

Red Weekly

special
supplement



RED WEEKLY - FOR WORKING CLASS INTERNATIONALISM I

The *Red Weekly* is the paper of the International Marxist Group, British Section of the Fourth International. Like its predecessor *The Red Mole*, it will provide reports and analysis of the class struggle both here and abroad.

Unlike the traditional inward-looking British left, we are internationalists. *Red Weekly* will therefore take its place alongside other Fourth International papers such as *Rouge* - France, *La Gauche* and *Rood* - Belgium, *La Breche* - Switzerland, *The Plough* - Ireland, *Bandiera Rossa* - Italy, *World Revolution* - Japan, *El Combatiente* - Argentina and the *Militant*, paper of our American co-thinkers.

SOLIDARITY

The Fourth International has been in the forefront of world movements of solidarity with the Algerian and Indochinese revolutions. It is the only organisation of the left which has been able to develop any movement of international solidarity with the Irish struggle for self-determination. It alone has consistently defended the Irish republican fighters from the lies and calumnies of British imperialism.

It is able to do this because it starts from the correct premise that the main enemy of the workers of this country is their own ruling class. The *Red Weekly* will therefore give its support to all anti-imperialist struggles and will attempt to develop movements of solidarity in favour of all those forces fighting imperialism.

REPRESSION

In Britain as part of the preparations to defeat the working class, there is a constant and growing campaign of repression and intimidation directed at militants. The *Red Weekly* will take up the defence of all victims of the capitalist state, ranging from the Stoke Newington Five, the Shrewsbury building workers, to the latest victims in Coventry.

Unlike some of the more 'respectable' papers on the left who prefer not to defend anarchists, black militants, and Irish republican activists, *Red Weekly* understands that the stepping up in repression is directed against all the anti-capitalist forces.

INDEPENDENT INITIATIVES

The *Red Weekly* will give its full support and take any steps possible to encourage the independent initiatives of the rank and file. As Feather tries to disclaim any responsibility for a May Day strike he never wanted, in some areas the militants are attempting to mobilise the working class. In Oxford 100 stewards and work-place representatives from 18 unions and 35 branches attended a special Trades Council Meeting to organise the strike. Following the initiatives used in the miners' strike last year the meeting set up a 'flying-picket' to ensure that the city is shut down on May Day. In other towns such as Sheffield there will be

speakers from the Shrewsbury building workers at the mass meeting.

But the paralysis of the trade union leaders, their absolute dependence on the 'goodwill' of the government and the employers, has prevented May Day being used as a mobilising focus for beginning a fight to bring down the Government.

UNITED FRONT

The article on the *Lessons of the General Strike* in the first issue of the paper shows how in 1926 the Government beat a retreat when faced with a united front of the working class. It did this however, only to better prepare its forces for a confrontation with the unions. The union leaders went around cap in hand asking government appointed commissions to 'be fair' - meanwhile the government and the employers sharpened their knives. This policy led to the defeat of 1926.

Last year the miners smashed the per cent 'norm'. The working class by strike action got the Five Dockers released. The Government was in a state of near crisis. But once again the timidity of the trade union leaders and their desire to make deals behind the backs of their members has put the initiative back with the Tories.

The aim of the Government to divide off the better organised workers from the less economically powerful, and to split the housewife unemployed, pensioners, etc. from the organised working class must be fought. *Red Weekly* will therefore report on, campaign for and encourage all attempts to oppose union leader retreat - not by pious calls such as to make union leaders fight - but by the independent mobilisation of the working class. It will encourage all those struggles which break down sectarianism and which unite all the oppressed groups in society with the working class in a revolutionary struggle against capitalism.

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GREETI



The REVOLUTIONARY MARXIST GROUP, Irish supporters of the Fourth International, greets the *Red Weekly*.

A viable weekly paper of the British section struggling against chauvinism in the labour movement and fighting for solidarity with the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland is of paramount importance for our work. We ask you to continue on this course, thereby showing the relevance of the Fourth International to the Irish struggle.



The COMMUNIST LEAGUE, French section of the Fourth International, sends its most fraternal greetings for the launching of *Red Weekly*, the new paper of the IMG. The change to a weekly demonstrates the political and organisational progress achieved by the British section of the Fourth International in the framework of the past few years' increasing social conflict.

An analysis of the political situation in Britain allows us to foresee, without any possible doubt, a rise in the tempo of the class struggle. For Leninists the role of the revolutionary press in the building of a revolutionary party is central.

We are sure of the success of *Red Weekly*.



