

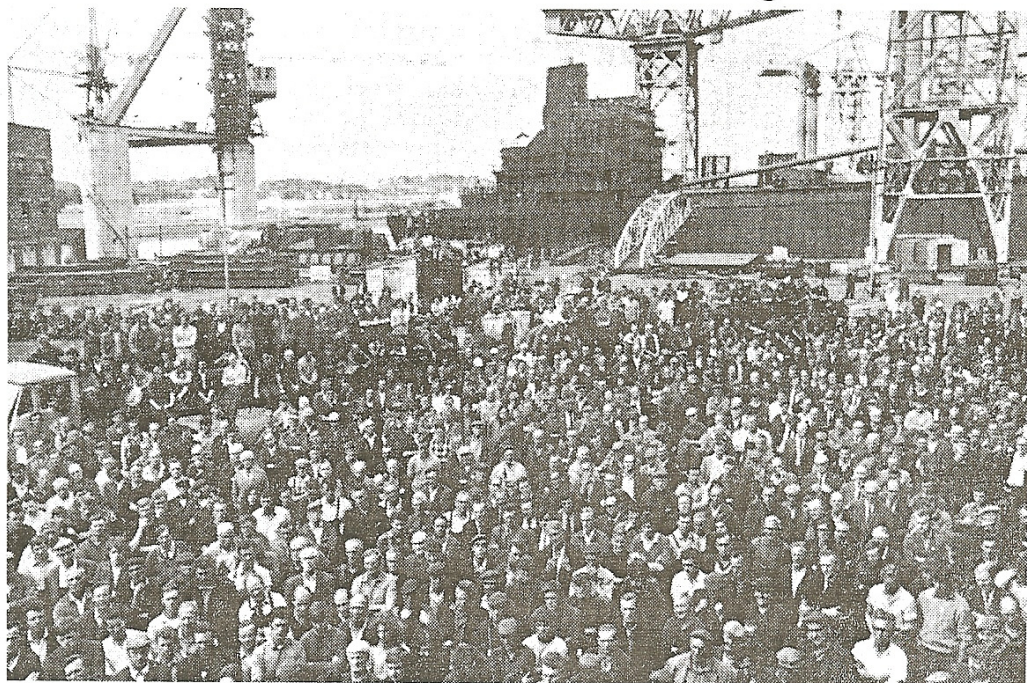
The Red Mole

CLYDESIDE:

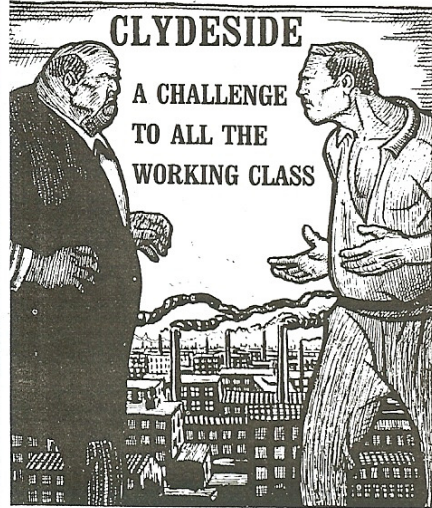
EXTEND THE STRUGGLE

BEYOND THE YARDS

The takeover of UCS is an extremely important step forward for the workers at UCS and for the working class movement as a whole. It is the first time for many years in Britain that the question of workers' control and the question of workers' management have been raised by the working class in such a powerful and determined fashion. *The Red Mole* and we in the International Marxist Group believe that this adds a new dimension and a new depth to the class struggle in Britain. The use of occupation as a tactic to win working class demands while being the norm in France and Italy, is only just being discovered by workers in Britain. A successful use of the tactic on Clydeside would legitimise the tactic in the eyes of other workers. The effect this could have would mark a momentous turn in the struggle against the Tories and declining British capitalism. It could well mark the end of a period of comparatively defensive action—demonstrations, protests, resolutions, etc. and unfortunately a willingness on the part of trade unions to negotiate redundancies. The fight against unemployment is now an absolutely necessary complement to the fight for improved wages and conditions, and the struggle for UCS could give to the fight against redundancies a new hope and dynamism. Without this the wage fights to be conducted over the coming winter will lose much of their militancy as workers grow more and more afraid of the sack following bankruptcies, rationalisations, etc. The success or failure of the men's efforts on Clydeside will play a pivotal role for the future.



