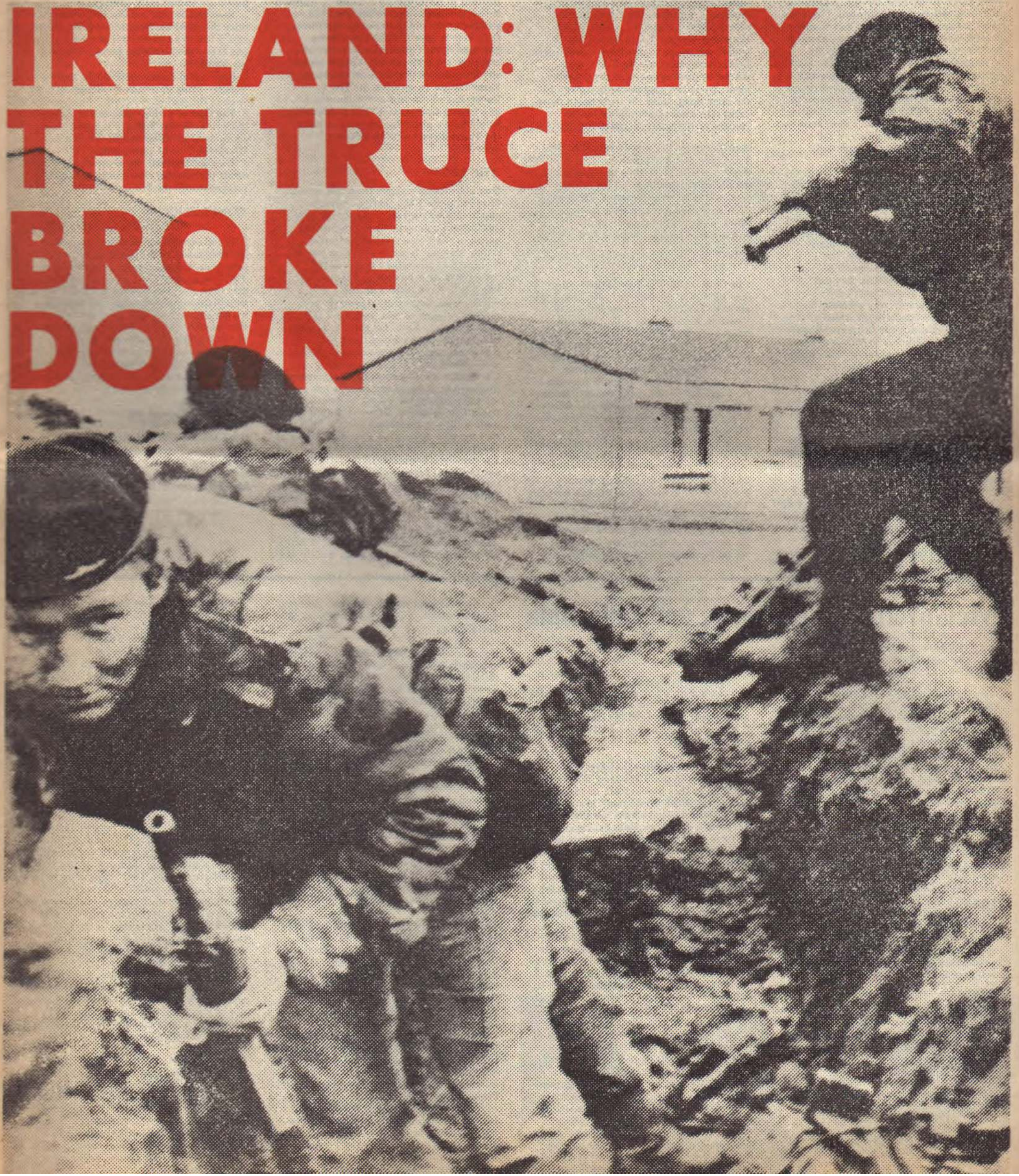


The Red Mole

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IRELAND: WHY THE TRUCE BROKE DOWN



TUC DEAL WITH GOVERNMENT?

The decision to float the pound was taken with two thoughts in mind. First, to halt the massive outflow of capital from London. Second, to prepare the ground for entry into the E.E.C. Capital outflow was basically caused by doubts about the U.K.'s prospects of getting inflation under control. The short term strategy the government had developed to curb 'inflationary' wage claims depended heavily on 'confronting' sections of the working class on the wages front. The State was to be central in curbing the indiscipline of rank-and-file trade unionists. Understanding the failure of the Wilson government to make Incomes Policy work by 'co-operating' with the trade unions, Heath's short term policy was based on the ability of the Industrial Relations Act to smash trade union rank-and-file organisation:

But the government has been badly stung on the Industrial Relations Act. The N.I.R.C. is proceeding far more carefully than before over the Midland Cold Storage depot picketing (one Tory spokesman attacked the Midland for bringing proceedings at all). Confidence in the working class's ability to smash the Act is shown by Bernie Steer's comment that they had "broken the law in good faith" and still not been arrested. Any pretence that the law is above class struggle is shattered to bits. In this situation the Government must manoeuvre on all fronts to change the unfavourable balance of forces. The most obvious perspective that presents itself is a deal with the T.U.C.

AN ALTERNATIVE STRATEGY?

When the 'lame duck' policies collapsed, it was not just a problem of economic strategy. The Tories faced a severe political crisis. Confrontation policy no longer appeared so worthwhile to capitalism in terms of its risks. The response has been a shift of opinion within the Tory Party. Two political facts of life loomed up. First (as *The Economist* has been saying), the way to cut the working class's share of the National Product is by hidden methods.

Decimatisation was a prime example. In this way you do not provoke a head on clash with the trade unions, as the Act does. The trade unions have no strategy to deal with the all-round attacks of capitalism. The other political fact (again raised by *The Economist*) is to use the T.U.C. in the role in which it sees itself. Crudely (per *Economist*) let the T.U.C. have £900 million per annum to distribute in wage rises. Less crudely, integrate the T.U.C. into the policy making bodies of the Government. These two approaches boil down to the same thing. Make the trade union movement take some responsibility for the running of the capitalist system.

Most Tories see the new detente with the T.U.C. as a stop-gap measure.

Heath is willing to shelve a few clauses of the Industrial Relations Act for some agreement over wage increases. The only alternative is an Autumn wage freeze which in the present conditions the government could not hope to hold.

THE T.U.C.

The Government has shelved their policy over the U.C.S., Rolls-Royce, etc., and appears to be cooling off over the Industrial Relations Act. Now the T.U.C. is much happier working with them. Up to now the T.U.C. were in a dangerous position, sitting on a potential rank-and-file explosion against the Act. Naturally the pressure of the working class was all in terms of the need for a strategy to defeat the Tories. Feathers' alternative plans for the economy peddled to the Labour Party, were not much use to the rank-and-file. Now the Tories are prepared to debate these plans. That means the T.U.C. feel they can move off the spot.

The T.U.C. looks on itself as a pressure group, not as an instrument of class struggle. This was shown when they got the boot from the Tories. Their role was one of planning alternative (mainly unworkable) strategies for the economy. A real workers' leadership would have organised fierce resistance to

both unemployment and the Act. Feather was booed from Liverpool to London on the unemployment rallies. Over the Act they capitulated without the first shot being fired with the T&GWU's fine (and were outdone in radicalism by a Court of Appeal!) By being unable either to lead the class struggle or to 'put pressure' on the Tories they were in continual danger of being bypassed in the fight between the government and the rank-and-file. They were totally marginalised in the recent Chobham Farm dispute. In speeches the T.U.C. leaders had to substitute "for the return of a Labour Government" (in which they would have a place) for any plan to bring the Tories down based on industrial action.

THE LEFT

One clear lesson emerges from this period. The left on the T.U.C. have no strategic importance whatsoever. They should have put forward a programme to organise the defeat of the Tories through industrial action. However Scanlon et al were just as frightened of mounting a potential full scale attack on capitalism as Feather. The left T.U.C. when faced with the clearest class division of interests do not use that pressure to take over the T.U.C.; they duck. It follows that the C.P.'s policy, based as it is on the left of the T.U.C., is built on sand. One event showed this last week. When the T.U.C.'s Economic Committee met to discuss the Government's proposals for joint consultation, a few opposed talks because the Industrial Relations Act was still in operation. However the left were quite willing to compromise on the basis that the talks were called a special meeting of the National Economic Development Council. The name was important to the left (though not to Heath) because of the central role they give the T.U.C. of participating in permanent government policy making bodies.

THE DEAL

Already the T.U.C. have agreed to arbitration procedure to look into strikes of national importance. Also on the cards is a 'threshold

agreement now that it seems likely that the C.B.I. will peg prices for another three months. What this means is that the government will smile favourably on limited rises if the cost of living has risen above a certain level. Four points are immediately obvious.

1. Rises can only take place after a certain price threshold has been reached. By restricting prices to a certain level of increase, just below the threshold, no pay increases are 'justified'.
2. Such a deal accepts in principle that workers' living standards should not advance at all in this period.
3. The Cost of Living Index can mean anything to anybody. Stability in high priced goods does not affect the worker but affects the Cost of Living Index.
4. Wage differentials, the economic tool to divide the working class, are given formal recognition by the T.U.C.

CONCLUSION

It is too early to say that the government has abandoned all the trappings of confrontation. Many pundits regard the deal with the T.U.C. as a one-off job. The object is to gain time. A decisive defeat will still have to be inflicted on the working class to prepare for entry into the E.E.C. Despite the drop in the number of strikes, and despite the limited victory over the engineers (over 1200 shops have signed deals, most way under the claim) the potential effects of the threatened national docks strike, for instance, would wreak havoc on the economy.

However, the Government now realises clearly that the restraining influence of the T.U.C. is more effective when they are co-operating with government than when they are not. As for the T.U.C., whether talks about a deal are a one-off job or not, they have little choice but to jump for it.

McGovern, the elections, and Indochina

As expected George McGovern is the Democratic candidate for the American Presidency, but it would be foolish to imagine that his easy success in Miami could be repeated in the November elections. In the first place there are few signs that the American ruling class as a whole is at the present prepared for a new New Deal, and secondly in the international stakes Nixon is still ahead: while McGovern benefited from the fall of Quang Tri, the Peking and Moscow primaries were solidly in Nixon's favour.

Without doubt one of the key factors determining the result of the November elections is going to be the war in Indo-China. There can be little doubt that a Democrat administration in the White House would mean that the ruling class had decided on a quick withdrawal from Vietnam. Certainly McGovern himself was quite unequivocal in his speech at the convention where he pledged an immediate halt to the bombing and a total withdrawal within three months. The pheno-

menal applause which greeted this statement provides us with a clue as regards the popularity of such a move and the consequences if this turned out to be yet another unfulfilled election promise.

The key to the solution, however, rests essentially with the Vietnamese militants. Up till now they have refused to accept a settlement which would result in a continued U.S. presence in Indochina, but the pressure on them is enormous. Both Peking and Moscow have been pressurising them in their different ways to accept a negotiated settlement with Nixon, and Moscow has even remarked that Nixon is genuinely interested in peace. This in addition to the heavy bombing, including the bombing of the Red River dykes, puts the Vietnamese fighters in a cruel dilemma. It must be clear to them that a settlement on Nixon's terms would not only damage their own struggle but would be a blow against the world revolution and would undoubtedly put Nixon back in the White House. If, however, Kissinger's latest mission results in an acceptance of the PRG's demands, they have nothing to lose. Clearly Nixon understands the importance of the Vietnamese and realises that if the war continues it lessens his chances of getting re-elected. The next period is therefore likely to see a whole number of manoeuvres by the U.S. government designed once again to put the blame for the continuing bombing on the victims of the B-52's. If the Vietnamese continue to reject Nixon's terms and the war continues at its present pace then George McGovern could prove to be an extremely

say that the result of the American elections is being partially decided on the battlefields of Indochina.

However the internal problems of American capitalism have forced its upholders to think seriously for temporary solutions. John Kenneth Galbraith, by far the most sophisticated spokesman for advanced sections of the ruling class, is quite open about the periodic crises which afflict capitalism and which require solution. In an interview with a newspaper correspondent during the Democratic convention he outlined three points:

"One - we no longer believe that the U.S. has a mission to stand guard against Communism in the third world. Two - we are rejecting the old notion that we can solve all our problems by economic growth. And three - we now accept that the present system of income distribution under unfettered capitalism is no longer tolerable." *Evening Standard* 12 July 1972

Thus a section of the Democratic Party is very consciously trying to revive the old populist strain which ran through American politics in the Thirties. For instance the display of solidarity at Miami with the struggle of the Mexican workers in California, who have called for a nationwide lettuce boycott in protest against the farmers' refusal to allow unionisation was quite unprecedented. Certainly few leading Labour Party politicians in this country have called for similar boycotts at party conferences in recent years. It would also be naive to imagine that there is universal capitalist displeasure with McGovern on account of his unorthodox supporters, who have left behind their indisputable mark on the 1972 Democratic convention. Undoubtedly a large number of young people radicalised in 1968 have gone into the Democratic party, worked for McGovern

and helped him achieve his nomination. From the point of view of the American ruling class this is infinitely to be preferred to them entering the Socialist Workers Party or other leftist organisations. McGovern thus very consciously aids in the integration of some components of the radicalisation within the structures of bourgeois politics. Even if he doesn't win the 1972 election this fact alone can be regarded as no mean achievement.

