

RED WEEKLY

5 JUNE 1975

No 104

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UNITE AGAINST WILSON'S TORY POLICIES



As we went to press it seemed most likely that the vote in the EEC referendum would be 'Yes'. If so, a battle has been lost but the war is not over. In the unlikely event of a 'No' vote, the problem for the working class will be how to enforce this decision against the sabotage of the capitalists in Parliament.

In the EEC debate the 'left' have been knocked all over the place. Wilson has pointed out with unerring logic that a capitalist Britain can only survive inside the EEC. Wilson and the ruling class could only have been defeated had the 'left' driven home the lesson that the alternative to the EEC was not a capitalist Britain, limping along outside the Market, but a socialist Britain fighting for a United Socialist Europe.

Wilson deliberately ignored every decision of the Labour and trade union organisations. Without compunction or hesitation he appealed over the heads of the labour movement to get 'Yes' votes. Victory in the referendum will mean that he will obviously try such a tactic again on incomes policy and unemployment.

Every time the Labour 'left' backslide on making Conference decisions binding on Wilson, they dig their own graves and help him to prepare the way for the vicious anti-working class policies which his capitalist masters are demanding.

The retreat of the 'left' is allowing Wilson to start getting under way Social Contract Mark II. By playing on fears of

coalition government he is intimidating the timid bureaucrats of the unions into accepting a policy of wage cuts. The outburst of Education Minister Reg Prentice in his pro-coalition speech in Leeds is also used by Wilson to whip the unions into line. But the Labour 'left' stays quiet not daring to oppose his plans publicly.

by the Editors

Wilson knows that the working class is far too strong to allow its leaders to do an open deal leading to wage cuts. Although the second version of the Social Contract has no more chance of being successful than its predecessor, the TUC by agreeing to a new Social Contract puts an invaluable weapon in Wilson's hands and prepares the way for an incomes policy.

Wilson will claim after its collapse; 'Everyone agrees wage restraint' is needed. The Social Contract did not work. The union leaders did not keep their part of the bargain. Voluntary restraint has failed. Now we need a statutory wage freeze'.

This will mean cuts in social expenditure, increased unemployment and compulsory wage control.

But Wilson has another goal. He wants to remove Benn.

Like his ruling class friends, Wilson knows that he cannot chop Benn and at the same time introduce a wage freeze. Above all else Wilson is frightened of uniting the Labour 'left' and the trade unions in opposition to his anti-working class measures.

To get over this danger Wilson is trying to separate Benn and the 'lefts' from the people he really fears—the trade union leaders, particularly those under pressure from their rank and file. As Jones, Scanlon and company sigh with relief that a statutory wage freeze has not been introduced, Wilson intends to sink the knife into Benn. He is banking on the notion that when he despatches Benn off to be Minister in Timbuctoo all the union leaders will do is make the odd polite, muted protest, as they gratefully hang on to the 'new' Social Contract.

This will leave the door open for Wilson to push the demoralised parliamentary left to one side and then replace the social contract with a compulsory wage freeze.

These policies can only be fought by a united working class movement. Across the trade unions and the Labour Party a campaign must be launched for a working class alternative to the capitalist crisis. Demands like a sliding scale of wages, nationalisation without compensation of all firms creating redundancies and work-sharing without loss of pay, can unite the working class against the offensive of the ruling class and its agent Harold Wilson. It is urgent that the left begin to fight for such demands right now.

INSIDE: The Rape of Scotland (pages 6 & 7)

/ Long Kesh Horror (page 8)



MOTOR INDUSTRY



CONFRONTATION!

1. CHRYSLERS



Chrysler management are all set for a long confrontation in their battle to force through a package deal on pay and participation. Their aim—to end plant bargaining in the combine and achieve centrally co-ordinated negotiations in place of the present 53 separate ones—is part and parcel of Chrysler's plans to force through a savage rationalisation which will inevitably mean speed-up and large scale redundancies amongst the 27,000 strong workforce.

Management's determination to smash plant bargaining was reflected in their refusal to grant two days holiday pay lost by 4,000 production workers on strike for the last three weeks at the Stoke, Coventry plant. This would almost certainly have provided the basis for a recommendation by the stewards to return to work on the basis of Chrysler's offer.

'PARTICIPATION'

The basic pay offer that Chrysler is making to all its plants is an extra £8—with no mention of future negotiations towards the £15 which the Stoke strikers are demanding from July. But the deal is also tied to acceptance of an end to plant bargaining and 'worker participation' and profit sharing. Chrysler are offering two £50 lump sums to get this agreed. Unable to defeat the work-force in a straightforward fight over productivity and manning levels on the shop floor, Chrysler want worker participation to do the job for them.

So far the Linwood stewards at Chrysler's plant in Scotland have rejected the deal, but simply on the basis that it doesn't offer all their production workers enough money to bring their rates into line with Coventry. The Ryton, Coventry stewards seem to be waiting for someone else to take a lead, while the situation at the Stoke, Coventry plant is deadlocked. Chrysler stewards fear that national bargaining would lead to the same slump in earnings as has happened in Fords.

FIGHT BACK

The establishment of a real national shop stewards' combine committee, which would systematically report back on their negotiations and proposals to mass meetings in all the plants, is an urgent necessity in building a national fight back in this trial of strength between Chrysler management and their workers.

2. FORDS



Eighty doorhangers and setters in the Body Plant at Ford's Dagenham voted overwhelmingly on 27 May to stay out 'indefinitely' in their fight against speed-up and manning cuts. The six-week old strike has cost Ford's 11,000 cars worth £22 million in saleroom terms. Management promptly responded with a lock-out of 6,500 workers and threats—later withdrawn in the face of union opposition—to break the lay-off agreement.

'KNOCK-DOWN'

When the dispute first broke out an occupation took place which quickly sealed off the wheels and 'Knock-Down' shops. If this had been built on it could have hit production nationally and become a focus for winning support at this level. But after getting the occupation called off, the convenor and deputy convenor have done nothing to organise support for the striking workers.

Their only efforts have been directed towards getting the national union officials off the hook by attempting to get management to take the dispute to the Conciliation and Arbitration Service—a body set up by the Wilson Government to police the social contract! This risks throwing away all that has been fought for over the past weeks, by undermining the independent struggle of the workers.

The plant leadership is hailing Ford's agreement to go to arbitration as a major victory—an open admission that they will not seek to unite all Ford

workers in a common fight to defend jobs. A strike in the Dagenham foundry shop alone could paralyse the whole of Ford's operation in the UK. This type of action could rapidly force Ford's to retreat.

It is now up to the strikers themselves to elect a strike committee and campaign for support from other sections and plants. Rebuilding the occupation of the Body Plant could provide the focus for this—it would also force the officials into action.

EXPLOITED

All Ford's attacks are just the prelude to big redundancies and a smaller, more exploited workforce. To be effectively countered a national policy of work sharing with no loss of pay against short-time and speed-up is needed. Ford's books should be opened to work out how the workers can implement this policy and prepare the way for the nationalisation without compensation and under workers control of the whole car industry.