The Tories are adamant that UCS must close. That means that out of 8,000 jobs now at UCS, only 2,500 will remain, and that all work will eventually be concentrated on the Govan yard. Most of the work in progress is to be completed. At the end of September, 1,000 men will become redundant, and only 400 immediately, mostly white-collar and staff. Govan's yard is to close by the end of the year, and Clydebank by next March. The Tories are making an open market: the 2,500 workers left at Govan will have to show their willingness to accept shift-working, take wage-cuts, and that it is worthwhile for investors. This is clearly going to be used as a big ideological weapon to make workers believe that they can influence the Tories into granting concessions. Another weapon much in evidence is the "1,000 jobs" at Scott-Lithgows. The recent completion of a new million berth at this yard on the Lower Clyde was timed to show her neatly, and the jobs announced quite suddenly to show her admen looking for work there recently have been told: vacancies).



POLITICAL ANALYSIS—AN URGENT NEED

Because of the fact that the Tories have announced their own set of redundancies in motion before the majority of UCS workers have returned from their holidays, the shop stewards committee have gone ahead with their action. When the mass of the workers return on the 9th, the whole strategy and the demands that this strategy is designed to win will have to be discussed at mass meetings. The first task's occupation at Clydebank has to be assessed, the plans it have been made by other forces, the Labour Party, the trade unions, the Tory Party, the Liquidator, etc. all have to be taken into account. This demands a very clear political analysis of the whole situation. The developments taking place within these other forces hold enormous dangers and they have to be assessed.

THE CHIMES OF WEDGWOOD BENN

The support that the workers' action has received from Wedgwood Benn must be treated critically. Benn, of course, is the creator of UCS. Benn's actions are motivated by his desire to vindicate his own past and that of the Labour Party. It is essential to counter any illusion that it represents a shift in the attitude of the Labour Party to "workers' control", industrial democracy, and the interests of the working class. Benn would not support mass occupation but would support a work-in. This is a crucial distinction. What engages his attention is that a work-in gives Benn's support against the Tories some backing—by working the men expressing their confidence in the future viability of the yards, which he shares. At the same time, even if the yards close, they close after the ships have been completed. Hence, if he loses the battle, he can save some financial face. The Tory charges that UCS should never have been created by showing a sound profit on the existing ships. The Labour Party gives him their tacit support—but only because they believe that "after a week or so the take-over could be called off and the workers' protests then be channelled into more orthodox ways of demonstration." (*Financial Times*, 2 Aug. 1971). The Labour Party can use the workers' struggle in their attempts to present an alternative to the Industrial Relations Bill. This is something they haven't been able to do so far with much force because of the *In Place of Strife*. Now they can talk much more effectively about "workers' participation" in management rather than legislation against trade unions: an alternative signed, however, to produce the same results. At the same time, the Tory abandonment of their lame duck philosophy in regard to International Computers Ltd. (ICL) last week gives the Labour Party an opening through which they can improve the quality of their Opposition (absolutely minimal so far because their policies are not substantially different from the Government's) by attacking the Tories favouring only those firms which will do well in the Common Market and leaving whole regions of Britain pressed backwaters (ICL is the protegee for the European computer market against U.S.-owned IBM).

The Labour Party protests over UCS are of course hypocritical. It was the Labour Party who through the Industrial Organisation Corporation helped Weinstock to merge British Electric with GEC and create several thousand redundancies, defeating in the process the only significant

UCS: THE STRUGGLE MUST BE EXTENDED

attempt at a workers' takeover in Britain. Weinstock was later knighted by the Labour Party, so little faith should be placed in their apparent concern for mass redundancy, when out of power.

Benn's qualified support for the UCS workers carries nationalisation proposals with it. Benn wants another inquiry by a "select committee" into UCS, and on the basis of this he wants to complete the nationalisation of UCS (including writing off its debts) with workers' consultation in its development. This would be the Labour Party's "constructive alternative" to the Tories' cold-blooded approach. In other words: nationalise with compensation to the private owners and hold out to them the prospect of a "share of the responsibility" in running UCS on the basis of a Labour report which will inevitably suggest reorganisation but with fewer redundancies than the Tories. Wilson's visit to the STUC was clearly designed to persuade the STUC to call off the protest in return for a pledge that the Labour Party will nationalise under "workers' control". The STUC couldn't call off the protest at this stage but it would bear Wilson's offer in mind. The "constructive alternatives" of the Labour Party should be regarded with the utmost suspicion, especially if the Labour Party "fights" for them in exchange for the workers channelling their protest into more "orthodox forms". This would be an ideal solution for everybody except the workers: the workers give up serious forms of struggle and become spectators of a mock parliamentary tournament over which they can exercise no control and in which the Labour Party would lose.