What this means, of course, is that the revolutionary left has to systematically expose the very basis of capitalist politics. On the question of Indochina the imperialist nature of the war has to be always stressed so that socialists, at any rate, understand that while McGovern is in favour of a withdrawal and some of his supporters in favour of an immediate withdrawal, the reasons for this are rooted in the political and military reversals which imperialism has suffered at the hands of the National Liberation Front. They must understand that McGovern represents that section of the ruling class which regards a continuation of the war as counter to the medium term interests of U.S. capitalism. Unless these facts are explained and further spelt out and unless revolutionists differentiate themselves very clearly in the anti-war movement from McGovernism there will be a serious demoralisation within their own ranks. These are some of the lessons which can be learnt from McGovern's success in winning over large numbers of "radicalised youth" behind his banners.

Given the immense importance of Indochina the Fourth International will be organising a further series of demonstrations in the autumn throughout Western Europe and North America. These will coincide with the last phase of the elections in the United States and it is important that these are supported and attended by all organisations which stand with the Vietnamese people against American imperialism.

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'The Carworker' Conference

The second conference of supporters of the rank-and-file car worker and components workers paper *The Carworker* was held in Birmingham on Sunday, 2nd July. The paper was started at a conference in May last year, after the long strike at Fords. It was decided then to produce a monthly paper, but due to difficulty in collecting articles, it has now become bi-monthly. The circulation has roughly doubled over the year and now stands at over 4 000.

It was also decided last year to call regular readers' meetings in the main centres of the industry, but these failed at first for lack of support. They have recently been started again in a few towns and have so far attracted a number of people.

The second conference was attended by 52 militants, representative of the main unions and most of the centres of the industry. The organisers were disappointed with the number present, (they had expected about 200). Although it was obviously valuable to bring together militants from all over the country, the conference in fact achieved very little.

THE POLITICAL ISSUES

The conference only began to deal with the great political challenge facing the whole labour movement: the need to resist and counter the offensive against the living standards and organisations of the working class by the capitalist class, defending their declining profits. In the car industry, the Tories' measures have complemented the various strategies tried by the employers to break the backbone of shop-floor organisation and confine bargaining to negotiations that can be sold-out by the local and national full-time officials. Measured Day Work, agreements on mobility of labour, victimisations and all the rest.

Although obviously realising the central importance of the discussion on "carworkers and the Industrial Relations Act", most speakers made no attempt at all to develop a strategy for carrying forward the struggle against the Act. In fact the discussion was mainly concerned with how to oppose the introduction of the check-off system of collecting union dues. Of course this is a factor in maintaining a strong shop-floor organisation, but hardly the key to defeating the Act.

There was no consideration of the way the Act has been used so far, the lessons to be learned from the railwaymen's and dockers' struggles, the implications of the decisions of the NIRC and the Appeal Court, the reactions of Jack Jones and the rest of the TUC leadership - all factors which must be fully understood if we are to decide what is required to defeat the Act.

INADEQUATE RESOLUTION

An examination of these events shows the inadequacy of the resolution proposed to the conference: "The dockers have shown that immediate wide spread solidarity action can defeat the Industrial Relations Act. We therefore resolve that we should all go back to our workplaces and undertake to commit factory policy to immediate industrial action whenever any group of trade unionists are threatened with fines or imprisonment under the Act."

Industrial action in defence of victims of the Act is an advance on the idea that the Act can be beaten by just pursuing wage claims with more militancy, although several speakers pointed out that the resolution gives no strategy for developing the struggle, since key sections of carworkers were already preparing for or even actually took strike action in solidarity with the dockers. And in Oxford, for instance, industrial action in defence of any worker jailed under the Act is now official policy of the Engineers' Confederation.

But the total inadequacy of the resolution as a strategy stems from its first statement - the idea that a purely defensive reaction to the State's attack is the way to defeat the Act. The dockers did not defeat the Act; their readiness to take on the State in the form of the Courts, the police and prisons did force the Tories to beat a

hasty retreat on enforcing the Act in a particular case, so their action was an important but partial victory. But although it cannot be ruled out that the government or the Courts may be stupid enough to provoke a movement towards a General Strike too strong for the union bureaucrats to control, the Tories are probably shrewd enough not to do this if they can possibly avoid it.

This means that only an offensive strategy can be relied on. We must bring home to all Trade unionists, especially those in parts of the car industry who at present find themselves relatively well off, the need for a political response to the capitalists' offensive.

WHAT IS A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT FOR ?

The second main discussion, on "Do we need a rank and file carworkers' movement", had to take up the theme of a political strategy to be of any use. However, some speakers seemed to think of a rank and file movement as a sort of parallel Union, and opposed fighting for democracy within the existing organisation on the grounds that the official union structure was an irrelevance to their struggles. Others said that the main purpose of *The Carworker* is to overcome the feeling of isolation of militants in different factories by putting them in touch with each other, so that they can share their experience and learn from each other. Unlike, say, the miners or the dockers, carworkers do not have a sense of a tight-knit working class community which gives them unity in struggle, and the job of a paper like *The Carworker* is to fill this gap.

Although nobody would deny that this is one of the functions a rank and file movement should fulfil, we hold that it is not the main one. It is no good talking about a "fighting paper" and a "fighting organisation", unless it is clear what these are fighting for. *The Carworker* has an 11 point programme and the constitution approved by the conference says: "The purpose of *The Carworker* is to use all means available to get *The Carworker's* programme adopted within the trade union movement, and to assist all workers in struggle for these aims."

Yet there was absolutely no discussion of the programme at the conference.

We say that the rank and file movement must be based on a clearly socialist programme. This should say that the problems of carworkers, as for the rest of the working class, are primarily the result not of this or that management nor of this or that government, but of the operation of the capitalist system, and therefore the basis of a rank and file movement must be the struggle for the overthrow of this system of production for profit and its replacement with a system of production for social needs. It is this perspective, and not just their greater militancy which essentially distinguishes socialists in the Unions from the present leadership. In practice, if not in words, the leadership limit the unions to a struggle for reforms within the framework of capitalism - reforms which in time of crisis like the present the capitalist class cannot grant. Indeed they must erode them in order to survive. It is from this political basis that the parts of the programme should follow. These must include demands for the independence of the unions from the State, against all forms of incomes policy, against unemployment, redundancies and productivity deals, for democratic control by the rank and file of the unions, and so on.

WORKERS CONTROL OF THE INDUSTRY?

It is because the present programme for *The Carworker* does not have this clear political line, that its only explicitly "socialist" demand, for "nationalisation of the car industry under full workers' control" is unclear. The nationalisation of an industry within a capitalist economy, where the principles governing the organisation of production is still profit for sale on the market, does not begin to solve the workers' problems. And even if workers control the administration of a factory, the basic problems of capitalism remain if the industry is still producing for profit, selling

its product on the market in competition with other producers. Even supposing that supporters of *The Carworker* were to take over the car industry, as long as the industry was still operating in a capitalist economy there would still have to be redundancies when the car market slumped, speed-ups and wage cuts when profits were squeezed and so on.

So when we advance demands for workers' control, we must be clear that we are not to participate in, or even to take over the management of the industry under capitalism, but rather using our organised strength to obtain demands which directly challenge the capitalist priorities which the industry is run. These would include effective rights of veto on line-speeds, manning levels, all new methods of working, and payment, hiring and firing, and real security of employment - not just guarantees against short lay-offs, but work-sharing with no loss of pay when the car market declines again; also wage rises automatically linked to the rise in the cost of living - to be determined by the unions - as the basis for wage reviews, and so on.

THE CONFERENCE

Revolutionaries in the car industry should

DOCKS DISPUTE

The haulage business is one of the strongholds of small-time entrepreneurial capital. The pressure grouping which represents this section - the Road Haulage Association - and several individual companies in the business have in the past few weeks been frantically paddling against the stream. On one hand the R.H.A. have impotently screamed their intention to cross the dockers pickets while knowing full well that the most consistently militant section of organised labour will see any haulage company which does so banished from the docks. Individual haulage and storage companies have also been beating their heads against another wall - having run to the State for support they have simply been rebuffed by a judiciary sufficiently attuned or dragooned to reflect the same appraisal of the balance of forces shared by big business and its political agents. The last thing the bourgeoisie want is to provoke a confrontation with a section of workers sufficiently determined to hold the line while militants mobilise the working class against the N.I.R.C.

But not only the small-businesses are bemused by the present turn of events. The early arrogance of Sir John Donaldson, President of the N.I.R.C. has now been replaced by a plaintive cry for clarification of the law. He has now asked in one case for an appeal to the very superiors who have overturned two of his previous over-eager decisions before being asked to commit the seven named dockers who refused to obey his order restraining them from continuing to picket the Midland Cold Store in Hackney. He has no intention of being made to look a fool for a third time following the reversal of both his decision to fine the T&GWU and his committal of the three shop stewards for contempt.

SERIOUS OPPOSITION

Unfortunately the active opposition to the dockers' campaign does not stop with the hauliers and Donaldson. The dockers have more dangerous opposition, due to the policies adopted. They are campaigning for the return of "their" work from workers who have, in some cases, done it for two or more years. This has led to a barrage of press criticism which has in the last few days reached a real crescendo. What are the real arguments here? Firstly, the dockers never operated the Depots now involved in the dispute. Their case rests on the definition of docks

have learnt one thing by the confusion on the way forward at the conference. We cannot proceed by stages in industry; first building up a strong rank and file movement based on more consistent militancy than is shown by the present leadership, and then at some point when this "spadework" had been done, unveiling our political ideas to give the movement a way forward. There are two things wrong with this: first of all, the development of the class-struggle always faces the working class with a political challenge which will unfortunately not wait till we have complete our non-political spadework; and secondly, spadework on the shop-floor and consistent militancy are of course absolutely necessary, but unless carried out with a clear perspective of political action will be directionless and will lead in the end to nothing but frustration. Unless *The Carworker* can be developed from a trade union information sheet into a means of organising socialist militants in the car industry for united action on a clear political platform, it will increasingly tend to seem irrelevant to the questions preoccupying class-conscious car workers.

N.C.

(for the IMG Trade Union Commission)

work in the '47 Docks Scheme. The Act defines this as any cargo-handling within the vicinity of the Port. The debate is therefore confined to what constitutes this 'vicinity'. The Bristow Report suggested a five mile radius of the Thames, and the dockers want at least this. But the official body which has interpreted the Scheme since the 1966 Docks and Harbours Act has a more limited conception of what it means.

Though attempts have been made to secure the work by following the laid-down procedures, these were initiated by the men in the Regent Canal Docks and other small docks then faced with closure. Only with the closure of Southern's and the threat of massive redundancies in the Royals did the big battalions, capable of leading an unofficial campaign, take up the issue in an abeyance. The effect of this delay has been to allow what would earlier have appeared as a straightforward struggle against the dilution of the labour force to now seem to be a particularly selfish and bloody-minded action by the dockworkers. Unfortunately, the possibility of presenting this issue in a very bad light can only confuse militants who would otherwise side wholeheartedly with the dockers.

The danger is that the State, after a vicious press campaign, be able to stop the picketing without invoking the response which the threatened arrest of Williams, Steer and Turner did. This possibility is enhanced by the organised opposition of the non-dockworkers involved. In addition to the counter-picket of Chobham Farm, USDAW is now involved on behalf of its members in the Midland Cold Store. The United Road Transport Union has also joined in the growing wave of trade union hostility to the dockers. Again this can be used by the press and will not pass unnoticed by the rest of the working class.

In the event of the Courts pursuing this line the State would then appear to be playing the role of arbiter between conflicting interests. This would minimise the possibility of the working class seizing on the event as an excuse for a struggle against the N.I.R.C. Obviously the dockers could make a good fight on their own but this would only tend, in the short term, to reify the sectoralism which is at the root of the problem. E. Waring.

USDAW workers at the Midland Cold Store



BUILDING STRIKES

Interview with Birmingham militant

A dramatic increase in the level of militancy and organisation has taken place in the Birmingham building trade over the last year. This period has seen a trebling of union membership, a militant and largely successful campaign against lump labour, and the use of several tactics new to the trade in Birmingham such as go-slows, work-to-rules, and the occupation of sites and cranes. These struggles, not surprisingly, have been accompanied by a growth in influence of the Building Workers Charter Group, which enjoys the support of several leading stewards including Pete Carter, Chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee. The Charter, throughout the course of these struggles, has exerted a strong influence on the tactics of struggle used by the men, and on the development of their political consciousness.

The first major struggles to take place in Birmingham were against the use of lump labour (see *The Red Mole*, 30) and originated with a strike at Woodgate Valley site in support of demands for £1 an hour for all men and the end of the lump.

Since that time, this site has been the spearhead of the militant building workers movement in Birmingham and was the first site to be occupied (against the continued employment of blacklegs). The employers were not slow to realise this, and with the help of the strike-breaking tactics of local UCATT officials, they were able to inflict a heavy defeat on the workers at this site resulting in several leading militants being forced on to the streets. Although this was a severe set-back for the entire movement in Birmingham, the radicalising effects of previous struggles has meant that other sections of the movement have proved themselves capable of continuing and extending the struggle. The biggest demonstration of Birmingham building workers ever held took place on Friday, 12 July, when 4,000 building workers took the day off in support of the UCATT national claim of £30 a week for 35 hours.

The following interview was held with John Mahon, UCATT stop steward from Woodgate Valley B site, who was one of the three militants to occupy Bryants' cranes in protest against the blacklisting of Alan Pryor, another UCATT steward. John Mahon has himself since been laid off.

Can you explain the course of the struggles within the Birmingham building trade which led up to the recent defeats of the Bryants workers?

We came out on strike around the middle of April after Bryants had refused to conform to the guaranteed company agreement. This agreement had been ripped up by Bryants after we had organised a go-slow on the site in support of our demand for two days holiday with pay over Easter. In reply to this action by the employers, eleven sites came out on strike to demand the re-instatement of the company agreement. However because the strike was not made official, and because of the activities of the union officials, by the end of the first week of strike only three sites were left out. At that time the U.C.A.T.T. officials assured the men on the three remaining sites that if they returned to work they would have the agreement re-instated and the holiday pay granted within a fortnight. This swayed a number of the men, and on the following Monday (May 1st, the day on which we had planned a one day stoppage) we were forced to return to work. We also had to go back with blacklegs because the union officials could not, or would not, do anything about them.

