time and again, thanks to the mass initiatives of the rank and file. Thus the flying pickets of the miners defeated government attempts to use the coal stocks in the power stations, and the building workers' flying pickets defeated the employers' attempts to break the strike.

### COUNTER-ATTACK

The Government is now counter-attacking on two fronts. First, it is trying to line up the middle classes, backward sections of workers, and the trade union bureaucracy against the struggle to defend working class living standards. In this way it hopes to isolate those sections of workers who are prepared to continue the struggle. But secondly, the Government is reorganising and strengthening the repressive forces of the State to defeat the new strike tactics and the rank and file organisation of the working class. The coming wage struggles will see a great stepping up of violence against strikers.

Two events on 11 October gave us a foretaste of government plans. At Courtauld's Deeside Mill, peaceful women pickets were viciously attacked by police. Two women were injured and Courtaulds were forced to announce the following day that they would not call in the police again. But at the very moment, it was also announced that special police strike breaking squads are being organised on permanent standby, ready to attack strike pickets and demonstrators at a moment's notice.

### CHALLENGE

This is a very serious challenge to the Labour movement. The industrial struggles this winter are likely to be even more bitter than those we have seen over the last year, and the trade union bosses are totally unprepared. They have accepted the principle of wage restraint and are simply haggling over the percentage points. Vic Feather has also accepted the principle of police intervention against strikers. Mr Carr was fulsome in his praise for Feather on this very point. It is therefore vital that militants in every area should take the initiative into their own hands, unite to establish a class struggle policy to defend working class living standards, and set up committees to organise the defence of the trade unions against capitalist attacks in the months ahead.

# UNITED ACTION CAN SMASH PAY PLAN

By JOHN MARSHALL

As the Government steps up its pressure on the living standards of the working class there can be only one answer. Negotiations with the Government should be broken off, and a clear policy for defending the working class and not profits should be put forward by the TUC. But instead, the TUC and the Labour Party are getting dragged further and further into confusion.

The TUC finds itself in this situation because it accepts that in some way the trade union movement should protect the interests of private industry and therefore of profits. This is rubbish. The job of the trade unions is to protect the interests of the working class, not to sort out the problems of capitalism. By starting off on the wrong basis the TUC is getting enmeshed in irrelevant arguments with Treasury economists over what the exact rate of inflation is, etc.

### REAL SITUATION

Arguing over decimal points has nothing to do with the real situation. The Government's proposals amount to a wage cut for everyone earning over £25 a week, and an attempt to get the unions to rely on the state machine rather than their own strength for winning wage rises. The trade union movement should have nothing to do with schemes to bail out capitalism, yet with the honourable exception of Doughty, of TASS and Sapper of the General Council, every member of the General Council has accepted the principle of negotiating an incomes policy. No union leader has yet come out clearly to explain the simple fact that the guard against price rises can only be automatic wage increases for every penny on prices and a massive flat rate increase in wages for all. Such a policy must be carried through by the trade union movement, and not by a state machine whose job it is to defend the employing class.

### PREPARING THE STRUGGLE

Union branch resolutions, demonstrations, mass meetings and stoppages must be used to try to stop a deal. Immediate united action



The struggle to free the five began to show the kind of unity in action which is needed to defeat Heath's pay plan by all groups and organisations opposed to the deal is an urgent necessity.

If the worst occurs and a deal is done, then the struggle is undoubtedly going to be harder, but that only means that organisation must be tougher and greater effort put in. Even if the TUC does a deal, big sections of the working class are not going to accept it. There are going to be big struggles as the Government tries to enforce the agreement. Local representative bodies must be set up in all areas to organise solidarity with any section of workers in struggled against the deal. Against a determined government attack and treachery by union leaders, only solidarity action on a truly massive scale will ensure victory.

### DEMANDS

A real campaign against the deal can still stop any negotiations being successful. It has to be realised, though, that this will not be the end of the story. If the Government cannot get what it wants by guile, it will try it by force. Inside the kid glove is the iron fist. The task now is to prepare united action of all trade unions, and if the TUC does a deal, of all trade unions rejecting the deal,

to present a common front to the Government and employers. In order to prepare the struggle action committees need to be prepared in every area. The key demands now are:

- \* An end to the negotiations.
- Demand from the employers:
- \* Automatic wage increases to compensate for every single penny of price increases.
  - \* A flat rate across the board increase at whatever the highest current wage demand is.
  - \* No acceptance of any form of incomes policy from any government under capitalism.
- For socialists and revolutionaries the key tasks, now are:
- \* To fight for rejection by all unions of any negotiations with the government on incomes policy.
  - \* To form united front organisations in every area and union to fight acceptance of the deal and if it is accepted to organise action against it.
  - \* To get all existing Councils of Action and LCDTUs to reject the deal and to propose nationally co-ordinated action against it.

## A.I.L. REAFFIRMS SOLIDARITY POSITION

The annual conference of the Anti-Internment League voted overwhelmingly last weekend to reaffirm its "solidarity with all those socialist and Republican organisations struggling against British imperialism in Ireland".

The conference opened with a slight air of depression, resulting from a newspaper interview given by paid organiser John Gray. In the interview, given almost a week before conference, but kept secret from the committee and members of the AIL until its appearance in print the day before the conference, Gray claimed that he was resigning in order to give himself greater freedom to criticise both wings of the Republican movement.

This was the first that many of the committee members had heard of Gray's criticism. He denied that his resignation was connected with the falling off of finance to the AIL, which had made it impossible to pay him his full wage.

Despite the resignation, and the manner of its release, the conference got off to a good start, with 49 delegates from the branches and affiliate organisations.

By GERY LAWLESS

Two motions on the agenda seemed to criticise the taken earlier this year. One, from IS, was withdrawn after IMG had moved an amendment to it. The other, from Haringey AIL, which sought to delete the solidarity position, was massively defeated.

Bob Purdie, formerly Scottish organiser of the ISC, was elected as organiser on a part time basis. The new committee includes John Gray and members of both wings of the Republican movement, IMG, Workers Fight, IS, PD, as well as independents.

### DEMONSTRATION

The next major event planned by the AIL is a demonstration in London on 12 November,

for which support is expected from all over Britain. Posters advertising this demo were distributed to delegates, and a draft model leaflet is expected to be ready for branches to copy during the next week.

A leaflet from Central London AIL, distributed at the conference, said in part, "The November 12th demonstration must be the key point in our work following the conference. It may not be as big as previous demonstrations. But it will be a more powerful testimony of our determination to keep up the fight, than a larger demonstration at a time of spontaneous mobilisation. It will be a political focus for the work of all branches, and will be especially useful for assisting new and weak branches".

After conference, the new organiser, Bob Purdie, appealed to all revolutionary socialist groups, Irish organisations, trade unions, student unions, Soc Socs, etc. to support the November Demonstration and to help build a mass movement of solidarity with the Irish struggle.

Brian Slocock looks at

# HEATH'S PLANS FOR YOUR WAGE PACKET

A recent public opinion poll quoted in last week's *Sunday Times* indicates that the initial response of many trade unionists to the government's proposals for wage restraint has been a very confused one.

This is not really surprising: one of the major mechanisms employed by the ruling class to maintain its power is the manipulation of "public opinion". Public opinion polls actually gauge the ideas that people are forced to develop in response to the activities of public authorities. These must be worked out on the basis of limited and often distorted information, no opportunity for discussion with those who are similarly affected, and cut off from any collective means by which new alternatives to those that are actually offered might be developed. It is little wonder that such opinions generally support the *status quo*.

Many trade unionists at first responded in a similar way to the Industrial Relations Act. It was only after an extensive campaign of discussion, education and protest organised by the TUC, the LCDTU and local trade union militants that the vast majority of the trade union movement became resolutely opposed to the Act. This defines quite clearly the urgent task that currently faces revolutionary and trade union militants: we must launch a big campaign to educate the mass of the working-class in the implications of the Government - TUC negotiations and begin to prepare a serious strategy to fight any attempts at wage restraint, from whatever quarter they may come.

## WHAT IS £2 WORTH?

The essential contents of the current government offer are that increases in basic wage rates over the next year should be limited to £2, gross earnings to £2.60, and retail price increases to 5 per cent. In order to lessen working-class fears that such an agreement might leave them defenceless against rampant inflation the proposals allow for a "threshold" clause that would grant an extra 20p in earning wages for every 1 per cent rise in the cost of living above 6 per cent; on the other hand, the government has insisted that any settlement involving a reduction in hours must set against the wage rises they have allowed a corresponding reduction at the rate of 75p per hour.

What exactly would such restrictions mean for the British working class? First let's take

the "average" industrial working man. At the present time the gross earnings of such a worker are about £34 a week; over the past few years his earnings have been rising by about 11 - 12 per cent each year, in money terms. This would mean that he could reasonably expect a pay rise of £3.50 - £4.00 this year. In other words the effect of the wage restraint would be a *pay cut of about £1 a week*. In fact the government offer represents a relative pay cut (i.e. less than could reasonably be expected without it) for all workers who earn £22 gross or over per week - *this involves over 80% of male industrial workers*.

## NO RESTRAINT ON EXPLOITATION

When Marxists say that the working-class is exploited under capitalism they refer to the fact that only a portion of the value created by the worker through his work actually comes back to him in wages or other social benefits; a substantial share is taken by the ruling class for their own purposes in the form of profits, rent or interest (Marx referred to this portion as *surplus value*). So when we ask - how will the wage freeze affect the *exploitation* of the working-class? - what we want to know is whether the workers will represent a greater or lesser share of his total output. If we assume that prices will rise next year by 5 per cent (a very generous assumption - set obviously the government's desire to - its "threshold" at 6 per cent indicates that they consider *this a minimum figure*) and productivity at about 5 per cent, then the money value of the "average" worker's output will increase by about 11 per cent. Thus any worker whose money wages rise by less than 11 per cent next year will be facing increased exploitation by the capitalist ruling class. With earnings increases limited to £2.60 this would apply to every worker currently earning more than about £24 a week. In other words, *the Heath plan involves increased exploitation for about 75 per cent of the male industrial working class*.

## "BUT IT'S ALL FOR THE LOW-PAID"

The line that is being pushed most persistently by the Heath government is that all these sacrifices are necessary to get a better deal for the worst-off sections. This is of course an old trick of capitalist governments: - rather than attack the profits of the ruling class, income is simply redistributed *within* the ranks of the exploited. But how much benefit can the low-paid actually expect

from this package?

