

The Red Mole

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As British tanks roll into Free Derry comes the response

EDITORIAL

The tanks which rolled into Free Derry and Free Belfast early on Monday morning have won a pyrrhic victory. They cannot maintain peace, and they cannot hold these areas for long. The lack of resistance was foreseeable, no guerrilla will stand and face vastly superior forces when it is possible to strike again when the enemy is less prepared. Both wings of the IRA have the military capacity and the support amongst the people needed to make the occupation of these areas a very difficult problem for the British. The IRA does not need to force the British Army out at gunpoint, all they need do is to deny the British any peace; mounting deaths amongst British soldiers, spiralling costs, and a deepening political crisis will do the rest.

ORANGE ASCENDANCY

This latest turn in British policy is caused by the failure of Whitelaw's strategy based on the imposition of direct rule to the breakdown of the cease fire. Whitelaw failed because in the Six Counties any concessions given or promised to the catholic minority will always result in a mobilisation of the mass of the protestants determined to retain their ascendancy and sectarian institutions. Having raised the spectre of an Orange backlash, Whitelaw allowed the Army to bend to UDA pressure. When the Provos made it clear that their cease fire was conditional on resistance to protestant sectarianism the bend became a crack, and the British were swept into the Republican free areas by the force of Orange pressure. Despite this Whitelaw still promises fake concessions to the catholics, combining the big stick with offers of pie in the utopia of a "peaceful" six counties. Thus he will maintain an open door for the middle class forces behind the SDLP, while terrorising all those who will not submit to British rule.

The latest events are proof, if proof were needed, that there can be no solution to the crisis of Northern Ireland within the context of the Six Counties; only by challenging the root of the problem—the sectarian state, and the institutions on which it has based itself for fifty years—can any progress be made. It is through the overthrow of the reactionary settlement imposed on Ireland in 1922, and the unfolding of the national struggle into an all-Ireland struggle for a Workers Republic that the struggle will advance. The major problem is that of spreading the struggle to the 26 Counties, and linking up the various struggles going on there into a political offensive against "stab-in-the-back" Lynch and the British imperialism which he more and more unreservedly backs.

SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

In Britain the solidarity movement must be built. The Anti-Internment League and the Irish Solidarity Campaign, which will probably be merged shortly, are the most effective focus for action. Their initiatives must receive unstinted support, and these actions used to build an ongoing mass movement.

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IRA: WE WILL STAY AND WE WILL FIGHT

The IRA will stay in the former Free Areas and will fight back against the occupation forces—that was the message from Barney McFadden, a Provisional Sinn Fein leader in Derry, speaking at a meeting near the Bogside Inn. He explained that the IRA ".....will be back again and will drive the British Army out of Derry.....I ask you to have faith in the Republicans. They are still here and they will fight again when the time becomes opportune." (*Irish Times*, 1 August)

This statement was echoed by Sean MacStiofain, interviewed on television, who said that the IRA had refused to be drawn into a confrontation with superior forces, but that they would carry on the struggle in accordance with the principles of guerrilla warfare. There can be no doubt that the Provisionals will hit back hard at the British Army; they have proved in the past that they can be relied upon to find new ways of harassing the enemy.

BITTERNESS

But the struggle against the occupying forces will not be a solely military one. All of the Republican and revolutionary forces involved in the struggle have called on the people to have nothing to do with the British troops. A Provisional statement said: "We warn all those who are engaged in acts of collaboration with the enemy to either desist or pay the penalty for such treachery. Owners of all business premises who serve occupation forces do so at their own peril, fraternisation with the enemy is forbidden and civil resistance must be increased in every aspect." (*Irish Independent*, 2 August)

The Officials, while not calling off their cease-fire, called on the minority to "ostracise" the British Troops. Michael Farrell of Peoples Democracy said: "The only way to end this new reign of terror is on the streets. The next two weeks must see a massive build up of protests against the occupying army and the British galleiter Whitelaw." (*Irish Times*, 1 August)

Already the Army has felt the bitterness of the oppressed minority. General Tuzo himself was given a very clear example of the sentiments of the Bogside when he was driven away from Free Derry corner under a hail of stones during a tour of the newly conquered territory. It is in Derry too that the sharpest effects of the civil resistance are likely to be felt. A dele-



Troops retreat from one barricade in face of local resistance — they had to leave it till the next day

gation of trade unionists and others has warned Tuzo that the security measures, which include the re-barricading by the Army of much of the area and constant searches of cars, houses and pedestrians, could lead to a general strike. Among those threatening action are workers at the Du Pont chemical plant, the British Oxygen Company, the Rosemount shirt factory, The Essex International factory, and the Power Station.

The arrogance of the Army has known no limits, with troops in Derry challenging local people to "throw a stone so we can shoot you". A particularly petty act has been the seizing in Andersonstown of Casement Park and its social club, the only recreational facilities for local people.

TURBULENT PROVINCE

Whitelaw's self-satisfied justification of the invasion, and his smug claims for its success, are likely to sound rather hollow shortly. Indeed the completeness with which he has capitulated to Orange pressure has left many of his supporters a bit breathless. Already Simon Winchester, one of the top British journalists in the Six Counties, speculates gloomily in *The Guardian*: "There were those who, three years ago, scoffed at suggestions that we might need 10,000 soldiers here in a year or so's time. There must be many people now who wonder if even 50,000 would be enough to stabilise the turbulent province." (2 August)

Need we say more?

DOCKS REPORT NO SOLUTION

The Jones Aldington report on the docks, although rejected by the docks delegates conference on Thursday, 27 July, seems likely to remain the basis for any settlement to end the strike. But we should be clear that its proposals offer absolutely no solution to the problems faced by dockworkers.

The report proposes solutions to the surplus of unattached dockworkers. This surplus has been caused by the pursuit of profits through containerisation and the consequences of competition from the unregistered ports. At several points any agreement along the lines proposed would mean accepting that workers should shoulder the burden for the workings of capitalism. Firstly, the report proposes a 14 per

cent reduction in the work force through voluntary redundancies. Secondly, it suggests the possibility of workers paying for the work-sharing arrangements (through loss of payment for unworked shifts) which are to absorb the men now on the Temporary Unattached Register (TUR) in the period before the redundancies take effect.

If workers are not to accept responsibility for the workings of the market, then they should reject any redundancies, any lengthening of the dole queue, and the financial hardship this leads to. The demand for No Redundancies should be counterposed to the suggested agreement, as should a demand for Work-Sharing Without Loss Of Pay. The demand against loss of pay

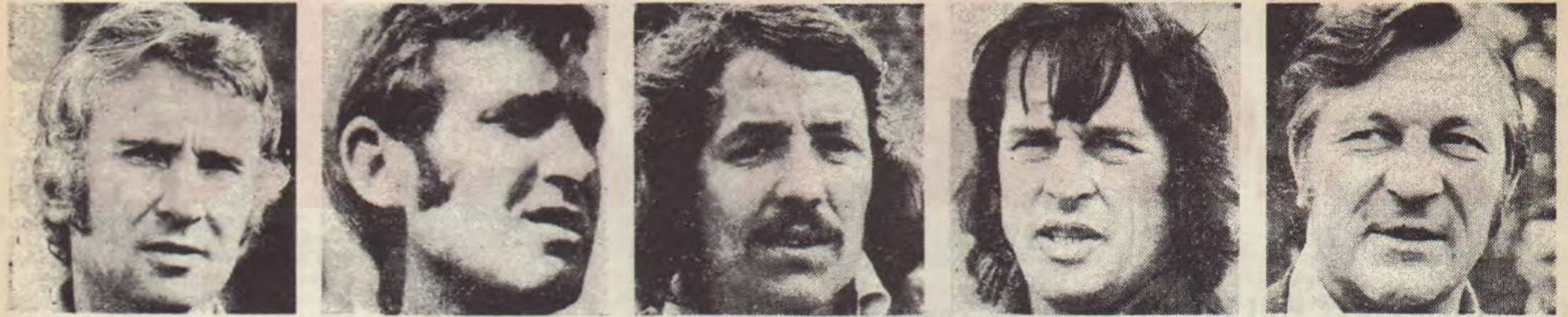
will undoubtedly be raised in the docks, and win much support. The acceptance of 'work-sharing' by the employers, even in this limited sense, opens up real possibilities. The "impracticality" of the idea will no longer inhibit the growth of a real struggle against redundancies. Developments in the docks therefore offer the possibility of explaining in a revolutionary context central demands around which the struggle will develop.

WHY THE REPORT WAS REJECTED

The dockers have concentrated primarily on winning container groupage work, not on the abolition of the TUR. The delegates' rejection

(To page 8)

Below: Oliver MacDonald explains why after the release of the Pentonville Five



THE RULING CLASS TAKES STOCK

There was a curious little incident on the T.V. last Wednesday night, the day the five dockers were released from jail. The scene was an interview with the Prime Minister. But it was very difficult to focus on what Mr. Heath was saying, because something kept bobbing and twitching up and down onto the screen. It was the Rt. Hon. Gentleman's right hand. He had lost control of it. The previous six days of struggle had begun to tell and the leader of the British capitalist class was unable to conceal the fact that his nerves were going to pieces.

The freeing of the five through industrial action was an almost unparalleled humiliation for the British bourgeoisie. How did it happen? Through the power of mass strike action by the working class. That is the simple answer, but in order to work out what to do next we must analyse the events of last week and the background more precisely.

In the first place the issue at stake was one which its whole history has made the labour movement thoroughly understand: the imperative need to defend the right of trade unionists to carry on traditional trade union activities like picketing, regardless of what 'the law' may say or do. It is a dangerous business for the capitalist class to launch an attack on such ground. It is likely to lead to a head-on clash between the classes.

We must recognise that the government made every effort to avoid such a clash on such an issue.

Before the jailing, Mr. Macmillan the employment minister contacted Midland Cold Storage, the company trying to get the NIRC

to attack the dockers, and tried to persuade its boss to at least postpone the action. In addition the government was backing the Jones-Aldington Committee in the hope that some agreed compromise could be reached over the containerisation issue.