This time it's the bosses who are locked out—and Massey-Ferguson production manager Ivor Clarke, on left with companions, can do nothing about it!
Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

3. MASSEY-FERGUSON

Writs for repossession against 310 workers occupying the Massey Ferguson tractor plant in Banner Lane, Coventry, were issued last week.

More than 4,000 production workers at Massey's three Coventry plants have been on unofficial strike for over three weeks in pursuit of a 'substantial' pay increase. On 13 May they took over the Banner Lane plant and have used it as a base from which to picket local hotels, where some of the 1800 staff who have been excluded from the building have attempted to scab on the strike.

The writs have been issued under the same order that three weeks ago allowed 750 police, some armed with riot shields, scurry across the campus at nearby Warwick University to evict a student occupation. Writs were also used last month to smash the six week occupation against redundancies at Crosfield Electronics in North London. The workers at Massey's have till this Friday 6 June—when the summonses are due to be heard in London—to decide on their course of action.

Both the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers and the Transport and General Workers Union have refused to do anything to support the strike. Now George Butler, Coventry organiser of the AUEW, has joined in the red-baiting campaign against the strikers, attacking the International Socialists and

claiming the strike 'has drifted out of control'.

Not surprisingly the stewards committee has decided not to speak to the press about the strike, but neither have they campaigned in the local labour movement for support. Nor have Massey's other factories in Britain, at Kilmarnock, Manchester and Liverpool, all of which are working normally, been contacted.

The employers are desperate to smash this strike and the occupation of the largest tractor plant in Europe. It is the first occupation of a motor plant in Britain in pursuit of a wage claim and, if successful, could easily trigger off a chain reaction in the crisis-hit car industry.

The stewards were due to meet as we went to press. A call to the Coventry labour movement for solidarity would meet a ready response in this situation. The strikers are broke and no money has been coming in—barring a £60 donation from some staff workers—as an appeal fund has not been launched.

An officially backed support committee could quickly win widespread backing for the strike amongst workers in the area, overcome the scabbing of the official leadership of the unions, and, if necessary, stay the hand of the courts and police in implementing an eviction order. As one militant told *Red Weekly*: 'We need to build links with other workers in the area.'

British Rail pay offer - lies, lies, lies...

The claim of the tribunal on railway workers' pay to have offered an increase of 27.7 per cent is a total fraud. The so-called 27.7 per cent increase includes £4.40 consolidated threshold payment. At present a railman (the lowest grade) gets £25.65 basic plus £4.40 threshold—a basic gross of £30.05. The offer of £6.05 includes the threshold, giving a new basic of £31.70—an increase in new money of only £1.65p!

The new basic is so embarrassingly low that even the tribunal had to dream up the idea of a new 'minimum earnings guarantee' of £36.70. So a railman will be getting £1.65 plus £5.00—an increase of 22.1 per cent on the existing gross. And this is a larger percentage increase than any other grade will be getting.

For example, a grade B signalman at present gets a basic of £31.95 plus £4.40 threshold, giving a basic gross of £36.35. A 27.7 per cent increase gives an increase of £8.79, a real increase of £4.39 once the threshold is excluded. As a percentage of existing income this is equivalent to an increase of 12.1 per cent—when inflation is currently running at nearly three times that rate.

BUREAUCRATS

The deal says nothing about how the extra £5 to make the 'guaranteed minimum earnings' is to be made up, which probably means that overtime will have to be worked. The report also comes out against any form of threshold payment to defend railworkers' living standards.

Despite this the white-collar Transport and Salaried Staffs Association has accepted the offer, and the locomotive

by JAMES HURST

the basis that differentials are maintained. As for the National Union of Railwaymen, General Secretary Sid Weighell and President David Bowman want to accept the offer and will do all they can to fox moves towards strike action. They will argue for further 'negotiations' with British Rail. Failing this they will probably go for an emergency union conference, rather than risk an immediate confrontation on the national executive.

The NUR bureaucracy has played straight into the hands of the tribunal, which is demanding sackings and fare increases (the third set this year) to finance the deal. They argued their case solely in terms of parity and productivity. Since 1960 this type of policy has led to a 54.6 per cent cut in the number of signalmen alone.

The offer must be rejected and replaced by a common claim for all the rail unions. Central to this is the financing of the industry. Already certain sections of the capitalist class, represented by *The Economist* magazine, are calling for British Railways to be turned into an industrial holding which would lease out tracks to private companies. This would lead to even bigger

Against this the rail unions should be drawing up plans for an integrated transport system which would include the nationalisation of all industries that service the industry. A policy of no redundancies and no fare increases should be enforced.

The NUR leadership is prepared to sacrifice railway workers' living standards in order to defend the remnants of the social contract. If a special conference is called to avoid action, railway workers will have to turn it into a body to organise the fight for a higher claim, for a sliding scale of wages to defend any increase against inflation, and for workers' control over the running of the railways.

Red Books News!

NEW IMG PUBLICATIONS

The Market and the Multinationals, price 15p. Published by the Scottish IMG, this pamphlet focusses on regional policy and the multinationals in Scotland; North Sea oil and the rise of the SNP; and the policy and strategy of the Labour left on the EEC.

British Troops Out Now, price 5p. This pamphlet aims to present in a popular and succinct manner the case for troops out of Ireland now.

Portugal—The Fight for Workers Power, price 10p. This pamphlet contains the most important statements of the Portuguese sympathising section of the Fourth International, the ICI.

MANDEL PAMPHLET OUT AGAIN

The Mandel pamphlet *Class Consciousness and the Leninist Party*, out of print for some time, has now been republished price 10p.

TROTSKY BOOK

New Park has republished Trotsky's *Social Democracy and the Wars of Intervention in Russia 1918-21* (sometimes called *Between Black and White*), 128 pages, price £1. Very attractively produced with photographs, maps and a glossary.

SPECIAL OFFERS

VERY CHEAP MARXIST CLASSICS (20% discount for bulk): *Communist Manifesto*, *Das Kapital* and *Empire*

criticism, 28p; *What is to be Done*, 15p; *Imperialism (Lenin)*, 10p; *Left Wing Communism*, 10p; *Two Tactics (Lenin)*, 10p. Bulk rates on application.

SPECIAL ISSUE OF INPRECOR

The second 60-page double issue of *Inprecor* on the world economic situation will be out in mid-June, containing articles by Mandel (world recession); Udry (raw materials); Langston (US economy); Gabriel (Africa); Vargas (Spain).

As a SPECIAL OFFER it will be supplied FREE to new subscribers. Subscriptions cost £7 p.a. (25 issues); otherwise the double issue can be purchased from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. for 60p plus 8p post. Subs should be sent to Red Books.