So far we have been operating on the assumption that workers would actually receive the full benefit of the proposed £2.60 limited increase. This is certainly an incorrect assumption with respect to the low-paid, (and has limited validity for the higher-paid, who, for example, must pay out an above-average share of any wage rise in income tax). Firstly, they are presently receiving low wages precisely because they are working in relatively marginal sections of industry or are poorly organised (or both) and there is no reason to assume that they will automatically get £2.60 or even £2 extra at this point. The government gives a *guarantee* nothing: it only fixes a *ceiling* on any amount they might be able to win. Secondly, there is the fact that the low-paid currently receive a range of social benefits (income supplements, subsidized social services, family allowance, rent rebates, etc.) which are cut back as their income increases.

The following table (taken from the *Financial Times*) shows just how much extra cash £2 a week *really* amounts to for a range of working-class situations:

EARNINGS AFTER £2 RISE	EXTRA CASH RECEIVED		
	Single Person	Married -1 child	Married -3 children
16.00	0.96	0.55	0.65
18.00	0.96	0.48	0.67
20.00	0.96	-0.16	0.73
22.00	0.96	0.96	0.55
24.00	1.03	0.96	0.48
26.00	1.30	0.96	0.87

This would indicate that the *most* a low-paid worker could expect to receive under these circumstances is *less than an extra 7 per cent take home earnings; for most 4 per cent would be a more likely figure*, and others would even be unfortunate enough to actually *lose* money in the end. And all this is *money* increases, not real ones. When we recall that prices are likely to be going up by at least 6 per cent then it becomes clear just what a fraud the government's concern for the low paid really is.

## WOMEN WORKERS

The lowest of the low-paid are, of course, women workers. A £2.60 increase would be a substantial percentage rise for the vast majority of women workers. However the nature of women's employment - with very

little overtime being worked - means that there is rarely much difference between basic rates and gross earnings. Thus the Heath plan effectively means a £2 limit to the increase of most women's earnings during this next year.

With the current average level of women's earnings being about £17.50, and the level of wage settlements running around 14 - 15 per cent, this would mean something of a *cut back in the expected level of wage rises for almost 75 per cent of women workers* (all those making over £14 a week): hardly a "great gain" for the suffering low-paid! Many industrial groups of women workers have been able to increase their earnings by considerably more than £2 - during 1970 £2.90 in the paper and printing industry, and £2.16 in engineering; during 1971 £2.31 in food, and £2.12 in chemicals. These sums, of course, represented even greater *percentage* increases than the same rise would involve today.

In fact, previous government pledges on the question of equal pay and the possibility of a number of serious equal pay campaigns being mounted within the trade union movement, have led to an *acceleration* of the rate of wage settlements for women next year. The Heath plan will stop that - "but it's all in the interest of the low-paid, after all".

## INFLATION ON THE THRESHOLD

Thus far we have been very charitable to the government proposals and assumed a prospective rate of inflation of only 6 per cent (in line with the Heath "threshold"). But clearly even they have very little confidence in their ability to do this. During the life of the CBI price freeze, which was to keep price rises to 5 per cent, the official government index showed an increase of around 6 per cent. With the impact of entry to the Common Market on food prices, the effects of VAT, and the consequences of the Housing Finance Act for rents, we could reasonably expect a rate of inflation double 6 per cent.

The "threshold" agreement is not designed to protect the wage gains of the working-class from the effects of inflation, but only to serve as a re-assurance that *unpredicted* levels of inflation will not completely wipe out or reverse gains that are made. It operates on the assumption that a proportion of any wage increase won is not actually designed to increase the *real* incomes of the working-class but is simply an insurance against anticipated price increases - thus real wages can be run down by this amount (the "threshold") without any new increase being called for. In the Heath plan it is assumed that this holds true of the first 6 per cent of every future wage agreement. The "threshold" must, however, be passed by a full percentage point before any increase is forthcoming thus prices could rise by anything up to 7 per cent before the threshold increases would come into operation. This would mean that any worker earning £38 a week or over could see *every penny* of next year's rise wiped out by inflation and have nothing left to show for it: this affects about 25 per cent of male industrial workers.

However, even when the threshold comes into operation, it only provides 20p for every 1 per cent of increase, i.e. *only enough to maintain the real wage level of that section of the working-class earning less than £20 after their £2.60 increase* (i.e. currently earning £17.40 or less). Thus the cost of any serious rate of inflation will be borne by the working-class. The following table shows at what level of current weekly earnings (assuming a £2.60 wage rise next year) workers could expect to lose *all* their increase, or even suffer a *loss of real wages*, for different possible rates of inflation:

Rate of Inflation.	Level of wages at which loss of real wages would occur
6 - 7%	£38
7 - 8%	£35
8 - 9%	£34
9 - 10%	£32

This indicates the serious threat to the living standards of the working-class by the government proposals: any rate of inflation greater than 8 per cent would endanger the real wages of the average worker, and anything approaching 10 per cent would reduce the real wages of a clear majority of British workers.

# RACISTS ON THE RUN



Anti-racist march in Bradford, 7 October.

By JOHN MARSTON

Despite the absence of any lead from the TUC and other so-called "leaders" of the labour movement, the racist organisations campaigning against the entry of the Ugandan Asians have been having an extremely hard time of it recently. Though organising their demonstrations in areas where their propaganda has previously met with a certain favourable response, they have on every occasion been challenged by the action of local anti-racist groups.

## MAJOR EFFORT

The National Front demonstration held in Blackburn on 30 September was described in the NF's internal bulletin as their major effort for that month. The effect which the anti-racist campaign has already had was shown, however, when a mere 200 or so gathered for the NF march, while a counter-demonstration attracted upwards of 1,000 supporters. With such a relationship of forces, the police were quick to act on behalf of the racists. Police attacks on the counter-demonstration led to the arrest of fifteen comrades, mostly young workers; but this could not conceal the size of the defeat suffered by the racists, who will

think twice at least before they venture out onto the streets of Blackburn again.

In Bradford a week later the Right received another blow when they were again outnumbered by counter-demonstrators. This time the racists had organised under the banner of the British Campaign to Stop Immigration. Unfortunately on this occasion the impact of the Left was somewhat lessened by the decision of the local Communist Party to pull out of the recently formed Bradford Anti-Racism Committee, and organise their own separate march. Their appeal, seemingly aimed at Christians and "moderate Tories", called for a charitable welcome for the Asians because "the actual numbers involved are small and well within the country's capacity to absorb". So on the day, instead of one united counter-demonstration, there were in fact two separate ones.

The main counter-demonstration, however, organised by the IMG, IS and various other groups (including the CP and YCL in Leeds) under the slogan of 'No Platform for Racists', by itself rivalled the mobilisation of the racists. It also attracted almost twice the number Bradford CP's

handwringing liberalism was able to muster; thus proving yet again that only if the problem is tackled *at its roots* can an anti-racist campaign begin to make any headway.

## LEICESTER

The racists' next attempt at a demonstration takes place in Leicester on Saturday, 21 October. Socialist, trade union, student and other groups in the area are already organising for a massive response in a city whose council's attitude has done much to foster racialism there. The National Front and similar groups started out with high hopes of using the Asians issue to extend their influence, particularly among the working class. Leicester provides another important opportunity to prevent this by putting a stop to their activities *now*.

The fifteen comrades arrested at Blackburn have been charged with a number of offences, including some under the *Race Relations Act*. Considerable costs are likely to be incurred as a result, costs which if they are not met independently will severely hinder future activities in the anti-racist campaign. Please send as much as you can to: Pat Horne, 16 Queensway, Blackburn. All donations will be acknowledged.

# Thornycroft workers force British Leyland into 'top level' talks

By PAUL HUNTER

British-Leyland are to hold what are described as "top-level" talks on Thornycroft's - the Basingstoke factory they are trying to sell to Eaton's of Ohio. The date when they had hoped to complete their £5 million deal with Eaton's - October 1st - came and went with the workers still occupying the factory, effectively blocking the takeover.

As a result, Eaton's and BLMC came to an agreement to "postpone" the takeover - but not before Eaton's had made some very interesting statements about no money having changed hands as yet. (So much for all those

who tried to demoralise the workers occupying the factory by saying that you "can't unscramble the deal".)

## CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE

British-Leyland are now under considerable pressure. On the one hand - no matter what facade of unity BLMC and Eaton's may care to put up - it is clear that Eaton's are turning the thumbscrews by threatening to abandon the deal altogether in the face of the workers' opposition. BLMC are especially anxious to avoid this because it would place in jeopardy all their rationalisation plans if the Thornycroft workers were seen to win in this way.

On the other hand, whatever pressure Eaton's may put on BLMC to crush the sit-in immediately (e.g. by using the police to evict them on grounds of trespass, etc.) BLMC have to take into account the effect this kind of action would have on workers throughout the Combine.

And finally, there is the economic pressure of the Thornycroft workers themselves. For - as reported in the last issue of *The Red Mole* - with no gearboxes coming out of Thornycroft's for almost two months now, the dispute is beginning to create supply problems for BLMC in other parts of the Combine. There are rumours of impending lay-offs at A. E. C. Southall, for instance.

And this is a situation which could lead to workers in other parts of the Combine deciding to occupy their factories too - both to defend their own jobs and in sympathy with the Thornycroft workers.

## TALKS

It is in the context of these sorts of considerations that BLMC have agreed to high level talks with the unions on Wednesday October 11th in York. Having exhausted their supply of subtle tricks to undermine the occupation, BLMC have no option but to try to do a deal with the leaders of the engineering unions and the Combine shop stewards committee.

This is the real meaning of these top-level talks in York, and there is every sign that the Thornycroft workers understand only too well the dangers of a sell-out agreement at these talks. That is why the occupation committee has sent a very firmly worded message to the eight unions due to take part in the talks in York, rejecting any compromise settlement in advance. "The only basis for settling the dispute is a return to a full and expanding programme of production at the factory which must stay in British-Leyland's hands." A mass meeting of Thornycroft workers passed a motion that no deal was to be signed by any national official, but had to be brought back to the occupation first.

The danger is, of course, that instead of determining on the basis of the solidarity and determination of the Thornycroft workers and their families to launch a *real* struggle throughout BLMC against the rationalisation plans, the union negotiators will, as usual, look to their own bureaucratic interests (a quiet life) and (whilst covering themselves with a fig-leaf or two of left rhetoric) agree to sacrifice Thornycroft's for some paltry and probably even illusory gain elsewhere.

## IMPORTANCE

The importance of the factory occupation at Thornycrofts is not merely as a *local* redundancy struggle. With a rapidly falling rate of profit, increasing competition from America and Japan, and impending entry into the Common Market, British capitalism is having to attempt a drastic restructuring of its industry. The car industry is particularly involved in this, and the plans of BLMC for their Basingstoke works is just a part of a massive scheme of closures, lay-offs, changes in payments systems (from piecework to measured day work), etc.