"CONTROL" AND "OWNERSHIP"

A very acute danger inherent in the present situation is the lack of clarity which prevails over the meaning of words like "workers' control", "workers' management", "revolution", etc. This confusion is compounded by the press looking round for words to express their shock at the takeover. But we should be clear about this. "Workers' control" is a concept that applies to a general situation in which the bosses can't act without being countered by the workers—where the workers have de facto control over hiring and firing, speed of production, etc. The action of the stewards in taking over the gates, in ensuring that no work is moved out of the yards, constitutes a limited form of workers' control in one enterprise (so far only a section of an enterprise). This is not the same as workers' management. Workers' management of an enterprise can mean two things: either the workers cooperating with the owners in their own exploitation (some variant of this would be the "workers' participation" that the Labour Party wishes to see) or else it implies a situation in which the workers have seized the plants, thereby physically expropriating the owners, and produce for workers, not the bourgeoisie. Clearly this implies a revolutionary situation, and this is obviously not what is being aimed at by the present work-in, since it involves direct and continual conflict with the bourgeois state.

The suggestions that the shop stewards committee have been making to date suggest that they wish to escalate workers' control into "workers' management". This is not

possible a) because a worker-owned UCS cannot be viable within a surrounding hostile capitalist environment; b) it cannot be achieved without bringing the workers into direct conflict with the law (i.e. the state); and c) private capital for this "illegal" venture would not be forthcoming. If the shop stewards committee—which has discussed "municipalisation", workers' marketing teams, etc.—wishes to provoke this kind of confrontation at this stage, then it has to do a number of things very urgently. It must explain to a mass meeting of all the men involved the implications that have just been outlined, and what they must do to prepare themselves for this. For it should be recognised from the start that to jump from workers' control (which leaves the bosses in ownership) to a position of workers' self-management (workers' ownership) involves a physical seizure of the yards in which the workers would have to defend their claim to ownership by use of arms against the retaliation of the state. A successful confrontation of this kind involves at the very least a general strike before it can be seriously proposed.

The Communist Party, which effectively controls the committee, would not seriously envisage this kind of perspective even if it were correct to do so at this stage. It can only be concluded therefore that the work-in has been conceived as a protest which they imagine will by itself make the Government back down, while enthusiasm for the work-in is buoyed up by talk of an Upper Clyde Shipbuilders Unlimited. On the other hand, the C.P., whether they recognise it or not, have embarked the workers on the road to workers' self-management, the logic of which, if this course is pursued, leads to a conflict with the state, before the men are prepared for this politically or organisationally. If the men attempt a major reorganisation of the yard, the sale of equipment, set up new ships, etc. then, should the state respond by the use of force, the C.P. would almost certainly back down, and this could start the process of defeat.

A DILEMMA: WORK-IN OR GENERAL STRIKE

This short discussion brings us on to the whole question of tactics, strategy and demands. The establishment of control in the yards that has been achieved so far is an absolutely tremendous step forward. But the question of whether the men should continue to work is a tactical question which is determined by the demands which you wish to raise. So far no demands have been raised. If the work-in isn't a tactic that flows from a series of demands, what does it flow from?

As we pointed out, to consider a work-in as a long-term strategic aim is to raise questions of conflict with the state which few will have considered. From what can be gleaned from the statements of the shop stewards committee, the work-in is aimed not as a sanction applied to win a series of demands, but as a demonstration that the workers are determined they shouldn't lose their jobs, that the Tories are trying to viciously butcher their yards, etc. This is a very powerful way of demonstrating these things. It also breaks the ideological hold of the bourgeoisie over the working class for a long enough period of time for the working class elsewhere to see that workers can run industry and that they don't need bosses.