BUILDING SLUMP PUBLIC WORKS CAN SAVE JOBS

The building industry is now facing the biggest decline in activity since the Second World War. New orders in 1974 were 36 per cent down on the previous two years. Overall, 1973 was the worst year since 1953. After a period of boom in which the profits of leading firms more than doubled while wages rose by only a fifth, the industry is now being hit by increasing bankruptcies.

For building workers this means large scale unemployment. The monthly average of registered unemployed for 1973 was 86,000. For 1974 it was well over 100,000. This year will be considerably worse.

The slump in the industry comes at a time when there is an increasing need for buildings of all kinds. The slum clearance programme has come to a standstill. In 1971 almost one fifth of the dwellings in England and Wales were classified as sub-standard—a polite name for slums.

This figure is certainly an underestimate. A local survey in Birmingham showed that there were 41,000 such homes, as against the official

applies. The school building programme has been slashed. No new hospitals are being built. Nursery building is virtually non-existent.

The cutbacks are declared to be in the interests of the economy; but whose economy and what kind of economy? The present situation is certainly not in the interests of building workers and it is not in the interests of the working class to waste the labour and skills of builders. The chaos and stupidity of the present system which serves the interests of a tiny group of employers can be seen if we look at the boom of the early 1970s.

government subsidies, grants and loans to bail them out—in the national interest, of course. But bribes to private industry will not provide a solution to the problems facing the working class. Already the bulk of council house rents go to pay interest on loans, and if large amounts of public money are pumped into the industry it will merely restart the process which led to the current crisis. Furthermore, this money will be taken from the pockets of working people. But the Labour Government has done nothing to overcome these problems. And the construction union leaders simply indulge in pious hopes, writing in a recent issue of the UCATT paper

Viewpoint: 'We shall be anxiously awaiting details of Government plans that will involve us in building more houses, schools, factories and other essential structures.' The results of 'anxiously awaiting' and reliance on the social contract are plain. Unemployment has to be fought.

First and foremost this means drawing in other sections of the labour movement around a campaign against the cuts, particularly necessary in view of the scattered nature of the building industry. Linking up with workers also fighting the cuts in health, education, etc. can be an important first step.

This fight should also involve the demand for nationalisation of the industry and development land. Building must be run as a social service. There ought to be no unemployment amongst building workers while social need remains. A programme of socially useful public works, with particular emphasis on houses, schools and hospitals, is vitally necessary. If private industry cannot meet these needs, then it is the Government which must ensure that the resources of the industry and the skills of building workers are not wasted.

Pat Hickey (UCATT)



Unemployed Merseyside building workers lobbying Eric Heffer at the House of Commons last month. Photo: MICHAEL TOMLINSON (IFL)

figure of 25,000. It is estimated that three million homes lack such basic amenities as hot water, a bath, and indoor toilet. Despite this, council house building still lags behind the 1969 levels. Waiting lists are now at the levels of 15 to 20 years ago.

Pledges that wage restraint would be balanced by increased spending on the social services were never credible. The recent building industry wage settlement (hailed as a victory for the social contract) was only a few weeks old when the Government announced that council house improvement grants were to be slashed by a third. As a result Birmingham corporation announced that up to 900 of its Housing Management labour force of 3,100 were to be made redundant.

In virtually every area of the social services a similar situation

During that period the industry was going flat out, but the bulk of the building was not in the areas of greatest social need (houses, schools etc.) but in big money speculative ventures such as hotels and office blocks. Fortunes were made on borrowed money, as prices soared faster than interest rates. The result was that interest rates rose and land values rocketed.

The 'boom' was a boom for the capitalists only. By 1973 an income of £80 per week was needed to buy the average priced house, i.e. an income of twice the national average. This meant a decline in the demand for houses; and as the crisis deepened the demand for office blocks fell off, too.

Under the pressure of rising interest rates and a falling market, profits decline. So building stops. The employers immediately demand

PREPARE FOR BATTLE Bosses' magazine blows the gaff

The *Investors Chronicle* of 23 May contains a piece of hard-headed advice to Harold Wilson, entitled 'Unions that can stop the country'. It might more appropriately have been called 'Prepare for battle'! Written by Mary Goldring, who is well connected to top people in all the main parties at Westminster, it says: 'The betting at Westminster is that the Government will call a wage freeze of some kind once the EEC referendum is off its back.'

She goes on to explain that what Wilson has to guess is: 'How many unions will refuse to knuckle under, and of these how many would strike and which could stop the country.' Ms Goldring explains that 'the economy's four most vulnerable points are in descending order: Waterworks.....electricity switching stations..... oil delivery tankers.....and railways.'

According to the well-informed Ms Goldring: 'The Army has trained men on the quiet to drive oil tankers, but the Forces do not have enough tankers of their own to maintain even minimum deliveries, nor enough drivers to requisition the oil companies.' However: 'Waterworks jobs are unskilled', and 'given supervision troops could do them if supervisors cooperated.'

'a strike here could disrupt supplies to the point where normal life becomes impossible'. Unfortunately for Ms Goldring: 'The job is skilled and could not be done by troops', and the 'management engineers.....could only provide a broken-backed operation.'

Although the power of the railways 'is dwindling', and the shut down of industry would depend 'on the prudence of each factory's storage arrangements', she says 'successive governments have been advised not to risk it.'

But Ms Goldring is not only a realist. She is also a deep-seated cynic and is quite prepared to accept that: 'Local government strikes may be smelly, gas and hospital strikes may

All that worries this adviser to the ruling class is 'how other unions would react to a deliberate government attempt to stand up to a strike in defence of incomes policy.' She knows that the thought is never far from the centre of Wilson's mind, and she candidly admits: 'The Cabinet has a civil contingency committee to advise on which it is technically possible to stand up to....'

This article shows that the ruling class and the Labour Government are deadly serious about imposing some form of incomes policy. Furthermore they are discussing with the civil servants and the military how they can break strikes in the key sectors.

Ms Goldring reveals knowledge of Government plans and intentions which is deliberately shielded from the labour movement. Once again we see how the right-wing members of the Wilson Cabinet have much more in common with the capitalist propagandists to whom they reveal their confidences than they have with the rank-and-file members of the workers' movement.

IN FOCUS

SUPPORT THE 21 JUNE ABORTION DEMONSTRATION

The 1967 Abortion Act allows a woman to have an abortion if two doctors agree that carrying on with the pregnancy would be a greater risk to her physical or mental health, or that it could be socially detrimental. The last clause was very important, as it allowed the doctors to take a woman's 'environment' into consideration.

Even these minimum gains—a far step from the right to free abortion on demand—are now threatened by the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill. The conditions would be changed so that an abortion could only be obtained if continuing the pregnancy meant 'a risk of serious injury to the woman's mental or physical health'. A study of the grounds on which legal abortions have been obtained since 1967 reveals that at least 80,000 women a year will no longer get a legal abortion if this Bill becomes law.

RESTRICTIONS

The White Bill also includes restrictions on the doctors eligible to perform abortions. It requires that the two doctors be in different practices, and places the burden of proof on the doctors. Doctors will be put in the invidious position of having to prove that they did not contravene the Act—i.e. they will be assumed guilty unless proved innocent.