The principle at stake is therefore: *who is going to pay for capitalism's crisis of competitiveness and profitability. Workers have no reason to oppose the "rationalisation" of industry - if this takes place so that the benefits are theirs.* When this does not happen - as is invariably the case, of course - then workers have every interest in fighting to defend their livelihoods, for this is what it amounts to.

## ISOLATED

But trade union bureaucrats are notorious for avoiding central issues such as these. On the contrary they have generally fought their way to the top on the basis of their ability to lead *sectional* struggles. For them Thornycrofts may well be disposable. The section of workers involved is tiny, and their struggle isolated.

And we can say the same of the role of the "Communist" Party - many of whose members, as full-time or lay officials of trade unions are in a position to initiate a real struggle in the BLMC Combine on the issues involved at Thornycrofts. Their failure to take up this question - indeed the CP's rejection of the clearly *class* issues involved by talking about "British industry" being "sold out" to the Americans - has led to the Thornycroft occupation remaining an isolated and politically weak struggle.

As the occupation continues, and BLMC and Eaton's become more and more determined to finalise their deal, the need for external support becomes that much greater. The Thornycroft workers are lucky that the men's wives and families - a traditional weak spot of a struggle of predominantly male workers - are fully behind them, and have withstood management appeals to them. But solidarity and support actions of fellow workers remain sadly lacking, not least in the rest of the BLMC combine. If trade union organisations, and student unions, etc., could now rally to the support of this occupation, then the balance of forces in the negotiations would be favourably affected, and the Thornycroft workers given new encouragement to stand firm for their objectives.

# LABOUR PARTY IN

By ANDREW JENKINS

There is always a certain pattern to Labour Party conferences. Those held when the Party is in power exhibit the unanimity of the grave. Those immediately before elections are mere rallies. However, for conferences in the wake of an election defeat there is a pronounced change of mood. The leadership tends to generate a certain volume of 'socialist' rhetoric and the Labour Left carries out a ritual of menacing gestures towards the Right. But a further tendency overlays this cyclical process, and that is for the effectiveness of the Labour Left to decline. This can be illustrated partially in terms of personalities: World War II before the Second World War, and left Social-Democrat Bevan after the war; and the present day Michael Foot who has become the last of the Radical Liberals and chose this conference to proclaim his faith in the mixed economy.

## NATIONALISM

One other component of the forces at work on the Labour Party needs to be examined. The 1964 - 70 Labour Government represented a clear attempt to convert Labour into an orthodox bourgeois party - "the Party of power not protest", to use Crossman's formula. But in winning the plaudits of the *Economist* and Lords Kearton and Stokes, the Party nearly severed its crucial links with the trade unions. The decline in individual membership, a general tendency since the early fifties, became acute in the 1964 - 70 period. It was essential to repair the relationships with important sectors of the trade union bureaucracy and to breathe some sort of life into the decaying constituency parties.

A similar problem had confronted Gaitskell in 1962 after the debilitating battles over Clause Four and unilateral nuclear disarmament. His response was very interesting. He played as his trump card the lowest common denominator of Labourism - nationalism. The attack on the Common Market, the defence of British sovereignty and 'a thousand years of history', completely changed the line-up in the party. His own caucus, the Campaign for Democratic Socialism, split into two irreconcilable factions, pro- and anti- the EEC, while the left and centre became his devoted followers.

The current 'populist' ideology of many of the Labour leaders is in direct descent from the Gaitskell of 1962. Foot, Jay and Shore indulge in a patriotic ranting that, at times, has brought them into a close alliance with that 'great Englishman' Enoch Powell. Tony Benn (as he now likes to be called) contributes a democratic cover, and vigorously supports workers' control although when the content of this is examined it is discovered that it is merely a left sounding version of progressive personnel management.

"PROGRAMME FOR BRITAIN"  
The National Executive's draft programme for the conference, *Labour's Programme for Britain*, attempts to solve some of the problems mentioned above. It is generous with left verbiage, but in no way deals with the actual performance of the Labour Government or how a subsequent Labour Government could deal with the biggest capitalist crisis since the war. The document comes out firmly in favour of prosperity, full employment and good housing, and is positively scathing about poverty, unemployment and slums. But the whole issue of the class struggle is dealt with by systematic and total silence. In fact the basic proposition of the document is one of class peace: "... if inflation is to be overcome, then all sectors of society must co-operate in a necessary ad-



Barbara Castle and Harold Wilson at the Labour Party Conference

# PERSPECTIVE

justment." The realities of the squeeze on the profits of British capitalism and the necessity to extract a greater rate of surplus value are dissolved by appeals to everybody to play fair. This is underpinned by the classic reformist position that a rise in productivity will enable profits to recover. "... Labour believes that there is scope in an expanding economy for rising money wages and, too, that rising money wages and expanding profits can co-exist." Only one sixth of the fall of profits since 1964 have been due to stagnation. The reformist position is therefore not valid.

Finally the document tries to persuade trade unionists that Labour has learnt the lesson of *In Place of Strife*. The Labour Party will abolish the Industrial Relations Act. In its place will be a voluntary system. But it is the sub-clauses and not the declarations of good intent that are significant. "The extent of government intervention will have to depend on how successful voluntary efforts are."

## ELECTORALISM

The leadership's job in Blackpool was to channel the anti-Tory mood of the Labour movement back into an electoralist strategy. The conference should be given the illusion that what was said would matter and that democracy was an integral, living reality in the Party. On the Common Market, the nationalist fervour should be given its head but a proper room for manoeuvre should be left to the leadership so that it could fairly easily renege when in government and thus meet the needs of big capital. If possible the leadership should be given a mandate to prepare an incomes policy. Overall, the Labour leaders had a successful conference. The central debate was clearly whether or not to withdraw from the EEC. It is equally clear that this is not the central issue for the working class. Socialists must be opposed to the capitalist Common Market, but this can only be answered by a socialist Europe and not by the twilight fantasies of chauvinism. The AUEW resolution had to be defeated if Wilson was not to get into severe problems when he changed course in the future, and, to audible sighs of relief, it was voted down by a narrow majority. By a series of tricks the largest majority was accorded to the ambiguous National Executive statement. Jack Jones played an important role in this as virtually Wilson's closest ally. The *Tribune* view of the whole messy business was one of extraordinary illusion and naivety normally only found among those tourists who are in the habit of buying Nelson's column or Buckingham Palace. "The debate was wound up in a low-keyed but skillful speech by Harold Wilson. He was clearly determined to ensure that the Labour Party would move gradually and gently into outright opposition to the Market."

The debate on the Industrial Relations Act was an opportunity for a lot of old style

Tory-bashing. The NEC naturally backed a resolution calling for the repeal of the Act. Jack Jones listed the iniquities of the Act; it had brought the law into disrepute, lost more working days in one year than were lost in all the years of the Labour government, and enabled small irresponsible employers to undermine industrial relations. In this woolly atmosphere, dominated by the concept of the electoral return of the Labour Party to solve the problems of the working class, the real struggles such as Saltley and the docks strike appeared to be insubstantial phantoms. But the leadership's real bonus in the industrial debates was the successful resolution moved by the Transport Salaried Staffs Association which called on the Executive and the TUC to collaborate on a prices and incomes policy. This is one conference decision that most probably will be applied.

## LIMITED RESPONSE

It would be wrong, however, to merely write off the series of leftish resolutions by referring to the tricky footwork of Wilson. It does represent a response to the radicalisation of the working class over the past period. Labour Party membership has marginally but significantly increased. The move towards the right in the constituencies in the late fifties and early sixties has been, at the very least, halted. The votes received by three professedly 'Marxist' candidates in the NEC elections were significant.

But at Blackpool, as at every other Labour Conference, the strategic line of the Labour Party was necessarily counter-posed to the deepening of the actual class struggle of the workers. In the end this party must try to reduce the working class to a clique applauding the electoral fortunes and the 'titanic' Parliamentary melodramas of the Parliamentary leaders. This Parliamentary aim rouses so little enthusiasm in a working class that has lived through the 1964-70 debacle, that Benn in his final speech to the conference went so far as to flirt with the politics of inoffensive class struggle: he suggested that print workers might take direct political action and censor the anti-Labour press. Benn clearly feels that only such anti-Parliamentary demagoguery can ensure the Parliamentary success of the party.

The only real solution to the needs of the working class can be found through organised action absolutely independent of all reliance upon the machinery of the state, including its Parliamentary coat-tails. Such action can only be organised through the committees for the defence of trade unions, Councils of Action and other such formations which are able to transcend trade union sectoralism and unite the whole class and its allies in the struggle for political objectives which smash the structure of the capitalist class.

# WHITHER THE OFFICIALS

By BOB PURDIE . First in a series of articles examining both wings of the Republican movement, the People's

Following the 'laundry' revelations about British army spying in Belfast, the Official IRA have issued an important statement. It threatens to call off their cease-fire and may indicate their return to a more militant policy. In spite of Operation Motorman — the invasion of the Free Areas — the Officials had maintained their cease-fire, insisting that civil war had to be avoided. This stance had in turn been in sharp contrast with their previous policy of armed operations which included the shooting of Senator Barnhill and the Aldershot bombing.

This article takes up some of the political problems which explain the zig-zags of the Officials. It discusses various questions raised by the September 1972 issue of their paper, the *United Irishman*, which carried to extremes some of the trends developing in the paper over the preceding months.

We will not be diverted by the many quite apolitical attacks on the Provisionals and on left-wing critics of the Officials; characterisations of the Provisionals as "this cancerous growth, spawned by the moneygrabbing gombeen mind of Jack Lynch and Fianna Fail"; and statements such as: "The Provo/Trots saw a war of National Liberation where there was none, they supplied socialist jargon to justify the bombing of children, they turned Civil Rights into Civil War and they are revealed today for what they always were — not tribunes of the working class but rather a psychosis of the middle class"

These attacks are merely symptoms of the political crisis within the Officials. They are an attempt to close ranks by whipping up anti-Provoism, and to deal with internal critics by associating them with "Trotskyism" — which they dub as simultaneously an importation of "failed" ideas from England, and a capitulation to the Provos. That the *United Irishman* gives space to such nonsense is eloquent testimony to the internal crisis being caused by their wrong policies.

## ONE STEP FORWARD: THREE STAGES BACK.

The Irish Republican Movement took a great step forward when, in the '60s, its leadership took up a socialist position based on a Marxist view of society. Unfortunately they saw Marxism as a mechanistic system which could produce an automatic answer to any political problem. Their perspective, based on this formal method, was that the struggle in Ireland would move through three successive and separate stages: the struggle for democracy in the North, the struggle for national unity, and the struggle for a socialist Ireland.