In fact the union officials did not get the agreement re-instated. Neither did they get the blacklegs removed. After these failures many of the men became demoralised and began to lose confidence in their union. It was then that Bryants saw their opportunity. They realised that the officials did not want to lead a real struggle, and that the

demoralised. Half way through May, Bryants transferred fifteen leading militants to other smaller sites. This was at a time when 1100 houses on Woodgate Valley remained to be built on our side of the job alone. A vote was immediately taken to come out on strike against the transfers and for the dismissal of the blacklegs.

After two or three weeks we lost the support of other sites. About fifty men on our site were scabbing and about half of the men who had been issued with transfers accepted them. During all of this time we had still received no co-operation from the union officials. During the third week of the strike Woodgate Valley A1 site came out on strike over the transfer of fifteen men from there who, incidentally, were all Indians. By the end of the week A1 had completely collapsed and only about twelve men remained out on B1 site. The men became totally demoralised and voted to return to work the following day.



Can you tell us more about the role of the Union officials during the struggle?

The officials first showed their true colours during the mass meeting to discuss taking strike action when the dispute over the tearing up of the company agreement originally arose. This meeting was held in the Top Rank suite which holds about 500 people. About 1,500 building workers turned up. The meeting had been called by the union officials themselves, and after the vote was taken on whether or not to continue the strike they effectively wrecked the meeting. The majority in favour of continuing the strike was quite clear after a show of hands but they refused to believe it. We then split the room up into three and the stewards counted the votes in each section, but still this was not acceptable to the officials. The final unbelievable thing they did was to try to get all those people in an absolutely packed room in favour of the strike to stand on one side, and those against on the other. The inevitable result was that the meeting ended in complete chaos.

Then after nine sites continued the strike after this meeting the officials went round all the site canteens and told the men that they must return to work as they were the only people authorised to call a strike. While, and immediately after the strike was in progress they would not let the union offices be used for shop stewards meetings which was obviously imperative. There was also a black out of information from the officials. We could not find out exactly what was going on or how negotiations were going, neither could we get the officials out to the jobs. On one occasion, a steward from Woodgate Valley phoned the union office from nearby and was told that there was no-one in. He went round to the union office within ten minutes and found them all sitting there drinking tea!

On the Monday morning after the strike collapsed, the convenor steward was issued with a transfer to a job that had about three weeks work left on it. He refused the transfer and was told that if he continued to refuse he would be sacked. He called in the trade union official to force him to call a

officials were asked if they would fight against the transfers or whether they would side with the gaffers. The officials said they could do nothing about it and would have to accept the transfer or the sack. To this, even the blacklegs and men who had become demoralised by the defeats reared up at the official. He was eventually booted out of the canteen with a general foreman on either side of him for protection, leaving the convenor steward, with no power left, to accept his cards.

Do you see a new resurgence of militancy in the Birmingham building trade and what role should be played by the Building Workers Charter?

Although we have suffered a major defeat, we see this as losing a battle but not the war. Although most of the stewards are still out on the streets, they are working within the Charter Group - holding factory gate meetings, printing propaganda leaflets, explaining the Charter's positions and the role of the union bureaucracy. The Charter Group are trying to organise one-day stoppages, all-out stoppages, go-slows, etc. in support of the National Pay Claim and the national strike. The officials are only calling out selective sites, having a £1 levy on other members, and not asking for any support from the sites that are still working. Although the funds of the Charter Group are very low, we have engaged a full time worker to go round the sites and do the job the officials are failing to do. The union officials were with us all the way when we were organising the fight against the lump and for a 50 percent pay rise, but when we challenged the bosses' right to hire and fire, they showed their true colours and sided with the bosses. After the loss of Woodgate Valley, the men were feeling deeply demoralised and did not know what was going on. They were not sure what they should be doing to fight against the union officials and therefore the chance of a fresh upsurge of militancy seemed pretty dim. However the Charter are not prepared to give up and are explaining, through the production of leaflets, the role of the UCATT officials, what the union should be doing, and how the rank and file can rid itself of bureaucracy. We are also holding factory gate meetings, taking different sites every day and urging the men time after time not to rip up their union cards, not to leave the union, but to carry on the struggle and fight against the union bureaucracy.

What do you think of the programme put forward by the IMG within the Charter which advocates a struggle for the winning of workers' vetos against the prerogatives of the bosses to hire and fire, move workers around, etc., and for the decasualisation of labour?

I agree with the programme put forward in *The Red Mole* (*The Red Mole* 42, 15 May 1972) absolutely.

There is an encouraging postscript to this interview in that many of the 50 blacklegs left on the Woodgate Valley B site have also been affected by the new wave of militancy in the trade and are in favour of coming out in support of the national claim. It is also interesting to note that the site has been unable to find any bricklayers or carpenters since the dismissal of the previous workers.

Flying pickets smash overtime on Manchester sites

On the Wednesday, 12 July, meeting of the Manchester Building Action Committee (consisting of representatives from the T&GWU and UCATT, stewards from each of the sites in dispute, and an observer on the Social Security) it was decided to effectively implement the national overtime ban by organising a flying picket in the area. About 60 building workers turned up for the first picket on the Thursday afternoon and supported by local officials stopped five sites from working overtime in only an hour. On the Friday it was the turn of four sites in the centre of Manchester, on the Saturday of another six sites, and another site on the Sunday morning. By Monday, 17 July, the city centre had been cleared of overtime and so the pickets started working further afield and stopped three sites in the Openshaw area.

A number of these sites include lump

JAGUAR

Editorial Note

Since the article on Jaguar workers and the Social Security (page 5) was written, the press have launched a campaign against Social Security payments to the strikers, starting with an article in the *Sunday Express* of 16 July. The press would seem to be divided on the exact approach required; the *Express* is content to blame it all on the Jaguar workers, whereas the *Mail* and others favour the Reds-under-the-bed approach, attacking the IMG for putting such ideas in the innocent workers' heads. All are united, however, in the belief that such practices cannot be allowed to go on. As the *Sunday Express* put it, "This open use of Social Security payments ... to keep the crippling Jaguar strike going is certain to set off fresh demands on the Government to change the system." One M.P. has already put down a question in the House of Commons about the whole business.

This is only part of a growing propaganda offensive by the State against the use of the Social Security as a strike fund. The capitalist answer to strikes is always to hold out until hardship forces the workers back to work, but this becomes rather difficult if the workers are able to use the Social Security as a means of avoiding such hardship. According to an article in the *Evening News* (5 July): "This was what wrecked the Government's calculations this spring. They simply assumed that the miners would be back at work before the stockpiles ran out. Not so."

As we have pointed out before, a precondition for the success of any attempt to expand the economy by the government is the weakening of the trade union movement. An attack on Social Security payments to strikers is one way of doing this - indeed the *Evening News* article even went so far as to describe it as "Heath's hidden trump", "his ace in the hole". The State has also attempted to salvage what it can from the experience of the miners' strike; according to the *Kentish Gazette* (7 July): "Every miner's claim for supplementary benefit during their winter strike was investigated by the Department of Health and Social Security, Dover magistrates were told on Monday, As a result of the massive operation 10 Betteshanger Colliery miners were fined a total of £201 for claiming too much."

All these signs point to a concerted attack by the State on Social Security payments to strikers in the near future. It is an attack which must be resisted as vigorously as other aspects of the offensive against the trade union movement, for its success would very seriously prejudice the ability of workers to stay out over a long period without substantial strike pay. Moreover, the nature of this struggle also means that revolutionaries will have a particularly valuable role to play in it.

extremely effective way of sharpening the effect of the dispute. The fact that the stewards are now meeting at least once every two days has also greatly improved co-ordination not only on the overtime ban but on collecting finance, fighting the Social Security, producing the weekly bulletin for the area and also working out general strategy for the dispute. It has also resulted in good local publicity.

There are now 28 sites in the North-West region on strike, including all 13 sites of William Hall on Mersey side (Hall is the chairman of the Merseyside Building Employers and has been bragging about how easily they will smash the strike), and also the two sites (Murphy and Monks) at Shell, Carrington, which have been on an overtime ban for nearly two years because of rising unemployment. Manchester IMG.

JAGUAR

Workers at the Jaguar XJ6 and E Type plant in Coventry have now (14th July) been on strike for three weeks.

The claim is for a substantial increase in piecework rates, but Jaguar are trying to make any offer conditional on the introduction of Measured Day work

Discussion with a T&GWU steward

What is the background to the dispute? The simple answer is inflation. Under piecework, weekly wages and efficiency have risen by approximately 30 per cent. But the workers, on the XJ6 in particular and they are responsible for seven-eighths of Jaguar's production, have not seen any improvement in their living standards. The national idea that the car worker is on £40 plus per week is a fable. An XJ6 worker on days last year did not get more than

£1,700. Inflation has wiped out any noticeable differential that the production worker might have had over other workers. So our claim is for a substantial increase on the piecework rate. But Jaguar's offer makes even an interim award conditional on acceptance of a Measured Day Work scheme.

What are Jaguar's aims? Jaguar's aims are two-fold. First, they have to satisfy the increasing demand for the XJ6. Equally important, if not more so, they have to implement the present BLMC

The above discussion took place on the second day of the strike. The Coventry Industrial Holiday has now started, so there will be no major developments until the end of the month, although 24 hour pickets are being maintained over the holiday. This is a suitable opportunity to assess the progress of the strike and examine some of the issues involved. The original decision to strike was passed by an overwhelming majority (about 95 per cent). This shows an unprecedented militancy in a factory which has not taken large scale strike action for over five years. This initial militancy has been maintained throughout. About 80 per cent of workers have turned up for picket duty, although numbers have tailed off since there are virtually no supplies being delivered and the plant is at a standstill.

The Union has demanded a "substantial increase on piecework rates"; management insist that any increase must be linked to a "new system of payment". At present the strike is preventing Jaguars from supplying the XJ6 model to meet large export orders. Further, it is delaying their plans for launching the new XJ12 (they have about 500 cars ready inside the plant and at storage depots, which are blocked by delivery drivers). Most people felt that if Jaguars had

offered an interim payment of around £2.00 towards the piecework claim, there would have been a return to work immediately after the holiday. In fact Jaguars refused to put forward any cash offer that was not directly linked to Measured Day Work. Consequently the talks broke down.

For the past three or four years, BLMC have had a policy of introducing MDW into all their plants. At present there are struggles around this issue at Morris Cowley, Austin Morris Longbridge, Standard Triumph Coventry and other plants. As was argued in the interview, the central issue in the strike from the very beginning was not simply a pay increase. The issue is on what terms will the increase be given. Underlying this is the question: can BLMC introduce the new system of payment at Jaguars, and thus take another step towards introducing MDW throughout the combine? This is why Jaguar are not interested in an easy settlement. They are prepared to stick out for a long fight in order to achieve their real aim.

Whilst it is clear that Jaguar are working within the framework of an overall strategy, it is equally clear that the strike committee, in leading the strike, has no overall strategy. It is accepted that MDW is an important

policy of Measured Day Work. So Jaguar are looking on the strike as a means of bringing about MDW.

How in your opinion does Measured Day Work hit the worker?

Simply by pushing the individual worker to his individual limits of endurance. And the limited growth rate in production that can be obtained measured against the massive increases in efficiency that MDW brings must mean less jobs.

And rank and file organisation?

It's true that MDW also hits at the shop stewards' bargaining power. But where rank and file organisation is very strong the employers try to use the union to discipline the workers. In some deals the stewards are bought off by being allowed to wander around all day. The steward says this deal cannot be all bad if I'm allowed such freedom.

Are women workers involved?

Yes, approximately 10 per cent of the strikers are women. Their demand is for equal pay over three years in 10 per cent increases.

Why is this battle being fought plant by plant?

You must remember that in the car industry we have always looked after ourselves plant by plant as it were. The main reason for this is the strong shop-floor organisation we have managed to achieve. However, to be

element in the dispute. However, their actual tactics have been based not on fighting the introduction of MDW, but rather on winning an increase in piecework rates. For example: in the first week of the strike, management sent a letter to all workers on strike. The letter put over the MDW system as the solution which was in the best interests of both Jaguars and the workers. But, while Jaguar have laid their cards before the workers, the strike committee has failed to follow suit. The implications of this are obvious: when the crunch comes and the management make a cash offer linked to MDW, the groundwork for a continued fight against it will not have been laid.

There is another illustration of this absence of overall strategy. In the past decade there have been a series of isolated struggles against MDW in the car industry; in general these have been unsuccessful. A fight against MDW at Jaguar can only hope to succeed if it is generalised throughout the combine. At present BLMC is able to tackle the factories one by one. The fact that a number of struggles are taking place now, offers a real opportunity to link those struggles. To date, no serious efforts have been made to link up with other BLMC plants.

completely successful in defeating MDW there has got to be some kind of blanket policy.

What is the general feeling at Jaguar?

The degree of militancy presently being shown by the Jaguar production workers has never been known. If the present mood of solidarity is maintained I have high hopes that we will win our claim.

What are the political lessons of your struggle?

As the struggle is created by the terrific rate of inflation it is obvious that something more permanent must be done about market forces. The Conservative Party is totally committed to keeping market forces. The Labour Party has to be judged on its performance between '64 and '70 (all they did from '45 to '51 was hive off the least profitable sections of British capitalism to be supported by the state). Between '64 and '70 the Labour Party failed miserably to do anything for the working class. The working class have quickly got to understand that they can no longer tolerate an economic policy which is controlled by a few for the benefit of that few. I believe that unless the present trend is stopped we will see a situation where the dignity of man will no longer be a reality. It will not be easy to bring about the necessary change and in order to do this the working class must together fight for a planned economy which provides for the needs of all the people.