The gains that would be made from a work-in without provoking a revolutionary confrontation (only be relatively short-lived) at the level of de facto have to be weighed against the possible confusion flow from a work-in. By doggedly continuing to work, workers may come to think that this magically they will be working in future; that all they have to do is work. The opposite might very well be true: that they will be carefully considered. Because a work-in has the power of sanction over the bosses.

That a work-in doesn't really hold sanctions over bosses is easy to see. Both Benn and Smith (they have made it clear that they are happy to see it) have made it clear that they are happy to see it working. They get the ships finished on time, they get overtime working, and with no labour disputes. A work-in plays into the hands of the Liquidator. The men go on producing ships which are sold to profit lists at a profit, and the men are given redundancy. The shop stewards committee then has to find a way to pay the redundant workers after they have worked themselves out of a job. This money would have to come from the trade union movement or from pooled wages of other workers in the yard. Thus, the workers are poorer while the capitalists get richer! This clearly resembles workers' self-management as we've described it above. At the same time, because the Liquidator has to pay the wages, all he has to do in order to break his plans of the shop stewards committee, is to sack a number of men will be sacked on date y. He that this will mean that the shop stewards will then their energies raising money to pay the wages of men, perhaps at a crucial point in time.

FOR A SCOTTISH GENERAL STRIKE

Ultimately, the only effective means of defeat is to build a general strike in Scotland. This will force the Tories very hard. If the Rolls-Royce plants were

WORKERS CONTROL ON CLYDESIDE

The U.C.S. yards are occupied. The shop stewards, elected workers' representatives, have extended their control in the yards from the day-to-day struggles with management over wages and conditions. Now they have laid claim to the yards and one of them is quoted as saying that production could go on for up to two years.

When Bro. Reid and his fellow stewards were in London for the Government announcement of closures, they also said that what they were to do was not an occupation but a "work in". What is the difference between a strike and an occupation, between an occupation and a "work in"?

Britain is a society based on private profit. It is not just that the industrialists are interested in an industry only if it makes a profit, but over time, the state and the law have developed to protect and to support the system.

Workers, from whose labour all the profits come, have to engage in a constant struggle with the bosses over the price for their labour, and the conditions under which they sell it. This is the day-to-day struggle for some degree of control, from which the workers' organisations and the shop stewards movement have grown. The struggle is constant, for nothing gained is ever secure in a society organised not for people, but for profits. Attacks may come on a national level, through inflation, or "incomes policies". They may be more local, through productivity deals or the sacking of stewards. Or, as in this case, a "non-profitable" industry is just closed down, and thousands of men and women thrown on to the dole. But whatever gains are made over time by workers, in a capitalist society, they are never secure.

THE LAWS OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

Workers have two main ways of trying to get out of this constant fight. The first is to try to "opt out" by organising a firm run by workers, a little island in a sea of private property. The second is to change to a socialist society—one in which production is organised around people's needs and not around profits.

The first way would be of no help to U.C.S. There are a few tiny firms run by workers—for instance, Rowen Engineering on the south side of Glasgow, with 15 or 20 workers. But they exist only as long as the big private firms allow them. The banks won't give them big credits in order to expand, because a firm run by workers isn't very trustworthy to a private banker. The bigger the firm, the more impossible it becomes, because it is a competitive threat to the other big private firms, and they will gang up against it. The only thing that these little experimental companies do show is that workers can manage their own factories efficiently. Even the Tory government admits that it was bad management that was responsible for the closure at U.C.S. There's no doubt that the workers would never be secure as long as the rest of business was organised against it.

SOCIALISM—WHAT IT MEANS

The second way is socialism. By a socialist society, we in the International Marxist Group (I.M.G.) mean a society run by the working people in the interests of the working people, not one in which some of the poorer industries are

nationalised while all the cream goes to private business, which is what the Labour Party seems to mean by socialism, nor one in which, even though all industry is state property, a group of bureaucrats take all the decisions "in the name of" the workers, which is the case in Russia. The problem is to really start moving towards a socialist society—but obviously, if a socialist society means one in which working people control and manage all the wealth for their collective good, any situation in which workers begin to increase the control they have, to challenge the bosses' right to decide, is a step in the right direction.

The only real solution for U.C.S. is socialism. But U.C.S. workers on their own obviously cannot achieve socialism. What is necessary is, in the short term, to build such workers' power that the Government can't carry out its present decisions to close the yards, and to do it in such a way as to help the longer term aim of moving towards socialism, a society run and managed by working people themselves. In order to do both these things, the workers at U.C.S. have to involve more and more other workers on their side.