The cut-off date for abortion would be reduced from 28 weeks to 20 weeks. As the Bill also contains a clause stipulating that women must have a 20-week residence qualification in Britain before becoming eligible for an abortion, this would almost certainly exclude foreign women from getting an abortion. There are also restrictions on the right to publish information about abortions or to publish the identity of someone giving evidence in a prosecution. And the only referral agencies allowed will be those approved by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Security.

The James White Bill has rallied around it all the forces who want to chain women to the kitchen sink. These are the people who see women as being some inferior species. They offer women a life centred around the family hearth where they can provide children for the workforce and look after the 'needs' of the 'breadwinner'. Capitalism needs the 'stable' family unit. The pivot of that unit is the exploited and discriminated-against mother. This is why the reactionaries have jumped on the White bandwagon.

Because the amendments have been introduced by a Labour MP, the reactionaries are claiming that it is a 'non-party issue'. The hypocrisy of the Labour Government is breath-taking. Labour ministers chatter on about 'individual conscience' and this being a 'private matter'. They are quite callously prepared to let a group of MPs—Tories, Liberals and Labour—take a decision on behalf of millions of women! Such are the sweet charms of parliamentary democracy.

But opposition to the Bill is growing, centred around those who say that women should have the absolute right to control their own fertility. They insist that women must have the right to plan their own lives and that they should be freed from the alienating and de-humanising sexual role imposed on them by the fear of unwanted pregnancies.

Abortion is not a matter of 'individual consciences'. Nor is it some overriding moral issue. The right of women to an abortion is as much an issue of working class politics as the right to better health services, better education, and equal pay. It is an inseparable part of the struggle by which both men and women can gain their emancipation.

CONCERN OF THE WORKING CLASS

Women's problems cannot be solved in 'individual' and 'private' ways. Matters like abortion, free contraception, wife-battering, nursery facilities and equal pay are the concerns of all the working class. If the workers' movement does not take up these issues and make them a central part of a campaign to change society it will leave its flank exposed to reaction.

The crisis of capitalism means that there is a real conflict about where the resources of the State should be used. The fewer abortions on the NHS there are, and the fewer family planning clinics the State has to provide, the more money will be available to bail out the bankrupt, ailing firms of capitalism. This is another reason why the ruling class wants to shift the burden of the crisis of social expenditure back onto the family.

Furthermore, unless the workers' movement wholeheartedly fights for the full rights of women it will not get its own freedom. Nor will it involve millions of women in the fight for socialism. This is why the IMG whilst supporting the campaign against White's Bill, has always—and will continue to—fight in that campaign for the rights of all women to free contraception and abortion on demand.

The 21 June demonstration against White's Bill called by the National Abortion Campaign must have the support of every trade union militant, male or female. In every area people should be organising the biggest possible contingents from trade unions, Labour Parties, trades councils, students unions, revolutionary groups and women's organisations.

A mighty show of force can defeat the White Bill. What is more it can be a big step forward in building an even bigger, stronger united movement to win THE RIGHT FOR FREE CONTRACEPTION AND ABORTION ON DEMAND.

ANOTHER SIDE OF THE COMMON MARKET DREAM

'One day it will be better at home than abroad and when I go back there, I'll be able to work for myself and I'll build myself a house. It'll be a kind of paradise. If the wages at home were a bit higher and if everyone could find work there, nobody would leave to go abroad.' — immigrant worker quoted by John Berger in *A Seventh Man*.

All the propaganda pouring from the presses of the pro-Marketees in the last few weeks has been trying to sell us the Common Market dream, the 'international fraternity' of the EEC. This book gives us another side of that dream, the nightmare of the experience of immigrant workers in Europe—one-seventh of the European workforce. This is the real face of the capitalist Common Market, this is the real international fraternity which the EEC stands for—the fraternity of exploitation and oppression.

In 1972 the author John Berger won the Booker Prize for his novel 'G', and at the presentation denounced the imperialist role of the Booker family—one of the main sugar monopolists in the Caribbean—vowing to use the money to help overthrow them and their class. He gave half the money to the Black Panthers and used the other half to finance the writing of *A Seventh Man*.

Most books with political themes fall into the categories of fiction or non-fictional 'objective analysis'. This book is different. Berger has attempted a skilful combination of the objective situation of immigrants from Turkey, Portugal, Greece, etc. in imperialist Europe, with a semi-fictional reconstruction of the immigrants' subjective experience of that situation. To achieve this he uses a technique of reportage, analysis and the brilliant photographic work of Jean Mohr.

The result is a bitter and moving condemnation of an economic system, which by its very nature condemns large numbers (over



11 million when the book was written) of workers to spend a large part of their active lives trapped in an alien and isolated situation. They live away from their families and culture, working in dirty and dangerous jobs, and accommodated in hostile, uncomfortable barracks. This is the modern militarisation of labour with a vengeance.

Berger homes in on this two-sided contradiction of imperialism. At one end it has created economies which can't find enough labour to do the worst-paid and least desirable jobs. At the other end it has created the 'underdeveloped', stunted economies on the fringes of Europe and beyond, which are locked in a deadly cycle

migration.

But Berger doesn't simply reduce the phenomenon of temporary migration to crude economic causes:

'Underdevelopment not only kills; its essential stagnation denies life and resembles death. The migrant wants to live. It is not poverty alone which forces him to emigrate. Through his own individual effort he tries to achieve the dynamism that is lacking in the situation into which he was born ...

'Without the example of a revolutionary party, the economic and social relations which create and maintain rural poverty, appear to be unchangeable. Therefore those with most initiative do the one thing which seems to offer hope: they leave.'

**Carl Gardner reviews
John Berger's
'A Seventh Man'**
(Pelican paperback, £1-00p)

This refusal to give a crude economic determinist picture—his vivid attempts to give substance to the ideological and social factors in the process of migration—is one of the main strengths of the book. Nevertheless he does recognise the economic importance of 'guest-workers' to the European economies:

