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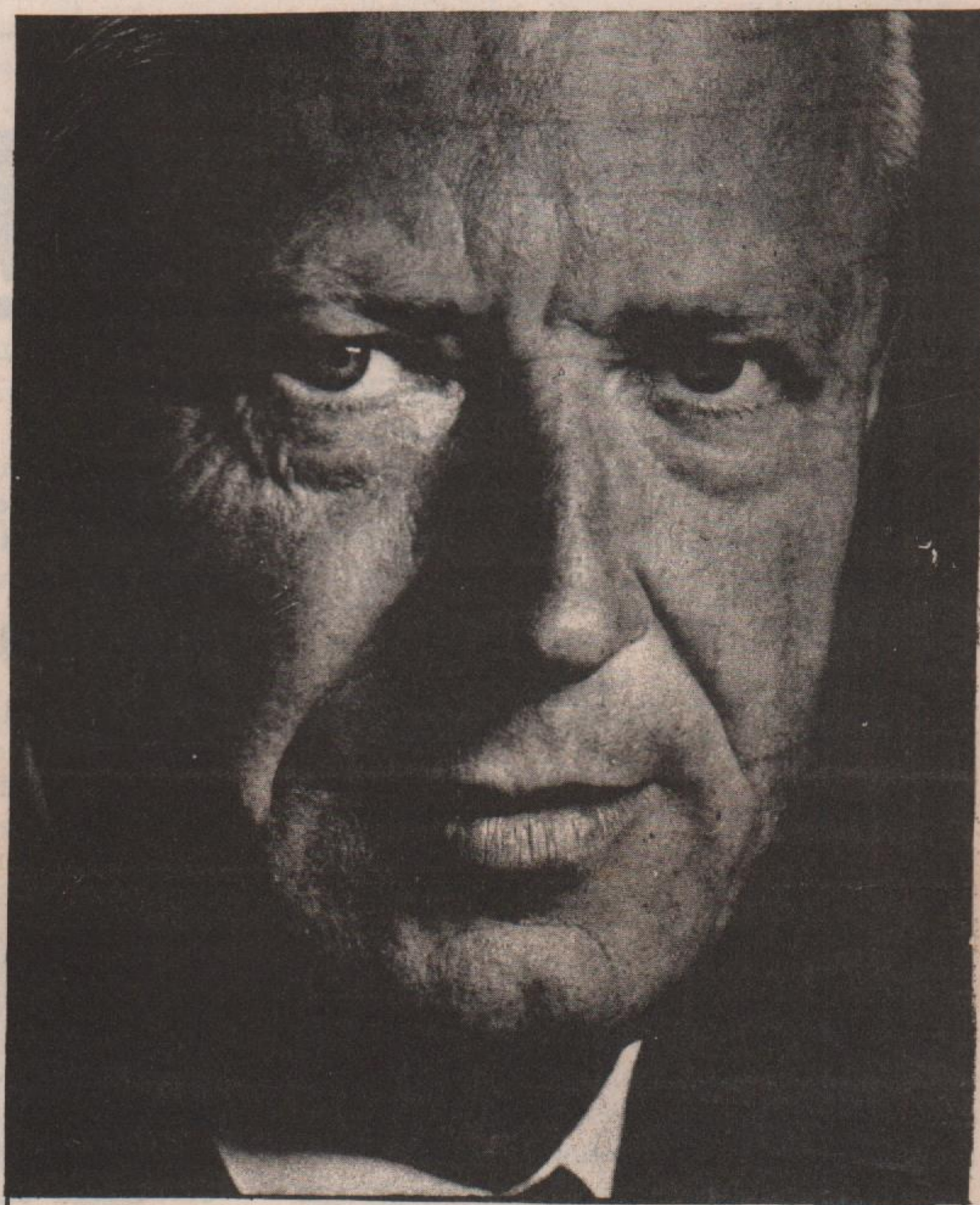
LABOUR'S ONLY REVOLUTIONARY VOICE

No. 3 DECEMBER 1972

4p

AS FOOD PRICES SOAR:

HANDS OFF OUR WAGES!



TED HEATH

HEATH HAS IMPOSED HIS WAGE-FREEZE AT A TIME WHEN PRICES ARE rising as never before. These are the figures admitted by the Government itself:

- Since Heath's election pledge to cut prices "at a stroke", the cost of goods bought by the working class has been rising at an annual rate of 12 per cent.
- Out of 20,000 housewives' complaints to the Ministry of Trade and Consumer affairs only 60 have so far been upheld since the 'price freeze' began!
- Food prices—the most vital item in a working class budget—have shot up an astronomical 22 per cent since June 1970.
- Necessities such as MEAT, BUTTER and CHEESE have registered even bigger increases.
- In the two weeks before Heath's wage-freeze, a flood of profiteering broke out. No less than 5,000 grocery items—a record—went up in price.
- The Government isn't even pretending to freeze the prices most important to the housewife. Those of fresh foods—meat, fish, vegetables—are officially exempt.

And as if this wasn't enough, look at what's coming. April will see the next instalment of the Tories' monster council-rent increases. And we're being forced into the Common Market NEXT MONTH. Meat is expected to rise 15 per cent as a result of the "Common Agricultural Policy". And Value Added Tax will cause an immediate 10 per cent rise in the overall cost of living. Heath's talk of freezing prices was a sham from start to finish.

The position is quite clear. We are ruled by a Government of businessmen, property-speculators and landlords. The more they charge us, the more they make for themselves. The top companies have already increased their takings an average of 18 per cent over the past year. Profits of Assoc-

iated British Foods—behind Fine Fare, Britain's largest supermarket group—have climbed £1.3 million to £13.6 million in the last six months. These are the people Heath fights for. It is for their benefit that the industrial Relations Court exists. It is for their benefit that our comrades in Ireland are being subjected to police-dictatorship both North and South. It is for their benefit that we are being forced into the Common Market. The millionaires are doing well out of it all. By raising prices while outlawing our struggle for wages, they hope to squeeze out of us still more. Will we let them do it?