There seem to be three different ways the U.C.S. workers can try to use the occupation to involve other workers.

TOKEN OCCUPATION OR ...

The first would be to see the occupation as a symbolic or token gesture of resistance. The yards could be occupied for a period decided by the workers, in order to get maximum publicity for the case, and maximum sympathy from other workers. The difficulty with this use of the occupation is that, when the period was finished, the Tories would almost certainly say, "Well, we're very sorry for you, but the yards are going to close"—as they did in Jarrow in 1934. The most extreme gesture of this type would be to destroy the yards rather than leave the machinery, etc. to the bosses. But although this would get worldwide publicity, and horrify those who think that private property is "sacred", it might solve the bosses' problem in one way, since while the yards are there, they are a problem; if they went, there would be some nice fat insurance payments for the bosses (not the workers).

OCCUPATION TO KEEP PRODUCTION GOING OR ...

The second way is to try to keep production going with the yards run by the workers. This not only gives publicity, but it defies the rights of the bosses to some extent. If successful, it would involve more and more workers outside U.C.S., who would have to take over their factories in order to provide supplies. A bit of imagination and one could see a situation in West Scotland where workers were running most of the industries while the government and administration were still in the hands of the bosses and their representatives—a situation of dual power. That would certainly be a springboard for socialism. But would it be possible to get from the here and now to such a situation? There are big difficulties. If U.C.S. workers "work in" illegally and go on producing ships, the work they do is still fulfilling plans and orders laid down by the bosses; the ships are going to the private firms who ordered them. In one way, that isn't

so much of a challenge; the challenge would be that the workers were running the yard. But if the workers are illegally running the yard, who will provide the 1,001 supplies needed to make ships—from electricity and steel to piping and all the different fittings. Businessmen won't. So the workers in all the supplying firms will have to take them over too. And of course, the workers in the firms who are supplying them—and so on. Now, if only one important group of workers didn't occupy their own factory, the whole question would come to a halt. And who would provide pay? The banks won't pay out to a U.C.S. illegally run by its workers—still less to a supply firm which has been taken over. The food producers would have to take over or be taken over in order to make sure that the workers were fed. So that, while a long-term "work in" would be good in theory, at this stage it has some pretty huge disadvantages in practice.

AN OCCUPATION-STRIKE

The third way is to use the occupation as a special kind of strike—one in which the workers take over the yards, stop production and determine who and what goes in and out. This has a number of advantages. It denies the right of the bosses to determine what is produced. It denies the right of the prospective ship owners to get their ships, and it shows that the workers who produce the wealth are taking the decisions. Some of the many machines and the skills of the workers in the yards might be used while supplies lasted—not to produce ships, but to make anything useful for people that the workers decided upon. Workers in supplying firms could be encouraged to join in and take over their firms, as the bosses cut off supplies, and workers in the rest of Scotland, and all over Britain, could be encouraged to show solidarity by striking and occupying their factories. The failure of workers in any one factory to show solidarity would not endanger the whole operation, as it would in a "work in", and tremendous pressure could be put on the S.T.U.C. to call a Scottish General Strike—and occupation. Of course, there would also be many big problems with this way too—if there was not sufficient solidarity action, the strike might in the end be defeated; and there would be big problems about payment. But there is no easy way out, and this would seem to be more effective than the first way of using the occupation, and have less dangers and problems than the second.

The U.C.S. workers are showing in a practical way by their occupation how to develop workers' control. These seem to be the three main lines of action open to them. The question is, which is the best in terms of the short-term aim of generating sufficient workers' power to stop the Government, and in the longer term of making a contribution towards really solving the problem by assisting the move towards a socialist Britain. The U.C.S. workers will have to decide their strategy. We will help it in whatever ways we can.

—R. Davis, 1.8.71.

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example just after the U.S. Senate has bailed out Lockheed with a \$250 million guarantee on which the future of the RB211 depended, it would drive the Tories crazy. The computer industry, which is the star at the moment for the Tories, would be hit hard. Most ironically, and most fortuitously, the Industrial Relations Bill becomes law this week. A general strike now in Scotland would throw absolute contempt upon it, and give workers greater confidence to fight it in future. It would also be a massive blow against incomes policy. With solidarity strikes following in Britain, neither the Tories politically nor the bourgeoisie economically could withstand a general strike for long.