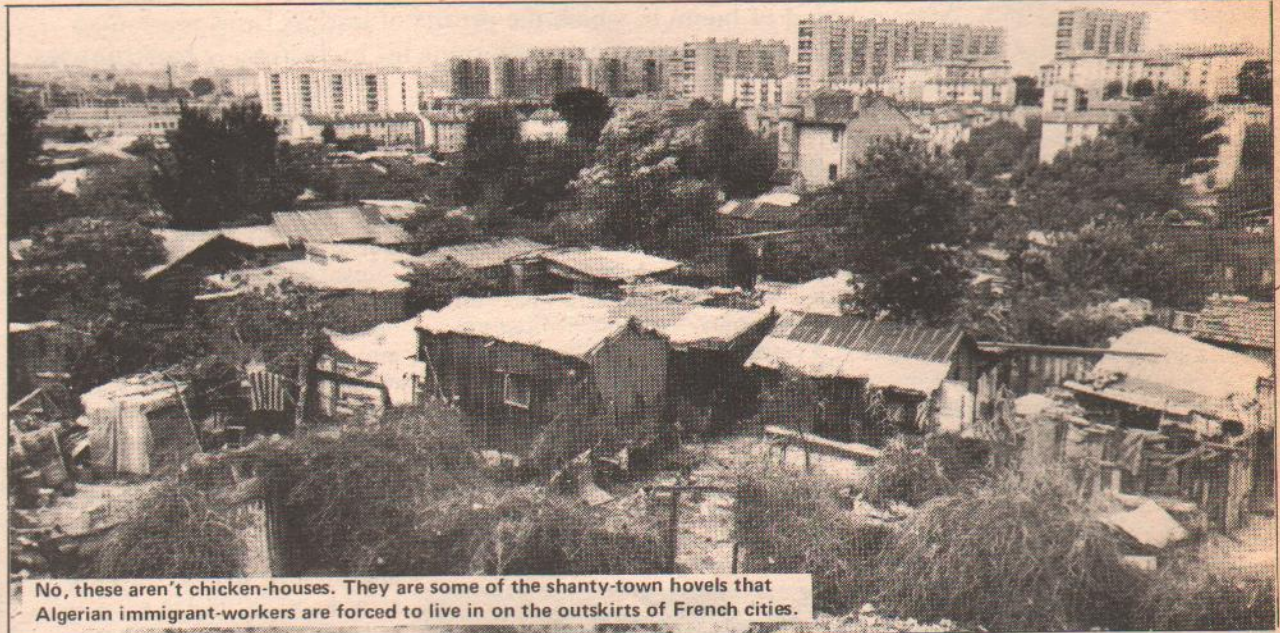
'So far as the economies of the metropolitan country is concerned, migrant workers are immortal: immortal because continually interchangeable. They are not born; they are not brought up; they do not age; they do not get tired; they do not die. They have a single function—to work. All other functions of their lives are the responsibility of the country they came from.'

However he puts equal stress on the political convenience of migrant labour. They can be used to divide and weaken the metropolitan workforce, by the use of racism and the creation of a 'labour aristocrat' mentality. They can be instantly expelled, if they threaten to become politically organised. And as far as the country of origin is concerned, emigration can reduce the political tensions that mass unemployment brings in its wake.

RECRUITMENT

The book takes us through the various stages of the migrants' journey, starting with the recruitment centres where applicants are vetted like cattle for their suitability for jobs in Germany or elsewhere. Then we see the desperate measures taken by rejected workers to gain access illegally to the metropolitan countries, and the added misery and insecurity they face if they succeed.

The conditions they sleep in (often in beds used by three workers on different 8-hour shifts), the alienation, hostility and strangeness of life in the cold, grey cities of Northern Europe, the bitterness of the jobs they have to take—all this is detailed and woven into the deepening analysis. We are given a particularly lengthy picture of the working-lives of a hundred-strong



No, these aren't chicken-houses. They are some of the shanty-town hovels that Algerian immigrant-workers are forced to live in on the outskirts of French cities.

project. In the space of a year two are killed and three suffer crippling injuries—a hundred workers forced to travel thousands of miles for a one in 20 chance of death or disablement!

And the unions? Although many of the migrants do become unionised, they are continually sceptical of their ability to fight for migrant interests. As Berger notes:

'The unions have never been able to think or act beyond the proposition that the migrant worker belongs to the country he has left and therefore does not belong where he works ...'

The unions mainly work to ensure that the domestic workers' living standards are not threatened by immigrant labour. To do this they often actively help in the victimisation of 'extremist' elements who may arise.

MYTHIC RETURN

Then there is the return after nine months or a year, or sometimes two years:

'The final return is mythic. It gives meaning to what might otherwise be meaningless. It is larger than life. It is the stuff of longing and prayers. But it is mythic in the sense that, as imagined, it never happens.

'Because the village has scarcely changed since he left, there is still no livelihood there for him. When he carries out one of his plans, he will become the victim of the same economic stagnation which first forced him to leave. He will join the already swollen and parasitic service sector ... Two or three years after his final return he or other members of his family will be compelled to go abroad once more.'

This is a moving, committed book. However, it has two main weaknesses. The first stems partly from the fact that it was completed before the present economic recession bit deep into Europe, bringing with it not just passive hostility and chauvinism but increasingly organised violence against immigrants by right-wing organisations. The attempted pogroms of Algerian workers in Marseilles, the attacks on North African workers by French marines in the streets of Toulon, the burning of the houses of Turk-



ish workers in Rotterdam are just the best-known incidents.

This increasingly frightening aspect of the immigrant's experience of Europe—the shrink-back in the job market, the violent attempts by the right to blame foreigners for the crisis and unemployment, the moves by various governments to exclude or curtail 'guest-workers'—is not really touched on.

But more important, Berger omits totally the isolated but exemplary attempts by migrant labour

to fight back. No matter how committed and sympathetic a study of oppression is, if it doesn't point to the possibility of rebellion and change, then it runs the danger of remaining an exercise in demoralisation, portraying a depressing 'norm'.

And the seeds of revolt are there. Against all the odds—their isolation, the national chauvinism of the native working class, the ineffectiveness of the trade unions, their lack of experience of proletarian organisation, their vulnerability to victimisation and expulsion—they have fought back.

BEGINNINGS

There were the Hella workers in Lippstadt in Germany, who introduced forms of struggle from Spain and Italy into Germany for the first time; the Spanish workers at a Geneva engineering works who organised the first strike in that sector for decades; the Tunisian workers' strike at Blindex in Marseilles, which won the support of the French workers; and the Spanish building workers' strike at the Muser site in Switzerland which with the help of militants of the Fourth International, organised a solidarity demonstration of 3,500 people.

All these were small beginnings, made against the stream. But they must be popularised, generalised, built on and extended if the deadly brutality of the migrant worker's lot in the European heartland, as depicted by Berger, is to be ended. And that can not be seen as separate from destroying the economic oppression of their home countries by imperialism which forced them to take their long journey to nowhere in the first place.

WHAT'S ON

NATIONAL ABORTION CAMPAIGN North West London Committee public meeting to discuss the James White Bill and the fight for free abortion on demand. Tuesday 10 June, 7.30pm, in Anson Hall, Anson Road, Cricklewood. Speakers include Gwyneth Dunwoody MP, Terry Marsland (Asst Gen Sec of Tobacco Workers Union), Dr Berry Beaumont (INAC Steering Ctee). Supported by Brent Trades Council and Working Women's Charter Campaign. For further details contact Ingrid or Ann at Brent Women's Centre, 138 Minet Avenue, NW10.

AFTER THE REFERENDUM—Which Way Forward? Public meeting Thurs 12 June, 7.30pm in Barking Town Hall. Speakers: John Hartnell (IMG Nat' Ctee) and Steve Harper (Shrewsbury Defence Ctee, in personal capacity).