This was wrong on two counts. Firstly, the necessary conceptual distinctions between the different elements of the struggle does not imply that they are insulated from each other, or that they develop along a linear path; in fact they interact with each other, and one aspect of the struggle serves to aggravate the crisis which brings the others into prominence. Secondly, the reality of the situation in the North was that these three elements were interlinked in an especially contradictory way, and that the mere posing of a mass struggle for one immediately brought to the fore the struggle for the other elements.

To be concrete, the Six Counties represented a very special form of bourgeois state which could only exist by basing itself on a set of sectarian institutions, which, through the Orange ideology, created a mass base for the Unionist Party. Any substantial challenge to any aspect of that delicate system immediately created the possibility of destroying the state. Thus the mobilisation of a mass struggle for democratic rights could only advance to a very limited extent before it challenged the existence of the state, and opened up once more the national question. In so doing a war was sparked off which if it is to be won poses the problem of effectively drawing the mass of the workers and small farmers in the whole of Ireland into struggle behind the Northern minority. This problem can only be solved if the achievement of national unity and the defeat of British imperialism in the North becomes the central and unifying factor of a generalised mass struggle North



Officials' press conference on 30 May this year, called to explain policy on the cease-fire. From left, Malachy Toal, Malachy McGurran, Ivan Barr and Sam Dowling.

and South, in which the particular demands of different sections, (urban workers, small farmers, the Gaeltacht, etc.) are welded together into one revolutionary struggle for a Workers Republic.

In this schematic outline, it can be seen how the "stages" of the struggle are intimately linked. Of course, understanding this does not in itself solve the problems of revolutionary strategy, and while the escalation from the democratic to the national struggle was achieved fairly quickly, and a leadership capable of driving it forward thrown up by the struggle itself, the transformation to a socialist struggle is much more difficult. But unlike the Official leadership, who see everything in formal and abstract terms, such an approach poses the problems of the Irish revolution as a linked series of *concrete tasks*. Thus the national struggle resolves itself into the need to defend the ghettos, which in turn becomes a struggle to smash Stormont, and the British Army. And the socialist phase, far from being a remote and academic problem, is posed *immediately* in the need to extend the struggle to the South.

Because the leadership of the Officials insisted all along that the struggle was only about democracy, and had to be restricted to Civil Rights, they were unprepared when the crisis reached its sharpest point in August '69, and could not play the role they should have played in the defence of the Catholic areas. But following August '69 they compounded their error by setting their faces against the developing national struggle which quickly escalated to a guerrilla war against the British Army.

## REFORMIST PROGRAMME

Today the effects of this series of errors can be seen in the deepening of the negative trends in the politics of the Officials, and the consolidation of their organisation around a reformist programme. The September 1972 issue of their paper, the *United Irishman*, demonstrates this. Monotonously it repeats, on page after page, the same three simplistic themes: that the struggle is simply one for Civil Rights, that the Provisionals are mad sectarian wreckers, and that the "Trotskyites" are ultra-left agents of reaction.

Maintaining the argument that the struggle in the North is solely about democracy the Officials say: "We do not want civil war. We repeat again and again that the issue in the North of Ireland is CIVIL RIGHTS NOW. On that there can be no compromise and no talking. We do not want prevarications; we do not want stalling; we do not want bombing; we do not want sectarian killings. We want full guaranteed democracy". . . . . "Britain's strategy for Ireland, then, has been very basic: the minimum of concessions on civil rights and the maximum of British control over the Irish people and their economy".

And in another article entitled "Why Britain Won't Give Civil Rights", they say: "Civil rights means for us the full freedom of polit-

ical activity, the opportunity to work for the creation of working class unity and for the winning of a sizeable section of the Protestant working class to support of the fight for national liberation and socialism. Civil rights is basically, then, a struggle to smash the patronage system of unionism and win the freedom to operate politically and the freedom to advocate the sort of Ireland we believe is necessary".

## CIVIL RIGHTS OR CIVIL WAR?

There are three dangerous elements in this argument. Firstly, it is true that the British have refused to grant the demands of the Civil Rights Association, for such simple concessions as a Bill of Rights. But this is not because they are opposed to civil rights. On the contrary, they have been anxious to "normalise" the North for a long time. This is indeed essential for their long term plans to re-orient their relationships with the gombeen bourgeoisie in the South. They resist such demands because they are trying to re-establish stability, and they know that concessions to the Catholic minority on that scale would deepen the mass Orange resistance.

So they balance delicately, while trying to achieve their main priority at this time; *the de-mobilization of the catholic resistance*. If they achieve this, through militarily smashing the Provos, and/or exhausting the minority, it is quite possible that they will introduce sweeping reforms in the North, as a means of sealing up the crack in the dam which nearly flooded them. Such reforms would aim at buying off the catholic resistance, and eliminating some of the structural factors which have made the catholic revolt so powerful. It is doubtful, even given the above conditions, that Britain could actually solve the Northern Ireland problem, through internal reform, but at least they could create a period of stabilisation.

In this situation the Officials' schema would have two disastrous results. It would mistake a victory for the minority, what would in fact be a consolidation and strengthening of British imperialism. *And, more important, they would not be prepared for the inevitable smashing of the resistance organisations which would accompany such a strategy*. The Official Republicans would go down along with the Provos, PD, et al., and despite the "democracy" would be unable to advocate any "sort of Ireland".

## WORKING CLASS UNITY

Secondly, the conception that all that is required to win over the Protestant working class is the opportunity to propagandise to them in a democratic state is utopian. It is not lack of facilities to convince them through argument, but the material basis for sectarianism existing in the institutions of the state, which polarises them away from the national and democratic struggle.

This view is coupled with the following statement: "The Provos have blasted away what slim hopes there were of working class unity in this generation, and have given

birth to the Protestant reaction of the UDA, UVF and other more vicious forces like Vanguard and the Tartan gangs".

It is difficult to imagine a more mistaken or dangerous view. By singling out this one factor as responsible for the inflammation of sectarianism, the *United Irishman* mis-estimates the political situation in the North and the real significance of developments within the protestants. Such a statement shows the dangers of mindless Provo-bashing, when the difficult and complex situation in the North has to be faced seriously.

## CRISIS WITHIN UNIONISM

The main factor in the mobilisation of the UDA, UVF, Vanguard, the Tartans, etc. is the crisis precipitated within Unionism by Direct Rule. This is a new phase of the general crisis within the political and ideological institutions of the Six County state created by the struggle over the past three to four years. It does not represent a *strengthening* of sectarianism (although it provokes heightened sectarian tensions), but since it is caused by the loss of control over a state security apparatus, and the threat to the Protestant ascendancy, it is a response from a *weakened* position. This weakness is further accentuated by the fragmentation of the former Unionist monolith into a number of warring factions. It is accompanied by a deepening feeling of despair amongst large sections of the protestant community.

Far from working class unity having been "blasted away", this generation is closer to it than any generation in the last sixty years. But it will only be possible to create unity when a sufficiently large section of the protestant working class has lost all faith in the traditional ideology and institutions of Orangeism, and realises that only acceptance of their common lot with the working class in the rest of Ireland can give them any future.

The Belfast strike of 1907, and the unemployed riots of the Thirties, represented the breakdown of sectarian barriers between workers, during a time when the protestant ascendancy was so secure that the maintenance of its ideological hold through the sectarian institutions had somewhat relaxed. The economic interests of catholic and protestant workers brought them together fleetingly; but this was enough to re-mobilise the sectarian institutions, and re-assert their ideological hold over the protestant workers. Today when these institutions are shattered, and debilitated, the possibility of real and lasting working class unity is much closer. But it can only come about if the catholic minority and their organisations remain firm and press forward with their struggle, and they are backed up by the mass of the Irish people. Within this context there can be a discussion about which tactics give best hope of getting across to protestant workers who have gone furthest towards breaking with

# S?

## Democracy, and the SDLP.

Orangeism, and the question of bombing targets, etc. is relevant in this context. But the line taken by the Officials is a dangerous strategical diversion.

### THE NATIONAL STRUGGLE

Thirdly, the *United Irishman* argument misunderstands the nature of the national struggle. The catholic minority in the North are not mobilised by abstractions like "national unity", "self-determination", or "political independence". They fight for an end to internment, to get the British troops out of their streets, and to ensure that Stormont never returns. This does not mean that they are consciously restricting themselves to basically democratic demands, but that they are responding to the concrete problems posed for them by the nature of the Six County State.

To return to the argument above: the national and socialist struggles consist of a series of concrete tasks, none of which can be achieved within a partitioned or capitalist Ireland. The mobilisations around the democratic demands of the Civil Rights movement therefore cannot be seen as a purely democratic struggle because, while individual demands could be achieved within the Six County State, as a programme, which mobilised large sections of the catholic minority, these demands could only lead to the *smashing* of the state. It is vital for revolutionaries to understand this, because revolutionary leadership does not consist of convincing the masses to make a revolution, but in convincing them to take the steps which will move them into revolutionary struggle; and then enabling them, on the basis of that experience, to make the leap in consciousness required to understand that they require a revolutionary transformation of society.

### THE AXE TO THE ROOT!

The trajectory being followed by the Officials has grave dangers. It is now clear that the split in the Republican Movement was the tragic and politically confused result of an attempt to graft a reformist programme onto the Republican tradition. Since the split the Officials have been adjusting their policies and actions to align with that programme, and have therefore been changing the nature of their organisation. Their continued counterposing of a reformist to a revolutionary programme (which means that they counterpose democratic to national struggle, and immediate working class unity to the struggle to smash the barriers between the workers), has only one logic - the abandonment of Republicanism. The need of the Irish revolutionary movement is to move beyond traditional Republicanism to a Marxist understanding of the inseparable nature of the working class and national struggles in Ireland; but at the same time to encompass the aims and fighting tradition of Fenianism.

The Officials instead are moving back, away from Republicanism, and towards the creation of a new kind of reformist movement in Ireland. Such a development would be a tragedy, it would make more difficult the task of politicising the mainstream of Irish Republicanism, and would surrender all the advances made within Republicanism since the '56 - '62 campaign. We know that this would not happen without a deep internal struggle, but without a correct programmatic basis those who are opposed to this trend within the Officials would be defeated and demoralised.