An obvious danger at the moment is that the shop stewards will shy away from the task of building a general strike or from extending class conflict beyond the yards. To some extent, though not entirely, the continuation of the work-in into the indefinite future cuts across the task of building solidarity strikes. If the work-in continues, it will either lead to conflict with the state, or else the Liquidator will tread softly, allowing the men to finish the ships. Although it is impossible to predict, even if other circumstances don't intervene, both these variants would lead under present circumstances to the same ultimate result. But the continuation of the work-in demands a form of solidarity from workers in the supply industries that is very difficult for them to give. It is one thing to "illegally" build a ship when you are surrounded by 8,000 determined men, have control over the river, and control over the gates. But it is quite another matter for workers in what will often be quite small enterprises to defy their bosses, produce "illegally", and "illegally" transport supplies to the yard. This demands a higher level of consciousness and commitment than is perhaps demanded of the shipyard workers themselves. Again, if strike action in solidarity is demanded of them (whether leading to a general strike or not), this means they have to live for perhaps a week or more on social security for expressing solidarity with workers who are still working and hence getting paid.

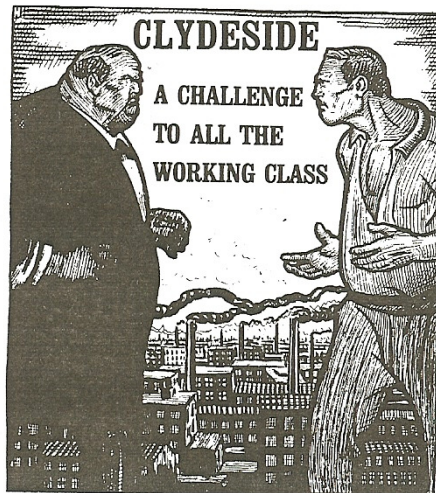
EXTEND THE STRUGGLE BEYOND THE YARDS

If the UCS workers are to develop a strategy to defeat the Tories on this issue, they have to move in the direction of general strike. The question of whether or not the men continue work in the yards has to be seen in relation to this objective. For only a general strike would apply any sort of force against the Tories to concede demands. Extending the struggle beyond the yards into a general strike is imperative. Protest strikes are insufficient. Mass strikes and occupations, rent strikes, hire purchase strikes, rates strikes, etc. are vital. This initiates a period of mass class struggle in West Scotland, with different sectors of workers making all kinds of demands against their bosses, landlords, councils, etc.

With this massive power of sanction, demands could be raised for finance for UCS under the control of the shop stewards committee, and completion of nationalisation without any compensation. If these demands were not met by the Tories when confronted by general strike, and if the workers in Britain did not come out in full solidarity, then the Scottish workers have a power base, the massive support and active involvement in struggle of the whole working class, from which to launch a struggle for workers' self-management across whole sectors of the Scottish economy.

—Dave Bailey

If you would like to be put in touch with the International Marxist Group (IMG) or the Spartacus League, then write to The Red Mole, 182, Pentonville Road, London N.1. Tel.No. 01-837-6954.





Factory Occupation

a short history

A glorious tradition

If we were to judge by the reports of the newspapers and television, the occupation of U.C.S. is something of a type which has never been seen before. Workers taking over and running their own factories, docks, mines or shipyards is something which is supposed to be new and unusual.

In fact, the first great factory occupation of modern times occurred in December, 1906 at the General Motors plant at Schenectady, New York. The workers of U.C.S. have revitalised a tradition which is almost as old as mass trade unionism itself and which exists in every single country in the world in which there are powerful workers' organisations. Even in Britain, very backward in this respect, a small history of occupations, although none as big as U.C.S., can be found.