FREE DESMOND TROTTER CAMPAIGN. Picket every Friday 4.30-6pm outside East Caribbean High Commission, Haymarket, London SW1.

WANTED permanent accommodation in London for Chilean political refugees. Contact Box RW/8/5

HARRINGAY NAC DISCO—8 till 12pm, Friday 13 June. Small lounge, Students Union, University College, Gordon Place (entrance in Gower Court), WC1. Nearest tubes: Euston, Euston Square, Warren St. Admission 75p (50p for students/claimants). Bar extension.

'CRISIS IN THE HEALTH SERVICE': Speakers Ron Pearson (NUPE Convener, in personal capacity), Dominic Costa (IMG). Chair: Terry Bull (ASTMS Divisional Officer, in personal capacity). Thursday 5 June at 8.00 p.m., UCATT Hall, Henstead Road, Southampton. Organised by IMG.

ISLINGTON ABORTION CAMPAIGN: public meeting Wednesday 11 June at 8.00 p.m. in Finsbury Library, St Johns Street (Angel tube). Speakers include Jo Richardson MP, Anne Coote, street theatre.

IMG SOCIALIST FORUM: 'Ireland—After the Convention, What Next?' Tuesday 10 June at 7.30 p.m. in the Friends International Centre, Torrington Place—close to London University Students Union (Warren St/Gower St tubes)

DEMONSTRATE against James White's anti-abortion Bill. Saturday 7 June, 12.30 p.m., Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

10th ANNIVERSARY of the Omani Revolution: public meeting, Friday 13 June at 7.00 p.m. in Holborn Library Hall, 32 Theobalds Road. Speakers include Fred Halliday, Stan Newens MP, an Arab worker and an Iranian student. Also a film.

'INFLATION AND THE WORKING CLASS': day school organised by Manchester Centre for Marxist Education, 1.00pm-6.00pm, Sunday 15 June at West India Centre, Carmoor Road, Manchester 14. Speakers: Dave Purdy (CPI), Geoff Hodgson (LP), Harold Best (EPTU Exec, in personal capacity). Social and creche. Details from MCME Secretary, 12 Kenilworth Avenue, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 8NA (061-434 6359).

WHOSE PRESS, WHOSE FREEDOM?—The Need for Workers Control in the Media. Public meeting with speakers Carl Gardner (IMG), Alan Hayling (TOM), Steve Harper (Ford's T&G). Friday 6 June at 7.30pm in the Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren St tube). Organised by IMG Media

WAVE OF TERROR LAUNCHED IN SPAIN



As President Ford touched down in Spain after the NATO summit, on a mission designed to draw the fascist regime more closely into Western imperialism's military alliances, the Franco dictatorship launched a wave of terror throughout the country. In the northern Basque country mass arrests under the 'state of emergency' are now being followed up by plans to murder two jailed nationalist militants after using the usual frame-up trial. Dozens of members of the Communist Party led opposition group the 'Junta Democratica' were also rounded up last week.

At the same time the regime is making moves to begin the trial of militants Eva Forest and Antonio Duran—now expected to open between 20-25 June. They face the virtual certainty of a death sentence on a trumped-up charge of being involved in the assassination of Spanish Prime Minister Carrero Blanco in December 1973.

But moves are already underway to organise mass resistance to the fascist terror. The workers' commissions (underground trade unions) and revolutionary organisations in the Basque country have called for a one day general strike and 'day of struggle' against repression on 11 June and the Trotskyist LCR-ETA(VI) has called for the extension of this action to the whole of Spain.

This is a call which the workers' movement around the world must take to heart by organising the broadest possible international solidarity to defend the lives of these militants and support the struggle against the Spanish dictatorship.



SAVE THE LIFE OF GARMENDIA!

APPEAL BY THE POLITICAL BUREAU OF THE LCR-ETA(VI)

The Francoist dictatorship has decided to condemn to death Jose Antonio Garmendia, a revolutionary nationalist militant of ETA (V), without previous warning, in order to prevent a national and international mobilisation which could stop it from going through with this assassination.

THE TRIAL COULD TAKE PLACE IN THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF JUNE!

Once more we are seeing a major mock-trial in the framework of the total mockery which Francoist legality amounts to. The sole 'evidence' is the 'moral conviction' of a military judge that this Basque militant is guilty. Apart from that they have only Garmendia's signature—obtained whilst he was in a coma, as a result of a severe head wound and the torture to which he was submitted—on the bottom of a piece of paper on which the police were able to write what they liked.

The dictatorship no doubt hopes that the thousands of arrests carried out in the Basque country under the state of emergency will be a sufficient guarantee to head off a mass mobilisation, both in this area and in the rest of the Spanish State.

But it is wrong: the working class and the oppressed masses are not ready to allow the dictatorship, in its death agony, to seize new victims! There will be no new execution! There will be no new Salvador Puig Antich!

Despite the state of emergency and the terror campaign of the fascist-police gangs, the Basque country will once more be at the head of the struggle, and the workers and oppressed masses of the entire Spanish State will make solidarity with the Basque struggle and the defence of Garmendia the central axis of their mobilisations.

It is urgent to develop an immediate response to this new attack by the murderous dictatorship. It is necessary to respond with immediate demonstrations, stoppages of work, mass meetings, and actions of

every kind in the factories, in the neighbourhoods and in the schools. It is absolutely necessary to set in motion the weapon which can halt Francoism's murderous plan: **THE GENERAL STRIKE.**

In the Basque country the revolutionary organisations and the Worker's Commissions have already decided to call for a day of struggle against the state of emergency on 11 June. It is now necessary to bring about a united call throughout the Spanish State for a general strike on the day on which the trial commences.

—We call on the workers and the oppressed masses to redouble their actions of every kind to save the life of Garmendia;

—We call on the Workers' Commissions to develop an intensive campaign of agitation, to push for stoppages of work and mass meetings, and to prepare for huge demonstrations;

—We call for immediate unity of action of all the workers' organisations at the sectoral, local and central level to organise a mobilisation which will be capable of stopping the hand of the Francoist butcher!

The dictatorship, on its death-bed, has embarked with this trial on a test of strength which could be decisive.

To transform it into a general offensive against Francoism is now the task of the mass movement!

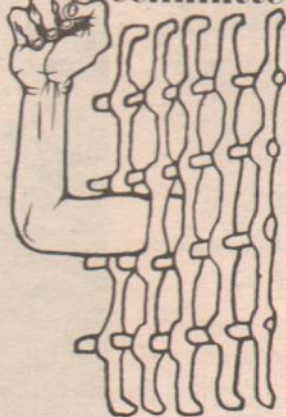
FREE GARMENDIA!

END THE STATE OF EMERGENCY!

FREE THE POLITICAL PRISONERS!