Of course these are not simply weaknesses of one strike committee, but reflect deeper weaknesses in the British trade union movement. Since the war, strong shop floor organisation has been adequate to win wage increases (this is particularly true in the car industry and in Coventry). One of the results of this is the absence of any powerful local or inter-combine links. With the growth of large combines, and in the situation where employers and government are forced to make major attacks on the living standards, conditions and organisations of the working class, the establishment of links between workers in different parts of a combine is an absolute necessity even to defend present conditions. In order to prevent BLMC from carrying out their plans, it will be necessary to take industrial action throughout BLMC. In order for such action to be a realistic proposition, the issues involved and the background to them must be seen in political terms. The struggle in a particular factory or industry must be understood in the context of the crisis of capitalism and the situation of the working class in it. This indicates the issues for revolutionaries: they must try in this way to show the working class how their day to day struggles can be fought and won. Coventry IMG

Workers, Jaguars and the State

On the day that strike notice was given at Jaguar the Coventry Claimants and Unemployed Workers Union was approached to prepare a leaflet on Social Security benefits for the Jaguar workers. These were distributed in the plant immediately before the strike began in order to prepare the workers for claiming benefit during the strike. Preparations were made to organise mass claiming in the second week when almost all those on strike would be entitled to SS payment for their rent and dependants.

When this was discussed at the strike committee meeting it was noted that Jaguars intended to pay lump-sum holiday payments in this second week. These payments are made up of weekly holiday payments deducted from wages over the past year. Management notified the Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) that holiday money was to be paid one week before the beginning of the Coventry holiday. Senior SS officials decided that these payments would be regarded as regular income - thus depriving a majority of the strikers of their right to benefit for up to two weeks at a crucial time.

The strike committee issued a statement on this matter which, together with further information on claiming benefits, was published in an information bulletin with the assistance of the C&UWU. The bulletins

were distributed by the shop stewards when the Jaguar workers came to collect their pay. The next day a special centre was set up for Social Security claims from the strikers. Officials of the DHSS stopped all strikers entering the centre and asked if they had received holiday money. Those who had received little or no money were allowed to claim, but the others were taken aside in groups and told that they were not entitled to benefit. Many workers argued that this money was already committed to holiday bookings, etc., and that they could not meet everyday expenses with holiday savings. IMG members active in the C&UWU who were present pointed out to the state officials and to the groups of workers that this was an arbitrary decision by the DHSS, calculated to weaken the strike. It would be necessary to organise on a mass scale, as on the pickets, in order to maintain the strike and ensure that entitlements were paid by the SS.

Claims from most strikers will be met after the first week of the holiday fortnight. Test cases are being fought on the issue of holiday pay. It will become most important to ensure that these are backed up by organised mass action by the Jaguar workers after the holiday. This attempt by the DHSS to deny strikers and their families their rightful benefits must be defeated. Coventry IMG.





Georges Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party

The agreement between the French Communist Party (PCF) and the French Socialist Party (PS) is only the latest sign of the crisis of the European Communist Parties. As the agreement is not therefore simply part of a process taking place in France it is worth looking at its wider significance.

THE SOCIAL BASIS OF EUROPEAN STALINISM

A classical Stalinist party is fundamentally different to a social democratic party such as the Labour Party. The aims of a social democratic party correspond to the position of a privileged layer within the working class which is tied to the ruling class of its own country. A Stalinist party however is not tied to its own bourgeoisie but to the bureaucracy of a workers state. It is this fundamental fact that explains why in the past it has been out of the question for the fusion, or even long term co-operation of the Communist and social democratic parties to occur. For example in 1939 all the CP's followed the line of Moscow over the Nazi-Soviet pact and this prevented co-operation

with social democratic parties in France and Britain. This situation has been fundamentally changed however by the way in which the individual Communist Parties have grown and by the logic of Moscow foreign policy.

The old Stalinist parties represented the coming together of two elements. In the first place there was the degeneration of the Soviet Union and the coming to power of Stalin. Secondly there was the enormous series of defeats of the European working class from 1923 onwards. The seizure of power by fascism in Italy, Germany and Spain together with the collapse of the Popular Front in France disillusioned tens of thousands of militants. It was on this social base that Stalinism consolidated itself. However, for all its bureaucracy, this base was a *working class* base. The members of the Communist Parties were the most anti-capitalist members of the working class and joined the CPs because of their connection with the October revolution and their revolutionary rhetoric. These people were virulently anti-capitalist, had a contempt for liberalism, pacifism etc. It is this layer

THE CRISIS OF IN EUROPE

The recent announcement of an electoral agreement between only one sign of the general crisis of Stalinism in Europe. It is well as examining more closely the long term prospects of 'programme of government'.

that forms the base of, for example, the Sid French tendency in the British CP or is the central core of the PCF. However, from 1934 onwards a considerable change took place in the Communist Parties. In these years the tactic of the Popular Front was taken up. This meant basically collaborating with 'liberal' sections of the ruling class and therefore placing great emphasis on ideas such as 'peace', 'democracy' etc. The people who were attracted on this line were very different to the old base of the CP. All sorts of middle class elements such as teachers, solicitors, journalists, professors, etc. were recruited into the CP's. These soon predominated over the old working class cadre. The gains made in this way can clearly be seen if you look at the membership figures of the British Communist Party. In 1934 it had 5,800 members while by July 1939 it had 17,700. When Russia was collaborating with the allies during the war and the CP was carrying on activities such as denouncing strikers, the intake of people into the Party was even greater. In 1943 the membership of the CPGB reached 55,000. A similar situation occurred in all the Comm-

unist Parties in the same period - for example in France the PCF increased in size almost six-fold in the course of the Popular Front. An enormous number of middle class elements attracted by the talk of 'peace' and 'freedom' joined the organisations. By the beginning of the cold war in 1947, which stopped the flow of middle class elements into the CP's, the social base of the Communist Parties had been entirely changed. They now contained two fairly distinct groups. On the one hand a deeply bureaucratized but extremely anti-capitalist working class layer, and secondly a middle class mass who had never really broken with social democratic and bourgeois ideology.

The particular ways in which these social layers combined of course differed from country to country. In Italy for example the Communist Party had been illegal for twenty years at the end of the war and the extremely Stalinist core did not exist. From the beginning therefore the PCI was a liberal semi-social democratic organisation. The PCF however still had its core forged in the 1930's intact and cont-

'Marriage of Convenience'

Less than two months ago, things weren't going very well between the Communist Party (CP) and the Socialist Party (SP). The SP, strengthened by the size of the abstentions at the referendum, was proposing that the non-communist left should put up a single candidate for the legislative elections right from the start. G. Marchais wrote in the CP's paper *L'Humanite*: "Everything is happening as if the main aim of the SP today - while contemplating an agreement with our party - is to reduce our influence". So will this agreement, which we are told is so important, wipe out all the old differences? Is it likely that the two parties' plans, so clearly divergent a few weeks ago, are now suddenly found to have solid common ground for agreement?

WHY THE AGREEMENT?

The tactical agreement of 27 June has as its origin the recognition of two factors common to the CP and the SP.

1. The acuteness of the political crisis of the regime, shown by the absence of a ready prepared alternative team for the bourgeoisie, and the acuteness of the social crisis illustrated by the high level of workers' militancy even on the eve of the holidays, proves that the situation is ripe for aiming for power. Those politicians who see only the sad electoral ladder ahead, feel themselves "called" to power, feel obliged to start climbing the rungs now while they have as many trumps in hand as possible otherwise others will bypass them. So, programme in hand they find themselves at the starting line, putting out guarantees of 'seriousness', of their belief in 'progress', of their 'will to govern'. They affirm they are ready whether the elections are brought forward or not. If it is a 'Programme of government' they have signed and not simply an electoral agreement, this is because the latter would have no credibility in the face of workers' struggles which directly confront the strong state and its police. If they sign so quickly it's not because they want to but because the gangrenous state of the Governing team and

'really' on the left, cleansed of the role the socialists played during the Algerian war, Guy Mollet's presence in De Gaulle's first government, his dispatching of troops to Algeria - with special powers too - etc. (for the list is long). In the long term the SP strives to ensure for itself the possibility of playing leap-frog using the back of the CP and its militants to climb to power in '76. For the CP the signature of the agreement is the warranty of a favourable relationship of forces with the SP. It shows to the left electorate that it is the SP which has to submit to the dishonouring conditions of 'Advanced Democracy' and not Marchais having to bow before the aspiring Bonaparte-Mitterrand.

SOME EXPLOSIVE CONTRADICTIONS

Both have realised that from now on they have to fight for power and also that to do so they need each other. But the disagreements which already exist impose two contradictions onto the government programme which in the end threaten to be explosive.

1. In the first place, the CP-SP Programme is "unifying" only at first sight. At bottom it the rumours of an early election push them to do so. Marchais (CP) and Mitterrand (SP) are not making history as they sip champagne following the signing of the agreement; they merely reflect in a distorted way, because of the electoral level, the increased tension of the class struggle in France.

That Mitterrand had to go "so far" in compromising with the CP proves that he is not in control of the profound reasons for the agreement: that Marchais has accepted so many concessions on the original aims of the party - allowing the minimum threshold for nationalisations to fall from 25 to 13 companies, only goes to show that he too is not in control.

2. The second acknowledgement common to the two parties is that they cannot dispense with each other to realise their aims. For the SP, the 27 June agreement is the price to pay in order to reappear as a political force

is clear that in the hesitations, the shirkings of the real issues, the nit-picking nuances and above all in the tactical function which both parties assign to each other, the electoral plan is only the true reflection of the relative incompatibility of both their aims. For how can one take seriously as an axis for the construction of proletarian power in France, a programme whose key point, nationalisations, has been the object of incessant haggling and is only the result of a rotten compromise between grocers? Such a programme can hardly represent something coherent and constructive for the masses.

2. On the other hand, and this is the second contradiction, while adopting the programme, neither has renounced its basic aim - to govern by climbing on the back of the other. The SP, in taking the CP for its running mate for the 1976 elections, is stealing the CP's room for manoeuvre during an election in the hope of carrying out a lengthy period of 'Socialism' of the Brandt or Swedish variety, and allowing an integrated working class to pick up the crumbs of expansion. The CP, in utilising the SP and the left wing radicals would have the necessary spring board to leap to the fateful 51 percent. The party bureaucrats really believe in their traditional pattern about the conquest of the middle classes. When they cut up society into little slices, getting out a programme for each one, when they yoke the working class to the rickety chariot of the middle classes, constantly hesitating between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, when they refuse to carry out an offensive policy vis-a-vis the middle classes by calling on them to follow the working class instead of the other way round, all this is not so much to justify their betrayals. They genuinely believe in the possibility of power under Communist hegemony; but a power which is neither bourgeois nor proletarian, where a class alliance excludes only the monopolistic bourgeoisie, merely a fraction of the dominant class. This tactic of the gradual conquest of power, at once reformist and Utopian, which can only lead to Communist ministers carrying out the policies of a section of the bourgeoisie, is implicit in this privileged alliance with the SP.

The essential preoccupation for the CP as much as for the SP is to build a decisive

relationship of forces for the day when they think they can govern together. On this question, the contradiction between their two schemes is explosive, as numerous polemics since the agreement was signed have shown.

For the SP, Mitterrand set the tone the day after signing the agreement when he said at the Vienna Conference of the Socialist International:

"Our main objective is to rebuild a big Socialist Party on the ground occupied by the CP itself, in order to show that of the 5 million Communist electorate, three million can vote 'Socialist'! This is the reason for the agreement... the awakening of the great Socialist Party, orientated towards the left to regain its authenticity, but also taking the position nearest to the masses." And *L'Humanite* regrets the cynicism of this false friend Mitterrand in trying to win the Communist electorate and not the "thousands of electors" still under the grip of reaction. The Socialists continue in the same direction: "We are certainly not alone with the Communists. Already quite a lot of democrats and 'radicals' understand the choice that is being posed to them. One is not alone when surrounded with 8, 10, 12, or 13 million Frenchmen."

These declarations are designed to reassure the gut anti-Communist wing of the SP which finds the price to pay much too expensive and which is frightened by the traditional right accusing them of treating with the devil.

As for the CP, anxiety is growing as the SP ceases to be a mere apparatus and takes on flesh and blood. Mistrust prevails. And it is not so long since the referendum when the CP didn't hesitate to drop unity to prevent Mitterrand from reviving the socialist corpse.

Thus it is not so much a period of unity as that of a struggle, with each opponent attacking the other to reinforce himself. This battle, symbolised on a small scale by the Arbes Municipal elections, where the CP candidate was elected without the support of the socialist, could well get out of the control of the two friendly seeming opponents. The referendum proves it, and the Marriage of Convenience may very well be an unhappy one. -Rouge

STALINISM

The Communist Party and the Socialist Party in France is
re we look at the general significance of this agreement as
is 'marriage of convenience' and the meaning of its 'joint

ained many men who had fought in the war-time resistance. The PCF therefore remains a party which is quite used to the use of violence - usually, but not always, against the left - and it is extremely tightly organised. It is by far the most Stalinist party in Europe. The CPGB comes somewhere between these two extremes in terms of politics.