Occupations of work places in Britain began to appear during the Great Depression of 1929-40. The most important occupations of the 1930s were those in the mines. These were the 'stay-down' strikes. They were a vital weapon in defeating the attempt of the mine owners to destroy the Miners Federation by setting up company unions. The first strike of this type took place at the Welsh Nine Mile Point colliery when mine owners tried to replace Miners Federation men with blacklegs enrolled in the companies union. In previous struggles of this type the mine owners had always won as they had brought in police or even threatened troops in order to break the picket lines and smash the strike. The Nine Mile Point workers saw they could break this tactic by occupying the mine. It would be impossible for the police to go in and fight to bring the miners out from underground. In addition, their action would serve as a rallying point for the entire Welsh minefield, and would gain enormous support. Therefore, at the end of one evening shift, the men did not come back to the surface, but occupied the mine. They were supported by a network of supporters on the surface who

sent food, drink, blankets, etc. down the mine. When the company tried to send blacklegs down to one part of the mine it was occupied by Miners Federation men as well. In solidarity with the Nine Mile Point men, 11 other mines were occupied, and the local railway union branches gave support by refusing to transport blacklegs. After just over a week of the occupation, the miners won all their demands for recognition of the union and a guarantee of no redundancy.

An even more bitter struggle of the same type occurred in the Parc and Dare collieries in the Rhondda where 1,500 men were involved in a 13 day occupation. Here the company tried to stop food being sent down the mines. To prevent this the union declared that if the management carried out its threat, it would mobilise miners from other collieries and the wives of strikers to attack the pit head, and would hold safety-officials underground as hostages. Eventually the company was forced to accept the demands of the men.

It was only through these two great occupations that trade unionism was safeguarded in the Welsh mines.

Occupations since 1945

Since the Second World War it appeared for a time that the technique of occupation by the workers was disappearing. There was one important occupation of a mine in Britain in the late 1940s, but since then most occupations have been minor ones. Perhaps the longest was one by workers at the Injection Mouldings Company in North London. Other significant factory occupations were at M. and L. Goldstein in London in 1950 and Austin Longbridge in Birmingham in 1962.

In the first of these the occupation was carried out against a lock out imposed by the management. One hundred workers seized the factory and barricaded themselves in. They were only removed by a full scale assault across the roof tops by the police. The strike only really failed because not enough support had been gained from other

factories.

At Longbridge 3,000 workers were involved in an occupation which lasted for a week. This occupation was successfully concluded. Other minor skirmishes which have developed in the motor industry were the entry and almost starting of an occupation of company offices of the Ford plant at Halewood earlier this year.

Up to U.C.S. the largest threatened factory occupation in Britain since the war was that of the G.E.C. plants in Liverpool. This however failed because unfortunately the strike leaders had not gained the full support of the men. Nevertheless this threatened occupation set a lot of people thinking, and where the shop stewards had the full support of the men, as at U.C.S., the tactic of occupation could be put into effect.

France in May/June 1968

The greatest of all factory occupations were in France in May-June 1968. Here a General Strike of 10 million workers led to practically every major plant in the country being occupied by the workers. The inventiveness of the workers in these occupations surpassed anything that has so far been seen in Britain. At Nantes and St. Nazaire, for example, the strike committees took over the control of the entire town. They regulated the flow of traffic into the town, controlled prices and distributed food brought in from the surrounding countryside. At one point they even issued their own money. At Caen, in order to prevent attacks from the police and army, barricades were erected across the roads and all entry to the town controlled by strike committees. In Paris itself a mass committee of workers, students and farmers, organised food convoys supplied by agricultural co-operatives. The food was distributed directly to factories at cost price. The tremendous upheaval in France unfortunately did not lead to the seizure of power by the workers that will come later, but what the French workers have learnt from the strikes of 1968 is the

tremendous power of the factory occupation. Almost every major industrial struggle in France is now coupled with sit in strikes. Until the U.C.S. occupation this lesson had not been learnt in Britain. Now the sit in strike/factory occupation may be here to stay. Perhaps there is something to be learnt from the Common Market after all!

Advantages of an occupation

Perhaps the most important advantages of an occupation are on the morals and involvement of the men involved. By all being concentrated in one place, they can see visibly the massive solidarity of their fellow workers. In the same way that a mass meeting is always preferable to a secret ballot, because it stops the workers being split up so they can be influenced by the press and managements as isolated individuals, so the factory occupation is like one enormous mass meeting, and the feeling of solidarity is enormous. Nothing could be further removed from the Tories' ideas, in the Industrial Relations Bill, of secret ballots, than occupations by thousands of workers where every viewpoint can be thrashed out and the fullest possible democracy can reign. In addition, an occupied factory is a focus for solidarity action by every surrounding area. In the occupations of mines and car factories which are described in this article, workers from miles, or even hundreds of miles, around came to give direct support, or indirect support in the form of strikes, to the occupying workers. Every factory or yard controlled by the workers appears as a base from which the workers can extend their whole struggle against capitalism. It is this that is the only real way that even a sit-in strike can be won, and it is the real lesson of all the occupations described in this article.