Congratulations! The appearance of *Red Weekly* represents a major step forward for the Trotskyist movement in Britain. The addition of another revolutionary weekly newspaper to the list of revolutionary periodicals in political solidarity with the Fourth International reflects the continuing growth in the strength and vitality of the international revolutionary movement. We look forward to the increase in international collaboration and exchange of information that will be made possible by the weekly publication of your paper.

From the Socialist Workers Party (USA).
Prohibited from affiliation to the Fourth International by reactionary legislation.



The REVOLUTIONAERE SOCIALISTERS FORBUND (Danish section of the Fourth International) sends fraternal greetings to the International Marxist Group on the occasion of the publication of the *Red Weekly*.

All over Europe there have been increasing struggles, not least in Denmark where 260,000 workers were on strike or locked out for a few weeks after March 21st. In a period of mass struggle it is vital for revolutionary marxists to have regular news journals. Faced with attacks from the bourgeois media the labour movement needs its own forms of communication.

We are sure that the *Red Weekly* will mark a big step forward for the IMG and enable our comrades in Britain to win many militants to the banner of the Fourth International.

INGS!



THE REVOLUTIONAIRE ARBEIDERS LIGA — LIGUE REVOLUTIONNAIRE DES TRAVAILLEURS (Belgian section of the Fourth International) and the editorial boards of its weekly papers *Rood* and *La Gauche* welcomes the new weekly paper of the IMG. Such a 'collective organiser' is an absolute necessity to combine the uneven development and to unite the different sections of the labour movement against the capitalist order.

We greet the rising anti-capitalist struggle in Great Britain, that confirms the existence of a new revolutionary period in Europe.



We revolutionary marxists in Sweden send you our warmest and most fraternal greetings. We have always followed and read with interest *The Red Mole* and have through it also found political stimulus. The name of our own paper — *Multaden (The Mole)* — bears the mark of this inspiration.

With the development of mass struggles, particularly within the working class of Europe, and the parallel development of the sections of the Fourth International, it is of vital importance that we can create revolutionary newspapers capable of intervening in the daily struggles of the masses. The creation of the weekly *Red Weekly* is an important step forward in this respect and in the development of the international Trotskyist movement in Britain.

From the Revolutionära Marxisters Förbund.
Prohibited from affiliation to the Fourth International by reactionary legislation.



The LIGUE MARXISTE REVOLUTIONNAIRE (Swiss section of the Fourth International) welcomes the publication of *Red Weekly*. The deepening struggles of the British working class, the civil war taking place in Ireland and the crisis of the British bourgeois leadership imposes important tasks for the revolutionary marxists in Britain. A weekly newspaper is of key importance for the accomplishment of these tasks. At the same time the publication of this new revolutionary weekly newspaper shows the political and organisational development of the IMG and confirms the development of the Fourth International in Europe.

Uniting these struggles is the task of revolutionary marxists, a task that the Fourth International tries to implement on a world scale.



The editorial board of *Sedai Kikumai (The World Revolution)* — paper of the Japanese section of the Fourth International) welcomes the news that you are to have a weekly paper. The *Red Weekly* can be added to the growing list of weekly journals of the Fourth International. It will undoubtedly help the IMG in its work to build the Revolutionary Party in Britain, and strengthen the International in Europe.

We in Japan are well aware of the value of such a journal in a time of rising class struggle. May it help you win many of the newly radicalised militants to your side!

MAY DAY MANIFESTO of the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The rising wave of militancy since May 1968 of the working class and all the oppressed of capitalist Europe has reached new heights during the last months.

In Italy, the metal-workers have engaged in an unprecedented wave of mass struggles to gain a new contract, culminating in a mass demonstration of 250,000 in Rome and the partial occupation of the Fiat factory in Turin. This struggle has had a largely successful outcome.

In Britain, after several years of growing strikes and resistance against reactionary legislation, the trade union bureaucracy has been forced under the pressure of the growing militancy of the working class to call a 24-hour general strike for 1 May.

In Spain, tens of thousands of workers in Barcelona have just downed tools in protest against the shooting of a building worker by the police.

In France, after many occupations of smaller factories, the revolt of the low-paid conveyor belt workers at Renault coincides with the occupation of the important Peugeot car factory.

Denmark and Holland have just experienced the biggest strike wave since the Second World War.

In Belgium, a whole series of militant strikes have followed one another since last autumn.

Even in Western Germany, the most prosperous and stable capitalist country in Europe, there have been several important wild-cat and official strikes, and growing agitation at plant and union level.

This rising wave of militancy is the answer of the working people to the burdens imposed on the wage-earners by the growing contradictions of late capitalist society, and to the way in which the European capitalists try to solve this crisis at the expense of the working class.