Secondly, after the jailings the Government initially kept its mouth shut—'this is a matter for the Courts not the Government'—no doubt hoping that the movement might either fizzle out or be sabotaged by Mr. Feather and the General Council. Accordingly a meeting was arranged between Heath and Feather on Monday, but no deal could be worked out. From then on the Government was set upon a tactical retreat—getting the dockers out quick before the mass strike swept the whole working class into the struggle.

So on Tuesday morning the Official Solicitor was again set in motion. At first he was going to try to appeal in the NIRC that same day. But he changed tack so that the Law Lords could produce their new interpretation of the Industrial Relations Act before the NIRC decided to release the five. The Law Lords' decision allowed the dockers to be freed on the best possible basis from the Government's point of view: *the strengthening of the meaning of the Act* in line with Heath's original conception of how to tackle trade unionists. But in examining government tactics what we must notice is the fact that this synchronisation of the Official Solicitor with the Law Lords was an *afterthought*, albeit a very handy one. The Government's first and dominant thought was to get the five men out. Why? Because the other options for Heath were too dangerous.

The alternatives were basically two:

- 1). Holding out even through a general strike to force a capitulation on the part of the working class on the terrain of the jailings.
- 2). Keeping the dockers inside while calling a general election on the law and order issue.

The class reaction of the forces and order issue. The options extremely dangerous: to go into a general strike situation when the army is not fully available and ready is simply impermissible for the ruling class. The question is not whether military violence would have to be used, but the fact that the presence of the army is indispensable for the purpose of the necessary shows of force and to boost the morale of the forces aligned to the bourgeoisie, leaving aside the necessary technical functions of the army.

Secondly, we should not forget that in 1926 the government spent nine months building up auxiliary volunteer forces in order to defeat a general strike technically and politically and even then the service was totally inadequate for its tasks. Today the trade union movement is immeasurably more strongly and more extensively organised in this country, and while such auxiliary networks have been built up in recent years by the French and Italian bourgeoisies nothing of this kind as yet exists here. Thirdly the bourgeoisie itself is by no means convinced of the necessity and advisability of a head on confrontation with the trade union movement on such an issue—quite the reverse. This was made absolutely clear by such organs as the *Times* before the strike movement and by Lord Devlin on Monday. Finally and most

important of all, the working class would have been entering such a struggle a thousand times stronger than in 1926—more will be said about this below.

The option of calling a general election while the five were inside would also have been potentially disastrous for two very simple reasons: first it would not necessarily have halted the strike movement, creating an extremely dangerous situation for an election. Secondly, whatever the government's wishes, the issue in the election would, for the great mass of people, have been do you want a government that wants to jail trade unionists, and the government would probably have lost. Thirdly the bourgeoisie would have been frightened of the consequences of a Labour victory in such a contest, since the future Labour government would have been very weak, having been elected precisely and clearly to defend the trade unions from such things as the Industrial Relations Act, while there would have been a considerable upsurge within the labour movement. In short the leadership of the British ruling class in the government, assisted by the courts adopted correct tactics once the five had been jailed and avoided making the same mistakes as those of the Gaullist leadership in France which turned a difficult sectoral crisis into a pre-revolutionary situation.

THE SITUATION FOLLOWING THE FREEDING OF THE FIVE.

The freeing of the five was an almost unparalleled humiliation for the ruling class and a tremen-

BASINGSTOKE LCDTU FIGHTS BRITISH LEYLAND REDUNDANCIES

The crisis of the British motor industry—which today means the British Leyland Motor Corporation has reached the town of Basingstoke with a vengeance. For the second time in the space of a year, the workers of Transport Equipment Thornycroft's Ltd are confronted with the prospect of redundancies. But this time the proposed sackings are of the scale that their implementation would *double unemployment* in the town.

RATIONALISATION

For several years British Leyland, under increasing competition from the Common Market (French and German) and Japanese motor industries has been getting into deeper and deeper financial difficulties. In this situation, and reacting to the growing pressure of their main creditors, Barclays, British Leyland have adopted a policy of intense rationalisation, with the aim of reducing the number of plants in this country from the present 60 to "under 20", with no loss of production. One subsidiary planned to go to the wall is Thornycroft's of Basingstoke.

BLMC have already sold the site for £2½ million to a firm called English & Continental, and the plant itself to the Eaton Corporation of Ohio, for a further £2½ million. Eatons have taken over a 3-year lease from the English & Continental for the land on which the factory stands. However, when Eatons take over on 1 October, they plan only to operate in the transmission

section (producing gearboxes for BLMC!)—with an immediate loss of 350 jobs.

An interesting point about English & Continental, a "property development" company, is that through an intermediary firm called Four Millbank Investments and a number of interlocking directorships, it happens to be controlled by Crown Agents, a government trading company. One is compelled to suspect that all of this is no coincidence, and that there is some sort of deal between BLMC and the government concerning the proposed rundown of Thorny's. Another consideration is that the 3-year lease taken out by Eatons would be just about the right period of time in which to close down a factory of this capacity altogether, given its relationship to BLMC production plans.

QUICK REACTION

With the experience of a long strike last year, the Thorny's workers reacted quickly. (At the end of the last strike management promised that there would be no redundancies without prior consultation with the trade unions—an agreement which was followed by a steady trickle of redundancies totalling 300 over the next year!) An official work-to-rule was imposed immediately, and this has been supplemented by a number of unofficial, and rather more useful actions, including sit-ins.

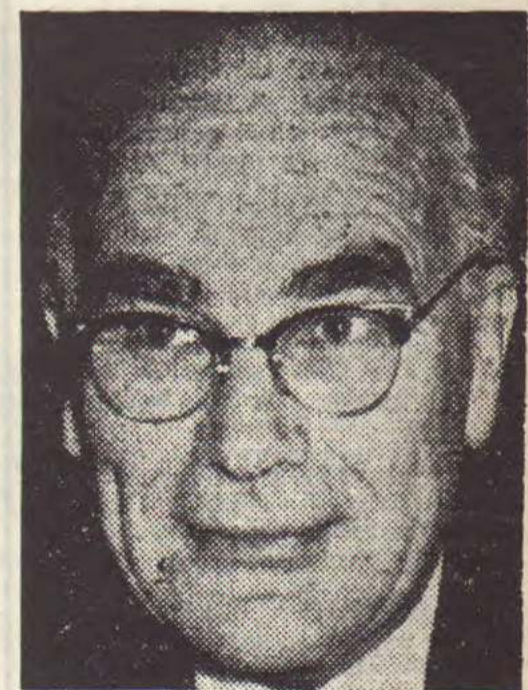
On top of this, the idea of an occupation of the whole factory has been put forward, most force-

fully by the local Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions and its weekly publication *The Spark*. The LCDTU has also been explaining that the "Thornys' problem" is *not* just a problem for the workers at Thorny's, but for all workers in Basingstoke, and for all the workers in the whole BLMC combine.

There is very considerable confusion as to *how* exactly to fight against the proposed redundancies. The officials of the unions involved seem to think that the work-to-rule, and perhaps an eventual strike (in October!) is somehow sufficient: This sort of position has been taken to its extreme by Pat Farrelly, district secretary of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions and well-known member of the Communist Party. Farrelly argued in a public meeting that the work-to-rule is effective because if the deal were to be undone, then the interest that would have to be paid on the money returned would be less than the cost to BLMC of the work-to-rule!

OCCUPATION

In opposition to this approach, the Liaison Committee has consistently said that if the Thornycroft workers are to be successful in their fight, then they must challenge the right of the capitalists, BLMC, Eatons, or otherwise, to in any way close-down or move out their capital. In other words, the factory must be



Lord Stokes, chairman of British Leyland

occupied in order to check the plans of the old and new owners. Such an occupation would need the active support of the widest possible sections of the labour movement in Basingstoke and throughout the country.

At the time of writing (1 August) Thornycroft's is having its annual 2-week shutdown, and so whether or not an occupation is actually put into effect will not be known at least until Monday 7th, when the factory re-opens. But the signs are that the workers of Thornycroft's are looking for an effective way to struggle against the BLMC plan to rationalise them out of their jobs, and a sit-down occupation is certainly being widely considered.

Paul Hunter

dous boost for the morale of working class militants. It has further reduced the credibility of the Heath government, and has no doubt sharpened policy antagonisms within the ruling class. But we must be careful not to confuse this with a *decisive* shift in the relation of forces in favour of the working class, a decisive defeat for the ruling class; rather the meaning of the freeing of the five is to pose more sharply the continuing stale-mate in the class struggle in Britain, a stale-mate which cannot last for ever and to which neither class has yet found a solution. What the freeing of the five means is that the battle is now going to be joined that much more in earnest and therefore those elements which like to sit in the middle and mediate—the trade union bureaucracy in particular—are now going to find life getting pretty rough.

The strategic necessities of the capitalist class corresponding to its turn to the Common Market are: the transformation and rationalisation of the productive apparatus; and the qualitative weakening of the bargaining power of the working class. The first objective can generally speaking be carried through without direct confrontations with the trade unions since redundancy struggles are extremely difficult. Nevertheless there have been important struggles—UCS, some of the other occupations and the struggle that is going on now in the docks as well as the looming struggle in steel—and the resulting unemployment puts a strong electoral pressure on the Tories. The result has been some retreat on the 'lame duck' front. What room for retreat the ruling class has on this front we do not know very clearly and it is possible the government doesn't know either.

On the front of directly weakening the bargaining power of the working class the government began with the dual tactic of crushing defeats being set up in the public sector against individual unions taking advantage of the unemployment situation combined with the Act which would force chastened trade union leaderships to crack down on their militant rank and file. Where does this line of attack stand now?