Like a desperate gambler, doubling and redoubling his stake, the leadership of the Officials now repeats in more frenzied and exaggerated terms the wrong analyses it made in the Sixties, and the tone of the *United Irishman* becomes increasingly paranoid and abusive. We know that many genuine militants within their ranks are becoming more and more disturbed at these trends. It may well be that they can arrest the rate at which the Officials are travelling along their present path, but this can only temporarily hold back their political decline. The axe to the root comrades! It is the wrong analysis, wrong politics and wrong methodology of your organisation which is responsible. It is this which must be understood, and this which must be changed.

# IS split the LCDSU

The IS recently took a decision to withdraw from the LCDSU. The IS have issued a statement explaining their reasons which basically boil down to two. First, that "a mass politicisation on the question of autonomy is not on the cards and that ... the scene looks set for a peaceful NUS executive compromise with the government." Second, "The IS participate in student politics as part of the overall struggle to build a revolutionary party ... which ... can prove in practice to the mass of students that an alliance with the working class is a real alternative." This view is proffered in opposition to the IMG who supposedly "regard the autonomy campaign as an isolated issue" and "can't even pose correctly the question of a political alliance with the proletariat or relate the struggle for socialism to students." Let us look at these reasons a little more deeply.

### AUTONOMY

"A mass politicisation on the question of autonomy is not on the cards." There would be two sorts of reasons which could be actually to show this. First, that there actually was no such issue of autonomy, students unions did not need to be reintegrated, or were already integrated into the college bureaucracies. If that is the case then right from the start there was no justification for the LCDSU. It would be completely bogus in that case for the IS to say that it was only since the LCDSU refused the IS's programme that it became an historical impediment. So, this can't be meant.

The second argument might be couched in terms of a lack of perspective for fighting the issue. That because no leadership was being given, the radicalised elements were dispersed and demoralised, the struggles fragmented and localised. As Marxists, we know that political movements don't arise spontaneously, but need the active intervention of political forces to create them. This was what we witnessed last year with the failure of the CP leadership in the NUS to give any leadership to the fragmented 'local' struggles at North London Poly, LSE and elsewhere. It was on these grounds that the LCDSU criticised the CP and the NUS leadership. But if this argument held any water, the conclusion would be to strengthen the LCDSU so that it could begin to give some sort of perspective to the students in struggle on this issue. So this is not an adequate reason for withdrawing support from the LCDSU. The IS itself comes up with a third reason, that "the scene looks set for a peaceful NUS executive compromise with the government". But this rather than being any justification whatever reveals truly monstrous errors.

### COMPROMISE?

First it locates the content of the struggle as essentially against the Tory government and not flowing from the basic needs of the capitalist State. If the former is the case, then the CP has been right all along and the LCDSU never had any reason for existence. The whole history of the LCDSU on this question through NUS and at North London Poly, at Canterbury, at Lancaster has been completely misguided. The IS should do a self criticism for ever participating in the LCDSU.

Secondly, it bases its policies on the assumption of a peaceful compromise. But such a peaceful compromise has been on the cards right from the start. This was one of the reasons for setting up the LCDSU in the first place: to forestall such a compromise. And at that time the situation was more unfavourable than it is now. This is why it was urgently necessary to unite all the forces who wanted to fight such a defeatist policy. Today we are far stronger than then. We are organised, we have a well educated periphery, we have a modicum of generalised support (25 per cent of the votes at the last NUS conference) and so on.

Whether a peaceful settlement now ensues depends precisely on our actions. Whether such an outcome, between the NUS leadership and the DES, is decisive anyway again depends on how we have managed to intervene on the question during the time that this deal is being drawn up and in the continuing 'local' struggles. All in all it is quite fatal for any politician, revolutionary or otherwise to confuse history and politics in this way.

Now let us move on to the motivating principles of the IS. "The IS" we are informed "only participate in student politics as part

of the overall struggle to build a revolutionary party ... which ... can prove in practice to the mass of students that an alliance with the working class is a real alternative." This bundles together and confuses a whole variety of things. Clearly there is more than one way of linking up with the struggles of the working class. Let's look at the reformist answer to this.

The CP essentially views student struggles and workers' struggles as advancing in parallel. Workers struggle on the immediate questions facing them, students similarly take up the bread and butter issues. The NUS leadership seeks the support of the TUC leadership for student struggles and students give their formal support in turn to workers' struggles. The whole thing is topped off in the current period with the joint 'struggle against the Tories'. This is one way of forging an alliance with the working class, albeit a reformist way. Reformist, inasmuch as it refuses to take the struggle against capitalist social relations, and only through that the fight against the Tories, as its starting point.

By J.R. CLYNES

The IS are, of course, concerned to reject this view. How can this be done? Well clearly, the way to start is by rejecting the whole framework on which it is based: unity with the existing leadership of the class, left or right. The point from which a revolutionary must start is a struggle against capitalist social relations and to forge unity with the working class in that struggle. We can have unity inasmuch as the fight is against the same enemy. It is in this respect that the autonomy issue has some importance.

### STUDENTS UNIONS

The radicalisation of students over the past few years has been manifested in a number of ways. Perhaps one of the most unobtrusive has been the changing role of students unions both locally and nationally.

These corporative bodies which had been set up by college authorities and financed by the State were being put to use by students for ends which were directly against their midwife and paymaster. In solidarity with anti-imperialist and workers' struggles, in opposition to the changes which were being introduced in the colleges themselves, students were turning to their student unions and changing them from the tools of integration of the bourgeoisie to organised centres of resistance and counter-attack. This process had been going on for a period of four or five years. Something had to be done sooner or later about this state of affairs.

This was made more necessary by the impending massive reorganisation of the whole of higher education which is in the pipeline. So Thatcher last year introduced her proposals. But her reasons for this were not simply out of nastiness, but referred to the basic needs of capitalism. What she understood, was that the NUS and student union bureaucracies were not capable of performing a proper policing of students, and the students unions had therefore to be reintegrated into the college bureaucracies. This was commonly understood by the whole of the bourgeoisie - college authorities, LEA's, and the Tories. The question at issue was which side of the class struggle would the students unions and the NUS line up on. The State made its bid for them. As the LCDSU continued to emphasise, however, autonomy could not be posed in the abstract or in isolation. Consequently, the struggle for "autonomy" was precisely a struggle to line up with the working class in the fight against capitalism.

This was expressed in many ways. Solidarity with the miners in struggle was understood by the LCDSU not as simple pious sentiments but as expressed, for instance, in the actions of its supporters in occupying the university at Colchester. Similarly with students at Canterbury in the fight against redundancy of the workers there. So too with support for the Irish revolution, and so on. It was in this way that the question of an alliance with the working class was posed. Now, was this counterposed to the "building of the revolutionary party"? It all depends.

### "BUILDING THE PARTY"

It is absolutely clear that "building the party" is not the same as arithmetic recruitment. The strength of an organisation is determined by the social forces it can bring to bear on any struggle; what groups look to it for leadership. In the present situation, it is unquestionably the reformist bureaucracies to whom the workers turn for solutions to their problems, who are the leadership. The

revolutionary organisations have very little influence, if any, over the mass battalions. The task of a revolutionary organisation: is clearly, through an adept use of tactics, linked to an overall strategy, to alter the balance of forces inside the working class against the reformist bureaucracies. This, of course, involves developing the living struggles of the class and other sections of the masses. Obviously these struggles are not developed by the simple injunction, "build the party".

Now the question is: did the LCDSU seek to develop the struggle of the mass of students? Clearly, yes (Canterbury, Colchester, NUS autonomy demo, North London Poly, LSE, Portsmouth, etc. etc.). Did it do this in such a way as to develop a revolutionary base in the student field? Well, we have already answered this in relation to workers' and anti-imperialist struggles, but let us look more closely at the question in relation to directly student issues.

### TECHNOCRATIC REFORMS

The IS maintain that one of the planks of the LCDSU, the struggle against "technocratic reforms", is not a class notion. Let us agree, first of all, that the bourgeoisie is concerned to adapt education to its own needs. Now, the LCDSU accepted the view that the changes over the past ten years - the re-organisation, rationalisation and re-orientation of higher education - were promoted by the bourgeoisie in order to more closely adapt higher education to the needs of capitalist industry. It is this process which is referred to under the heading "technocratic reform" - a very inadequate term to describe the whole complexity of the process.

Even so, that those developments have been going on in higher education - and will be in a much more draconian way in the near future - is undeniable. The LCDSU accepted the view that it was necessary to struggle against any of the effects of these reforms, in which the bourgeoisie attempted to solve its problems at the expense of students. Such a struggle was understood to be a struggle against capitalist relations as they worked their way through higher education.

Now, this analysis might be wrong, but it is undeniable that to "build the revolutionary party" and to "show the relevance of socialism to students" demands an intervention in the struggles which this analysis attempts to understand. It also demands, in a similar way, a concrete explanation of how student struggles must be conducted as part of a struggle for socialism. The two cannot be counterposed. What any perspective must attempt to do is to show how a struggle in which the masses are involved can be developed into a struggle against capitalism. This view, accepted by the LCDSU, did precisely that.

It was therefore in this way that a link with the working class was posed. Given the fact that a struggle in the colleges, as we understood it, is part of the struggle for socialism, that such a struggle demands the social weight of the working class to accomplish this, we understood that the struggle on student issues would be determined by the balance of forces in society as a whole. Anything that students can do, therefore, to alter this balance of forces, we said, is part of their own struggle. To hit the bourgeoisie wherever it exposes its flank, is precisely what this implies and what the LCDSU attempted to do.

### WEAKENED

From all points of view, then, the revolutionary forces in the colleges can only be weakened by the IS withdrawing its support from the LCDSU. The cause of "building the party" can only be severely thrown back. It is to turn all logic on its head to argue that, "to maintain our presence in the isolated and sectarian atmosphere of the Liaison Committee is to divert the activities and energies of our comrades". It is not the LCDSU which is showing a sectarian face. We therefore call on all comrades of the IS to participate in the LCDSU Conference on Sunday, 29 October, to hammer out how best to fight, in a united way, for a revolutionary line on all issues amongst the mass of students.

### LCDSU CONFERENCE

Sunday, 29 October

at Imperial College (London)

Contact: 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. (01-837 9987) for further details.

# REVIEWS

## The political assassination of Leon Trotsky

As carried out by Joseph Losey with the aid of Richard Burton, Alain Delon and Romy Schneider and, of course, lots of Hollywood gold.

The death of McCarthyism enabled Losey to resume film-making in the United States. The death of Stalin and the 20th Party Congress enabled him to make a film about Trotsky. So far so good.