Inflation, massive lay-offs, a return to unemployment on a scale not seen since the Second World War; speed-up; increasing work-load and work-fatigue, intensified exploitation; increased attempts to integrate the unions into the bourgeois state, attacks against the right to strike and to organise strike pickets, against basic democratic rights of the labour movement, growing repression by the state apparatus, sometimes assisted by armed gangs of thugs in the service of the employers or of a clear-cut fascist character; intensified super-exploitation of immigrant workers and national and racial minorities, youth and women workers; increased degradation of the environment and the quality of life; these are some of the key evils against which the European workers are struggling in ever increasing numbers.

All of these evils are tied to the growing crisis of late capitalism as a system, internationally and nationally, which expresses itself, among other things, in the crisis of the world monetary system, the increase of inter-imperialist competition, the international trade-war, the general slow-down of economic growth, and the stepped-up crisis of capitalist relations of production in their totality.

This growing crisis of the capitalist system is intertwined with a general crisis of all social relations dominated by the bourgeoisie.

Alongside the revolt of the workers against the capitalist economy is a growing revolt of youth against the alienating and oppressive character of the bourgeois education system and the bourgeois army, a growing revolt of women against the burdens imposed on them by bourgeois legislation and patriarchal class society (illegal character of abortion, inequality of wages and of rights, etc.).

The recent mass movements in Belgium, Denmark, and especially France, which have drawn in hundreds of thousands of high school students and other young people, are a clear demonstration of the fact that bourgeois society is today rejected by a large part of the youth. The militancy and anti-capitalist thrust of these mass movements show that the spirit of May '68, far from having been crushed by the bourgeoisie, is reappearing more strongly than ever in the younger generation, on a higher level of consciousness and especially of organisation.

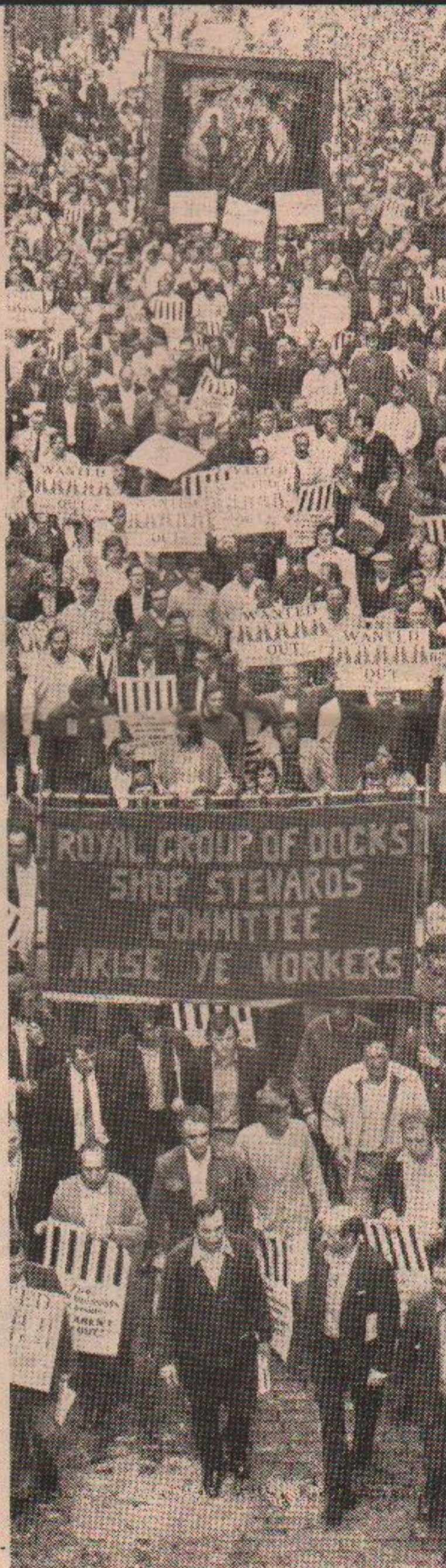
In this respect, the mass movement of the French high school and university students and the apprentices has an exemplary character whose significance extends well beyond the youth or the borders of a single country.

French youth in struggle have elected democratic strike committees in every school in the country. Every strike committee sends delegates to local, regional, and national co-ordinating bodies. General assemblies discuss the activities and decisions of these delegates, and recall them whenever they disagree with their decisions. At these assemblies and committees the fullest democracy is practised, with all political currents free to defend their respective lines and proposals. So powerful is the pressure of this mass movement that majority decisions are respected and applied by minorities.

This form of organisation, which was lacking in May '68, marks a new and tremendous step forward because it succeeds in combining spontaneity and organisation, freedom of debate and unity of action.