The miners' victory and the railwaymen's deal both constituted defeats for the government's confrontation policy of steadily reducing public sector pay deals. Secondly there are signs of the economy again picking up and although this will not reduce unemployment to 1960s levels it should strengthen the positions of the unions to some extent. This has meant that the Act was introduced before the weakening of the trade unions and not after it. This has created a situation which sections of the ruling class, particularly the chiefs of the legal apparatus, are very unhappy about because a golden rule of the British bourgeoisie has been broken by the Heath leadership: the rule is that the class struggle must take place *within* the framework of the bourgeois law; now the class struggle is taking place *against* an important part of the framework of bourgeois law. The ruling class has always wanted its judges to play the role of *regulators* of the class struggle which must be fought by the workers against individual employers or against the government; now the judges are forced to appear in the role of *protagonists* in class battles which are 'not a matter for the government but for the courts'.

THE ACT—WILL IT REMAIN?

In addition a number of other things have happened to reduce the credibility of the Act—the fact that it did not undermine the railwaymen's leadership as it was supposed to. Also there are a number of legalistic contradictions in the Act—Denning's decision that the T&G should not pay the fine was acclaimed by lawyers as introducing a 'solid backbone of law' into the Act while at the same time it destroyed the Act's political backbone. With the freeing of the dockers the credibility of the Act and its administrative agency the NIRC has been yet further reduced. There are no doubt sections of the ruling class denouncing Heath for an administrative conception of politics—introducing the legal-administrative measures before the necessary political job had been done on the trade unions. It is true that the Law Lords have, on paper, opened the ground for strengthening the operations of the Act in the way that the government originally intended, but their decision remains at present simply a formula on paper. Can the government work out a realistic tactic for turning that into a political reality?

The first point is that the government has no choice but to try: if the Act is destroyed then the government would also be in political ruins. The tactics now of the government will most probably be to attempt to gain a breathing space and at least offer concessions to the trade union bureaucracy on certain aspects of the Act, like for example the closed shop, in



Bernie Steer addresses pickets after the release of the five (photo: Serena Wadhwa)

order to keep the essence of the Act and at a later date be able to press it home. It will try to convince the trade union bureaucracy that the Act does not in any way crush their own authority and will actually be of advantage to them in having a good excuse for dealing with recalcitrant elements.

It should, of course be realised that any such amendment of the Act would require a *quid pro quo* from the T.U.C. It would have to take a constructive approach to amending the Act and abandon its policy of non-cooperation. At the same time other amendments more useful to the government could be brought in. For instance, an alteration to the Act such that the government could pick and choose the cases it wished to prosecute and therefore

decide its own terrain. It is in this respect that the latest TUC-CBI agreement could become useful.

A voluntary 'conciliation and arbitration service' could fit in very well with this scheme of things. Of course, the government is keeping its options open; a whole host of elements would have to be just right for such a scheme to work. But a plan along these lines has already been produced by the Industrial Society (*The Times*, 3 August). Feather and Co. again therefore reassert their traditional role as an instrument of pressure, not class struggle. Again they partake in an alternative *capitalist* strategy for solving the problems of the economy.

This means that the spotlight must now be

focused very sharply on the manoeuvres of the TUC leadership and every effort must be made to explain and expose their moves. An immediate urgent question is the current dock strike: the government has already got an alliance with Jack Jones in the docks and it is quite possible that the next Dock Delegate Conference could end the strike on the basis of nothing more than some 'specification' of the Jones-Aldington report. In such a situation London might well stay out on unofficial strike and then the government would move against London very heavily.

It is therefore vital in the immediate future to turn the forces brought together in solidarity with the five to work in solidarity with the dock strike.

'IF YOU WANT PEACE, PREPARE FOR WAR'

A review of the Stoke Newington Eight Defence Committee pamphlet

This pamphlet attempts to politically situate the 'Angry Brigade' bombings and the issues which immediately surround them, such as the trial of the Stoke Newington Eight. The treatment of this specific question leads to a consideration of more general political questions which the pamphlet discusses.

What makes it so important is that much of the pamphlet is taken up with a polemic against the British left. This polemic was an inevitable outcome of the attitude which the British left had on the bombings, the attitude it had over the Ian and Jake trial, and the attitude which most of it is taking over the Stoke Newington Eight trial. The polemic is both very lively and very necessary, highlighting the following inadequacies of the British Left.

1. Its tendency to tail end the class struggle rather than to play a vanguard role.
2. Its reluctance to solidarise with those who participate in forms of struggle which it does not think advisable.
3. Its reluctance to solidarise with those with whom it has political differences but who themselves are playing a vanguard role in the struggle (e.g. the attitude of most of the British left towards the IRA).
4. Its reluctance to break with bourgeois legality.

However, while agreeing on this, it is also necessary to discuss one's profound disagreements with other parts of the pamphlet.

THE QUESTION OF THE PARTY

There seem to be a whole number of confusions in the pamphlet regarding what a revolutionary party is. It is absurd to claim as they do that the Marxist-Leninist theory of the party (the straight left approach?) sets as the task for the revolutionary, the building of the revolutionary party as a thing in itself which is supposed to operate in a vacuum. On the contrary, a revolutionary party which does not intervene in the class struggle, and therefore in the organisations which have spontaneously been thrown up in that struggle, is a contradiction in terms. The

key to the Leninist theory of the party is that of *political* centralism. In capitalist society, it would be utopian to suppose that even all those directly in struggle against capitalism could ever be politically centralised around revolutionary socialist politics, let alone around a specific anti-capitalist strategy; hence the Leninist theory of the party, if applied consistently, leads precisely to involvement in other organisations.

By SPIKE HENRY

With regard to so-called "marginal" groups, the pamphlet is correct to point to the economism of the British left, but they over-state their position. What makes the "industrial sphere" more "crucial" than other areas is simply the fact that capitalist society rests upon the working class and it is that section of society which can ultimately make or break capitalism and provide the economic basis for socialism. This does *not* mean that it is more crucial in other senses. The inhumanity of capitalism may be expressed just as crucially in other spheres. The other struggles are just as crucial with respect to what has to be achieved through the revolution. The other struggles are, at times, just as crucial, with respect to immediate tactics.

ARMED PROPAGANDA

The activities of the 'Angry Brigade' are criticised in the pamphlet but there is a fundamental misconception which serves to give these activities more justification than they deserve, namely that the blowing up of a symbolic building or the assassination of a famous person simply puts across the idea that one wants to get rid of what the building symbolises, or what the person is famous for. This is incorrect, for armed propaganda has *two* components. It serves to advocate not only the struggle against something but also the *method* of struggle.

This misconception leads naturally to the idea that a bombing will complement a demonstration taking place at the same time. Hence the pamphlet does not criticise the Carr bombing and the Post Office Tower bombing, but on the

contrary regards them as being tactically correct. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Carr bombing stole the headlines from the activities of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions on the T.U.C.'s pseudo day of action on 12 January, 1971, and the Post Office bombing stole the headlines from the mass AIL demonstration last October. Indeed it has been suggested that this masking effect was so marked as to make it reasonable to suspect that these particular bombings were not done by revolutionaries at all, but by agents of the bourgeois state itself.

Of course, the comrades from the Stoke Newington Eight Defence Group can correctly ask what the British left has done in the way of propagandising the need for armed struggle. And while we regard armed propaganda as an ultra-left tactic to adopt at present, this does not at all mean that we deny the need today of posing the *question* of armed struggle, and politically preparing for it.

REVOLUTIONARY CRIMINALITY

The last section of the pamphlet deals with what it calls revolutionary criminality. Its theme seems to be that revolutionaries have to break from bourgeois legality, thus revolutionaries are criminal, therefore criminals are revolutionary. Now, while the first stage of the argument might be linguistically correct, i.e. a situation of dual power is 'criminal', the second stage of the argument is clearly invalid. The question of the criminal milieu as a source of revolutionary activity isn't absurd, though it may be unfamiliar outside of libertarian circles. But it is a *concrete* question, which has to be considered carefully without resorting to sophisticated arguments.

I have stressed some of the main faults of the pamphlet. Despite the importance of these faults, the fact remains that overall the pamphlet is essential reading, and represents a healthy trend within the libertarian movement; a trend from which marxist revolutionaries can learn a lot.

IRELAND

THE STRUGGLE

The latest change in Government policy on Ireland has led to the invasion of the Free Areas in Derry and Belfast. In these articles we look at various aspects of this new situation. Bob Purdie explains the inability of British imperialism to impose a solution and outlines the path which any successful struggle must take; Niall Nolan explains how long-term developments in the South will be crucial in this; and Val Graham stresses that the important differences which divide the two Republican organisations must not be allowed to interfere with immediate tasks which must be undertaken. Finally we nail the lies about "Bloody Friday" in Belfast and contrast with it the terror campaign being waged by the British Army and the Orange gangs.

The impact on the 26 Counties of the struggle in the north has been complex. The most notable aspect has been the general passivity and indifference of the southern masses to the struggle. Of course there have been exceptional periods: August-September 1969, the period after internment in August 1971, and after Bloody Sunday on 30 January this year. While the degree of support for the struggle did force the Fianna Fail government into many contradictory positions and (for a period) enabled the IRA to use the 26 Counties as a safe base, there was no movement strong enough to mount a dynamic campaign on behalf of the republican prisoners in the South or in defence of the free areas in the Six Counties. Also disappointing was the negative response to the northern struggle by the recent trade union conferences.

FIANNA FAIL BETRAYAL

The impact of the northern struggle on Fianna Fail is instructive. Fianna Fail during its inception incorporated a republican populist working class following. This factor, for most of its history, has been a source of strength. However during the recent period it has been a factor of instability. The republican struggle provoked a sympathetic response inside the Fianna Fail party. The leadership was divided on how to respond to this. Lynch, after a period of balancing between the different pressures, has now embarked on a decisive new

NO FAMOUS VICTORY

it was not the so-called "Bloody Friday" bombings which prompted the invasion of the Republican Free Areas, but the incident in Lenadoon Avenue on 9 July. As we show elsewhere in this paper the casualties inflicted by the bombs in the centre of Belfast were created by the refusal of the security forces to act on warnings clearly given. "Bloody Friday" was a put-up job, designed to give a rationale for the invasion.