...

Today our own class organizations have never been more strong. Over the past year, no matter where the Tories have tried to attack us—picking on the miners, the railmen or the dockers—our movement has closed ranks and checked them in their tracks. WE NOW HAVE THE STRENGTH TO BRING THEM DOWN. A bold lead from Harold Wilson and Vic Feather could unleash an onslaught which would overwhelm Heath's Industrial Relations Act, his Housing Finance Act, his wage-freeze, his Government—and his class. Labour and the TUC must USE the strength they have. They should:

- BREAK OFF all talks with Heath;

- SPONSOR the establishment of committees of housewives and trade unionists to check on price-rises as they occur;
- BIND these committees with tenants' associations, Trades Councils, Co-ops and Labour Party G.M.C.s to form JOINT COUNCILS OF ACTION with real power in each area;
- DEMAND of the Government an immediate rent and price freeze, £25 National Minimum Wage, repudiation of all Common Market agreements and a General Election;
- BACK UP these and other demands with concrete preparations for a General Strike—including an appeal to the Army ranks and an emergency TUC and Labour Party Conference;
- MOBILIZE the full power of the labour movement to bring down the Tory Government and replace it with the rule of our own class organizations in industry, on the housing estates and in the shops.

This is the programme of the SOCIALIST CHARTER. Help us build a mighty organization throughout the labour movement so that we can warn Heath: Hands off our wages—or else! ...and tell our leaders in Parliament and the TUC: Act now—or be replaced by those who will!

No to the Racists: DON'T LET THEM SPLIT US

THE ARRIVAL OF THE UGandan Asians has produced the expected flood of racist filth from the National Front and its Powellite allies on the right of the Tory Party. These fascists and near-fascists are now beginning to form a threat we cannot ignore.

Yes, the problems are real—the shortage of houses, jobs and services is becoming intolerable. But who is to blame? There are over 100,000 building workers unemployed and huge stockpiles of bricks lying unused. Is it the Asians who are stopping us using these resources to build the homes we need? Or is it the people Enoch

Powell represents—the Tory landladies and landlords, the property-speculators and building firms who profit from keeping houses in short supply? Merely to ask the question is to expose the fascists' game. The very people whose profits depend on depriving us of houses and throwing us out of work—are the first to throw the blame on "foreigners" and "immigrants". Enoch Powell is at this moment advocating more unemployment as a means of "curing inflation".

In this situation, the behaviour of the Labour Party leaders is extremely dangerous. Instead of going to the root of the matter—

and mobilizing the vast power of our movement to bring this landlord-capitalist Government down and provide the jobs, services and houses we need....they prop up our exploiters and help shove the blame for shortages on the immigrants. That is the meaning of what Labour Councils are doing now when they combine voting with the Tories to put the rents up.... with screams against letting in more Asians. If these "leaders" of ours would only get down to the job they were elected for—representing our interests as a class against the landlords and Tories—they would find they had less time

for the racists. They would discover that within the ranks of our own movement, many of the best of our comrades ARE immigrants—blacks, Irish, Asians and so on—and that we all need one another's strength to win our common fight. The racists are agents of our class enemies. They have begun with the Asians in order to continue against blacks, Irish, Jews.... These wretched landlords, property-speculators and their dupes want us all to fight one another—until we have no strength left to fight against them! Don't let them split us! These people must be unmasked and smashed.

VIETNAM: STOP THE SURRENDER!

THE NATIONAL LIBERATION front has put down an uprising by opponents of a cease-fire within its ranks, the Paris newspaper 'Le Monde' reported on November 24, quoting 'reliable and very well-informed sources'.

The paper's Saigon correspondent Jean-Claude Pomonti said that on November 10 (10 days before the latest abortive series of Paris 'peace-talks' began), just over 1,000 "extremist" North Vietnamese troops under General Le Vinh Khoa mounted a dawn attack on a camp just north-west of Saigon. The camp housed at the time the main leaders of the National Liberation Front and some 100 representatives of the Hanoi Government. The dissidents were armed with rifles, machine-guns and some bazookas. The security forces of the camp were able to hold off the attackers for long enough to enable the members of the Provisional Revolutionary Government and the NLF leaders to escape in jeeps and bicycles.

Once in command of the camp, the rebels sent a message to General Tran Nan Trung, the Provisional Revolutionary Government Minister of Defence, urging him to support them.

SUPPRESSION

But instead he marched a strong force all night and attacked the dissidents next morning.

By next day he had broken the uprising and captured most of its leaders, the most prominent of whom were sentenced to between 10 and 20 years in a concentration camp. One, who escaped, was condemned in his absence to death. In reward for his action, Trung was appointed supreme commander of the Popular Liberation forces.

What is the background to these tragic events? On October 26, Hanoi broadcast it had reached an agreement with the U.S. to end

the Vietnam war. For most ordinary people in the British labour movement and throughout the world the news seemed welcome. After all, have not the Vietnamese people suffered enough?