DOWN WITH THE MURDEROUS DICTATORSHIP!
23 May 1975

spanish solidarity committee

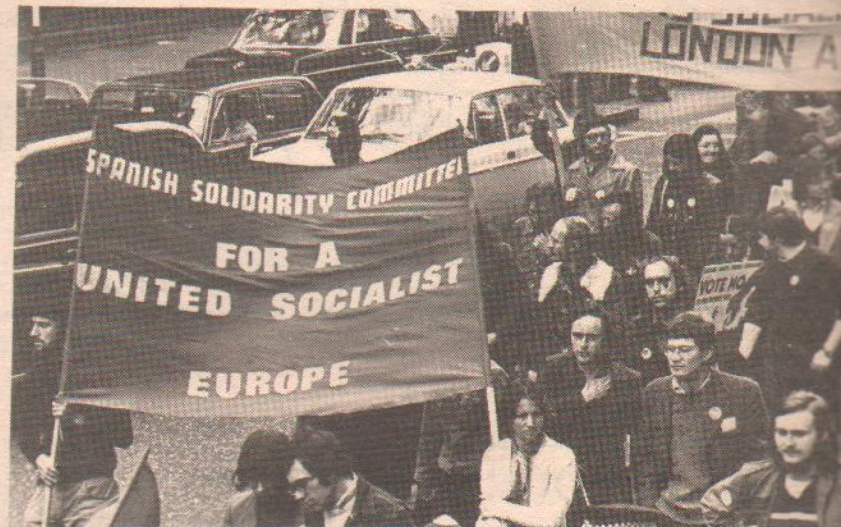


International solidarity is needed more than ever to save the lives of the threatened anti-fascist militants and to support the struggle of the Spanish people against the dictatorship and its rule of terror.

PICKET the Spanish Embassy—Saturday 7 June—10 a.m.-noon (Hans Crescent SW1 nearest tube Knightsbridge).

RALLY in solidarity with the struggle against the Spanish dictatorship—Friday 13 June, 7 pm—Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, Ctee Room 7.

DEMONSTRATE—Saturday, 14 June—assemble 2 pm Speakers Corner, march to Spanish Embassy.



Spanish Solidarity Committee contingent on last Saturday's anti-Common Market demo

THOUSANDS ARRESTED AND TORTURED

has also carried out raids against Basque nationalist sympathisers across the border in France. Many of the members of this group are off-duty policemen, and the authorities—both Spanish and French—often secretly cooperate with their activities. A car involved in a recent attack bore a registration number that has been traced to the Spanish Director General of Security, and a heavily armed thug recently picked up in France after having been identified by a Basque nationalist militant turned out to be a Spanish police officer.

To top off this wave of repression the regime is now preparing the official murder of two Basque nationalist militants it has had 'on ice' for nine months. Jose Antonio Garmendia and Angel Otaegui Echevarria were arrested in August 1974 for the murder of a police corporal. Last week their lawyers were suddenly called in by the authorities and given five days to prepare their case. This almost certainly means that the regime is planning a quick kangaroo trial before a military court, which will result in these militants being convicted and sentenced to death. Garmendia was shot in the head while being arrested and is said to be unfit to stand trial.

This brutal regime no longer has any support in Spain from anyone except its own hirelings and thugs. But before being swept away by the rising tide of mass struggle it is still capable of carrying out acts of murderous brutality. International solidarity is needed even more, now that the Franco regime is entering



On 25 April the Spanish Government declared a state of emergency in the northern Basque country, giving the authorities more sweeping powers to carry out political repression than they ordinarily possess. The state of emergency was supposedly imposed because of a number of attacks on police officials by the Basque nationalist group, ETA. But this was only an excuse: even after the ETA assassination of Carrero Blanco the regime did not feel it necessary to take such special measures.

The real reason for the State's crackdown is its desire to behead the left wing and working class opposition in this key industrial region, where the militancy of the working class is reinforced by the long-standing national grievances of the oppressed Basque people against the fascist State.

'INTERROGATION'

This is clear from the scope of the operation the regime has carried out. In the first six weeks of the state of emergency some 2,000 suspected political oppositionists—including several priests—were taken into cus-

reminiscent of Chile after the coup, with the bull ring converted into a temporary detention centre packed with more than 1,000 detainees. Among those rounded up last week were ten representatives of the 'workers' commissions' (underground trade unions).

VICIOUS

So far at least 80 of those detained have been handed on to military tribunals, where they face frame-up trials and vicious jail sentences for the most trivial acts.

The 'interrogations' are being carried out in the true traditions of this bloody regime. Torture is routine. One priest is in a critical condition in hospital after having been in police hands for several days, and another has emerged permanently disfigured after his interrogation.

Not satisfied with this official campaign of repression an independent fascist group called the 'Guerillas of Christ the King' has been carrying on its own campaign of violence. Homes and shops belonging to suspected

MAURITIAN POLICE ATTACK STUDENTS' DEMONSTRATION

On 20 May police and security forces in Mauritius used batons and tear-gas to beat up a peaceful demonstration of 15,000 high-school students who were marching towards the capital, Port-Louis. In Port-Louis itself another 10,000 students had assembled waiting for the marchers. The demonstration was the high point in a series of strikes launched by students in most of the important colleges of the country.

The demands of the students were wide-ranging. They were protesting against the deplorable conditions in all the colleges—lack of laboratory equipment, inadequately stocked libraries, and staff shortages. They were also demanding an end to discrimination against students attending rural colleges, free secondary education, more democracy in the colleges, and a radical reform of the archaic colonial education system.

nature of the Mauritian government. It is yet another indication of the inability of Ramgoolam's neo-colonial regime to rule without the use of force. This student-led movement, the first of its kind in the history of the island, took place in open defiance of the state of emergency prevailing at the moment.

More importantly, the strikes represent the most important form of popular opposition to emerge since 1971 when the massive strikes of Mauritian workers led by the reformist MMM were defeated. The MMM, in fact, seems to have played no role in the strikes: one of its leaders is reported to have denounced the students as 'irresponsible'. The initiatives undertaken by the students point to the crucial role Mauritian youth will be called to play in the harder struggles in the coming period. They thus represent an



The one area of Britain which will almost certainly return a substantial 'no' vote when the results of the EEC referendum are announced is Scotland. The reasons for this are not hard to find. Since the decline in the traditional industrial bases of Scotland began—in textiles, engineering, steel and even coal—Scotland has alternatively suffered as a 'distressed', 'depressed' and now 'development' area. High unemployment and poor housing, low wages, a high net emigration and atrocious social services and conditions have been the lot of three generations of Scottish workers. The ravages of industrial development and decline are a direct result of the blind and irrational way in which the capitalist economic system works—and Labour Governments along with Labour-controlled councils have done nothing to halt it.

Scotland foreshadows what will hit vast sections of the British working class as the process of economic decay and capitalist concentration of industry around the Midlands and the South East accelerates—a process speeded up, but not fundamentally changed, by membership of the Common Market. But Scotland shows more than this. The discovery which, if exploited in a planned way, could bring the greatest promise of change—North Sea oil—has resulted instead in the greatest explosion of unstable multi-national investment yet seen in Britain. It has also given rise to a situation unparalleled in the rest of Britain, where the major capitalist party, the Scottish Nationalist Party, has *opposed* the Common Market.