The real motivation behind the British switch in tactics is simple. The gains which Whitelaw was making through a policy of conciliating the Catholics were not substantial or rapid enough to offset the problems caused by the increasingly ominous threats of the UDA and the Ulster Vanguard. Having capitulated to the UDA in Lenadoon the British had lost most of the ground won in the softly softly days before and during the cease-fire. The level of concessions necessary to win back this ground would have been so unacceptable to the protestant extremists as to make a military confrontation with at least a section of them almost inevitable.

THE ROAD TO LENADOON

Whitelaw's dilemma was summed up very well by that master of logic J. Enoch Powell, M.P., in a speech made to the County Armagh Unionist Association on 28 July. According to an *Irish Times* report (29 July) Powell said:-

"It is not possible both to assure the people of Northern Ireland that their place in the United Kingdom will be maintained, and at the same time to have parleyed with the I.R.A., face to face, in the capital of the kingdom: or at the same time to bask in the adulation of an Opposition whose leader has been publicly complimented by the Government for proposals designed to produce a united Ireland in the measurable future or at the same time to proclaim the intention of finding a 'political solution' to which no avenue will be treated as barred and to which the agreement is sought of those who are fundamentally committed against Ulster being part of the United Kingdom, or at the same time to seek what, before Stormont was suspended, used to be called 'tripartite' understanding on Northern Ireland with the Republic, whose very Constitution asserts that Northern Ireland belongs to it already."

The protestant mobilisation which killed off the Whitelaw initiative stemmed inevitably from the sectarianism of the Northern Ireland state. However much a British government might want to change the nature, or reform some aspects of that state they will always be faced with the opposition of the majority of its inhabitants, and since they are not willing to pose even to themselves the question of the continued existence of the state they cannot solve the crisis of the Six Counties.

The UDA, temporarily mollified, will probably subside. Indeed the first fruits of Whitelaw's new initiative have been to open up the contradictions between the Ulster Vanguard and the UDA, which are a reflection of the differences between those who wish to maintain the protestant ascendancy at all costs, and those who wish to maintain the protestant ascendancy within the context of the Union with Britain. But protestant extremism remains as a road block to any progress in Ireland. In Lenadoon Avenue, the Provisionals manoeuvred

the British into a choice between taking on the UDA and bursting the bubble, or capitulating to their pressure. Predictably British imperialism lined up once more with Orange reaction, despite their long term desire to "normalise" sectarianism out of Six County politics.

From this capitulation the rest follows. It is not possible to give in to one side in the Six Counties without pushing hard against the other. The Provisionals having gained a new position of strength it was necessary for the British to attempt to gain the ascendancy over them in order to avoid being pushed against the UDA again. Since this could not be achieved politically the superior technical resources and firepower of the British Army had to be asserted. The invasion was not only in line with this, but it was a very substantial scrap which could be thrown to the wolves of the protestant right.

NO FAMOUS VICTORY

The invasion was hardly a famous victory, and certainly not a military defeat for the IRA. The struggle may have been pushed back by the elimination of the Free Areas, but it will continue in other forms. The Free Areas were important to the military struggle but the IRA was able to carry out quite effective military action before they were set up, and will continue to do so. The Free Areas were politically important; they were the undeniable manifestation of the rejection of British rule by the catholic masses, and behind them the political consciousness of the masses was raised considerably. But that political consciousness will not be dismantled as easily as the barricades. In fact as the unpleasant facts of life under the heel of the British Army become evident it will be strengthened.

The most important aspect of the Free Areas was their potential role in the strategy of the Irish revolution. As exemplary pockets of popular control, they were capable of inspiring mass support on an all-Ireland basis. In confronting the problems of leading the masses the volunteers of the Republican Army and the other revolutionary elements learned important political lessons, which represented a qualitative break from the previous IRA campaigns. *The Red Mole* always stressed the importance of developing the institutions of popular control in these areas, for this reason. But it is necessary to say with hindsight that it is unlikely that they could have spread puddle-like until the whole of Ireland was one large no-go area. Their existence was important, but the potential which their existence represented was even more important. That potential still exists; the Free Areas did not generate the minority's resistance, they were a symptom of it. As the struggle unfolds it may well be that new liberated zones will be created, and the minority has learned that it can successfully defy the might of British imperialism, and drive it back even if only temporarily from its 800 year long occupation of their country. They will be slow to forget that.

KEY PROBLEMS

The overall situation in the North of Ireland is dominated by the inability of British imperialism to impose a solution, and the fact that the forces involved in the liberation struggle are unable to extend the lines of battle beyond

their present limits. This could result in an extended period during which the contending forces are unable to inflict a decisive defeat on their opponents. Increasingly the questions facing the revolutionary movement in Ireland are:- "How can new forces be brought into the struggle on the side of the catholic minority?"; and "Can this be done before British imperialism imposes a solution based on the exhaustion of the forces of resistance?"

The future path for the Irish struggle is clear—it must be turned into a 32 County struggle, involving the mass of the workers and small farmers. They cannot consolidate any victories unless they go over to a fight for a Workers Republic. The key problem is that while the leadership necessary to carry the struggle forward from its Civil Rights phase to the phase of national struggle emerged, there is no indication of the potential leadership emerging which can tackle the problem of the next—the socialist—phase of the struggle. And just as the actual demands of the Civil Rights phase could not be met before the national struggle came onto the agenda, national liberation, while being the central aspect of the struggle at present, will not be won before the socialist revolution becomes a very immediate question facing the masses.

Thus the political and geographical limitations of the present struggle are intimately linked, and the immediate problems facing the revolution in Ireland can only be viewed in terms of tackling the immense problems involved in breaking out of these limits. Any criticism of the main forces involved in the struggle, particularly of the Provisionals, can only have meaning if it is directed towards solving these problems.

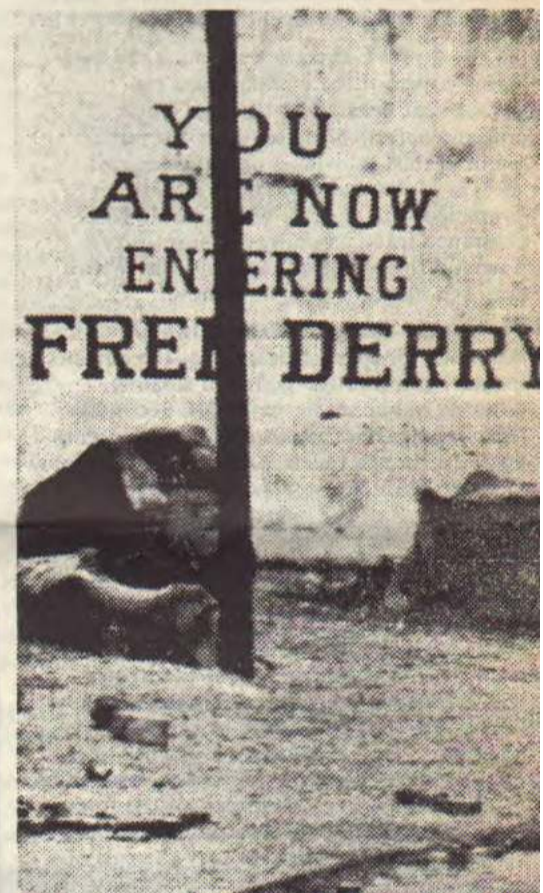
THE BELFAST BOMBINGS

That is why it is necessary to be very clear about the events of "Bloody Friday". It is useless to make abstract condemnations of "terrorism" and to declare in solemn tones that terrorism cannot achieve anything. The fact is that the Provisionals' bombing campaign was as important as their offensive against the British Army, and the resistance of the masses in bringing down Stormont.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the bombings in Belfast were used by the British for their own ends, and to their own advantage. The advantages which they did gain are very limited, but for the purpose of the invasion important. This illustrates that while the present lines of battle remain unchanged even the most developed military technique can rebound politically on the IRA. Without a solution of the problems of how to escalate the struggle in the North into an all-Ireland struggle which combines the completion of the national with the working class revolution the Provos will be balked in similar ways in the future.

But in the long run Britain cannot win. Whitelaw's initiative was the nearest they have got yet to imposing a solution, and having run that policy down with their own tanks the Heath government can face only a mounting crisis as the resentment of the minority is translated into a new round of the struggle against the Army of occupation.

Bob Purdie



WHO

"Bloody Friday" was Whitelaw's pretext for launching the Army's invasion of the no-go areas. In his statement on Monday, he called the invasion a response to "the insane and deliberate killing of innocent women and children on what is now known as 'Bloody Friday'", which "had been the deliberate work of the Provisional IRA."

WARNINGS

The events of 21 July were apparently very opportune for British imperialism—a little too opportune for the version put over by Whitelaw and the B.B.C. to be entirely credible. Now a *Sunday Times* report (30 July) has confirmed something of what in fact happened that day. In accordance with standard IRA practice, warnings of every one of the 20-odd bombs which exploded on Friday were phoned in to the public authorities and the Samaritans to ensure that there was time for the area to be evacuated of civilians. The facts given here tally with the document on the affair published by the Belfast Provisionals, *Friday, The Facts*. For the Cavehill Road bomb, which killed three people, 68 minutes warning was given; for the Oxford Street bus station explosion, which killed six, 22 minutes notice was given. The agency which received the Oxford Street call has stated that details were immediately passed on to the security forces: the army deny this.

The British Army kept quiet about the warnings. The result was a bloodbath which has now been used as a pretext to invade the liberated areas.

E IN THE SOUTH

course. His response to the invasion of Free Derry was: "If such a mature and calm approach is adopted, this new development could lead to greater understanding and co-operation all round and create a better atmosphere for political talks, which I urge should be held without delay." (*Irish Press*, 1 August)

This approach was spelt out more comprehensively when Lynch addressed the National Convention of the American Ancient Order of Hibernians in Dublin recently. During the course of his speech he tried to portray the IRA struggle of 1918-1921 as essentially different from the present IRA struggle. He stated that "the only long term settlement of this difficult legacy of history is an Ireland united, by agreement, and with good relations with Britain". The message is clear: Fianna Fail is prepared to etch its residual republicanism and the logic of the coming period is a re-alignment in Irish politics, overcoming the structures which emerged from the Civil War.