THE CRISIS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES

The tensions inherent in the social make up of the CPs before and after the foregone after 1956 and the Khrushchev revelations on Stalin. These gave a head to all the liberal elements to go further with their openly social democratic politics. Many of the working class cadre however saw these revelations as a 'concession' to the capitalist enemy. The Hungarian uprising of late 1956 and the Russian intervention therefore had a contradictory effect. Thousands of the liberal elements left the Communist Parties as the dream of the 'peace-loving'

USSR was shattered. The working class cadres however were not in the slightest attached to the USSR because it was 'peace-loving'. On the contrary, they were for violence, provided it was directed against capitalism. Most, reacting against the liberal bleating of the middle class, were therefore prepared to accept the Soviet line that the rising was a 'fascist' plot. Only the very finest of the CP militants left on a revolutionary and not on a liberal position. The exodus of these oppositionists did however reduce the most critical of the working class membership and led to a more passive attitude towards reformism by the membership. (And of course for the really militant all the 'peace-loving' moves were quite frequently presented to the working class militants as a clever 'manoeuvre', of the type that was frequently carried out in the trade unions. Thus for example one story that was put about in all seriousness by many CP militants was that the PCF had kept all the guns from the resistance days, and had stored them in the basement of its headquarters in



Francois Mitterand, leader of the French Socialist Party

Paris ready for use at the right time.

Some renewed discontent did occur at the time of the Sino-Soviet split. A few of those who were most violently anti-capitalist joined the various Maoist groups. In general however this was not a significant movement.

By far the most important trend since the early 1960's has been that the crisis of European capitalism has created serious possibilities of 'left' governments coming to power. This can be seen in the Labour government in Britain, the Social Democratic government in Germany and the 'centre-left' coalitions in Italy. The ruling class is not unduly alarmed by this and indeed may welcome it provided that only social democratic parties are involved. A Communist Party is however a very different kettle of fish altogether. As we have seen they are not primarily tied to the native ruling class. For this reason the ruling classes in the big European capitalist countries have not been prepared to see Communist Parties in government. This does not unduly worry the

working class bases of the CP's, as they want to destroy capitalism and not govern it, but is of course not so good for the middle class followers. For this reason the crisis of the CP's has intensified enormously since the early 1960's. The line of the leadership of the middle class elements is to break the tie with Moscow and thus make the CP acceptable to the ruling class as a governing party. The line of the old Stalinist base is to continue the anti-capitalist struggle and to maintain the link with Moscow. In every case this has produced great internal rows. In France, where the apparatus is still strong, it led to the expulsion of Roger Garaudy and others. In Britain where the Stalinist core is not so strong, it led to the expulsion of oppositionists from the YCL. In other countries, for example, Spain, the process has gone further and the party has split. The openly right wing line of the PCF in its agreement with the Socialist Party in France is only a sign, but one which will speed up the process, of the crisis of the European 'Communist' movement.

J Burns.

Joint programme

The publication of a "joint programme of government" has given rise to real satisfaction among C.P. militants in France. Certainly the programme is a compromise, these comrades tell us, but it is not unprincipled. The coherence of the Communist programme has been preserved. The Communist platform is not just a platform for anti-fascist repartee as in 1936; it is not a national reconstruction pact as in 1945. It actually aims at changing direction. It is not a programme of new style botching-up of the system, like the German social-democrats or the English workers; it includes a mass of anti-capitalist measures, that is to say dealing an actual blow to the forces and power of the big bourgeoisie.

Nationalisation cannot be reduced to the nationalisation of losses. It does not concern the deficit sectors of the economy but certain central key sectors of the accumulation of capital (electronic, chemical, metallurgy) and the banks, that is to say the nervous system of the capitalist economy.

At the company level the programme limits the absolute power of the employers; trade union control is instituted on hiring and firing, speed-ups, etc., organisation of work, and even on certain management decisions. At the level of political institutions a whole mass of measures are aimed at reactivating the elected national, regional and local assemblies to the detriment of executive power.

Certainly, in foreign affairs important concessions have been agreed concerning N.A.T.O. and the European Economic Community. But the international context of easing off considerably restrains the of the former. The heavy-handedness of European construction and the affirmed guarantee of the independence of the French government reduces the consequences of the latter.

Briefly, they say, the joint programme considerably weakens the big bourgeoisie reinforces the position of the working class and the working masses, releases a dynamic offensive and assures, through the development of "advanced democracy", progress towards socialism in France.

In their polemic with militants and sympathisers of the CP revolutionaries must, of course take into account that the joint programme is presented (and is perceived) not as a minimum programme but well and truly as a transitional programme for socialism. Our criticism concerns the content and the means.

CONTENT

The programme of nationalisation leaves out the numerous "big monopolies". It is false to say that it assures control of the "dominant poles" of the economy. The "minimum threshold" defined by the CP is given elastic qualities which it does not possess: not only have 25 industrial groups been cut to 13 but also Paul Laurent writes in the latest number of *Nouvelle France* (No. 1390): "There is always a distinction between that which must be done from the time a democratic government takes effect, and that which has a more gradual, more progressive character. Example: the realisation of a minimum threshold of nationalisation unfolds over a certain period". If one adds to that an embarrassed silence on the problem of indemnification of the large shareholders (notably Americans and West Europeans: how could a member of N.A.T.O. and of the Common Market "wrong" the big investors?) one can see that the Communist Party-Socialist Party at the start would only dispose of the actual extent of the public sector and not the levers of economic organisation as they claim. These levers are in the hands of big capital which uses them to overthrow "advanced democracy" as they have always done in similar circumstances.

Together these measures of democratisation of industries aim not at ensuring true workers control over production (carried out by the workers and their delegates, organised at the base in the workshop and on the conveyor belt) but at giving the trade union bureaucracy certain rights which would lead to an opening up towards joint management by functionaries of the State and permanent trade unionists. This conception of democracy, limiting workers democracy, symbolised by the claim of *one hour a month for the information of personnel* (!) does not have

the educative and mobilising virtues of the revolutionary demand of workers' control by elected workers' councils.

Commenting on institutional reforms, the very reactionary *Le Figaro* (which meanwhile ceaselessly vituperates against the joint programme in terms worthy of the worst years of the cold war) recognises "... that on the whole the changes envisaged touch on more than thirty articles of the Constitution. A closer analysis reveals that if changes appear to be the rule, in principle they rather overlap the fundamental principles of the present institutional system and on certain points even go in the direction of an increased cohesion"

As to the allegiance of the SP-CP government to the Common Market and N.A.T.O., it says much for its determination to concretely change the socio-economic system.

THE MEANS

But, necessary as it is, a criticism of the content of the joint programme is not enough. It is completed and made clearer by a criticism of the means which this programme advocates to arrive at its ends; that is to say by a criticism of the strategy of which it is the product. This strategy is based again and again on *electoralism*, in other words on the illusion that one can realise the greatest social revolution of all time, overthrowing the strongest ruling class in history, by the means of elections, in accordance with the legal framework set up by the enemy. This idea is so absurd that it is relatively easy to pin down the CP militants on this point and to win over militant workers. All the history of the 20th century, and again we have the example of Chile before us, shows that one cannot substitute socialism for capitalism gradually, little by little.

However large the electoral victory, whatever the intentions of the "democratic government", if it leaves intact the state apparatus which the ruling class has built up in the course of centuries, if it maintains in place the institutions and high-ranking personnel which they have provided, it leaves them the real power. And they will exert themselves to stop, by all means, the measures which strike a blow to their fundamental interests.

One can only impose genuinely anti-capitalist measures on the basis of a strong mass movement, organising the workers for the taking of power.

To the militants of the (French) CP we say: Don't wait for a hypothetical electoral victory in 1976! Do you want to end the absolute power of employers in their companies? Do you want to establish the control of wages, of organisation of work, and from there of production itself? You want control of workers' representatives for hiring and firing, speed ups, promotions? Very well. We are not in agreement with the forms which you advocate, which we consider bureaucratic. Let us discuss in front of the workers and let them decide for themselves. But nothing prevents us from engaging in struggle from today towards these objectives. Don't wait till they are granted by a "democratic government". Perhaps it will not come; perhaps it will have changed its programme. Impose these claims now by struggle. The SP and the CP are in agreement on a joint programme? The majority of the Unions are in agreement with their objectives? What are we waiting for to organise a struggle, unified at the base by these objectives? It is in organising the mass movement right through, in industries and localities, that on one hand forces favourable to the victory of the workers are created, and on the other among the masses a training in economic and political power takes place, that is to say that cadres are formed with intuitive knowledge of socialist power.

But far from choosing the means of building an attacking mass movement, the CP in France leaves no stone unturned in its efforts to maintain mass combativity within limits compatible with its prime objective: to win over as large a part of the "moderate" electorate as possible. Their claims will be appeased by a democratic government. The mass struggle must not on any account interfere with the coming election. Thus the CP cuts itself off both from relating to forces absolutely necessary to carry out its own objectives, and from the conscious and organised forces capable of checking the sabotage of the big bourgeoisie in the event of the victory of the United Left in 1976.

-Rouge

**Le Figaro*, 3rd July; Jean-Luc Parodi: "Will the United Left stick to the rules?"

KOREA

North and South 'Transcend Differences'

In an agreement foreshadowed by several overtures from Kim Il Sung earlier this year, the North and South Korean governments issued a joint communique on July 4 announcing their "common desire to achieve peaceful unification of the fatherland as early as possible."

The two sides agreed on three principles for unification. First, it is to be the result of "independent Korean efforts without being subject to external imposition or interference." Second, it is to be brought about by "peaceful means, and not through the use of force against each other." Third, the goal will be to seek a "great national unity" by "transcending differences in ideas, ideologies, and systems."

In addition, the two regimes agreed "not to slander or defame each other" and to take steps to prevent "inadvertent military incidents." A hot line between Pyongyang and Seoul was installed the next day "to deal directly, promptly, and accurately with problems arising between the South and the North." And a North-South "co-ordinating committee" was established, to be co-chaired by the two main figures in the secret negotiations leading up to the agreement - Lee Hu Rak, director of the South's Central Intelligence Agency, and Kim Yong Ju, director of the Organization and Guidance Department of the North Korean Workers (Communist) party. Kim is a younger brother of North Korean Premier Kim Il Sung.

The agreement can be viewed as a byproduct of the Nixon trip to Peking and the detente between Mao and Nixon. Certainly the cues on present-day application of the theory of "peaceful coexistence" emanating from the Nixon-Mao talks were picked up in the Korean agreement. The effect of the accord is to recognise the legitimacy of the Park Chung Hee regime in the South. This was noted with considerable satisfaction by the *New York Times*, which reflects the views of an influential sector of the U.S. ruling class, in a July 9 editorial: Those accords pay lip service to reunification, which is mentioned twelve times in the brief fourteen-page agreement. But the key phrase is the one that talks about 'transcending' rather than eliminating the differences in the 'ideologies and systems' of the two states."

In addition, the agreement is understood to recognize the right of U.S. occupation forces to remain in the South. There are some 40,000 U.S. troops currently in South Korea. "The U.S. troops", Seoul's foreign minister, Kim Yong Shik, told newsmen, "are stationed in Korea as members of the United Nations Command established in accordance with a U.N. resolution." He declared that the United Nations should not be considered "an external force or power" and the presence of its troops would thus not be incompatible with the agreement. "The United Nations should not be considered a bad foreign force", Lee Hu Rak told a news conference.

The *New York Times* hailed the agreement in a July 5 editorial as "a historic development of the utmost importance for improving the political atmosphere in Asia and the world" and as a "major advance". The underlying reason for such elation is clear: the U.S. ruling class sees in the agreement an example that can be used as one more club in the campaign to bludgeon the Vietnamese into settling for something less than their freedom and independence.

'News of this agreement must raise the question why similar concord cannot be reached in Vietnam', the *New York Times* observed. Moreover many leaders in both South and North Vietnam will notice that

the North Koreans were willing to make the first major advance toward reunification without requiring either the prior exit of United States troops or a change of regime in Seoul. It would be rash and unjustified to conclude that progress in Korea assures progress in Vietnam, but Seoul and Pyongyang have set a useful example that neither Hanoi nor Saigon can ignore."

The response of the Nixon administration to the Korean agreement has been "enthusiastic", reported *New York Times* Washington correspondent Bernard Gwertzman on July 4. He quoted a senior state department official's view of the pressure the agreement places on the Vietnam liberation forces: First China invited enemy No. 1, the United States, to Peking. Now North Korea has a friendly dialogue with enemy No. 2, South Korea, which has as many troops in South Vietnam as the United States. This must have a damaging effect on Hanoi's morale."

It has been clear for three years that Nixon's goal in Vietnam is to gain a settlement similar to the armistice that formally ended the Korean war. The ruling bureaucracy in Peking has now made it clear that it too, like U.S. imperialism, regards Korea as a model for a Vietnam settlement.

Chou En-lai gave the first public indication of the bureaucracy's views on the subject on June 16, when he praised former U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower for negotiating the armistice "in a straightforward way".

Then on June 25, the twenty-second anniversary of the beginning of the Korean war, *Renmin Ribao*, the official newspaper of the Chinese C.P., went a step further. The paper portrayed as an unqualified "victory" the compromise forced on the Korean revolution whereby a puppet regime supported by U.S. troops was maintained in Seoul: "With the support of the people the world over, the heroic Korean people finally forced the U.S. imperialists to sign the armistice agreement after a bitter trial of strength with the U.S. aggressor troops. The victory of the Fatherland Liberation War of Korea not only defended the revolutionary gains of the Korean people and the security of China, but also made a great contribution to the revolutionary struggle of the world's people against imperialism and its running dogs and set a brilliant example for the cause of liberation of the oppressed nations and people of the world." (Translation by *Peking Review*; emphasis added.)

The Korean war did represent a defeat for imperialism in that the latter was prevented from carrying out its intention of overthrowing the workers state in North Korea. But that defeat was sealed by the intervention of Chinese troops, not by the armistice agreement. Only the most myopic bureaucrat could see the armistice, which legitimized the Seoul puppet regime, as a victory for the Korean revolution.