It has created a model, in real life, of how the working people will organise their coming generalised struggles first, their revolutionary power and their new state afterwards, when they will have overthrown capitalism: through a democratic system of workers' councils. It will not fail to influence deeply the forms of organisation of the workers themselves in the present struggles. Already strike committees democratically elected by general assemblies of strikers are springing up more and more from the present strike wave which is engulfing so many European countries.

Because the European working class is faced with a combined onslaught from the employers, the ruling governments and the bourgeois state, the working class vanguard sees ever more clearly the need to



adopt a centralising thrust to their struggles and to overcome their fragmentation in corporatist, localised, or industry-wide limited strikes and demonstrations.

Whatever the immediate forms and demands for the current strike waves which express this need — and this depends upon the concrete situation in each particular European country — the key question which they ultimately raise is that of the conquest of power by the working class.

This conquest of power calls for a new and higher form of democracy than bourgeois-parliamentary democracy: the democracy of workers' councils, which will not reduce but increase all political freedoms — including the freedom to form opposition parties, to publish opposition papers, to have access to radio and TV and all other democratic freedoms — which the working people want to enjoy.

The present offensive of Capital against Labour — itself an expression of the growing structural crisis of the world capitalist system — is not restricted within national frontiers. It is international in character.

It is nurtured by international capitalist organisations (the so-called 'multi-national corporations'), propped up by international power organs like the Common Market, the world-wide operations of US and Japanese imperialism, NATO, SEATO, international financial institutions, etc., etc. Capital is more and more international in organisation. Against it, a nationally limited working class movement becomes potentially ever weaker and ever more outmanoeuvred.

Multi-national corporations, whether dominated by US, European, Japanese or 'national' capitalists, can open and close factories in many countries at will, can lay off thousands of workers, and can try to pressure governments and union bureaucrats into aligning wages and working conditions at the lowest level existing in those countries. Reforming legislation, always at best a by-product of the militant struggles of the working class, is more and more paralysed when confronted with the operations of these giant corporations. There is only one way to answer them efficiently: to oppose international solidarity and international unity of action of labour to the international operations of capital.

Let us build a close network of shop-stewards, factory delegates and factory committees of all plants owned or controlled by the same multi-national corporation. Let them inform and consult each other on every reduction in manpower, every change in labour organisation, every decision of speed-up or deterioration in working conditions, and commonly plan the response of the workers.

Let us establish a solid unity in action of all trade unions in the whole of Europe, irrespective of political or philosophical differences between their members and leaders.

Let us organise European-wide strikes against the European-wide operations of the capitalists, like the simultaneous occupation of the AKZO trust's chemical plants in Holland and West Germany which forced that trust to reverse its decision to lay off 6,500 workers in five factories in four different countries.

Let us prepare the organisation of a great European Congress of Labour uniting all unions, workers' parties and movements in all the Western European countries, in order to map out a strategy through which the power of the 50 million or so workers of our continent can be used not only to beat back the capitalist offensive but to go forward towards the overthrow of capitalism, towards the building of the Socialist United States of Europe.

Solidarity must not stop at the level of common action against a common enemy carrying the same label of the same corporation. It must especially protect the weak, the less organised and the specially oppressed: the immigrant workers, the unemployed, the lower paid, the sick, the old. It must express the central aim of guaranteeing a decent standard of living and basic human rights to all members of society, irrespective of the ups and downs of booms and recessions, inflation and deflation.

It must particularly help those who fight so courageously under the most difficult circumstances of brutal dictatorship and violent repression: our brothers of Spain, Portugal and Greece, the heroic fighters of the colonial revolution in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and in the first place those of Indochina.

In struggling for these goals, through the conquest of a sliding scale wages and of working hours; through the immediate introduction of a 35-hour week; through workers' control over hiring and firing, over establishment of the cost-of-living index, over production costs and selling prices by opening the companies' books and revealing the balancing secrets, over the rhythm of the conveyor belt and the whole organisation of production; the working people will find out that they can lastingly ensure only by wrenching from the capitalists the ownership of the factories and the banks, and the power in the state, and by establishing workers' power, by bringing about a socialist revolution.

On the road to that revolution, the building of a revolutionary mass party, based upon the programme and the cadre of revolutionary Marxism, of the Fourth International, will appear to them as an indispensable prerequisite, on the basis of the experience which they assimilate; in the first place, the experience of the activities, the initiative and the leadership qualities of the revolutionary Marxists in the mass movement itself.

Forward, towards the European-wide co-ordination and generalisation of the current strike wave and youth upsurge in capitalist Europe!

Forward, towards the Socialist United States of Europe!

1 May, 1973

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International