CRISIS IN THE SOUTH

We can therefore diagnose the situation in the South as one of acute social crisis. Many militant and diverse struggles are continuing: struggles of tenants, struggles of workers against redundancies and low wages, struggles of republicans against political repression etc. The Fianna Fail government is definitely under

pressure from these struggles. The fact that it has had to strengthen its repressive machinery and introduce the Forcible Entries Act and the Special Criminal Courts demonstrates this; as does its postponement of a confrontation with the trade union movement over the National Wages Agreement.

CRISIS OF LEADERSHIP

However these struggles have not yet led to any decisive political shift among the southern masses. No political force has arisen which can turn these struggles into a generalised political struggle against the state.

It is here that the weaknesses of both sections of the Republican movement are highlighted quite clearly. The Provisionals can only see Lynch's collaboration with British imperialism in terms of moral betrayals. They have therefore failed to build a political base in the south which would safeguard them against political repression. The Officials, although representing a political development within Irish republicanism, have failed to develop an adequate programme for the south. Their rigid "stages" concept of the struggle has prevented them from outlining a strategy which would link the struggle north and south, a need that has only been grasped by small revolutionary organisations such as the Peoples Democracy and the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish supporters of the Fourth International).

Among the revolutionary vanguard the combined nature of the Irish revolution will have to be grasped. As the social crisis intensifies, a crisis of political leadership will develop among the working masses. A leadership will have to be built which can centralise all the struggles of the working masses and channel them into an offensive against the state. To achieve this task the vanguard needs to be aware of the interrelationships of each struggle and of the dominant contradiction in the situation. Only then will the vanguard recognise which specific struggles have the greatest dynamic in a particular situation. If we realise that the abortion of the national revolution in 1921 meant that not only the economic structures but also the political structures were restricted by the imperialist straitjacket, then we can grasp the fact that for the Irish masses to make political advances they will have to burst free from these restrictions.

NATIONAL QUESTION

This shows the importance of the national issue. The destruction of the Orange state is therefore a struggle in which the southern masses have a direct interest. **Struggles in the south in support of the struggles in the north are of decisive importance at present.** We have seen some concrete examples of these struggles already in the demonstrations against the harassment and imprisonment of republicans and the mobilisation throughout the country in support of the Newry demonstration after Bloody Sunday.



Section of the Newry march, which mobilised support from both North and South.

Such activities, if they gain momentum, will quickly come into conflict with Fianna Fail. This will have an educative effect on the southern masses about the class nature of Fianna Fail. It will lead to a situation where the contradictions within Fianna Fail will be sharpened and hasten the erosion of its populist base.

Given these pre-conditions the Irish people mobilised in a centralised struggle will break free of the imperialist fetters and having smashed both reactionary states reconstruct Irish society in the interests of the toiling masses. Niall Nolan

THE OFFICIALS AND REPUBLICAN UNITY

The fact that the Official I.R.A. has refused to call off its cease-fire, despite previous statements that in the event of an army invasion of the catholic no go areas it would resume armed actions, is a result of its political analysis over the past few months.

The decision must be seen in the context of the assessment of the situation which led them to call their cease-fire in May. This was based on two main arguments: firstly, that it was necessary to cease military activity in order not to intensify the danger of sectarian civil war; and secondly, that if a socialist solution was to be achieved in Ireland, it was necessary at this stage to unite protestant and catholic workers.

MEETING

It is in the light of these arguments that we must view also the meeting which took place last Saturday in Derry between representatives of the Official I.R.A. and the U.D.A. The *Irish Press* (31 July), reporting the meeting, said that it had led to an agreement to help each other's members if they were caught in the wrong areas and also that a senior officer of the Official I.R.A. was believed to have proposed a future political arrangement between the two organisations. Their analysis explains both why the Officials are keen to hold discussions with what they regard as the most important organisation of the protestant working class, and, on the other hand, why they are not ending their cease-fire, proposing instead a campaign of 'ostracising' the soldiers.

Both events have occurred because they counterpose catholic and protestant working class unity, as an immediate priority, to one of the fundamental tasks of the national struggle in Ireland: the smashing of the sectarian Orange state. Not only are the protestant workers unwilling to struggle to achieve this task, which is an essential precondition for the success of the Irish revolution, they have, in fact, at all times sought to preserve the state. The sectarian state and its institutions have served to maintain the grip of the reactionary Orange ideology on the protestant working class, and only when it has been smashed and the protestant workers see no hope of returning to their former position will they come over in significant numbers to the side of the revolution. The failure to understand this has been coupled also with a failure to see that in a state founded on sectarian violence, even the fight for civil rights would inevitably polarise the two communities; that, in fact, the Orange state cannot be peacefully reformed and its sectarian institutions gradually dismantled.

PROVISIONALS

Another result of this analysis is that the Officials have seemed incapable of understanding the significance of the Provisional Republican Movement and its mass support amongst the catholic minority. The Official Republican press has represented the Pro-

visional bombing campaign as responsible for the increase in sectarian violence and the threat to the catholic minority in the form of extreme protestant para-military formations. They have seen this latter development as a strengthening of the forces of reaction in the north and not as a sign of the weakening and fragmentation of the Orange monolith, for which the Provisional I.R.A. can claim no small credit.

However, the statement issued last week by the Long Kesh Co-ordinating Committee of Republican Clubs showed signs of a positive shift in attitude towards the Provisionals and of a clearer understanding of the real situation in the north. The statement did condemn the bombings of Friday, 21 July, in Belfast and criticised the Provisionals for attempting to gain a seat at the conference table before the minority's demands had been met. But it also stated in relation to their opposition to the bombings that: "At the same time, we wish to point out that this has always been our position and that we are not now climbing on the new anti-Provisional bombing band wagon."

It proceeded to place the blame for the increase in sectarian violence on the U.D.A. murder gangs and on British imperialism, which has at every juncture capitulated to the Orange extremists. It strongly reaffirmed the importance of Republicanism as a tradition in Ireland, stating: "It is an honourable tradition which cannot be exterminated and which represents the major force for freedom in this island." Directing itself to the catholic minority, the statement called on them not to allow themselves to be diverted from struggle by the use of imperialist propaganda makes of the bombing campaign, but to maintain the civil resistance with the maximum unity of forces.

CONCRETE TASKS

This statement is a welcome improvement in attitude towards the Provisional I.R.A., but nevertheless still reflects the deep political differences which divide the two Republican organisations. These differences are important, but in the present situation they must not be placed above certain concrete tasks which must be undertaken; the necessary defence of the catholic community in the north against the British army and the organisation of civil resistance to the army of occupation. The Official I.R.A. has shown, in the past, its incapacity to take on both these tasks. British imperialism is ruthlessly determined to use its military might to grind the catholic minority into submission and passivity; to separate it from its armed defenders, and thus achieve a temporary stability in the North from which it can pursue its long term political aims. No differences within the Republican ranks, however genuinely held, are more important than the necessity to undertake the immediate tasks which are essential if British imperialism is to be prevented from succeeding in its strategy. Val Graham



RE THE MURDERERS?

Whitelaw's Monday statement still attempts to maintain the facade of British "justice". "At the same time there have been killings in all sections of the community and a state of lawlessness which cannot be tolerated." The "impartiality" of the imperialist administration does not of course extend to an actual balance sheet of sectarian murders. Since the end of March, according to the Catholic Ex-Servicemen's Association, 42 Catholics have been murdered by Protestant extremists. 17 of them in July. This far exceeds the number of alleged IRA executions (which includes those of members of the security forces). Among recent victims of the Orange gangs and assassination squads were:

* a 15-year-old Catholic boy, David McGlenaghan, mentally retarded, who was shot by gunmen who broke into his home on 12 July, and assaulted his mother.

* Rose McCartney and Patrick O'Neill, a young Catholic couple found shot in a car abandoned in the Glencairn estate after they had had an evening out together.

* 47-year-old Francis McStravick, recently returned to Ireland after 25 years working in England, found dead in a bag near Sandy Row on 27 July.

* Joseph Rosato, father of a former internee, shot dead by gunmen who came to the house looking for his son.

OFFICIAL INFORMATION

The UDA gunmen, at least, are being helped from official sources in gaining information about the identity, addresses and relatives of Republican and civil rights militants. The

trial of UDA men in London recently revealed that files on Republicans were kept in the home of Charles Wilson, UDA chairman. The August issue of *United Irishman* reports that they came directly from RUC officers.

While the UDA have been patrolling the streets of Belfast side by side with the British Army and the Orange murders increase in number, Republican and Civil Rights militants are still languishing in jail. They include men like Malachy McBurney, Republican Clubs leader, who was active in organising aid for internees and their families before his own arrest in December. Like countless others he was subjected to the wall torture by Special Branch officers who added the final touch of removing his artificial leg. Other internees who put up any resistance—like the Provisional hunger-strikers—have been allowed to become dangerously ill.

TERROR

Terror is being used against a whole people in Northern Ireland—the terror of the British Army and the Orange mobs against a people who have been struggling for their freedom. The invasion of the no-go areas will involve a new phase of this terror campaign: the Army has gone in explicitly to "do a job" on the Republican militants. At the same time the imperialist propaganda campaign against IRA "terrorism" will be stepped up here as well as in Ireland. It is a campaign which socialists in Britain must be ready to combat.

Jon Rothschild explains how

SADAT CALLS THE TUNE

In the past, Egyptian President Anwar el-Sadat has sought to establish a completely unjustified reputation for candour by occasionally airing certain differences with his allies in the Kremlin bureaucracy. So there was nothing very unusual in his mentioning, in the course of a speech on July 18 to the Central Committee of the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) his most recent disagreements with the Kremlin.

But after enumerating some of these, Sadat not only stunned the ASU leadership, but triggered waves of confused speculation throughout the world. "After receiving Soviet explanations of the Moscow talks with President Nixon", he said, "I felt the need to review the situation calmly and without excitement or convulsions, since our decisions are made here and at the appropriate time."

"After fully reviewing the situation in all its aspects and in full appreciation of the huge Soviet aid to us, I found it appropriate to adopt the following measures:

"1. Terminate the mission of Soviet advisers and military experts who came at our request as of yesterday (July 17) to be replaced by our sons in the armed forces.