But then Losey is confronted with a serious dilemma: his own orthodox Stalinist past limits his vision as he decides on how to make this film. He reads Deutscher's trilogy, he studies Trotsky's *My Life* and he wonders about Peter Weiss's *Trotsky in Exile*. But Losey is not satisfied. They are all concerned with the central force in Trotsky's life: a passionate belief in the social revolution which determines his political activities before 1917 and which later compels him to defend the revolution against Stalin and his allies. These are facts which Losey feels unable to dispute. So he decides not to concentrate on Trotsky's life but on his death. The psychology of the assassin is preferred to the political ideas of the man who is to be assassinated. For Losey the two appear to be unrelated.

In reality it was these political ideas which were the cause of the assassination. It is not the psychology of the killer that we are interested in (and even on that level Delon's performance as Mercader is one of the more grotesque pieces of acting in recent months) but the motives of those who hired him; in brief the NKVD and the Central Committee of Stalin's party. Perhaps because he was too intimately connected with Stalinism and its sordid past, Losey keeps out mind away from these questions. It is no accident that he hires Nicholas Mosley (son of Oswald) to write the script. The result is a trivialisation of the assassination.

### STALINISM

Trotsky is presented as a nice old man who likes tending to the garden and his rabbits. Now and again over breakfast (or is it tea?) he makes the odd remark against Stalinism and then returns to the garden. Both he and Natalia are seen as a couple of old-age pensioners who have retired to the countryside. They are shown to be fatalistic as they constantly think about death. Losey does not bother to tell the viewer why this old man worries about death. His family in Russia has been liquidated, his political colleagues either tortured to death or humiliated and shot, his secretaries killed and a serious attempt made on his own life.

Trotsky knows the power of Stalinism. So does Losey, but he is ashamed to talk about it as he was part of it. Deutscher's description of Sylvia Agelhof is that of a serious, bespectacled, plain-looking woman whom Mercader seduced to get into the Trotsky household. Losey presents her in the shape of Romy Schneider, a veritable nymphomaniac who begins to masturbate if her lover is a few minutes late.

Trotsky's last exile in Mexico saw the founding of the Fourth International. Losey prefers to ignore the fact. He was visited by many old militants of the communist movement from all over the world and participated in long and heated discussions with them. Losey portrays a visit from the Rosmers. Now certainly Rosmer visited Trotsky on numerous occasions. The purpose of these visits was to engage in political discussions. But for Losey they are merely mid-Victorian tea-parties.

### FLOP

The film is a flop, however, in every sense. Now obviously one doesn't expect Losey to support Trotskyism, but to make a film on Trotsky one simply cannot ignore his politics or the politics of those who hired his assassin. One has to select facts. Losey selects the cup of tea. Given the fact that the actors are all unsuited to their parts, the film is a resounding flop even when viewed as an artistic achievement "divorced from politics". Delon's performance, in particular occasionally raises the odd laugh because of its absurd grotesqueness. One doubts, however, whether it is worth expending money on a sick joke.

Clarissa Howard.

Teamster Rebellion, by Farrell Dobbs (Monad Press, 95p)

As the United States heads for what looks like another boom, with the labour movement only just beginning to take up any political questions, it is difficult to realise how fragile class peace really is there. Farrell Dobbs' book looks at U. S. labour at a time when the combination of mass unemployment, rising prices (through Roosevelt's New Deal) and highly organised employers, created an explosive series of class battles.

### WORKERS' ORGANISATION

Dobbs points out that the expectations of masses of workers don't just follow the market, going up and down. Capitalism's ability to survive depends on defeating the efforts of the working-class to defend itself in such periods. One of the key parts of the workers' ability to defend themselves is their level of organisation. More than anything else this book is about 'miracles' of workers' organisation.

The role of members of the Communist League of America in these struggles was vital. As members of the organisation that was to form the S. W. P. (U. S. supporters of the Fourth International), Dobbs and his comrades stamped a number of these mass struggles of the working class with the best traditions of Bolshevik leadership. The book contains the history of one such struggle, that of the Teamsters Union in Minneapolis.

Between November 1933 and August 1934 the Teamsters' Local 574 was not only built, but managed to defeat the united forces of the local employers, police, Governor and the State Militia. In two mighty strikes in 1934 the small Union branch of a couple of thousand members built a mass movement of 40,000 employed and unemployed workers, a daily paper, defeated the local and national bureaucracy, used mass flying pickets, won full recognition and various wage increases. In the course of the struggle, as Dobbs himself points out, there was almost a dual power situation in the city.

### THE TRAINING OF THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS

In many ways the U. S. ruling class are more 'normal' than the British ruling class. In a sense U. S. capitalism developed without the 'hang overs' of feudalism that existed in this country. Coming out of basically the same background as their fellows, the only class distinction that really existed was based on wealth, particularly in the Mid West.

One of the great ideological holds on the U. S. working class was the myth that anyone, from however humble a background, could make it. The 'gap' between the ruling class and the workers and small farmers was not filled by any mass reformist party as in Europe. This had two effects. The working class always organised itself where its power obviously lay, at the point of production. Secondly, whenever this myth of equality of opportunity broke down, as with the Blacks today, the power of the ruling class was very quickly shown to be purely the power of naked force. Police and State Militia were tied, from the outset, very closely to the immediate interests of the ruling-class; in defence of private property.

### THE TRAINING OF THE AMERICAN WORKING CLASS

The traditions of struggle of the American working class arose out of the lack of any

## Teamster Rebellion - the Minneapolis strikes of 1934



'Bloody Friday' in Minneapolis - "Suddenly, without any warning whatever, the cops opened fire on the picket truck (left), and they shot to kill. In a matter of seconds two of the pickets lay motionless on the floor of the bullet-riddled truck (right)."



channel for labour to win its needs through the capitalist political system. The Industrial Workers of the World, organising before the first World War, were the most clear example of the result of this political block. They wanted to organise one gigantic industrial union to represent and fight for all workers where they saw their power really based. But beyond fighting ferocious struggles with the bosses they were not able to draw together all the layers in society that were oppressed, nor able to direct mass struggles against the central power of the ruling class, the State. Most U. S. militants did not make the connection between their industrial struggle and the need to overthrow capitalism and its State. We can see why, therefore, the employers in the strikes in Minneapolis tried to make so much propaganda out of the workers' Trotskyist leadership.

### MIRACLES OF ORGANISATION

The later chapters in the book describe in some detail the organisation of the two strikes of the Teamsters' Local 574. "A big garage building at 1900 Chicago Avenue was rented to serve as an operational headquarters. Besides its capacity to handle picket mobilisations, the building was large enough for a commissary, the necessary offices, and a mechanical repair department. It was also to house a field hospital. . . . A garage had been rented because the strike would be a mobile one, with expanded use of the cruising picket squads. . . . In that department, charts of the city were being made up, picketing instructions drafted, and picket captains selected. On the whole the Union was pretty ready for action".

Embodied in that degree of organisation is a crystal clear political view that the workers could rely on no one but themselves. Even Governor Olsen, the Farmer and Labour Party man, was offered no role by the strikers. Indeed it was only the building of this independent organisation that prevented Olsen's State Militia from breaking the strike at a later stage.

### RED BAITING

The employers lost no opportunity to attack the Union. They were determined to keep the open shop, and contracts with individual employees. In the best traditions of the U. S. ruling class they lost no opportunity to 'expose' the Trotskyist leadership of the strike. "They didn't want a strong Union

they wanted Revolution." But the strike leadership saw the winning of recognition for the Union as a key strategic victory for the working class of the region. This was born out by the series of struggles touched off by the Minneapolis strikes.

In other words, there was absolutely no difference between the interests of the revolutionaries and those of the Minneapolis working-class.

### SCIENCE OF PRACTICAL POLITICS

What is particularly impressive about this book is the political skill of the Communist League leadership. How revolutionaries should operate in mass politics is laid bare. These leaders were the best trade unionists. In every field - democratic control, information to the membership, mass involvement in the strike, and even in negotiations - Dobbs and his comrades were absolutely in touch with the mood of the masses. At no time did they lose sight of the main object of the strike, recognition.

This trade union skill was combined with the principles of revolutionary politics. Mass organisation of women behind the strike, together with the battalions of unemployed, created a movement of the Minneapolis working class and its allies which went far beyond a strike. The Mayor and the State authorities knew that their power was challenged by the local working class. It was that fact as well as the nature of the U. S. ruling class in general, that brought about 'Bloody Friday' when two trade unionists were killed by Police.

The study of this book is not only essential for members of the Fourth International who would understand the formation of their own movement, but is important reading for any militant who would like to know the methods and politics of a real working class leadership.

Paul Smith

### RANK AND FILE TECHNICAL TEACHERS

Next meeting for teachers in Inner and Outer London will be on Wednesday, 18 October, at The Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren Street tube).

Information on the Jenkins case, etc.

### RADICAL SCHOLARS OF SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN STUDIES

Second Conference at Imperial College, London SW7, 20-22 October, 1972

Friday 20th: 6-7pm Registration  
7.30pm Continuity and Change in the Polish Working Class - Jerzy Kolankiewicz (Swansea)

Saturday 21st: 11am Marxist Theories of the Soviet Union - H.H. Ticktin (Glasgow)

2.30pm Transitional Economy - Ernest Mandel (Belgium)

7pm The Soviet State - Ralph Miliband (Leeds)

Sunday 22nd: 11am Political Change Since Stalin - Mary McAuley (Essex)  
2.30pm The Legacy of Czechoslovakia - Jiri Pelikan (Italy)

Further details, including requests for (spartan) accommodation: CRSEES, 150 Elgin Avenue, London W9.

There will be a conference fee of £1 (students 75p) or 20p per session, any profit towards the costs of Critique, a new journal of Socialist Theory focussing on this area of discussion.



### Special Introductory Offer INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

A WEEKLY JOURNAL specialising in political analysis and interpretation of international events of particular interest to the labour, socialist, colonial independence, Black and women's liberation movements.

10 AIRMAIL ISSUES - ONLY £1 (regular - 13 issues for £2)

Airmailed from New York and mailed first class from London.

Send cheque/postal order for £1 (made out to Pathfinder Press) to: Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL. Sample copy free on request.

### 'THE HARDER THEY COME'

'Grass Roots' Benefit Late Night Movie ONE NIGHT ONLY

Friday, 20 October, 11 p.m. at the Kings Cross Cinema, Pentonville Road, London N.1.

All seats 50p - tickets obtainable from RED BOOKS (182 Pentonville Road, N.1.), GRASS ROOTS (54 Wightman Road, N.4.), and CENTREPRISE (34 Dalston Lane, E.8.).