SUFFERING

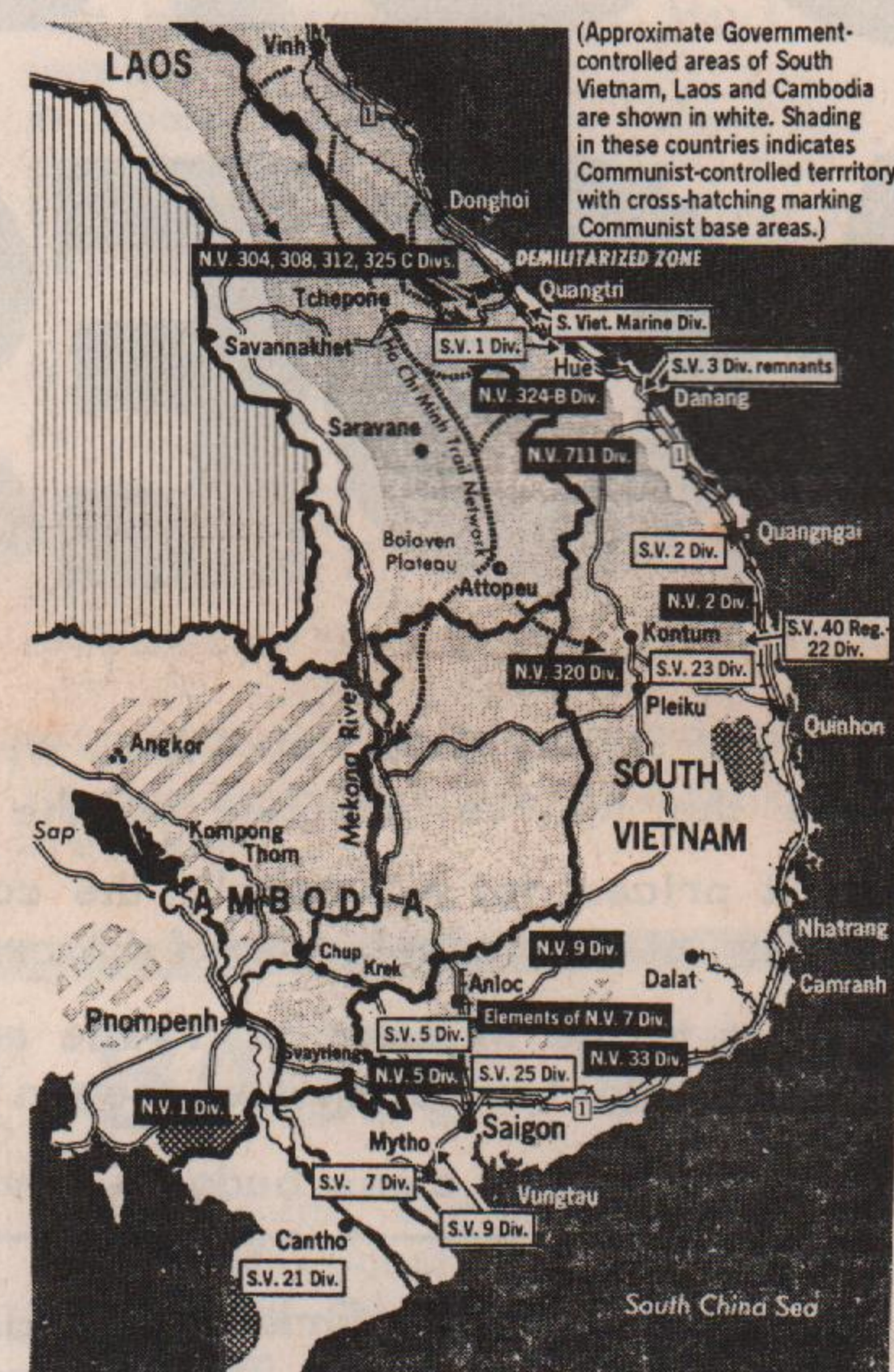
Between 1965 and 1971, the people of Vietnam endured a tonnage of bombs twice the total of all those dropped by the United States in World War II. By April this year the bombing of the North had soared to the equivalent of two and a half Hiroshima bombs each day. And on top of the bombs have been the napalm, herbicides and poisons which have maimed thousands of women and children, led to birth deformities in humans and animals, dried and burned up the forests and sterilized the soil over vast expanses of Vietnam.

In view of all this, you may feel that any agreement must be better than a continuation of such carnage and destruction. In fact, however, these are not the alternatives. Any "peace" to which the Pentagon agrees—short of a decisive defeat imposed by the revolutionary forces in Vietnam—will exist on paper only and will prolong the sufferings of the people of Indo-China as a whole.

CONCESSIONS

Even in the "agreement" announced by Hanoi—which the Americans never signed—dangerous concessions had been made. The most significant was this. After the proposed cease-fire, the U.S. puppet regime in Saigon was to be allowed to administer all territory under its control at the time the agreement was signed. The National Liberation Front had relaxed their previous demand that President Thieu's administration and his "repressive apparatus" be dismantled before the fighting stops. This means recognizing the Thieu regime's right to exist—and to control the major towns and communication-points.

It is this concession which moved the "Wall Street Journal"



New York Times map shows military situation in Indochina based on information from Washington. Areas both shaded and white represent disputed land.

to describe the terms as "quite favourable ones" and "an honest reflection of the battlefield results". The concession, the Journal says, reflects Hanoi's "will to settle" and makes the U.S. appear to be on the verge of achieving its "minimum objectives" thanks to its ferocious bombing campaign.

Of course, the United States has made concession, too—agreeing to withdraw its troops while allowing the troops of North Vietnam to remain in the South. In this respect, the terms reflect the extent to which the American colossus has been forced back by the heroic fight of the Vietnamese workers and peasants.

But the very fact that Nixon could obtain any concessions at all was an enormous victory for him. Any agreement, no matter what its terms, gives Nixon that "legitimacy" he so desperately needs. It tends to sanctify the whole history of the U.S. invasion of Indochina, making it seem to

Americans that "something has come of it"—that there must have been, after all, good reason for intervening in the first place.