Eisenhower did not have to be "forced" to sign the agreement any more than Nixon would have to be "forced" to sign a truce that left a puppet government established in Saigon. But that is precisely the sort of "victory" that the Peking bureaucracy has in mind for the Vietnamese revolution, as another passage in the *Renmin Ribao* editorial makes explicit: "U.S. imperialism is continuing its war of aggression in Indochina, and carrying out war escalation against the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam. Recently, it has not only mined and blockaded the ports of north Viet Nam but also steadily expanded the scope of its naval and air attacks there. It can be said with certainty that the perverse



Kim Il Sung (right) meets Lee Hu Rak, director of the South's Central Intelligence Agency, in Pyongyang

acts of U.S. imperialism can only result in defeat, as it suffered in its war of aggression against Korea, thus lifting a rock only to drop it on its own feet."

The agreement between Park and Kim will clearly fit in quite neatly with Peking's attempt to pressure the Hanoi leadership into a settlement. The Maoists will be

able to point to the agreement as "proof" that U.S. imperialism can be peacefully evicted from its colonies. The fact that the imperialists have no intention of leaving South Korea will not at all disturb the bureaucrats, who long ago learned that the essence of "peaceful coexistence" is betrayal of revolution masked by fine words. —ICP

VIETNAM

B-52's bomb Red River dykes

Towards the end of June the Democratic Republic of Vietnam made an appeal to world public opinion against the threatened destruction of the dikes of North Vietnam by American bombardment. According to the North Vietnamese spokesman in Paris, "THE SYSTEMATIC, PLANNED ATTACKS BY THE AMERICAN ARMED FORCES AND NAVY AGAINST THE DAMS AND THE DIKES ALONG THE RIVER BANKS AND SEA-SHORE OF NORTH VIETNAM, COULD CAUSE CATASTROPHIC FLOODS DURING THE RAINY SEASON OF JULY AND AUGUST." He accused Nixon of deliberately trying to spread death and famine among the civilian population, and sap the morale of the Vietnamese people.

There is every reason to take this seriously. News of bombing of the dikes continues to flow in. Between 10 April and 10 June there were 68 massive attacks on the dikes and 38 dams were severely damaged, and on 20 June two dikes in Quang Ninh province, to the north of the Red River, were broken.

According to *The Guardian* that same week, the U.S. might use 'rain makers' during the Vietnam war to trigger off torrential rains. The operation, codenamed 'Popeye', involves dropping silver iodine bombs on clouds over Laos to make the Ho Chi Minh trail unusable. The Pentagon Papers show that research has been going on since 1967 to prepare such weapons. Defence Minister Laird recently answered a question put to him about this by saying that they would not go so far as to make artificial rain storms 'over North Vietnam'. This could be taken as an admission that such practices have been used in Laos - where there is evidence that this is so - and South Vietnam

If this practice is also used in North Vietnam now, the results could be quite catastrophic.

The basic facts of the situation according to the French geographer Yves Lacoste, are the following: the rivers in North Vietnam run well above the alluvial deposits they have washed down from the mountains. In the rainy season they rise to a very high

level. In addition there are frequent typhoons in the region, which can also cause flooding. The system of dikes, over 2,500 miles long, and built by the hard labour of whole generations, protects the 15 million people living in the Plain of Tonkin (with a density of 700-800 people per square kilometre). The Americans have recently been making systematic attempts to destroy these dikes, especially by dropping very heavy bombs in the vicinity to cause intense vibrations. If these dikes broke, millions of people would risk drowning or famine.

The Vietnamese have plenty of experience of dealing with destruction of dikes. Towards the end of the Second World War there was famine in the Northern provinces because the French had confiscated the best part of the rice harvest for the Japanese occupation authorities. The famine and the seizure of power by the Japanese in March 1945 - they had left the French formally in charge until then - led to the abandonment of the irrigation system. When the waters rose eight provinces of the plain of Tonkin were flooded. Two million people died in 1944-45 as a result of famine and flood. Seven hundred and fifty miles of dikes had to be repaired, using 11 million working days.

The dikes of the North were also bombed between 1965 and 1968, under President Johnson. In 1965 there were 500 attacks against the dikes and dams. In 1966 the number rose to 1,000, and the following year to 1,300. It was striking that the attacks were heaviest in the rainy seasons, and then as now, peasants rushing to repair the dikes became the target of further bombing. Although an incredible amount of damage was done to the dikes, water pumps and dams in the Johnson period - the photos of the period bear silent witness to the facts - the Vietnamese, with immense efforts, managed to prevent greater catastrophes. The problem is whether they can do the same against Nixon's much more refined and accurate bombing, possibly to be backed up by 'rain making'. This article first appeared in the Dutch left-wing weekly, *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 27 June - 4 July.

IRELAND: who will bloody whose nose?

From GERY LAWLESS, Belfast:

Republican prisoners in prisons and concentration camps in Ireland cheered and clapped when they heard of the Irish Republican Army's response to the British breach of the cease fire.

This was stated at a press conference in Free Belfast on Thursday, July 13th, given by the Officer Commanding the Belfast Brigade of the Provisional IRA, Brigadier Seamus Twomey. The press conference was called to explain the background to the breakdown of the bi-lateral cease fire between Irish Republican and British Crown forces, and to deny categorically the suggestions being spread by the British mass media that the cease fire was ended because of differences between the Provos' General Head Quarters in Dublin and the Belfast Brigade.

Beginning the conference, Brigadier Twomey said that the events which led up to the breach of the truce had been clearly documented by the IRA: "Our G.H.Q. in Dublin was fully aware and fully informed of everything that took place and were in complete agreement with Belfast and units all over Northern Ireland going back into action. The return to activity was only undertaken after the British Army had violated the truce by the use of rubber bullets, water cannons, and Saracens, and by their breach of the undertaking given that there would be no harassment of the people."

Brigadier Twomey said that the Republican Army had a whole catalogue of complaints from the people in the nationalist areas of Belfast about the British Army breaches of the truce. He gave some examples:-

1. At 3.30 pm on Sunday 9th July, the day the truce broke down, several hours before the confrontation in Lenadoon Avenue, he was personally removed from his staff car at Andersonstown barracks by the British Army, who proceeded to search the car, in clear breach of the truce and a personal assurance given to him by his British opposite number.

2. Although the Provos had released two British Army officers who had entered Free Derry in civvies (under the unpublished truce terms the Provos would have been entitled to shoot these as spies) the British Army had arrested two IRA volunteers on Sunday morning who still remain in British custody. Under the terms of the truce Republican volunteers were to be allowed to carry out their own patrols provided that they did not ostentatiously display arms.

3. Despite the fact that the bi-lateral cease fire agreement provided that the British Army would keep a "low profile", they went during the cease-fire foot patrols into areas where foot patrols had never ventured before. Brigadier Twomey stated that in his own command area he had protested on seven separate occasions through the Joint Mediators about British Army breaches of the truce.

4. Referring to the actual dispute in Lenadoon Avenue, Brigadier Twomey gave details of meetings between officers of his local unit and himself with the British

Dealing with the actual incident which led to the breach of the truce, he stated that the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, the government body controlling housing in northern Ireland, allocated houses in Lenadoon Avenue to the Catholic families who had been forced out of their homes in other areas of Belfast by the Orange ultras of the U.D.A.; the British Army made no objection to this. It was only when the UDA objected to the rehousing that the British Army discovered that this might lead to a breach of the peace. After three meetings to try and iron out this difficulty, the



Troops fire rubber bullets at Lenadoon marchers in breach of the cease fire terms

Army. He said that the British Army O.C., Colonel Tomlinson, had made what Brigadier Twomey called an outrageous suggestion: "This was that Twinbrook estate could become a Catholic ghetto if we so desired and that maisonettes in the Turf Lodge area would be tidied up in due course to put families into and that a small advance engineering factory that had been turned down by Mr. Brian Faulkner would in all probability be given the planning permission to go ahead." But, said Brigadier Twomey, local people had been horrified and extremely angry to find that the British Army proposed to do nothing for the 114 adult refugees and their 212 children.

people in the neighbourhood themselves took the initiative to rehouse refugees and some 2,000 Catholics marched behind a lorry carrying the furniture of the families.

The British Army used a large Armoured Personnel Carrier to ram this lorry, and then used CS gas, rubber bullets and water cannons against the local people in clear breach of clause 2 of the cease fire; "G.H.Q. in Dublin was informed, and the decision to defend the people was a decision of General H.Q. in Dublin", said Brigadier Twomey.

NEW CEASE FIRE, NEW TERMS.

The Irish Times in an article by the usually well informed London Editor, Jim Downey, made it clear that Whitelaw is anxious for a return to the cease fire, and the attitude of Republican leaders, in Dublin and elsewhere, shows that the Provos would be willing for another bi-lateral cease fire.

With the final vote on the Common Market Bill out of the way, Whitelaw and those elements in the cabinet which represent manufacturing capitalist interests (Europeans) are now trying to sum up the courage to take on the Orange ultras, and their backers in the Tory Party, the old guard "Commonwealthers". But before they do this, they must clear from their flanks the military lobby represented by General Tuzo, and behind him the Defence Minister, Peter Carrington.

Whitelaw and the "Europeans" blame the ultra-Orange back-lash for the break down in the truce, and recognise that implicitly or explicitly, any new bi-lateral cease fire, to be acceptable to the Provos, will have to be based on a willingness on their part to call the Orange bluff. While being frightened of this possibility, they are spectre of a Southern backlash. They fear that a renewal of the confrontation with the Catholic population of the North will lead to other Derry massacres, without the sacrificial lamb of a British Embassy in Dublin to appease Southern anger.

BLOODY NOSE

Their tactics are to work for a cease fire as early as possible, but first to appease the military lobby they want to inflict what is known in British Army circles as a "bloody nose" on the IRA. What this quaint English euphemism means is, a new cease fire in which the British Army can interpret the terms, where Whitelaw, if the necessity again arises, can squeeze the Catholics to make room for the granting of concessions to the Orange ultras, without the danger of another Lenadoon

Although Republican leaders are playing their cards close to their chests, informed sources close to the leadership make it clear that whatever the other weaknesses of the movement, in this case they have taken Whitelaw's measure and are determined that any new bi-lateral cease fire will not be one which is imposed upon them in the after-math of a British victory.

While not desiring a civil war with the Orange ultras, they are determined that the Orange bluff be called, and that this festering boil be lanced and the Unionist monster destroyed. Only then will the possibility arise for winning any section of the Protestant working class to democratic or socialist politics.

Statement by MATZPEN and the Arab Revolution group

Five years ago the Israeli army, supported by American imperialism, attacked the Arab countries and occupied part of their territories. The Arab armies, presented by the petit-bourgeois regimes in Egypt, Syria and Iraq as the instrument of Palestinian liberation, were to collapse within a few days.

These five years have seen mass struggles throughout the Arab world, and in particular the emergence onto the political scene of the Palestinian people as an independent political factor for the first time since the Arab revolt of 1936-39.

But the petit-bourgeois leadership of the Palestinian resistance movement, by isolating the national liberation struggle from the class struggle at a local level, led the Palestinians to defeat and massacre.

The presence of the Israeli army in the territories occupied since 1967 has shown it up for what it is in reality, namely an army of occupation and repression serving the interests of the Zionist regime, the Israeli bourgeoisie, and American imperialism. The administrative arrests, the massive expulsions, the blowing up of houses and the terror used against the civilian population have revealed to the entire world the nature of the Zionist state.

Within Israel the occupation has accentuated social tension. Anti-strike decrees, the forcing of workers to appear before military courts, anti-working class legislation and an increase in police violence have shown concretely to the Israeli proletariat that "a people which oppresses another cannot itself be free".

The defeat of the Palestinians and the wave of reaction which followed it have highlighted the class alliance between all the regimes in the Arab East, and their links with imperialism. Today more than ever the common struggle of all the revolutionary forces, Arab and Israeli, against imperialism, Zionism and Arab reaction is on the agenda. The aim which the revolutionary organisations must set themselves is the social revolution throughout the Arab East. For that, they must equip themselves with the necessary tool for their struggle: the revolutionary party of the Arab East.

FORWARD TO THE BUILDING OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY OF THE ARAB EAST!

DOWN WITH ZIONISM, IMPERIALISM AND ARAB REACTION!

LONG LIVE THE ARAB SOCIALIST REVOLUTION!

Trotsky becomes best-seller in Chile

The publication by a state publishing house of Leon Trotsky's *History of the Russian Revolution* for the first time in Chile has met with an amazing response. The first edition of 8,000 copies was completely sold out within four days, and of a second edition of 15,000 copies now in preparation nearly half have already been sold in advance.

The publication of this work has been made possible by the current political situation in Chile, in particular the rising workers' movement and the radicalisation of various social layers that have carried out joint actions with the revolutionary left. Leading members of the Communist Party, including Senator Volodia Teitelboim (guest of honour at the *Morning Star* birth day rally earlier this year), visited the Chilean state publishing house of Quimantu to demand that the decision to publish the book be revoked since the C.P. was vetoing the spreading of Trotsky's ideas. But an appeal to the rank-and-file workers of the Production Committee, a "workers' participation" group formed by Popular Unity in all state-run companies, won approval of the decision to publish the book.

Following this, the C.P. demanded that the problem be taken up by the central commi-

tees of its own party and the Socialist Party. The C.P. plenum resolution of 15 March of this year stated in the section on "the ideological struggle" that there has been a "gross allocation of public resources to publish anti-Soviet works by this selfsame Trotsky". (*El Siglo*, 16 March)

These charges have now been answered, but from a quarter which the C.P. certainly did not expect since it relies on its own base - from the Chilean workers, who ensured within hours of publication that Trotsky would become a best-selling author in Chile.

IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Irish Solidarity Campaign holds alternate forums and business meetings every Friday at 8 p.m. at the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (junction Wharfedale Road) nearest tube Kings Cross.

Friday, August 4th: 'From the plantation to the Act of Union'.

STOKE NEWINGTON EIGHT

Who is trying whom?

After initial publicity, the trial at the Old Bailey of the Stoke Newington Eight has proceeded for some weeks now without much notice. Its most important feature is the way in which the eight, charged with conspiracy to bomb, have tried to make their defence a political one

The way in which they have tackled it so far (the question at the moment is how to deal with the prosecution, it will be some time before the defence presents its case which will open up new possibilities) is illuminating. They have focussed upon exposing the actual workings of the bourgeois state as it has impinged on their case. It could be argued that the fact that they have chosen to approach the problem in this way reflects, in part, their libertarian politics in that what is exposed is that state 'in itself' rather than the relationship between the state and the class nature of society. It must be recognised, however, that given the situation in which they are operating it is difficult to see a more effective way in which they can intervene.

Their method has taken two forms. Firstly, they have tried to challenge the ethos of the courtroom. They have to some extent broken down its traditions and have certainly destroyed its normal atmosphere in the course of this trial. Secondly, in their cross-examinations, they have tried to put the state on trial, as it were. Precisely how they have done this can only be seen by tracing the course of the trial.

EARLY STAGES

Right from the beginning the defence was able to break the court atmosphere. Constantly, friends were coming in and out giving encouragement and advice to the Eight. The stilted language, attitudes and dress of legal formality were thrown overboard by the defence. However, some of the early moves of the defence were unsuccessful. Two of these were particularly important. First, they were unable to get Habershon (in charge of police investigations into the 'Angry Brigade' bombings) out of the court.

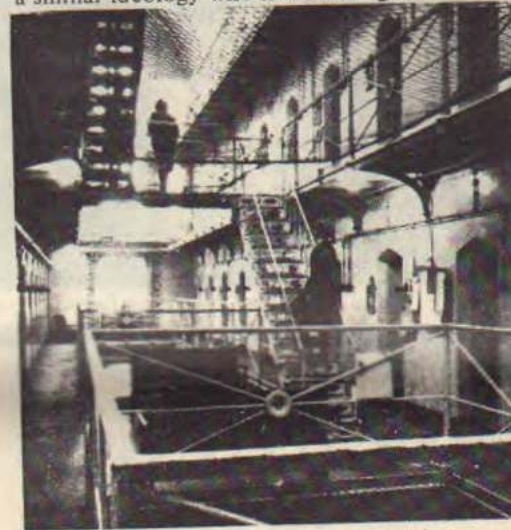
They requested that he should leave on the grounds that he talks to witnesses and was generally behaving in a way that made the trial an unfair one, even in the context of bourgeois democracy. At the time of writing, Habershon is still there. Secondly, the defence had sought to involve the jury more concretely in the trial and applied twice for the jury to be allowed to ask questions verbally whenever they felt like it. This was not permitted.

The trial started warming up in the second week when the defence cross-

examined Det. Insp. Haywood giving evidence primarily about the 'Italian Consulate Manchester' bomb. What was politically important about this cross-examination was that not only did the defence point toward fabrication but they also took the opportunity to ask questions about the workings of the Special Branch. They got Haywood to admit to his role of keeping tabs on left wing organisations, to elaborate upon how raids on left wing addresses were useful in that one could connect people together (address books, etc.) Not that we didn't know this before, but it was clear that the tables were turning - that it was the police who were on trial and the 'defence' were going on the offensive. Haywood really got a hammering in cross-examination. It was in this spirit that the trial continued.

THE REVEALING QUESTION OF BAIL.

During the course of the trial Anna Mendelson and Hilary Creek applied for bail. Anna because she was very ill, and Hilary because of the strain of trying to conduct a defence while living in Holloway. They were not allowed bail unless it was out of London. This, Anna and Hilary argued, was impractical because of travelling to see solicitors, the other defendants, etc. And why could they not get bail in London? James (the judge): Is there any objection to the address (in London)? Habershon: Yes, my lord, I have noted that the address is in N.1. and during our investigations into this case, we have discovered that there are many people of a similar ideology who live in Islington.



Holloway: where Hilary prepares her defence

'SCIENTIFIC' EVIDENCE.

One interesting facet of courtroom tradition, which has rarely been challenged, is the cult of 'scientific expertise'. An aura of indisputability surrounds forensic 'experts' and state employed 'scientists', and their evidence is rarely challenged.

In this case the prosecution used such people and the way the defence dealt with them negates any illusions one might have about the reliability of such evidence. An explosives 'expert', Lidstone, was trying to prove that a whole number of bombings formed an 'associated set', but the defence proved again and again that the evidence he gave was circular: it assumed precisely what it was supposed to prove. For example:

Defence: On what basis do you say it was probable that this second explosion had TNT in it? You've got no scientific basis, have you?

Lidstone: The only basis that it might have had TNT in it is what appears to be the logical one, that generally speaking, when more than one bomb is used, you find the same explosive in both.

Yet it was the connection between the two bombs which they were supposed to be proving!

SOLIDARITY

What attitude should revolutionary Marxists take with regard to this trial. It should be absolutely clear that we are in solidarity with the Stoke Newington Eight!

Such a solidarity position is quite independent of whether or not they are innocent of the charges. We are in solidarity with any people who are on trial because of their commitment to the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism. Whether or not they are 'innocent' they make no bones about that commitment and there is no doubt that it is their anti-capitalist activities which have brought them to the Old Bailey. To solidarise with these people isn't to accept their politics (there will be a critical examination of the politics of the defence committee in a review of *If You Want Peace, Prepare for War* in a future issue of the *Red Mole*). On the contrary, the only criticisms of fellow revolutionaries which will be taken seriously by those revolutionaries can come from those who show themselves clearly to be comrades in the same struggle.

Spike

For the trial to be successful, from our point of view, it must go on for a long time, because of the meticulousness with which the defence has approached it. To make this possible, the Defence Committee needs concrete support, e.g. money and also physical presence on pickets to maximise the political impact which the committee is seeking to make.

Communications etc., to Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group, Box 359, 240, Camden High Street, London, N.W.1.

The committee put out bulletins on the progress of the trial and also a pamphlet *If You Want Peace, Prepare for War*. They are available from Compendium Books, Camden High Street.

THE STATE AND RACE RELATIONS INDUSTRY

The article in *The Red Mole* 41 showed how racism also operates to the disadvantage of the bourgeoisie's own interests in the sense that it creates further tensions within the system. An analogy is State supported religious sectarianism in the North of Ireland. Thus from the point of view of the bourgeoisie this certainly weakens the working class but on the other hand it (a) is a waste of Catholic labour resources (b) provokes an armed uprising by the Catholic community; (c) is liable at the first sign of forced concessions to the Catholics to provoke a potentially violent backlash involving Protestant workers who have been brought up and bought off on the superexploitation of the Catholic working class. In other words the bourgeoisie in its need to perpetually divide the working masses also creates problems for itself and problems which it is forced to face up to. In Ireland these contradictions are today so huge that the ruling class has had to unleash its most basic weapon—physical force—to contain them. As regards racism within the U.K. itself, where the contradictions have not yet reached such proportions, more 'subtle' ways are used to try and contain them. This as was argued in *The Red Mole* 41 is the reason for the existence of such 'independent' bodies as the Runnymede Trust and the Institute of Race Relations.

THE STATE MACHINERY

However the main supporter of the race rela-

Within its machinery there are roughly three strands:

1. There are those bodies which are not primarily concerned with blacks but are frequently used to spy on them. For instance this is the point of the Department of Employment and Productivity's circular 12/508,¹ (Nov. 1970), which ordered local employment exchanges to enumerate the number of 'immigrant' unemployed (for immigrant read 'black' because those from the white Commonwealth were deliberately excluded). It is of obvious value to a government which has introduced an Immigration Act in order to terrorise blacks with the threat of deportation if they 'act contrary to the public good', to know the number of potential black scabs they have at their disposal. In other words, 12/508 should be read in conjunction with the Immigration Act and the Industrial Relations Act. It should not be forgotten that many immigrant workers who were involved in the events of May 1968 in France were afterwards deported.²

2. Another strand of the State machinery contains those bodies whose only role is to spy on blacks. An example of this is the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Commission set up at the time of the first Commonwealth Immigrants Act in 1968 as a sop to liberals to 'review' the situation. The attitude of the C.I.A.C. can best be seen in respect to education in its second report. Thus—"a national system can-

values of immigrant groups". In other words—smash black culture.

3. A third strand of the State machinery are those bodies which have been set up to deal directly with the public and in particular with blacks precisely to diffuse their militancy. One example of this is the Community Relations Council and its local Community Relations Officers set up under the 1965 Race Relations Act. One of the pre-occupations of this body seems to be persuading blacks that the police are their friends from birth and that they should even join the police.³ However the most well-known and the most vicious of these organisations is the Race Relations Board which was set up under the 1965 Act. Two points have to be made about this Act. Firstly, for the first time it made it a criminal offence to incite racial hatred. The end result of this has been that no Powellite or fascist or any sort of racist has been found guilty of this offence (only two have ever been prosecuted). The only people found guilty of this offence have been black militants. Secondly, it was made a civil offence to discriminate against someone on racial grounds (though with fantastically wide exceptions). The role of the Race Relations Board is supposedly to investigate such discrimination, try to resolve it (by apology!) and if it is not resolved take the discriminator to court. It is true that the board has discovered a few (a very few) acts of discrimination—if it hadn't it would have no political role to play in diffusing the situation. However in all cases where the interests of the government or of big business have been at stake it has backed down. The way the Board works is perhaps best seen in the accusation by a Mr. Pathak against the Department

of Inland Revenue who had rejected him without interview for a clerical job. The reasons given for not employing him were: (a) the age limit of 40 (he was 38); and (b) that the interviewer did not have time to check whether his two M.A.s and his law degree from Lucknow University were equivalent to five 'O' levels.⁴

OPEN RACISM

It can be seen from the above examples that the State machinery has not got a uniform role—indeed it has a conflicting role. On the one hand the purpose of institutions such as the Race Relations Board is to diffuse discontent and militancy provoked by racism. Yet on the other hand the purpose of circular 12/508 and a lot of the other spying network is actually to promote racism. Indeed it should not be forgotten that behind the liberal facade of the Race Relations Board, etc., there is also machinery to administer that legislation which is openly racist. Thus the Immigration Acts of 1962 and 1968 have created a whole caste of Immigration Officers and Immigration Tribunals whose sole purpose is to keep blacks out. And similar machinery will soon have to be erected to implement the 1971 Act, whose aim is to terrorise blacks already here.

Steve Cohen

NOTES:

1. *Sheffield Telegraph*, 16 November, 1970.
2. *International Commission of Jurists Review*, September 1969.
3. See statement of Wandsworth's Community Relations Officer, *Evening Standard*, 20 March, 1972.
4. *Race Today*, October, 1971.

REVIEWS

HOUR OF THE FURNACES

In Argentina, as in the rest of Latin America, one of the key tasks for revolutionaries is to combat illusions about 'democratic' solutions to the problems of the working masses: in particular, illusions in a peaceful return to power by Peron, which he is at present attempting to manoeuvre. Unfortunately a much-acclaimed film which was shown in London at the recent Third World Cinema festival and is shortly to be shown again does much to perpetuate these illusions about Peronism as a popular movement.

La Hora de los Hornos (The Hour of the Furnaces) gives us no real analysis of the forces which dominated the political stage between 1945 and 1955 in Argentina. This four-and-a-half-hour film, divided into three parts, is an attempt at both a political analysis of the dependence of the Latin American peoples on foreign imperialism, and the forging of future perspectives for the liberation struggle in Argentina particularly. There is no doubt that its form is revolutionary and innovative, in the sense that it provides breaks in the film for discussion, is open-ended allowing for "new testimonies of combatants", and uses collage techniques mixing interviews, documentary newsreels of particular struggles and speeches with political analysis. 'Neocolonialism and Violence', the first part, dedicated to "Che Guevara and all the patriots who fell in the struggle for Indo-American liberation", grasps the very essence of the economic and cultural dependence from which Latin America suffers and stands as a brilliant work of art as well as a political weapon.

Despite these strengths, however, the analysis provided by Fernando Solanas and his Film Liberation Group from Buenos Aires of the decade of Peronist power between 1945 and 1955 leaves one with the impression that they still cling to Peronist ideas and still put their faith in the existing Peronist organisations. Peron for instance, is presented simply as a popular leader of the working masses, rather than as a figurehead for the Argentine industrialists who used the working class movement as a stick to beat the more reactionary oligarchy consisting of church and army.

This grave weakness in the film is compounded by the knowledge that it has already been shown underground throughout Latin America, as well as in other parts of the world. Nevertheless, the film does provide many valuable and absorbing insights into the developing liberation struggle in Latin America, and its open-ended form leaves room for hope that its political weaknesses will be remedied as a growing experience of struggle shows them to be such. Phil Cohen

La Hora de los Hornos is being shown by the PKK Politkino Klub on August 3rd (part 1) and August 10th (Parts 2 and 3) You have to get membership in advance from 11 Greck Street, London W.1. (01-734-4131); the film will be shown at Sudbury House, 15, Newgate Street, E.C.1. (St Pauls tube).

RED CIRCLES

Weekly meetings to discuss revolutionary politics.

North London meets every Tuesday at 8pm in the General Picton Pub, Caledonian Road, N.1. (near Kings X station)

Notting Hill meets every Monday at 7.45pm in the Britannia Pub meeting room, Clarendon Road (near Ladbroke Grove tube). Buses 52, 7, 15.