Below: Jane Frazer explains how Chile is caught

# BETWEEN THE HAMMER AND THE ANVIL

August and September have seen mounting tensions in Chile: in late August, the shopkeepers' strike and armed demonstrations by the fascists in Santiago, while in the countryside peasant militants were assassinated by the landowners' gangs; in September, violent clashes between the fascists and the Left; fascist barricades in Santiago, and a demonstration of 750,000 for the second anniversary of the election of Popular Unity. Throughout the year, faced by the re-organisation of the right and movements beyond their control on the left (land occupations and strikes for nationalisation), the CP has been projecting the road of 'consolidation'. Allende has been attempting to follow this road, notably via the negotiations with the Christian Democrats, which broke down in face of the deepening divisions in the base of Popular Unity. The MIR's first critique of the reformist nature of Popular Unity incurred the CP's witch-hunting wrath against the 'ultra-left', leading to the events of May in Concepcion, when a MIR member was killed by police breaking up a left counter-demonstration to the right wing, and acting on the orders of the CP chief of police. Here and among the most advanced workers and peasants radicalisation has developed independently of the reformist Popular Unity leaderships. In Concepcion itself, the MIR has recently established a Popular Assembly with the support of all Popular Unity parties except the CP, and a large number of trade union delegates. Though its role for the moment has been largely confined to propaganda and internal discussion, it has responded to a response outside Concepcion.

In the Perlac factory in the Santiago suburbs, there has recently been an occupation on the demand for nationalisation, the management being suspected of stockpiling production. The occupation also demanded:

- no to the judiciary,
- no to the bourgeois Parliament,
- no secret negotiations,
- workers' control of the factories,



MIR peasant

- support to Popular Unity (a demand which prevented the Christian Democrats from giving the strike).

Police intervention was threatened, and the workers of the borough (Maipu) stepped in and threw up barricades. On the initiative of members of the MIR, Socialist Party left and the front of revolutionaries in the trade unions (FTR) they elected a Council and a self-defence committee from among the trade unionists, peasants and slum-dwellers participating. The strike succeeded in obtaining nationalisation.

The peasants of Cautin have also created local Councils, and these have recently held a regional conference, electing a leadership of left SP and MIR militants. In Concepcion and in Perlac, then, there have been important localised experiences of embryo dual power. The need for self-organisation and self-defence of the workers, peasants and slum-dwellers, is reinforced by incidents like the massacre at 'La Hermida', where four workers were killed defending their 'poblacion' against the army and police. Only Allende, joining the funeral to mourn the dead, was able to salvage the image of the government. The affair of the fugitives from Trelew also demonstrated the disarray of the government.

While the CP demanded "The application of the Chilean law" (i.e. adjudication by the right) and Allende hesitated, only the MIR, left socialists and other revolutionaries came out onto the streets for proletarian internationalism.

The defence of Popular Unity against the right remains nonetheless central to the revolutionary struggle. The economic situation is deteriorating still further, with inflation running at 5 per cent a month. The currency has been further devalued. US credits have been cut to almost nothing, and the French blockade of Chilean copper, at the request of Braden-Kennecott is only the latest example of imperialist sabotage. The right is organised in the judiciary and the army, and in the ranks of Christian Democracy, which is waging an ever more vicious campaign against the government, while the fascists are beginning to work to develop a mass base. In this situation the reformist and Stalinist leaders of the government dare scarcely develop, beyond the occasional demonstration, their organisation of the masses against the right, for fear of the political consequences of organising and arming the mass of militants in the left parties, the factories and the peasant unions. These forces must take the steps which Popular Unity will not.

## Defend The Argentinian Political Prisoners!

This month 15 people go on trial in Buenos Aires accused of the murder of Oberdan Sallustro, the director of FIAT in Argentina, on 10 April. The military regime is accusing the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army); but many Argentinians accuse the government of breaking off the negotiations between the ERP and FIAT, and it is also held that the police provoked Sallustro's death by breaking into the house where he was held. It is not even known whose bullet killed Sallustro.

Well-informed circles in Argentina say that the tribunal may well deliver at least three death sentences.

The following facts should be made known internationally:

1. The judges of the criminal courts hearing the case have all been directly appointed by the military government. It is therefore a special tribunal of a kind which violates the Argentinian Constitution, which has stood since 1853.
2. Article 18 of this Constitution expressly abolishes the use of the death penalty for political reasons. The tribunal is acting on the decrees of the regime, not according to the Constitution.
3. The constitutional principle of the right of defence is being violated: the prisoners have been taken over 900 miles from where the tribunal will be held, and communication with their lawyers is extremely difficult. Furthermore, these lawyers will receive copies of the terms of the accusation, which consist of 15 volumes of material, five days before the trials.
4. Seven of the 15 accused were arrested a day before Sallustro died, and could therefore have had no part in the events. But one of them, Osvaldo de Benedetti, is spoken of as one of the most likely candidates for the death penalty, because of his record as a dedicated revolutionary.

5. All the accused have been brutally tortured. Another who may receive the death penalty is Jose Beristain, who since being savagely tortured has suffered constantly from claustrophobia and hallucinations, but has received no medical attention.

6. A third, a young journalist called Andres Alsina, denies that he is a member of the ERP or that he took part in the kidnapping of Sallustro. He is known throughout Latin America for his investigation, over the past four years, of the torture, kidnapping and murders committed by the Argentinian police and army. He wrote for the workers' paper, *CGT*, until it was closed down by the military government.

7. The names of the remaining accused: Giomar de Klachko (possible death penalty), Carlos Ponce de Leon, Angel Averena, Elena da Silva, Jose Luis da Silva, Mirta Mitidier de da Silva, Lilita Montenegro, Marta Brego, Silvia Urdampilleta, Mirta de Menajovsky, Eduardo Menajovsky, Lucrecia Cuesta de Beristain.

8. The military government which is judging these people for the kidnapping and killing of Sallustro, is guilty of the kidnapping and murder of the following people since 1969: Alejandro Baldu, Nestor Martins, Nildo Zenteno, the Verd couple, Juan Pablo Maestre, Mirta Misetich, Luis Pujals, Eduardo Monti, and Juan Lanchowsky; and they are guilty of the murders of over 50 workers and revolutionaries, including the 16 shot at Trelew on 22 August.

(From a press release of the Paris Committee for the Defence of Argentinian Political Prisoners.)

## Ceylon Hunger Strike

As part of the growing movement of opposition in Ceylon, a one-day hunger strike against the repression has been called for 18 October. It comes at a time when the first batch of political prisoners is on 'trial' before special courts; the Government's success or failure here will have a vital bearing on the future of the many thousands of political prisoners still awaiting 'trial'.

Five leading trade union organisations in Ceylon are so far sponsoring the hunger strike, along with the Human and Democratic Rights Organisation. The strike is rapidly gaining support in the form of pledges to participate on the day, and a number of successful public meetings in support of it have also been held.

### LONDON MEETING

In London, the Ceylon Solidarity Campaign is organising a public solidarity meeting on 18 October (Wednesday), 7.30 p. m., at the Unity Theatre, 1 Goldington Street, N.W.1. Speakers will include Ernie Roberts (AUEW) and Hermione Harris (recently returned from Ceylon).

This public meeting will be preceded by a picket on the Saturday before (14th) outside the Ceylon Tea Centre (Lower Regent Street, Piccadilly). The picket will take place from 11 a. m. to 2 p. m.

Both these events are organised by the Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, 9 Dennington Park Mansions, London N.W.6. The C.S.C. also publishes a monthly bulletin (5p) with news and analysis of events in Ceylon and reports of solidarity activity around the world. Also available is an informative pamphlet, *Ceylon Island Behind Bars*, of particular interest to activists in the labour movement (price 15p).

## GREEK MILITANT ESCAPES

Psaradellis, Greek revolutionary and militant of the Fourth International, known internationally for his political declaration before the colonels' military tribunal, has escaped to Paris. In the 1960s he worked as a mechanic in the textiles industry, and participated in the workers' struggles of the period before the 1967 coup. He was first arrested and tortured in August 1967, but was released for lack of evidence, and returned to clandestine struggle.

When comrade Psaradellis was again arrested in May 1969, there was proof, and the longest struggle to escape began. After days of torture, he was taken to a local police station from which he escaped. He rowed for 18 hours in a stolen boat to reach Turkey, where he was granted political exile in a remote area of the provinces, and put under constant surveillance. At the second attempt he escaped to Bulgaria, where he asked for a passage to Western Europe. The bureaucracy put him on a train: but they put Greek police on it too. Comrade Psaradellis jumped from the train and ran and walked for 25 miles in freezing rain, until rheumatism and agents of the Greek regime caught up with him. Only after another dose of the hospitality of the regime has he finally now escaped.

In an interview with *Rouge*, paper of the Ligue Communiste, comrade Psaradellis says of the present situation in Greece: "The political crisis goes on inexorably: the dictatorship cannot win a base among the people. It cannot satisfy the lowest economic and political demands of the workers, or grant the masses political liberties."



Comrade Psaradellis

"Recently, in April and May, there were mobilisations in the universities. They are only the first stirrings after a long period in which the masses have been politically inert, and they will not be the last.

"Faced with the disintegration of the Greek Communist Party, more and more young, newly radicalised militants are coming to revolutionary Marxism. Our comrades are exploiting the growing radicalisation of Greek youth and preparing the coming struggles, working for the building of the Greek section of the IVth International."

### LITERATURE AND FILM WEEKEND

starts 3.30 p.m., Friday, 20 October  
at Sheffield Polytechnic, on Pond Street

Stalls organised by Claimants Unions, left wing publishers, women's groups etc.; meetings for community papers, bookshops, etc.; film showings including *Hour of the Furnaces*, *Time is Running Out*, *People's War in Vietnam*.

Ends Sunday afternoon. Cost about £1, including two meals a day. Further information from Agitprop, 248 Bethnal Green Road, London E.2. (01-739 1704). Please try to inform us in advance if you are coming.

### IRISH REVOLUTIONARY HISTORY from ANVIL BOOKS

THE MCGARRITY PAPERS, *Revelations of the Irish revolutionary movement in Ireland and America 1900-1940.* 70p.

BRIAN FAULKNER and the crisis of Ulster Unionism 40p.

THE RISE OF IRISH TRADE UNIONS 1929-1970. 50p.

From Agitprop, 248 Bethnal Green Road, London E.2., or all progressive bookshops.

### INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

(British Section of the Fourth International)  
182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

I would like more information about the IMG.