BETRAYAL

With proper support from China and Russia, there would have been no need for the Vietnamese people to make concessions. When the reactionary Egyptian regime was threatened with further Israeli attacks, Moscow sent advanced weapons that were never sent to the revolutionary forces in South or North Vietnam. Egypt received ground-to-sea missiles, for example, which the Vietnamese could have used to keep out the Seventh Fleet from its shores. From both Moscow and Peking, military aid to the Vietnamese revolution has been pitiful—hundreds of times less than that provided by the United States to prop up their puppet regime. At each stage in the war—as U.S. strategists pondered how far they could escalate their attacks without provoking a reaction from Russia and China—the failure of these countries' governments to respond has encouraged the United States to go one step further in its barbaric onslaught.

ALL-OUT

The situation in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia is now full of risks for the revolutionary forces. There can be no slackening of the campaign in every country for the defeat of the U.S. war-machine and the full military victory of the National Liberation Front. U.S. imperialism has no right to negotiate anything for the people of Indo-China. Given realistic military support, the N.L.F. and North Vietnamese leaders could break off the demoralizing Paris Peace talks and go all-out for a complete military victory in the entire area.

- No to the Paris Peace Talks!
- Stop the Surrender!
- Victory to the N.L.F.!

CHILE: END OF THE PEACEFUL ROAD

by Frank Hansen

THE COUNTRY where revolution came through the ballot-box. That, we are told, is Chile—where elections brought "marxist" President Allende to power two years ago. And that, too, is what most Chilean workers themselves believe.

"This is our Government now", a saucepan-factory worker tells an American reporter for the "Wall Street Journal". The words speak for millions. Inflation is raging, but the President has vowed that—unlike previous inflations—the worker won't pay for this one. At the beginning of October, every wage-earner received a 100 per cent pay rise. "Before, we couldn't buy meat," the factory worker says. "Now, if there is meat, we have the money to buy it." Official figures put unemployment at about 3 per cent, well below the 8 per cent of two years ago. "We are the masters now!" These words sum up the feelings of the Chilean working-class, who are still solid in support of President Allende.

But is the working class really in power? In October, an attempt was made to take over road-transport in Southern Chile. The owners—many of them drivers of their own lorries—called a "bosses' strike". When the Government tried to arrest the leaders, almost the whole of Chile's middle-classes joined the revolt. Doctors, chemists, shop-keepers, factory-owners and others were almost able to paralyse the state. In response, the working class began to move. Workers forcibly re-opened plants which the owners had declared "closed". They flexed their muscles for massive pro-Allende demonstrations and factory-occupations. With an appeal by Allende to the army ranks to stand by him, the workers could have broken the last obstacle to full power. They could have taken over road transport, the armed forces, the press and the whole economy.

RETREAT

But the workers' strength was not used. Instead, they were told by Allende to stop demonstrating—they were not needed. Afraid that the Army might move against him, Allende invited three senior officers into his Cabinet. He pleaded with them to "restore order". He was told "Get rid of your extremists!"—and removed the most left-wing ministers from his cabinet. His plans for taking over road-transport were abandoned. The middle-classes rejoiced in their victory.

Now, growing sections of the working class can see that they don't hold state power after all. Former Army Commander-in-Chief General Prats is now Minister of the Interior. Ultimate power is still in the hands of the same ruling class and Army officers who governed the people before.

Salvador Allende was swept into power in the Presidential elections of September 1970. His "Popular Unity" Coalition—comprising the working-class parties and some radicals and 'progressive' Christian Democrats—gained the backing

of the industrial workers, the shanty dwellers and the radicalized small farmers and agricultural workers. The peasants were promised land. The city slum-dwellers were promised houses, schools, hospitals. The giant corporations and monopolies—mostly American-owned—were to be nationalized without compensation.

PEACEFUL

Allende seemed sure he could meet these promises peacefully and within the Constitution. In return for being Constitutionally confirmed as President, Allende's first step on being elected was to guarantee to the Christian Democrats he wouldn't touch their Army. Even President Paz Estenssoro of Bolivia—a confirmed anti-marxist—had leaned upon the armed workers when nationalizing the tin mines in 1952. He had supplied arms to the miners and allowed them to set up a workers' militia. True, this was meant only as a "counterpoise" to the regular army and not a replacement of it. But



ALLENDE

Allende—egged on by the Communist Party—refused even to consider that. He made two pledges: (1) that no workers' organizations would be allowed to arm themselves and (2) that no military (or police) officers would be appointed unless trained in the established military academies. With his two pledges to the Christian Democrats, Allende renounced all intention of seizing power from the ruling class.

REACTION

True, he was able to carry out much of his programme. In 1971 he imposed a freeze on prices of basic necessities, whilst wages rose 35 per cent. The nationalization of the U.S.-owned copper mines was so popular that not even the Christian Democrats dared object. Workers' committees were even established in all state-owned enterprises, although each was headed by a manager appointed in the capital, Santiago. Half a litre of free milk was guaranteed to every child in an effort to combat malnutrition. A standard size of bread was enforced to stop price-juggling. And all the while, Allende's support grew in leaps and bounds.