"2. All military equipment and installations built after June 1967 are to be manned by the Egyptian armed forces and become the property of Egypt, and

"3. Invite a Soviet-Egyptian meeting, at a level to be agreed upon, to hold consultations to decide on the next phase of operation."

EXPULSION

At first, the scope of the expulsion order was not clear. By the end of the week, some four thousand Soviet advisers attached to Egyptian units had left the country. Apart from these advisers, there are an estimated 10,000 to 15,000 regular Soviet troops in Egypt. In addition, there are said to be about 200 Soviet pilots in the country.

By July 23, Western news sources reported that nearly all these troops were packing up and would soon leave Egypt. Sadat's first decision, then, appears to have been a sweeping one. It is now believed that only about 2,000 Soviet personnel, most of them highly specialized technical instructors, will remain. They will function under Egyptian command. The Western press spoke of a Russian "exodus", and while such language may be attributed to initial overexuberance, it seems clear that for once Sadat was not merely mouthing empty rhetoric.

IMPORTANCE MINIMISED

The Egyptian and Soviet regimes both appeared to be concerned with minimising the importance of the expulsion. The Soviet news agency Tass treated the news routinely, presenting the Egyptian decision as a bilateral one: "After an exchange of views, the sides deemed it expedient to bring back to the Soviet Union the military personnel that had been sent to Egypt for a limited period."

On the Egyptian side, Sadat called attention to the fact that the fifteen-year Soviet-Egyptian friendship pact signed last year would remain in effect, and on July 21 Yenia Abdel Kader, the Egyptian ambassador to Moscow, was given ten minutes of Soviet television time to give a speech hailing the "shining example" of Egyptian-Soviet relations.

It would appear, then, that Sadat has by no means broken definitively with the Kremlin. But he has dealt the Soviet bureaucracy a significant rebuff. A clear bid to the West has been made, and the defensive capability of Egypt has been weakened.

GENERAL STAFF

According to most reports, the chief source of anti-Soviet pressure within Egypt was the traditionally anti-communist Egyptian general staff. *Al-Nida*, the newspaper of the pro-Moscow Lebanese Communist Party, suggested that Minister of War Mohammed Sadek and Chief of Staff General Saad Hussein el-Shazli had informed Sadat that if Soviet troops were not ordered out of Egypt, "The army would impose the measure by direct interference in the country's political affairs".

The veracity of this report of a virtual threat of military coup was not accepted by most Arab diplomatic sources, but neither was it rejected out of hand. Whether the general staff went that far cannot be told with certainty but it can be said that the officer corps, which has consistently opposed Egypt's close relations with the Soviet Union and which has always favoured reliance on the United States, seized upon the prevailing political conditions to force the first significant break with the Soviet Union since the June 1967 war.

But the nature of the Sadat regime is such that the president must have needed little convincing. "It is felt here (Cairo)," the July 22 *New York Times* reported, "that the discontent expressed here earlier this year by anti-Soviet rightist civilians was not a major element of pressure but, on the contrary, had been used, and to some extent orchestrated by President Sadat."

Sadat's explanation of the expulsion of the Soviet personnel to the Egyptian people was couched in terms of Egyptian nationalism. The left in Egypt has been increasingly hostile to the Soviet bureaucracy's consistent betrayals of the Arab revolution. In expelling the Soviet troops, Sadat tried to play on those feelings by recalling the Kremlin's failure to deliver offensive weapons to the Egyptian armed forces. The expulsion of the Russians was presented as a continuation of "our battle against Israel" and as an assertion, in the tradition of Bandung, of Egyptian national independence.

REAL SITUATION

The real situation is otherwise. As usual, it was left to Sadat's lesser aides to spell out the meaning of the master's gibberish. On July 22, Mohammed Hassan el-Zayyat, minister of state for information, held a news conference—in English—for the foreign press. Explaining that the government had become exasperated with the state of no-war, no-peace that has existed in the Arab East since the 1970 cease-fire went



President Sadat

into effect, he noted that Egypt, because of Soviet failure to provide sufficient weaponry, was not in a position to make war. "We desire peace and friendship with all", he said. Logicians can draw the inference.

El-Zayyat's news conference, the *New York Times* noted with its usual incisiveness, "strengthened the impression among foreign observers here that Mr. Sadat and his army commanders had excluded war as a feasible policy and were looking for a way to renew the search for a negotiated settlement in the Arab-Israeli conflict."

Also on July 22, wide coverage was given in the Egyptian press to a statement by Ismail Sabry Abdullah, the minister of state for planning. Past fears about foreign investment in Egypt, he said, were no longer valid; the Egyptian economy could only benefit from the implantation of foreign capital. He advocated loosening restrictions on foreign investment. By making a further leap in the two-year-long rightward plunge of the Egyptian government, by demonstrating to the West that fears of Soviet domination of Egypt are unfounded, Sadat is

aiming at re-establishing contact with the United States and inducing Nixon, or his successor, to bring pressure to bear on Israel to make some significant territorial concessions as part of a new peace agreement.

BROADER TREND

The Egyptian move is part of a broader diplomatic trend. At the beginning of July the Republic of Yemen (North) re-established diplomatic relations with the United States. Two weeks later, Sudanese President Gafaar el-Nimeiry announced that his country would follow suit. Both Nimeiry and Muammar el-Qaddafi, the notoriously anti-communist Libyan strong man, enthusiastically praised Sadat's expulsion of the Russians.

The elimination of the Palestinian fedayeen from the political scene, which seems to have been decisively achieved by the Israeli invasions of Lebanon in June and the subsequent suspension of fedayeen actions against Israel, has increased Sadat's freedom of action to deal directly with U.S. imperialism instead of relying on the Soviet bureaucracy as an intermediary. Sadat has learned the lessons of the year of the summit—the Kremlin is not an ally to be trusted, even for limited objectives; and the U.S. ruling class is not especially averse to exchanging a smaller ally for a larger one, as Chiang Kai-shek has discovered.

Sadat has offered Nixon a partial and very tentative break with the Soviet Union. It is now Nixon's move. Will he rashly press the advantage by demanding thorough Egyptian capitulation to Israeli territorial claims, or will he force his Zionist ally to be conciliatory, threatening to dump Israel for Egypt if Tel Aviv resists?

Sadat's policy clearly aims at the latter possibility. For Egypt, this is a serious and dangerous gamble. The Israeli regime has shown no sign of willingness to part with the Sinai peninsula. It is difficult to see what interest Nixon would have in putting any serious pressure on Israel to

do so. In the long run, U.S. imperialism will discard its Zionist ally only if it is definitively demonstrated that the Arab regimes can be more effective than the Zionist state in quashing the development of the Arab revolutionary movement.

Accomplishing that task will require much more than a partial split with the Soviet bureaucrats and much more than a few trial balloons about Egypt's desire for foreign capital. It will require a new counter-revolutionary offensive that the Egyptian workers and students are not likely to accept without massive resistance.

FIRST BIG STEP

Sadat has taken the first big step down this road. He has done so cautiously, leaving himself room to retreat, to resolidify his Soviet alliance. If a favourable response to the first step is forthcoming from the U.S. government, he can be expected to press on. In that case, the Palestinian people can expect further Israeli-Egyptian deals to be made at their expense, and the Egyptian people can expect the attendant repression needed to enforce those deals. — JCP

ANGELA DAVIS SUPPORTS CZECH TRIALS



In December 1971 and January 1972 an unprecedented wave of arrests took place in Czechoslovakia. With more recent arrests the total is now at least 200. The arrests resulted directly from the November 1971 elections, whose function was to legitimise through the ballot box the regime imposed by the armies of the Warsaw pact. Despite the remarkable success of the Government (93.83 per cent) it still did not feel confident enough, and subsequently had to resort to arresting those people calling for a boycott of this farce.

A few weeks ago a request to Angela Davis to call for the release of political prisoners in Eastern Europe and in capitalist countries was made by Jiri Pelikan, an ex-member of the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party forced to flee from Czechoslovakia after the invasion in August, 1968. This appeal may have been a little naive, but the response has revealed to many militants the essentially Stalinist character of Angela Davis's politics. In her reply, she explained that anyone who left the "socialist" countries was objectively counter-revolutionary as they were "acting in opposition to the socialist system". Secondly, if people in Eastern Europe ended up in jail it was because they were undermining the government. In other words, by implying that these societies are true socialist societies, she has ended up by pandering to the very image of communism that the bourgeoisie tries to impose on us.

Even the French Communist Party has made "some criticism" of the Czech trials, arguing that in this case there should have been an "intensive ideological and political struggle to beat and isolate the enemies of socialism", and not trials. It is apparent that the French C.P. still considers that any ideological opposition to the bureaucracy is *de facto* counter-revolutionary, and its present line is in fact due more to its courtship of the Socialist Party of Mitterand than any political objection to the trials. Proof of this is the fact that a statement was only issued by the political bureau of the French C.P. after continued promptings by Mitterand.

The CPGB has also expressed concern at the trials, following a similar line to that taken by the Italian C.P. which deplored the trials "if the reports received are accurate".

The reticence of the official Communist Parties will surprise few people (we characterise these parties as Stalinist precisely because of their organic links with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union). However, it must come as a surprise to many militants when Angela Davis's statement is, in effect, more reactionary than that of the French Communist Party.

The reason why we should be concerned about her position is because of the key role she has assumed in politicising many young militants both in the States and elsewhere in the world. Any statements she makes may well influence them further, and that is why it is absolutely necessary to explain that by her statement she has reneged on the duty of revolutionaries to support the right of socialists in Eastern Europe to develop ideas and critiques of their societies, and to organise against a bureaucracy. It is not enough for all her supporters to have fought for mere bourgeois democracy within the capitalist countries. They must realise that it is as necessary to aid struggles for true proletarian democracy within the workers' states.