Name:

Address:

Occupation:



By ANDY SCOTT

Last March, Nixon's 'Vietnamisation' policy looked in shreds. The offensive launched by the national liberation forces merely added the final humiliating blow to the battering Thieu's puppet troops had received, the previous year, in the rout in Laos and Cambodia. The importance of the March offensive was, however, its precise timing in the critical pre-election period. With Thieu's puppet army crumbling on all fronts, Nixon's problem was precisely how to stem this offensive at the same time as not appearing to escalate the war and thus, by stimulating anti-war feeling at home, jeopardise his election chances.

### RELATIVELY UNSCATHED

Six months later, he would seem to have emerged relatively unscathed from his dilemma. Not only has he been able to escalate the bombing to new, genocidal heights; he has, at the same time, even managed to undermine the 'peace' candidate McGovern whose role was precisely to channel the mass discontent into a more 'flexible' policy on Vietnam urged by one section of the US ruling class. The catalyst which brought Nixon's unexpected rise of fortunes was, of course, the combined intervention of Moscow and Peking.

The state visits to China and Russia earlier this year involved much more than clinking champagne glasses. Secret negotiations behind the cocktail parties (denounced by Hanoi) solved Nixon's immediate dilemma in two ways. In the first place, the willingness of the workers' states to turn a 'blind eye' to the saturation bombing and mining of the harbours (in exchange for 'diplomatic' and 'trade' concessions) enabled Nixon to pursue unhampered the strategy of successive US administrations: to win a military victory in Indo-China. In the second place, such a deal allowed Nixon to heal the breach - at least temporarily - in US ruling circles between the hawks and the 'doves' who were pushing McGovern because of their concern that any escalation of the war might involve a confrontation with China or Russia.

It was this deal which pulled the rug from under McGovern's campaign. With the connivance of Moscow and Peking, Nixon has been able to present himself as a 'peace' candidate. At the precise moment when he is escalating the war to unprecedented proportions, he

# INDOCHINA CONFERENCE



Indochina solidarity demonstration in Paris earlier this year

is busy creating the illusion of winding it down by playing up the withdrawal of US ground forces and carefully 'leaking' information about the possibilities of an imminent 'settlement'.

### TASK FOR ANTI-IMPERIALISTS

There can be little doubt that this propaganda machine has influenced people's thinking, exactly as the announcement in 1968 of the Paris peace talks undermined the anti-war movement then. Even those who are still opposed to the Nixon strategy in S E Asia are largely off the streets campaigning for McGovern's 'peace' ticket which channels the wide-spread discontent behind 'democratic' politicians who would, if elected, be prey to exactly the same influences as Nixon has been.

Today more than ever before, the defence of the Vietnamese people, sacrificed on the altar of 'peaceful co-existence', becomes a central task of all genuine anti-imperialists since it is only they who can come to the aid of the Vietnamese. It is the task of these forces to drive a wedge between Nixon's claim to be 'winding down the war' and the reality of the mass saturation bombing; between the carefully leaked suggestions of an imminent settlement and the reality of US imperialism's long-term strategy in Indo-China. It would be disastrous if US Government propaganda was to be taken seriously and allowed to defuse the urgent task of building a movement in solidarity with the Vietnamese struggle.

The National Peace Action Coalition in the States has, this Autumn, called for days of international action against the Nixon government's brutal escalation of the war. The NPAC is, itself, struggling to turn the still massive discontent with the war out of the channels of electoral manoeuvring into mass demonstrations on 18 October and 18 November. In Britain, after a lapse of almost four years, a united-front preparatory committee has been set up (under the initiative of the magazine *Indo-China*) to prepare a Conference early in December as a springboard for re-activating a Vietnam solidarity movement in Britain.

The call by *Indo-China* (even though only a few weeks old) has already encouraged the following groups to sponsor such a Conference: Agitprop, Association for Radical East Asian Scholars, Group '68, *Indo-China* Editorial Board, International Fund to Aid the Indo-Chinese Resistance, International Marxist Group, National Union of Students, Socialist Woman, Support, Union of American Exiles and the Vietnam Solidarity Committee. At the same time, many individuals have agreed to sponsor the campaign.

### SPRINGBOARD

At the meeting of the preparatory committee on 10 October, a discussion was opened up on the nature of the Conference and the preparatory work that would have to be done. It was agreed that the Conference should be a springboard for mobilising a broad solidarity movement and that it would take place on 2 and 3 December. It is vital that any united-front movement in solidarity with the Vietnamese struggle must involve the widest possible forces. The IMG would therefore add its voice to that of the preparatory committee in calling upon all those organisations and individuals who support the struggle of the Vietnamese people to sponsor the Conference and send a representative along to the preparatory committee. (Those who do not support the solidarity position, but who oppose American aggression will also be able to attend). Those who pride themselves on their 'internationalism' will not be remembered for their fine analyses of the Vietnamese struggle. They will be remembered for translating that analysis into action, which today means building the December Conference.

## Cheng Case

Every Tuesday for a number of weeks a man named Tzu Tsai Cheng has been remanded in custody for another week at Bow Street magistrates' court. Cheng is a member of the 'World United Formosans for Independence', and was taken unconscious from an airliner at Heathrow Airport at the beginning of September while in the process of being extradited from Sweden to the USA.

The US Government is now seeking to have him extradited from Britain. Under British law no person can be extradited for 'political' crimes, but nevertheless the Home Office has wide powers of discretion. As in the case of Rudi Dutschke, the State can deem Cheng an 'undesirable alien' and ship him off to America if it so chooses.

There is obviously more at stake, however, than simply the political activity of Cheng himself (who was convicted in New York of conspiring to assassinate Chiang Kai-shek's son). For example, the US Government waited a year before they asked Sweden for his extradition. This can only be explained in the light of Nixon's visit to China and the subsequent attempts to appease the Chiang Kai-shek regime.

There is just a chance that an African country may grant Cheng asylum. If this is the case, then whether or not the Government chooses this option will depend largely on how much an 'example' is going to be made of this case in the light of growing emphasis on the whole question of 'international security' following Munich.

# PROVOS BLACK PRESS GANG

By ROSEMARY SULLIVAN

The Irish Republican Publicity Bureau (Provo) announced on Monday, 1 October that all interviews with British *bourgeois* journalists - embracing television, radio and newspapers - are to be blacked as a result of a mounting British intelligence campaign against the Provisionals.

### PROPAGANDA WAR

In a statement, the Bureau declared: "The propaganda now being waged against the Republican movement exceeds anything waged by the British Information Service since World War Two. This is an indication of how seriously the British view the military situation in the North".

The statement accuses the *Sunday Times* newspaper of carrying a report of a "distorted interview" with the president of Sinn Fein (Kevin Street), Mr. Rory Brady. It adds that the report carried some "downright lies", and that Brady had repudiated the implications contained in the report. The statement also refers to a recent article by Paul Ferris of *The Observer*, who claimed to have interviewed Sean Mac Stiofain, Chief of Staff of the IRA, for an hour and a half.

"Mac Stiofain has categorically denied giving an interview to Ferris. Both of these incidents are, of course, part of a black propaganda war that the British counter-revolutionary forces are forced to use now that they

realise that they cannot defeat the Republican Movement by military repression".

As I predicted (*The Red Mole*, 18 September) the next move in this black propaganda drive has come from the *Sunday Times*. The basic motivation for the campaign remains the same - to split and isolate the IRA.

The latest nuance is in the use of the distorted interview, or the interview which never took place, or the off-the-record telephone conversation which suddenly becomes an interview. The idea is to seize out of context or *deliberately* to invent this or that remark in order to try and set one section of the Republican movement against another.

### PREVIOUS FAILURE

The *Sunday Times* distorted interview with Rory Brady was only resorted to after the failure of a previous attempt by James McManus of the *Guardian*. McManus, in his article "Swapping the Gun for the Vote" (*Guardian*, 13 September), tried to give the impression that Rory Brady was in favour of calling off the struggle in the North in return for the legalisation of Sinn Fein in the Six Counties.

The McManus attempt failed miserably. Indeed, IRA intelligence was aware of a policy briefing conference presided over by the *Guardian's* Deputy Editor, Ulster Unionist John Cole, on the previous Saturday. British imperialism is not unique in having an intelligence service.

McManus' background is of some interest. After the Aldershot explosion, he did a hatchet job on Clann na h'Eireann in the *Daily Express*. Shortly afterwards, he moved from the *Express* to the *Guardian*. Claiming a conversion on the road to Thompson House, in late July he approached the London leaders of the Provos, Officials and the Irish Solidarity Campaign for interviews. The ISC refused, but the interviews with the other groups, when the piece did appear, were "fair and friendly". This was the sprat to catch a mackerel.

In the *Guardian* McManus' name started appearing in by-lines alongside the *Guardian's*

"Journalist of the Year", Simon Winchester. With this cover, McManus was sent to do an interview with Brady, and Winchester was sent to America in case his well known delicate "ethical sensibilities" should trouble him.

### ALIVE AGAIN

Meanwhile, back at the *Observer* (or the Foreign Office), Colin Smith has suddenly come alive again, reporting on the Ugandan Asians. Smith has been writing to the Dublin Review, *Hibernia*, complaining that its coverage of the Maria Maguire case gives the impression that he is a British agent. Mr. Smith thinks this would endanger his life.

Nowhere in his lengthy reply does Mr. Smith mention his peculiar background. This "ordinary journalist" joined the British Army at 15 years of age for a nine year stint, and after a distinguished career, during the time the British army was engaged in counter-insurgency activity, he was recommended to the *Birmingham Post*, where he learnt the ABC of journalism. This was followed by a rapid move to the *Daily Sketch* and after only 2 months, an even more rapid transfer to the *Observer*, as a colleague of its Defence Correspondent, Andrew Wilson, formerly Major Andrew Wilson of British intelligence, who undoubtedly showed him the ropes. Certainly after the 'Maguire revelations', Major Wilson made a secret trip around Ireland to check on their effects.

### BRITISH LEFT

One would imagine that there would be no need to list these details: one would have hoped that the British left at least would have got the message. Not so. In *Workers Press*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Socialist Labour League, ace reporter Ian Yeats set up shop on 2 October as a retailer of Foreign Office slander, picking up and cribbing from the black stories in the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times*.

But then what do you expect from a pig but a grunt? And what would you expect from a newspaper which claimed on 21 September last year that, "The closure of the 'Maidstone' was hastily decided when the army high command and the Tories became aware of the inhuman tortures which were being carried out".



## SUBSCRIBE!

I enclose £1.50/£3.00 for 6/12 months.

RED MOLE

Name:

Address:

Money Orders to Red Mole, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

FOREIGN SUBS: Asia/Africa/Australia/N. & S. America: £6 per year (airmail); £4 per year (ordinary). Western Europe: £4 per year.