But quickly the system began to take its revenge. By the beginning of this year, Chile was on the eve of a serious economic crisis. The system simply could not "afford" the reforms. Since working people were eating more, imports had begun soaring above exports leading to a snowballing deficit in the balance of payments. Western credit had begun boycotting Chile as a risky investment, whilst Chilean investors were switching their funds abroad or plumping for quick profits. Moreover the world price of copper—which provides roughly two-thirds of all Chile's foreign exchange—had begun to fall by a stupendous 40 per cent. With food shortages appearing in the shops, there was no way out but to proceed to take over the economy. A Bill for the nationalization of nearly one hundred companies was drawn up. But the right wing opposition refused to allow the Bill through Congress. At that point, Allende should have sought a mandate from the working-class organizations to go ahead despite

every district are arming themselves to the teeth for a struggle. As shanty-dwellers lose patience and move into the well-to-do suburbs of the big cities, erecting and guarding their new 'revolutionary campamentos' under the auspices of the "Guevarist" MIR, the rich are patrolling their residential areas with "neighbourhood defence groups" under the leadership of the extreme right. The fascists are building up arsenals and the conditions for civil war are being prepared.

SEIZE POWER !

There is only one way forward now. Allende has his mandate. No ruling-class "Constitution"-mongering must be allowed to stand in the way. The apparent might of the Generals and of the Christian Democrats is a chimera. A single word from Allende would unleash an earthquake of working-class and peasant anger to crumble these obstacles to dust. Allende and his Socialist and Communist supporters must be told: "Break with the bourgeoisie! Take the Power!"

● PEASANT COMMITTEES should be set up to organize the seizure of land regardless of Congress. The land-nationalization can be 'legalized' afterwards, once the peasants and workers have seized power.

● SOLDIERS' COMMITTEES should be established to allow the Armed Forces rank-and-file to defend their interests, supervise—or where necessary arrest—their officers, etc. There can be no doubt that the mood of the army ranks will reflect that in the working class. They will fight to defend their own Government with all they have got, given the chance.

● ALL PRINTING PRESSES and RADIO and T.V. STATIONS should be made available to the workers', peasants' and housewives' organizations for the free expression of views. The right to free speech and the dissemination of opinions should not depend on the size of one's wallet.

● WORKERS' CONTROL should be introduced in every factory to defend jobs, determine production policy etc. If the result is bankruptcy, the plant should be nationalized without compensation.

● A WORKERS' DEFENCE force based on the peasant and trade union organizations should be established

● DEMOCRACY must be introduced into all the workers' organizations, with direct representation from factories and villages, immediate right of recall and no official to get more than a skilled workers' wage.

● A SPECIAL CONFERENCE of all labour organizations must be convened to decide the question of power.

The revolutionaries must build a revolutionary party using such demands to teach the overwhelming masses what the minority already know: that Allende won't act—and that if the power is to be taken, they will have to take it themselves.

the protests of the totally unrepresentative Congress. With the masses overwhelmingly behind him, no force on earth—and certainly no Army officers—could have stopped him. Since he was not prepared to do this, he had no other choice but to back down. He removed the freeze on prices and hoped the higher profits would "stimulate investment". The result was a raging inflation. The prices of essential foodstuffs doubled and trebled. Huge losses were incurred by the state enterprises. Allende's response was just to order the State Bank to print more money. This only stoked the fires of inflation and drove the lower middle classes into the hands of the fascist and conservative parties as their life-savings almost dried up overnight.

The result we have seen—a "bosses strike" against the Government which was supported by large sections of the middle class.

CIVIL WAR

Now Allende has reached the end of the "peaceful road". As the peasants lose patience and start to seize the land, landowners in

NEW APE- MAN FIND CONFIRMS MARXIST THEORY

A Two-part Series by CHRIS KNIGHT Part One



Above: The new 'Leakey Man'

An artist's impression of the creature whose 2,500,000 year old skull has just been discovered by Richard Leakey near Lake Rudolph in Kenya. It had a brain capacity of over 800 cubic centimetres (compared with 300-450 cc for modern apes and 1,400 for man). From a leg bone and from the shape of the base of the skull, it has been concluded that the creature walked upright.

IN RECENT YEARS, MORE AND MORE "scientific" books have been telling us that primitive man was a brutal savage. The proof? Fossil skulls of a kind of "man-ape" called "Australopithecus" had dents in them. Nothing unusual about that, perhaps. Except that these dents were apparently wounds from which the creatures had died. And they had been inflicted by artificial weapons.

From these and other facts it was concluded that our earliest ancestors had a social order like that of modern baboons. The males fought each other for possession of the available food and females, the strongest ending up with nearly all. The first tools of "man the tool-maker" were in fact weapons of violence which the earliest men used in fights against one another.

Hence the modern world's competitive struggles, male dominance, private property, inequality, violent nationalisms, wars, ever more lethal weapons and so on were all quite "natural". We had inherited them, the books told us, from our animal ancestors, along with the fact that we have two eyes and one nose. As Nicholas Tomalin put it* in the *New Statesman* (September 15, 1967), the new facts about "Australopithecus"

"must make, if not reactionaries, at least revisionists of us all. Man, and consequently his society, is immutable. The old adage "you can't change human nature" becomes true once more."

Katherine Whitehorn in her "Observer" column expressed gratitude ("I for one feel a lot better for it") for the information that today's "violence" and "aggression" were "natural"—and

"the desire to have and to hold, to screech at the neighbours and say 'Mine, all mine' is in our nature too".

(Observer, Oct. 29 1967).

The chief value of the recent discovery of "Leakey Man" is that it provides powerful new confirmation that all this is rubbish. The newly-discovered "man-ape", with a larger brain than "Australopithecus", is a much better candidate for the title of "missing link". And the fact that it lived over two-and-a-half million years ago—

in the same period as "Australopithecus"—can only mean one thing. The "Australopithecines" were not its ancestors. Instead of developing into modern man, they must have become extinct.

To anyone who thinks at all, it is perfectly clear that the Australopithecines died out precisely because their social order did not allow them to overcome their sexual and other antagonisms and to co-operate in hunting big game.