Red Mole

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DESIGN: Dave Edmunds

DISTRIBUTION: Debbie Dodge

Published by Redcrest for The Red Mole, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 01-837 6954, 01-278 2626

Printed by F.I. Litho Ltd (T.U.), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 01-837 9987

THE BUREAUCRATS ARE WAITING FOR THEIR CUE

The trade union bureaucrats are notably absent from the struggle so far. This is explained, in part, by the lack of demands arising out of the struggle to date. Unless the Government backs down in the immediate future (possible, but not likely), then, very soon, demands have to be raised. When demands are raised, then the question of who negotiates with whom has to be confronted. This is the cue for the bureaucrats.

It is absolutely imperative that the struggle extends beyond its confinement to a narrow base, and beyond its trade union limits. Only by extending strikes and occupations into other sections of the working class and at the same time making the shop stewards committees the sole organ of negotiation (themselves directly accountable to mass meetings) can the struggle develop. Only in this way can the danger of containment and a sellout by the bureaucrats be avoided. It is one thing to have the support of the Labour Party, the Scottish TUC, and trade union leaders, but it would be quite another to allow these forces to do the negotiating. The old division between "trade unionism" and "politics" raises its ugly head. The danger is that when demands are raised, the vacuum which exists at present will be filled by Feather, the Labour Party & Co.

The Labour Party will offer its services to the workers in exchange for a surrender of workers' control. The trade union bureaucrats will offer their services in exchange for the workers "recognising" their "natural" position of "leadership". What they are asking for is a free hand to sell out the struggle and to do deals freed from the scrutiny

of the workers. The trade union bureaucrats don't want struggles to be extended because they undermine their authority and control. As constituted at the moment, the shop stewards committee is still integrated into the existing structures of the trade union movement, and control could imperceptibly pass out of the committees' control into the hands of the bureaucracies.

Because no demands have been raised so far, and because other sectors of workers are not yet striking and making demands on their own bosses, the shop stewards committee has been able to bury for the time being the traditional inter-union hostilities. This was very difficult to achieve. The support for the idea of a "takeover" came only gradually from the Confederation of Ship Building and Engineering Unions, and even more slowly, of course, from the STUC. The old craft chauvinism of the Boilermakers Union leadership seems to have been put aside for the time being. But if the struggle is extended only after the trade union bureaucracies have regained control, then all the hostilities could be reopened, and this in turn could reactive tensions inside the shop stewards committee inside the yards. This is why it is absolutely vital that the rank and file take and hold the initiative across whole sectors of industry, creating in the process new organs of leadership, which in turn can take the struggle beyond trade unionism in a very literal sense: housing struggles, for example. A suggestion that this should be done has been rejected by Reid already.

Both Reid and Airlie are in the AEF. But the most strategically key union is

the Boilermakers Union. Shipbuilding can't exist without the Boilermakers. The history of this union is the history of 150 years of craft sectionalism and the symbol of its past conservatism is Dan McGarvey. The Government will have their eye on the Boilermakers in the hope that they can be used to split the committee. If the latter agree, McGarvey's expert demagoguery will come in very useful to defuse the entire situation.

This explains the stress laid by the Government and mass media on the 1,000 jobs available at Scott-Lithgows on the Lower Clyde (the new berth there may well have created this number). These jobs are primarily for skills that fall within the Boilermakers Union. Moreover, out of the 3,000 or so men left at Upper Clyde if the Tories' reorganisation goes through, 1,200 will be Boilermakers. Thus, quite clearly, if the bureaucracy of the Boilermakers does a deal with the Government, Reid and Airlie will be smashed by the very trade union machine they have been seeking to use. And being in the AEF they will be caught in a very invidious position.

This kind of development—or some variant of it—would be disastrous. There is only one way to avoid this.

All decisions to be taken by mass meetings of workers!

All negotiations to be carried out by the shop stewards committees under the control of the workers!

Extend the struggle to other sectors of the workers through elected workers' councils!

Build a general strike in Scotland!

—Robert Mossgeil