REVIEW

International Socialism and the Fourth International

Lacking real political perspectives themselves, and aborted in their efforts to establish viable international links, the International Socialism group is currently turning all its venom against the one consistent revolutionary current in the world today, the Fourth International. This anti-Trotskyist position is, of course, not accidental but is consistent with the political approximation to Stalinism which has been such a feature of I.S.'s intervention in the intensified class struggle in present-day Britain.

Unable to reply coherently to the theoretical criticisms of their 'State Capitalism' by Ernest Mandel and others, I.S. have now turned to searching for skeletons in the closets of the Fourth International. They have now disinterred the "last testimony" of Trotsky's widow in a pamphlet entitled, *Natalia Trotsky and the Fourth International*. Retailing at 7½p, these 11 pages of type can only be classified as a bad buy.

The facts of course are not disputed. Natalia Trotsky did break with the Fourth International over the question of the class nature of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European states. So did many other forming leading Trotskyists, under different pressures and for a variety of reasons. These include Max Shachtman, who was personally very close to Natalia and who is now to be found on the extreme right of the American Socialist (sic) Party; James Burnham, a staunch defender of American imperialism in Vietnam; and Tony Cliff of I.S. who stated when he broke away that he and his co-thinkers would "fight for the building of the Fourth International as a genuine Trotskyist organisation" and who since then has consciously moved further and further away from fundamental Trotskyist positions.

The fact that Natalia was Trotsky's widow no more immured her from outside pressures than any of these other back-sliders. Lenin's widow, Krupskaya, who played a much more active political role than ever did Natalia, herself capitulated to Stalin and joined in the denunciations of Trotsky.

Natalia's criticisms of the policies of the F.I. contained in her letter to its Executive Committee of 9 May, 1951, contain many valid arguments, but the conclusions she drew from these placed her squarely outside the main stream of Trotskyism. She writes: "There is hardly a country in the world where the authentic ideas and bearers of socialism are so barbarously hounded.... Yet you continue to say that under this unspeakable regime Russia is still a workers' state.... They are the worst and most dangerous enemies of socialism and the working class."

Was the Stalinist regime more unspeakable and more reactionary in 1951 than in the 1930s, the years of the Moscow Trials, when a whole generation of Bolsheviks were wiped out; when hundreds of thousands of workers found themselves in Stalin's slave camps? Were its policies, at home and abroad, more counter-revolutionary than when it was liquidating the Spanish revolution, concluding the Stalin-Laval and the Stalin-Hitler pacts? Yet during all these years Leon Trotsky steadfastly maintained that the Soviet Union remained a workers' state and that its defence against imperialism remained the primary duty of all revolutionaries. Of course, the defence of the Soviet Union was never confused in Trotsky's mind with the defence of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Quite the contrary! As he wrote to Shachtman in 1939: "Unconditional defence of the USSR signifies, namely that our policy is not determined by the deeds, manoeuvres or crimes of the Kremlin bureaucracy but only by our conception of the interests of the Soviet state and world revolution." (*In Defence of Marxism*, p. 39)

Natalia had every right to her views on the class nature of the Soviet Union but that they had little in common with those of Leon Trotsky is only too apparent.

The best part of the pamphlet is the Statement from the Executive Committee of the Fourth International. This is a dignified reply to Trotsky's widow and a defence of Trotskyism against her criticisms. As the statement concludes:

"It is not easy to separate with Natalia who after so many years has become the victim of pressures stronger than her. The revolutionaries, the continuators of Leon Trotsky, have no choice. We can only repeat the famous maxim he liked to quote: 'Neither laugh or cry, but understand'."

George Cunvin

SAIGON TROOPS LURED INTO TRAP

In the early part of the current offensive three major fronts were established: in Quang Tri, in the Central Highlands and around An Loc. In each case, major administrative centres were threatened and cut off. In the case of Quang Tri the unexpectedly rapid collapse of the Saigon forces led to the liberation of the entire province. In June and July we have seen the much trumpeted Southern counter-offensive. Are we to interpret this as a setback to the offensive, as most of the Western press has done?

MAKE THEM FIGHT

To answer this we need to remind ourselves of who it is that is fighting, and what they can hope to achieve. Firstly, how important are the specific territorial gains of the liberation forces to their strategy? The answer is, not really very important. The liberation forces do not advance from one fortified position to another: their lines of communication already cover the length and breadth of the Indochina peninsula. The real importance of threatening the Saigon forces' positions is that this obliges them to fight, and to squander their relatively small backbone of reliable troops. *Seen in this light, the counter-offensives of the Saigon forces are merely a continuation of the liberation forces' basic strategy: to make them fight with their best men where they are at a disadvantage.*

The objects of the Saigon counter-offensive are not centres of particular strategic importance to Thieu, nor are they particularly easy for him to retake. They were after all chosen in the first place by his opponents. But to those who invented Vietnamisation the Southern counter-offensive was an ideological necessity. So the South Vietnamese troops find themselves bogged down for months on Highway 13 to achieve the reconquest of An Loc, by then a militarily worthless pile of rubble. The NLF claim that in the 100 days between 5 April and 15 July they put out of action 22,000 US and puppet troops on Route 13.

QUANG TRI: THE PARAS' GRAVE

The most deadly conflict during July and into the first week of August has been the battle for Quang Tri city. Thieu ordered that this be retaken to offset the series of military disasters suffered by the Saigon armies in the first two months of the current offensive. The puppet forces began their counter-offensive in the first week of July, initially meeting light opposition. As casualties began to mount B-52 strikes were called in and the Seventh Fleet poured thousands of shells into the hostile Vietnamese earth.

As the first Saigon forces entered Quang Tri city it became clear that the Liberation Forces—that is the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam and the North Vietnamese Army—had "a man in every tree and in every house", their 130 mm. cannon and tanks were entrenched in deep bunker positions and their precisely targeted artillery pounded rank No.1 to the city from Hue along which the main body of supplies and reinforcements were routed.

In the second week of July the parachutists, one of the elite divisions of Thieu's army, advanced on the citadel of Quang Tri itself and at one point claimed to have opened up two breaches in it. But the defensive fire has been murderously accurate and the paras soon found they were losing 150 men a day. In the fourth week of July they withdrew from the area of the citadel which was left and still remains in the hands of the Liberation Forces. *The paras in 20 days had lost the equivalent of a regiment in the citadel alone.*

THE TRAP

At the same time the tactic used so successfully at An Loc is being repeated on Highway No. 1 linking Hue with Quang Tri. A few hundred men in deep bunkers on either side of the road systematically pound all the supply columns, only



NLF gunners in Quang Tri province

allowing them to go through irregularly to a terminal point which is—a besieged town. In An Loc and Quang Tri many of the most effective fighting units of the Saigon army are now being decimated to try to achieve a sparkling political coup for Thieu in Saigon. But the coup is never realised and meanwhile the defences of Hue and Saigon are systematically weakened by their own High Command!

Fighting continues at lower levels of intensity all over the country. At the beginning of August the huge US base at Bien Hoa was hit by 70 rockets from out of the blue one morning. Two men were reported killed and 52 wounded. The defensive perimeter of Hue is constantly under attack and 10 days ago a police station in Saigon was blown up.

SAIGON NEXT STOP!

We can expect in the next 4-8 weeks, as the Presidential elections of November become imminent, an even greater intensification of the Vietnamese struggle, a new wave of the offensive. Having stripped the Saigon forces of some of their best fighting men, large scale attacks on one or more cities will be seen. The most obvious targets: Hue, Da Nang and Saigon. *Now is the hour of the furnaces. Let there be nothing but light!*

Duncan McNiven

Frank Pais

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WITCH-HUNT IN SOUTH INDIA

Liquidation as a political tactic is not so well known in this country as in India. The police there are quite adept at effecting the removal of political militants without making much publicity about it. This is the tactic they are most likely to try to use against comrade R. Kuchelar, leader of a rank and file trade union movement in the Tamil Nad, the southernmost state in India.

This rank and file movement is of extreme importance in the politics of South India. Beginning with a strike of the Simpson workers in Madras, it has heralded a definite break for large sections of the working class with the Dravida Munetra Kazagam, a Tamil bourgeois party which came to power on a pseudo-nationalist platform. This party's hold has meant that until now this part of India has seen nothing to parallel the level of the class struggle in, for instance, West Bengal.

Comrade Kuchelar was at one time a member of the so-called Marxist Communist Party, until that party's particular electoral pact with the DMK came into conflict with the effective conduct of a strike at the Swedish-owned Wimeo plant in 1968. For his service to the workers in this struggle comrade Kuchelar was expelled from the CP(M) and branded as a Naxalite, thus inviting the police to initiate political repression against him.

SOLIDARITY

Kuchelar is not of course merely a trade union militant. He has vigorously attacked the pseudo-nationalism of the DMK and was the only Indian trade union leader of note to denounce the massacre of the Ceylonese youth by the Bandaranaike regime. Now he is on the run from a frame-up charge of murder, the culmination of a whole series of legal frame-ups and physical attempts on his life. Publicity is the only answer to the undercover methods favoured by the Madras police. That is why international solidarity with comrade Kuchelar and his movement is so vital if the designs of the Tamil Nad bourgeoisie are to be thwarted. Anthony Fernando

ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE

Public Meeting

IRELAND: WHAT HAS TO BE DONE?

Speakers: Frank McManus, M.P.

Bowes Egan

and guest speakers

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square
(near Holborn tube)

WEDS. 9th AUGUST 7.30 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

(British Section of the Fourth International)
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IRISH ACTIVITY IN LONDON

Over the past few weeks, the London Anti-Internment League has maintained consistent activity reflected in the greater success of the AIL committee in drawing members of individual branches into Central political activity. Not unnaturally, the British army's invasion of the Bogside and Creggan called forth the immediate response of a protest picket outside the Home Office on Monday night. About 100 people from AIL, ISC, Provisional and Official Republicans as well as other organisations picketed and then about 30 marched to the Irish Club in pouring rain to take up certain questions with SDLP M.P. Gerry Fitt. Having been tipped off in time, he didn't turn up. The AIL is also holding a protest meeting and march at 3p.m. this Sunday, 6 August, at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.