We know that our early ancestors were not at all the selfish individualists of Katherine Whitehorn's middle-class imagination. When a Stone Age hunter killed an animal, he did not screech "Mine, all mine!" and begin eating it on the spot. On the contrary, many of the most powerful so-called "taboos" and "customs" of primitive man were those which prevented him from doing any such thing.

The North American Indians lived a way of life closest of all known peoples to that of Stone Age man since earliest times. According to the traveller Heckewelder,

"I have seen them divide game, venison, bear's meat, fish etc., among themselves, when they sometimes had many shares to make; and cannot recollect a single instance of their falling into a dispute or finding fault with the distribution as being unequal or otherwise objectionable. They would rather lie down themselves on an empty stomach than have it laid to their charge that they neglected to satisfy the needy; only dogs and beasts, they say, fight amongst themselves."

Another writer wrote of them:

"These savages know nothing of mine and thine, for it may be said that what belongs to one belongs to another. When a savage has been unsuccessful in beaver-hunting, his fellows succour him without being asked."

Modern anthropologists have tried to pour scorn on the idea of "primitive communism". But even those most hostile to it have had to concede—as in the case of Audrey Richards—that throughout the primitive world, "food.... is something that has to be shared."

The further back we go in man's history, the less selfish and "ape-like" does his be-

haviour seem to be. Among the Australian aborigines of South West Victoria, we are told,

"When a hunter brings game to the camp, he gives up all claim to it, and must stand aside and allow the best portion to be given away, and content himself with the worst...."

In the very earliest times, it seems, society was "communist" through and through.

So the people who use "baboon-society" to prove that communism is "against human nature" had better try again. We see here how the theory of evolution is misunderstood and used for reactionary ends. Of course, evolution explains the development of our anatomy—our bodies. But with regard to our social behaviour, the "theory of evolution" as it is usually understood just doesn't add up. Ape and monkey societies—and the societies of all "man-apes" as far as can be judged—have everywhere "evolved" in quite the wrong direction. In becoming more complex, they also move not towards less "selfishness" and conflict but towards more. The higher primates were confronted with this great evolutionary dilemma. The more socially-organized they became, and the more efficiently they mastered the use of artificial weapons, the more brutal they became in their behaviour towards each other—and the more, in fact, their own infant "technology" was turned against themselves.

But for marxists this is nothing strange. It's just one more example of the fact, as Trotsky puts it,

"that evolution proceeds through the struggle of antagonistic forces; that a slow accumulation of changes at a certain moment explodes the old shell and brings about a catastrophe, revolution...."

and that this is how all appearances of anything NEW in the universe have always taken place. Social tensions and contradictions for our man-ape ancestors accumulated until life for them became intolerable—and a 'catastrophe' occurred. It was in this catastrophe that human society—on the basis of a ruthlessly "communist" way of life—was born. This event—and the light thrown on it by the discovery of 'Leakey Man'—will be outlined in more detail next month.

* Reviewing a book by Robert Ardrey.

IRELAND

THE EVENTS IN IRELAND have broken out too late for us to give adequate treatment to them in this issue.

Suffice it to say that behind the callous treatment of Sean Mac Stiofain and behind the new Irish Justice Bill stands Heath and our own ruling class in this country. What is being done to Irish republicans today will be done to British tenants, trade unionists and housewives tomorrow.

We salute the courage of Sean Mac Stiofain. Though we have deep political differences with them, we solidarize unconditionally with both wings of the Irish Republican Movement in the struggle against British Imperialism. We demand our trade union and Labour leaders in this country do the same—and organize class action in support of the developing strike movement in Ireland. The Heath-Lynch moves towards dictatorship on both sides of the Irish Sea must be smashed. Act now—before it is too late!

- Release All Political Prisoners in Ireland North and South!
- Defend the Irish Republican Army!
- Bring down the Tory Government, British Imperialism and its "Eire" puppet regime!

DEFEND AUEW

IN THEIR STAND against paying the £5,000 fine imposed on them by the Industrial Relations Court, the leadership of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers have distinguished themselves. The contrast with the recent cowardly behaviour of Jack Jones on this and similar issues is obvious. It is not enough, however, merely to refuse to "recognize" the Industrial Relations Act. It is there. It is backed up by the Tory Government and the whole repressive apparatus of state. "Non-recognition" can only mean endless martyrdom—unless the trade union leadership goes beyond this to an all-out struggle to prepare for a General Strike which will bring down this Government, its state apparatus and the class it represents.

Sean MacStiofain,

Irish Patriot

and heroic

fighter against

British

Imperialism



SOLIDARITY WITH THE I.R.A.!

U.S.A.

by Phil Eliot.

Nixon's electoral victory over McGovern came as no real surprise to Socialists in Britain or America. After all, he not only had the support of Wall Street but also that of Peking, Moscow, and the bureaucrats of the American Trade Unions. What chance did McGovern have against these giants, backed as he was only by liberal middle class Americans?

While Nixon and McGovern were fooling themselves that they were fighting a decisive political campaign, the American working class showed its contempt for the whole charade by massive abstention—only 60% of the population voted.

Nixon has already announced the policies he intends to pursue—a massive attack upon the American working class and its Trad Union organisations, cuts in welfare benefits and social services, and a cut-back in the poverty programme. In international affairs his policies are not so different from McGovern's, i.e., a relative running down of U.S. foreign military expenditure, with massive reductions in the armed forces and the withdrawal of 170,000 troops from N.A.T.O. (McGovern suggested 175,000). In Vietnam, Nixon sought the agreement of Moscow and Peking to act upon the Stalinist leaders of the N.L.F., with the same intention as McGovern to end the U.S. military presence in South East Asia as quickly as possible.

All this is in preparation for the massive international trade war hotting up, in which capitalist America is steering towards an isolationist position.