Glasgow meets on Thursdays at 7.30pm in the Iona Community Centre, 214 Clyde St.

BUILDING WORKERS STRIKES

A new pamphlet on the background to the present dispute and in particular the rise of the Building Workers Charter Group and its politics is now available, price 2p, from IMG Publications, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN ITALY?

Meeting at 5pm on Sunday, 30 July, at the Centro Iberico (directly opposite Holborn tube station).

Organised by Italian Red Help, 21 Theobalds Road, London W.C.1.

Murderous Providence: A Study of Pollution in Industrial Society

by Harry Rothman (Rupert Hart-Davis, £2.95)

The question of pollution and the so-called eco-crisis is one that has been largely ignored by the left, who have dismissed it with such banalities as "it'll be solved after the revolution". This is a totally incorrect position for Leninists to take. Firstly, the legacy of industrial pollution is one that will be carried over into a future socialist society so that any moves to prevent the gradual worsening of the situation now must be supported. Secondly by an adequate analysis and programme relating to the oppression of capitalist pollution, we could almost certainly attract sections of the millions of people who have mobilised on a reformist platform, to fight the increasing worsening of pollution.

Rothman's book goes some way to correct this ignorance on the left and to provide a preliminary analysis revolutionaries can draw on in beginning to form such a programme.

Rothman is no optimistic, technology-worshipping Micawber or a moaning, fatalistic Jeremiah, but a revolutionary Marxist and as such he relates the problem of pollution and the supposed problem of the "population explosion" to the current state of capitalist organisation of the means of production - man's means of interacting with nature to satisfy his needs. His thesis is summed up early in the book: "... whilst our technologies have advanced in power, they have increased our capacity to produce unintended effects... in fact the socio-economic structure of our society produces social groups which consciously fight against the socially rational use of technology." (p. 24)

In fact, maintains Rothman, an unplanned capitalist economy in which competition and the need to accumulate profits in the short term are central, will produce yet more and more oppressive and polluting side-effects.

The first section of the book deals with the growth of life and energy and consciousness on the earth's surface and the complex totality of energy-flows, which comprise the biosphere. Science has become so fragmented and specialised that it is unable to see the whole for the parts and therefore is incapable of arriving at a total view of man and the effect of his productive activities on nature: "The enormous potential for change in modern technology makes it imperative that a scientific discipline competent at the biosphere level be developed... Ecology is the scientific discipline most germane to the development of a science of the biosphere". (p. 7)

However knowledge of the totality of the eco-system, which if put into practice can help man re-harmonise his distorted and destructive relation with nature, can only be useful if the economic rationality and social structure are compatible with this end. "Scientific knowledge or even the will to plan are not enough if the human environment, which is determined by its political and economic structure, is not favourable. It is not difficult to demonstrate... that industrial capitalism has no functional conception of the welfare of mankind as a whole". (p. 19)

Rothman goes through a study of how human society has developed, based on different and developing modes of production (i.e. the control of man over his resources). The advancement of capitalism was accompanied by a rise in rationality which broke the grip of traditionalism. Production was organised with a future goal in view, rather than being based exclusively on how things had been organised in the past. A central organising concept at which all industrialists could aim arose - the concept of profit. However: "The development of capitalist society encouraged the intensification of economic rationality, together with the parallel and intimately related development of science and technology, which led to an unprecedented increase in the productive forces of society. But the fatal contradiction of capitalist rationality was that it was confined to the private interests of individual enterprises, which predominated over wider social interests." (p. 42).

Part two of the book consists of a comprehensive, empirical study of the present state of the polluted environment and the

misuse of technology, as produced by an unplanned capitalist economy. There is also a section on the incapacity of the legal framework of capitalism to limit pollution, because to do so would entail an attack on the private property relations which bourgeois law defends and on which such law is based. The Marxist conception of the state is here implicit in Rothman's argument, though he doesn't state it clearly. Reformists believe that the law can control the excesses of capitalism, because they see the state apparatus as a neutral arbiter between groups of people, for the "common good". In fact the State and its law functions to maintain a particular class-structure, which is itself at the root of the pollution crisis, so can not be used to attack that structure in any radical way. Any reforms are only desperate responses to specific crises which threaten capitalism, rather than long-term, planned control.

In the last section Rothman faces squarely the question of "Social Reform or Revolution?" and points out the total incapacity of capitalism as a form of economic and social organisation to solve these problems. Where the maximising of private profit is the driving force of industry and where pollution-control costs money and lowers profits, firms cannot afford to implement them. Even capitalists with "a social conscience" can do nothing, for immediately they finance pollution-control, their profit-margins are lowered and they cease to compete with their rivals.

The important question for us is that of the specific ideas revolutionaries should be explaining in connection with this form of oppression. Rothman doesn't have a great deal to say on this, but active Leninists can begin to formulate some preliminary propaganda and agitation from his analysis. One aspect of this contradiction, brought out by Rothman, which is usually glossed over by the "we're all in the same boat" school of analysis, is the essentially class nature of pollution - the fact that it oppresses the working class, especially in the factories (and ironically in agriculture, with the increase of poisonous pesticides) more than other classes of society. Therefore we should attempt to explain ideas about the nature of this specific oppression to all sectors of society and how the total economic and social organisation of capitalist society is responsible, not individual bosses.

Secondly, we must take into account the response of the ruling-class to the increasing clamour for pollution-control, as outlined by Rothman. This will take the form of blaming the workers for demanding more material goods (the "greed" denounced recently

by Sir Alec Douglas-Home and others), and attempts to alleviate the problem at the expense of the working-class - redundancies to cut costs (the elimination of lead-additives from petrol in the USA, a very necessary measure, will mean the loss of 10,000 jobs in the lead-industry), increased prices, state intervention in the form of increased taxes to pay for pollution-control and the encouragement of voluntary organisations to fight pollution.

It is clear that revolutionary socialists must get over the essential idea that the working class should take no responsibility for the alleviation of this problem created by the ruling-class. Neither should they accept a lower standard of living to help capitalism through the crisis. However they should fight for the right of information and veto on any changes of plant or industrial process which might conceivably increase the deterioration of their environment, inside or outside the factory. This would involve one of the demands Rothman raises - an end to secrecy and the opening of industry's books.

Any programme relating to pollution as an oppressive element of capitalism must also face the problem of the Third World, the over-exploited and under-industrialised countries. How can such countries afford to industrialise cleanly when the better-endowed advanced capitalist nations find the implementation of anti-pollution measures so difficult?

To end with a quotation from Rothman, which sums up the long-term strategy of revolutionaries in relation to this aspect of the crisis of capitalism: "It is in the struggle for such demands that conservationists will become conscious of the true nature of the system they are attempting to alter.... In the light of such possibilities one can expect increasing numbers of anti-pollutionists and conservationists to proclaim that their goal can only be achieved by far-reaching political changes rather than the present perpetual tinkering with the existing system. It is only because of this newly awakening consciousness that we can look to the future with any hope." (pp. 319,322)

Carl Gardner

SOCIAL SECURITY

A pamphlet on the Social Security system, incorporating the latest experiences of the working class in the Manchester sit-ins, is now available from IMG Publications, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

This pamphlet is a useful handbook for all militants needing practical advice on how to claim etc.



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MINERS' CONFERENCE SHOWS NEED FOR RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The atmosphere at this year's miners' conference at Morecambe was much to be expected. In the wake of the national strike, the mood was finely balanced between the new militancy of the rank and file and the back-peddling of the executive. Some time before the conference President of the Union, Joe Gormley, pre-empted the recent TUC/CBI moves by approaching the NCB. The talks were aimed at establishing a new strategy for tackling miners' pay which could "avoid the confrontations of recent years". He and the executive thus came to Morecambe to "sell" this new policy to the rank and file. But this is no longer the placid membership of the fifties: this is a rank and file which earlier this year secured the most decisive working class victory since the war. Thus the stage was set.

Joe Gormley caricatured the classic right wing trade union leader in his opening address. "For God's sake," he pleaded, "do not let us give the impression to the public and our customers that we believe as a union that the only way to solve our problems is by the use of the strike weapon." These remarks were designed to undermine the militancy of the wages discussion the following day where a motion from Kent was proposing the union demand new minima of £30 per week for surface workers, £32 for underground and £40 for face workers, (as opposed to the present £23-£25 - £34.50). The Tuesday debate demonstrated how finely balanced was the final outcome. Conference unanimously passed a composite resolution with the above rates set as new minima but with the executive's addition of a threshold agreement. In itself this is hardly a moderating of the motion (as some people have suggested) - on the contrary, we have always argued that wages agreements should contain built-in cost-of-living increments with the index, of course, under the control of the union. What is decisive about this composite is the fact that taken together with the proposed threshold agreement, the new minima are no longer a demand but a "negotiating target". As Lawrence Daly explained in his summing up, it is a "flexible resolution", only a "desirable objective". Nevertheless, the fact that rates were voted upon and that the claim was linked to a call for a ballot on industrial action in the event of an unsatisfactory reply from the NCB, gives the leadership less room to manoeuvre than they had hoped for and perhaps expected after an earlier motion from COSA (white collar section) fixing no definite rates but calling for pay increases to be tied to the cost-of-living and "increased productivity and efficiency" had been narrowly passed, 171 votes to 141.

Perhaps the most important part of the conference was that which concerned not wages but hours. The question of pit closures has been one that has haunted the industry for years. Since nationalisation, 400,000 jobs have been lost, whilst since 1960 alone, the number of collieries has fallen by 56 percent from 698 to 289. But in this discussion too, the struggle between the rank and file militancy and the executive failed to produce a really decisive answer to redundancy. Conference did unanimously pass a resolution proposed by the Scottish area for a reduction in the working week from 37½ to 30 hours. This is a great step forward though it should not be seen as a one-off demand: any suggestion of redundancy should be met with the demand for a reduction of the working week with no loss of pay, or with no loss of earnings for men forced to leave for geological, safety or other reasons. Otherwise the executive, having declared its commitment to the new productivity deal earlier on, might accept the six-hour day in return for more intensive shift patterns - the vicious "continental" shift systems. Already Gormley has indicated his willingness to negotiate on this point. But as we have explained many times before, the key question in the case of redundancy, as in all other areas, is for the union to fight for a position from which it can veto management plans. This is the only way in which the fight for control can be waged without taking responsibility for the running of the industry. What this means in practice is that the union must wage struggles to achieve a favourable balance of forces, a position of strength from which it can impose such a veto.

A very encouraging move in this direction was a resolution from Nottingham calling for industrial action to fight pit closures. This idea had been brewing round the country amongst the rank and file for some time. The Welsh conference had very militant contributions on this question. Here at Morecambe, however, the executive successfully manoeuvred out the reference to "industrial action" in a composite motion to protest the closures. As one delegate pointed out though, "this does not rule it out for ever".

And nor does it. But what the whole conference demonstrated clearly is the need to forge a genuine rank and file movement within the NUM that can prepare for such struggles in a decisively political manner. Nothing is likely to demoralise people more, and dispel a movement faster than to be continuously fighting for something that does not solve your problems. Nothing

illustrates this more clearly than the struggle for nationalisation of the mines. The programme of any rank and file movement must be one therefore that demands that the workers' organisations themselves should have the right to decide what is in their interests and what is not; one that puts the struggle for socialism to the fore.

Members and sympathisers of the IMG have produced such a programme and a 56-page pamphlet "After the Miners' Strike - What Next?"; cost 10p. Write for your copy to 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

Miners' rally in Trafalgar Square, February 1972



MANGROVE RAIDED - AGAIN!

On the morning of Thursday, 13 July, at about 4 a.m., police officers from Notting Hill/Notting Dale police stations sealed off the section of All Saints Road, Notting Hill, in which the Mangrove Restaurant is situated.

The Mangrove has for years been an object of police harassment. Two years ago the black community responded with a demonstration which was attacked by police in Portnall Road. The attacks led to the famous 'Mangrove' trial last autumn.

On July 13th the police converged on the restaurant and informed Jean Caboussel a waiter at the restaurant, that he was under arrest. They claimed to be executing a warrant against Caboussel for failing to surrender his bail at the Inner London Session on Wednesday, 5 July. But in fact he surrendered his bail on 6 July and had been re-bailed on condition that he sign on at Notting Dale police station daily. This he had done.

The police were repeatedly told that they were making an illegal arrest, that no such warrant could possibly exist, that Caboussel was in fact bailed and signing-on daily. But they insisted on arresting him, meanwhile hurling the filthiest abuse at staff and customers. They later released Caboussel having claimed to have radioed Notting Dale police station. No apology was forthcoming.

The arrest of Caboussel was a severe provocation of the staff and customers of the Mangrove Restaurant. The police blocked off the street in a dramatic military style, ready for confrontation. They had no right there, nor is it easy to believe that they were unaware of the fact that they were making an illegal arrest. That a major incident was averted had nothing to do with the attitude of the police, who were distinctly hostile. It was due simply to the sense of order and organisation of the Mangrove staff and customers.

This incident is a sign of the fact that despite its defeats in the Mangrove Nine and Metro Four cases the State intends to continue its harassment of organised black groups. In this context the following statement by the Mangrove management committee is particularly important: "We warn the Home Secretary and the Government of this country that we have reached the end of our tether. Years of harassment and eleven weeks at the Old Bailey (Mangrove trial) have taken its toll. We serve notice that any future attempts by the police to illegally assault and arrest any member of staff, will be met with the resistance necessary to defend our fundamental human rights." It is the job of revolutionaries to fight for solidarity, particularly from the labour movement, with black people organising to defend themselves against such attacks. Notting Hill IMG.

Lawrence Daly urges miners to accept offer at the end of the last strike; now new proposed rates are no more than a "desirable objective", a "negotiating target".