Future activities are a public meeting to commemorate the anniversary of internment on 9 August in Conway Hall, Holborn. Speakers will be Frank McManus, M.P., spokesman for the Northern Resistance Movement, Bowes Egan, Bob Purdie, Republican and other speakers. On Saturday, 12 August, local AIL branches will be picketing Army recruiting offices and barracks. Also planned is a demonstration on Sunday, 3 September, and a mass demonstration for the end of October. The AIL annual conference will take place at the beginning of October. Information about these latter events will be supplied in detail at a later date.

HUGO BLANCO ARRESTED

On 12 July the Argentinian regime arrested Hugo Blanco, Peruvian revolutionary and militant of the Fourth International. He is now threatened with deportation.

Blanco was released from jail in Peru only eighteen months ago after seven and a half years' imprisonment. His crime had been to organise the peasantry of La Convencion Valley, Cuzco, to occupy the big estates. The landowners and the regime turned the armed forces on them, and the movement was bloodily suppressed in 1963.

The Velasco Alvarado regime had been in power some time before it released Blanco, in December 1970—long enough to have effected a temporary "stabilisation" in the countryside by means of the land reform, which has been the most far-reaching in Latin America, while leaving essential imperialist interests untouched. Even in this situation, however, Blanco was enough of a threat to the military regime for them to deport him to Mexico, in September, 1971.

INCREASING REPRESSION

The Peruvian left is continuing to demand Blanco's return, despite the increasing repression they face. The regime has now completely dropped its "progressive" mask. In the past few weeks a series of localised general strikes, in Puno and elsewhere, have been viciously put down, and the total number of deaths may never be known.

Blanco has stated a preference for deportation to Chile, but no news of his release has yet arrived.

WOMEN'S DISCO BENEFIT

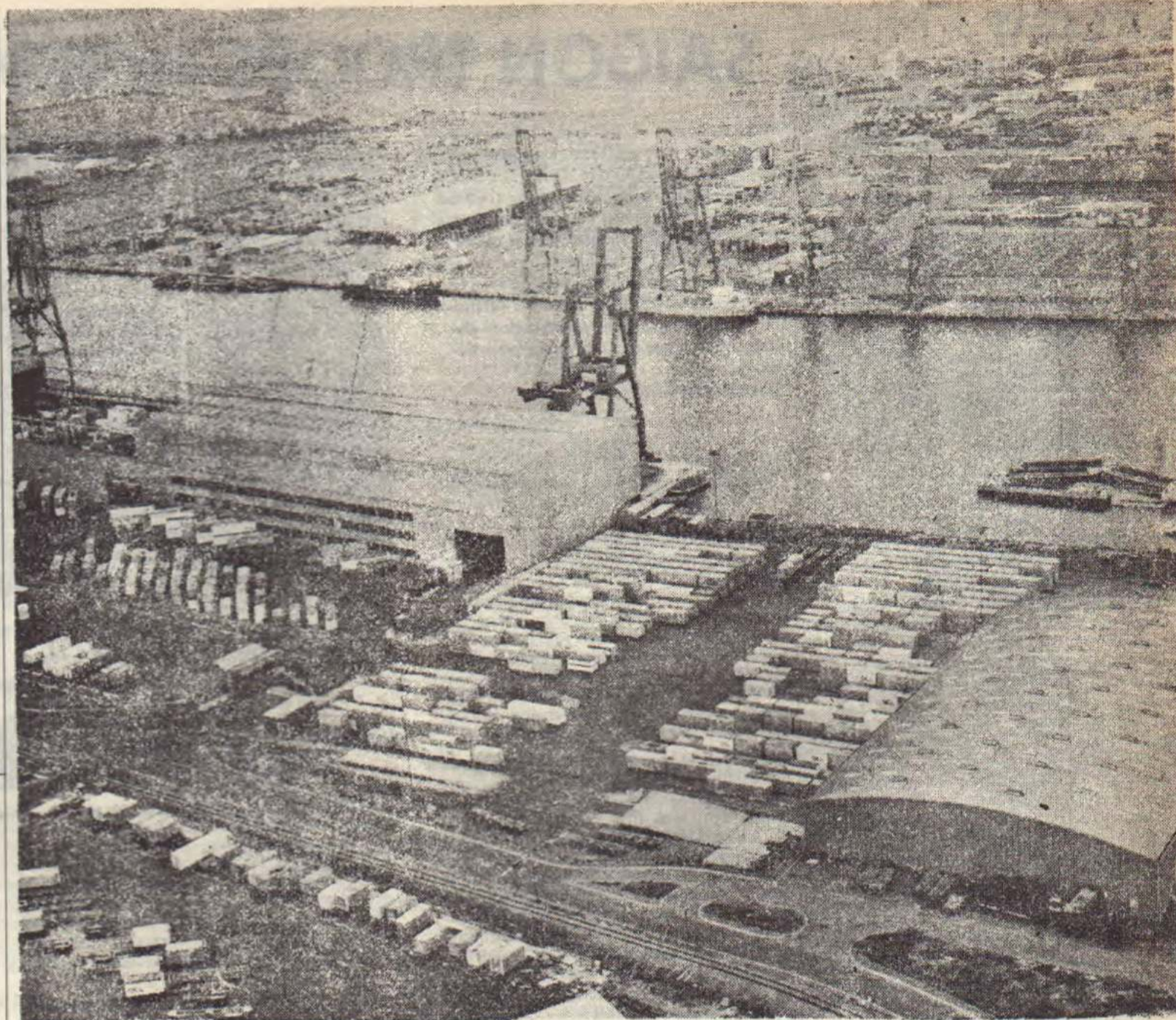
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BAR BOOKSTALL FILM

Organised by Gay Socialist Women's Group



Tilbury docks - deserted as a result of the strike

DOCKS (From page 1)

of the report reflected this. The report contains no guarantees that favourable agreements will be reached between the unions and the container firms. Without this, representatives of the men who closed Chobham Farm could hardly accept the report. A secondary objection was that pushed for by the Hull delegation. They wanted something done about the unregistered ports whose growth has accompanied a decline of the traditional ports, most markedly on Humberside. The only proposal here was for a 7 per cent levy which again was not guaranteed. Hull's objection to the agreement has a firm basis.

DECLINE OF THE TRADITIONAL PORTS

The unregistered ports and wharves are booming. Felixstowe is now handling 2½ million tons and this is scheduled to more than double in the next few years. In the Trent and Ouse estuaries of the Humber the unregistered wharves are handling 450 per cent more than they did ten years ago!

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The spectacular growth outside the Docks Labour Scheme (established in 1947) is rooted in several factors. Firstly, basic pay on the unregistered Humberside wharves, for example, is exactly 50 per cent of the basic rate in London at £21. In addition, the registered employers pay a surcharge on their wages bill to support voluntary redundancy payments, fall-back money for men on the TUR, and pension schemes. Secondly, the registered ports have militant and "ill disciplined" work forces. Discipline is in the hands of a joint board and in effect the men cannot be fired. Thirdly, job flexibility exists on the unregistered wharves. On some wharves on the Humber even crews have helped to unload cargoes.

As a result the handling rates are higher in the older ports and the difference is leading to a selection of new wharves by the shippers and a flow of capital to develop them. In addition, land values in the Port of London are enormous and massive profits have been made by companies like Hays Wharf which have sold out to developers.

The 7 per cent levy on the wages bill of the unregistered ports will not stop this decline. Given the increased expense of supporting the currently unattached dockworkers on full pay, the registered employers face a growth in expenses at least as great as the 7 per cent in the other

ports. If the numbers accepting severance are much short of 14 per cent the effect on loading rates could be very much greater than elsewhere. On balance, then, the agreement is likely to spread the decline rather than halt it.

SECURITY

The conditions of the dockworker are by no means secured for all time by the report. Attempts to get rid of surplus labour could well emerge again a few years after this proposed reduction, just as they have emerged a few years after the wave of redundancies which took place in the late '60s. In fact, only the monopoly position and militancy of the dockers have protected their conditions so far.

The continued expansion of the non-registered ports means an increasing proportion of trade will pass through the hands of dockers with no interest in defending the superior conditions of the registered dockworker. In fact it will break the near monopoly position the registered men now enjoy. As it is, the unregistered men are at best reluctant participants in the current docks strike.

The only way for the dockworker to retain his bargaining position is to use it now, to enforce traditional proportions and establish a veto over all work movement.

Ernie Waring

NIGHTCLEANERS STRIKE

Nightcleaners at the Empress Building in Lillie Road, Fulham, have been out on strike and picketing the building since Sunday, 30 July. The building houses Ministry of Defence personnel and a mere 13 cleaners are expected to clean all 27 floors of it.

The cleaners are employed by a small firm, Clean Agents, which has had a lucrative contract for the building for some years and whose pay rates are among the lowest the Cleaners Action Group have ever come across. Take-home pay for a 45 hour week is around £11-12 only, and a night missed may mean through loss of pay and bonus that this falls to as little as £7 for 36 hours work. The cleaners also have to pay for certain materials out of their own pockets, get no sickness benefit, and have to use totally inadequate equipment. Most important, the contractors have over the last three years profited from a dramatic increase in productivity by reducing the workforce from 25 to 13 without any increase in wages. The cleaners don't even get any of the normal cover money for doing someone else's work when they're off work.

After a meeting with May Hobbs earlier this year most of the cleaners joined the Civil Service Union to help them in their fight. A few weeks back they presented Clean Agents with a list of five demands: for an increase of £3.50 a week, union recognition, more holidays sickness benefit, and more staff to share out the work. Just over a week ago, having only been offered £2.50, the women decided to go on unofficial strike having been assured that the union would probably make it official. But at the time of writing (2 August) confirmation of this has still not been received from the union.

A picket of the building has been organised, supported by Womens Liberation Workshop, Socialist Woman, the International Marxist Group, and I.S. The cleaners need your support! Please send resolutions, money etc. to: Cleaners Action Group, C/o May Hobbs, 13 Middle Lane, London N.8. All supporters are welcome to join the 24-hour picket at Empress Building, Lillie Road, West Brompton tube (closed after 5pm, get off at Earls Court). Joanna Griffiths.



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