At the same time, the American working class is striving to strengthen its ties with the international labour movement. The Union of Auto Workers has begun forging links with the European car workers, and the Farm Workers Union has gained its successes to date because of solidarity action by British and European workers in blacking Californian grapes and wines.

The task facing American Socialists is to struggle inside the Trade Unions against their present leaders for the formation of an American Labour Party capable of leading the American working class to the conquest of power.

ASLEF STRIKE

Behind the one day railway strike on November 23rd was a mounting feeling of frustration amongst the rank and file of A.S.L.E.F., the engine drivers' union. The drivers are worried about the lack of progress in the talks on the future wages structure—it took 6 months to arrange one meeting with the management—and the probability of further big redundancies.

Since the early 1960's, train drivers have seen their conditions of work decline, and many thousands of footplaten have left the industry as a result of line closures, productivity agreements, e.t.c. 1965 saw one of the biggest betrayals of drivers by their leaders when the Single Manning agreement was brought in. Previously, most trains had run with two men in the driver's cab, but management began to cut out the second man (or fireman).

The election of the Tory government in 1970 increased the ferocity of the attack being made upon the railway industry. The Railways Board, acting on behalf of the government, is already trying to lengthen the drivers' 40 hour week. The Southern Region has stated that in order to maintain services some 35 to 40% of drivers must work their rest days each week, i.e. a return to the six-day week. There have also been instances where drivers have been asked to

work a second term of duty in one day—despite the fact that this contravenes the 12 hour rest agreement.

At the same time the board has almost reached agreement on another 25,000 redundancies, and the government has threatened to reduce the railways from over 11,000 miles to under 7,000 miles, with the possibility of an additional 26,000 redundancies.

A carefully designed Tory plan becomes visible: fewer men working longer hours, with their wages controlled by the state.

The footplaten, however, have very different ideas. At their annual conference earlier this year resolutions were passed demanding a reduction in the working week from 40 hours to 36 hours, as well as a substantial increase in wages. In addition the 9 man executive committee was mandated to ensure that no train with a potential speed above 100 m.p.h. would run until the British Railways Board paid a substantial increase in wages to all footplaten.

The Executive Committee appear to have responded, but the militancy of the A.S.L.E.F. leaders is not all that it seems to be. During the work-to-rule early this year, A.S.L.E.F. was represented at the National Industrial Relations Court. Even the militant Mr. Buckton, the General Secretary, was not prepared to face up to the full consequences of defying the state.

WEST GERMANY

by Keith Veness

THE 'LONG NIGHT' of reaction in West Germany is over. The working class have started waking from their lethargy and a whole new scene is opening up. The victory of Willi Brandt and his SPD-FPD coalition in last month's Federal elections is only a beginning.

The electoral victory was secured above all by the first political mass strike in Germany since 1952. All over West Germany the workers—despite their leaders—struck for twenty-four hours when Germany's "torians"—the CDU—threatened to bring down the Brandt

END OF AN ERA

Government over its policies towards East Germany in the early summer of this year. It was this upsurge which scared the CDU into eventually abstaining on the treaties with East Germany and thereby enabled Brandt to survive. The German working class want nothing of the anti-communism of their ruling class and saw Brandt's treaties correctly as a step towards unity with their class-brothers in the East.

The election hinged on the issue of Brandt's "Ost-politik" and has resulted in a crushing blow for the

right. His overwhelming victory gives Brandt little excuse for inaction. In this situation it is criminal for German socialists and revolutionaries to be outside the mass party of the German working class.

The SPD's youth wing—the JSU—is now over a quarter of the party and is really its "left wing". Though far from marxist, its rank-and-file can be won for the programme of revolution—provided the "revolutionaries" themselves grasp the opportunities. The middle-class composition and sectarian policies of the German rev-

olutionaries are a product of past political realities. In the present situation, they are a scandal. Organized on the programme of marxism and the principles of democratic centralism, our German revolutionary comrades must work within the SPD and the trade unions to smash the existing leadership and prepare the labour movement in West Germany for the ultimate seizure of state power and working-class re-unification of Germany. The new scenario which has begun making its appearance is now putting this possibility firmly on the agenda.

BRENT

THROUGHOUT 1972, Brent East Young Socialists have concentrated on the rents issue, organizing a series of well-attended meetings on housing estates in the area—and fighting the treacherous Labour Councillors who voted to implement the Housing Finance Act.

As members of the Brent Federation of Tenants' Associations, we have played our part in developing the tenants' movement in new areas, in explaining the political issues involved, in organizing coaches for a lobby of Labour

LAMBETH

THROUGHOUT 1972, AS THE attacks of the Tory Government continued, the bankruptcy of the existing leaders of the Labour Party and trade unions has been shown up again and again. In the fight against these leaders, the Labour Party Young Socialists in Lambeth have concentrated on two major issues affecting every working class family today:

- On the rents issue we mounted a consistent campaign for non-implementation of the Tory Rent Act and are still fighting for the removal of those Labour Councillors who voted to put the rents up.
- On the Common Market, we have fought for the expulsion of the treacherous Labour MPs who

Councillors and securing Trades Council support for a one-day industrial stoppage in April—when the next rent-increases are due.

In the Labour Party itself, the Y.S. put forward a resolution to the General Management Committee calling on all those Labour Councillors who voted to put up the rents to resign and make way for those prepared to fight on the tenants' behalf. After being gerrymandered off the agenda for two months, it at last got on the floor last month. "Who is to control our Labour Councillors?" asked Graham Bash, moving the resolution. "The tenants, trade unionists and Labour Party members who put them in office, or the Tory Government and big business?"

voted or abstained on this issue when the Government could have been brought down. In particular we have aimed for the removal of Strauss, MP for Vauxhall, who has consistently abstained in Parliament.

We also campaigned on many other issues—and were particularly active in setting up a local branch of the new National Union of School Students.

A series of speakers at regular meetings of Vauxhall, Norwood and Streatham Young Socialists have put the revolutionary socialist case on all these and many other issues. But our activities didn't stop there.

● Firstly, the sales of our paper, YOUNG SOCIALIST, were built up. Now this has merged with the CHARTIST to produce a bigger, better monthly. This will be further expanded in the future. We have thus over the year been able to explain

As expected, it was the 'non-implementing' Councillors who were relied upon to beat the motion down—showing just how little really divided them from those who had caved in to the Tories. The resolution was defeated—but not without this warning from Comrade Bash: "The tenants support us. We'll do all possible to bring them back into the Labour Party, to take over the wards, and to throw out the right-wing Councillors once and for all!"

April will be a crucial period for the whole tenants' movement: we are now going all-out to ensure that any rent strikes will receive full backing from the Labour Party and the Trades Council, and that the tenants' demonstration planned for that date is a success.

our ideas clearly to tenants, trade unionists and Labour supporters, and draw in many new members.

● Secondly, our campaign on the rents issue has been full and active both inside and outside the Labour Party. Two lobbies were organized. We also put a big contingent under our own banner on the May Day march.

● Social activities also helped the growth of the Y.S. Parties, football matches and a day trip to Hindhead are some examples.

1973 offers bigger challenges. The Tory Government is now legislating to control wages. Yet more rent rises are on the way. An all-out confrontation with the Tories is being prepared. The possibilities are there to build a massive revolutionary youth movement which will help transform the Labour Party. We must make sure the opportunities are taken!

Your YS Branch

STREATHAM YS meets every Tuesday at 298, Streatham High Road, SW16.

VAUXHALL YS meets every Wednesday at 179, Kennington Road.

BRENT EAST YS meets every other Tuesday at Anson Hall, corner of Anson and Chichele Rd. NW2.

NORWOOD Y.S. meets at 264 Rosendale Road, S.E.24 every Thursday at 8pm.

Vauxhall L P YS

PUBLIC MEETING

Freeze Rents Not Wages!

Wednesday December 6th 8pm

DUKE OF CLARENCE
YOUTH CLUB
ORSETT ST.
LONDON S.E.11.

LONDON TEACHERS FIGHT BACK *by Al Richardson (Brent N.U.T.)*

On Thursday, November 23rd, nearly all the schools in the inner London area and in many of the outer boroughs were closed, and over 10,000 teachers marched in protest from Lincoln's Inn to County Hall, and then on to Westminster to lobby their M.P.s. The march took place against a background of impotence on the part of the executive of the union (the N.U.T.) and bitterness on that of the rank and file.

The dispute centres on the provision—made two years ago—that teachers should get an increase in the "allowance" for living in London. Faced with rising prices, steeply rising fares and rocketing rents and mortgages, the school-teachers in London were looking forward to this. Other civil servants and local government employees get a far greater "London allowance" (only recently increased) than they. So shock turned to anger when Mrs Thatcher came forward with an offer of...28p a week!

Everybody now disclaims responsibility. The Inner London Education Authority and the Outer London Boroughs are claiming to support the teachers—since they are desperately short of staff (600 teachers left Brent L.E.A. alone last year—one twentieth of all teachers in London). Their support so far has taken the form

of robbing teachers of half a day's wage for striking on November 23. The National Union of Teachers Executive complains loudly of the Government's treachery in breaking the "gentlemen's agreement" it thought had been reached. But after calling the derisory half-day "protest" strike on November 23, it has no plans for a fight. The Government on their side claim that the offer has been produced at short notice (only two years given!).

London's teachers are left wondering in a dazed way why they have been picked on as victims of a wage freeze that is not yet law, to be applied to what is not even a wage, and which in their case is retrospectively dated back two years.

A protest meeting held in Westminster Hall brought to everyone's notice just how wide is the gulf between the NUT Executive and the rank-and-file. Hints from the platform that I.L.E.A.'s Sir William Alexander may have been drunk during negotiations seemed a poor reply to angry challenges from the floor. The general demand was for action following the protest strike—which, it was felt, was a pitiful gesture unless followed up.

The splinter union, the loud-mouthed but inactive N.A.S., has not even organized a strike in

school hours, and a scab union—the "Professional Association of Teachers" (set up by a sinister right-wing lawyer) has even condemned the N.U.T. for striking at all.

None of this comes as any surprise. For many years now, the Executive of the N.U.T. has acted in the same way whenever the uncomfortable question of a rise has been posed. It has always put the union membership (each of whom pays a £12 per year subscription!) on trial—asking them to take token strike action, to demonstrate, or even to cough up more money just to show that they really do want an award. Like other trade unionists, the N.U.T. rank and file would rather their Executive went ahead and challenged the Government instead of conducting such "polls" of its own membership as if it were the Industrial Relations Court.

And who are this Executive? For the most part, white-haired old Headmasters who enjoy salar-

ies three or four times those of their members. A headmaster is not, of course, a teacher. He is a manager in the pay of the local authority. He assigns teachers to their tasks and (through the scale system) fixes their wages and promotion. How can he understand or fight for the teacher's real needs?

A sizeable section of the N.U.T. now fully understands the futility of attempting to take on the Government alone. Now, more than ever, the teachers need to be shown that the rest of the labour movement is behind them. It is, after all, the education of the children of working men that suffers in the hands of apathetic, demoralized and poorly-paid teachers.

Good firm action from the Trade Union movement to smash the Tory freeze and the government responsible for it would teach this splendid lesson to the teachers themselves—that their allies are the working class, whose standard of living they share.

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