BACK-DOOR DEAL

The importance of this fact is that the SNP, far from swelling the ranks of those fighting the multi-nationals, is doing a back-door deal with the oil monopolies and their financiers to strengthen the multi-nationals. This gave the Labour anti-Marketters in Scotland a particular duty to understand and explain clearly the nature of the Market, its origins, the alternatives, and the way in which the fight against it must be conducted. Instead, despite the united opposition of the Scottish Labour Party and the Scottish TUC, the 'lefts' not only failed to organise a united campaign against the Market, but they did not even recognise the measures necessary to conduct the real fight: against the multi-nationals.

The real enemy is well known to Scottish workers. Singer, Plessey, Honeywell, Timex, ITT and Hoover are household names. Every one of them has seen major battles over pay and conditions, or has introduced lay-offs and short-time working. In two successive, protracted strikes, ITT virtually closed down their STC factory in East Kilbride to get rid of the militants. Every time a new pay claim threatens Chrysler, the American managers are roped in to announce that the factory will close if the trouble continues. The power which Chrysler possesses is enormous: before they would come to Scotland they got a special agreement guaranteeing them a certain percentage of exports.

ALTERNATIVE

Scottish workers have been caught in a crossfire between America, Europe and the Middle East. Foreign and multi-national control of industry is far higher in Scotland than the rest of Britain, and is still rising. Yet a whole section of the capitalist class in Scotland, spearheaded by the Scottish Nationalist Party, is seeking an alternative *outside* the Market.

The SNP has now replaced the Tory Party as the main ruling class party in Scotland. Sir Hugh Fraser, Sir William Lithgow, and Lord Clydesmuir have given the SNP far more than respectability. They have put the backing of Scotland's main capitalists squarely behind the Nationalists, and they have lined up the important finance companies involved in oil—Noble Grossart, Edward Bates, and the Scottish banks. They have made the Oil Connection for the SNP, enabling its influence to grow in capitalist circles to the extent that SNP leaders like William Wolfe tour North America and speak with Kissinger and Kennedy, while the Arab states in OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum and Exporting Countries) demand that the SNP be represented at

OPEC meetings with equal status to the governments of other countries!

The SNP has opposed the EEC at the same time as it paints a sham picture of an independent Scotland, using North Sea oil to bargain with the world. More dangerous still, a whole section of the Labour Party in Scotland—the devolutionists—have been using very similar arguments. Both call for a Scottish Assembly because they believe the solution to the crisis in Scotland lies through the use of North Sea oil.

MONOPOLIES

The SNP propose the *private* ownership of oil in a Scottish *capitalist* economy. The Labour Party official policy is for the *private* ownership of oil within a British *capitalist* economy. The Scottish Labour Party Executive, which took a strong stand against devolution, proposes the *full public ownership* of the oil and oil-related industries—a substantially different attitude.

The attitude of the SNP and the proposals of the Labour Party do not differ in one fundamental respect—the oil remains in the hands of the oil monopolies. The propaganda of the SNP is thus based on a huge and monstrous lie. The slogan 'It's Scotland's Oil' is a meaningless con, because it hides the fact that the oil is neither England's nor Scotland's but belongs to the international oil monopolies.

COMMON MARKET

The most illuminating insight on what the SNP is up to is provided by the way it has changed its position on the Common Market. Three years ago its position was 'No Voice, No Vote', which meant it was not opposed to the Common Market, but would campaign against Britain going in because Scotland could not decide for itself whether or not it wanted to go in. But this was before the SNP's links with the oil monopolies were consolidated.

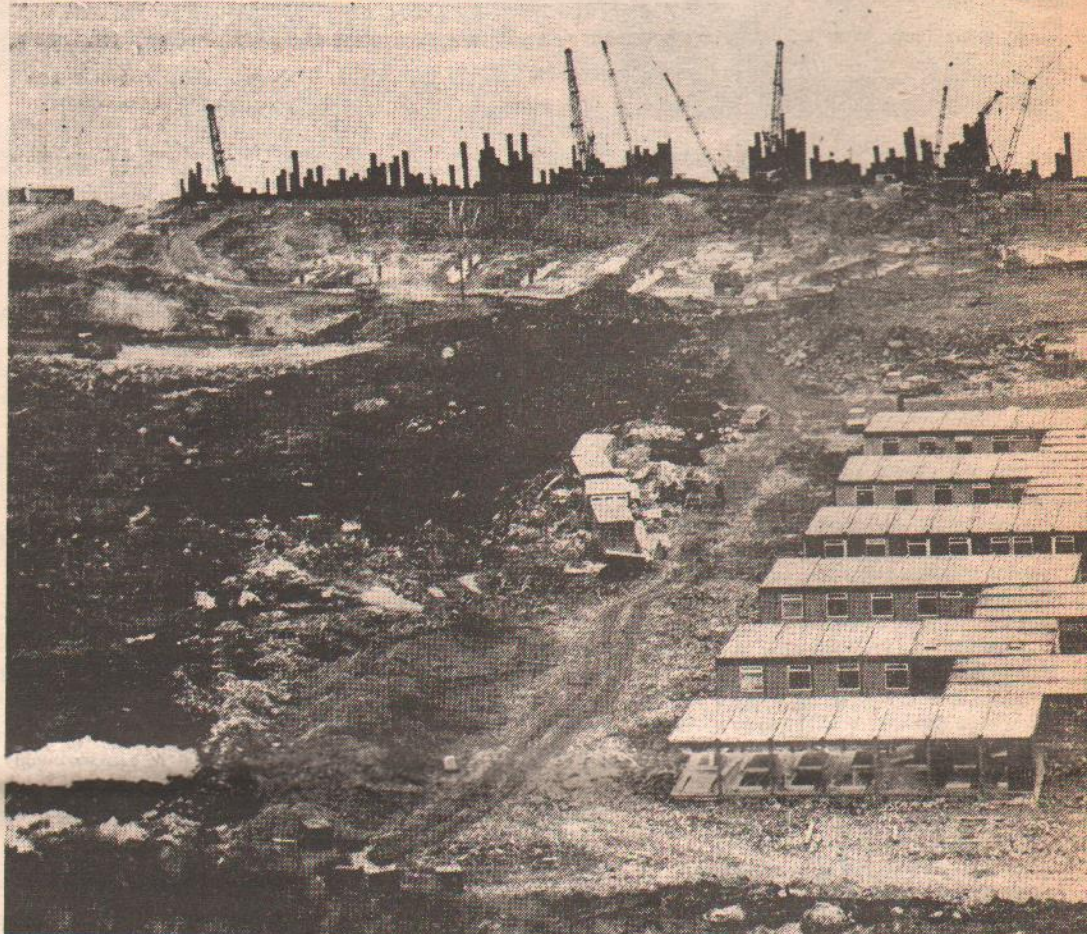
Unlike the rest of the capitalist class in Britain, the SNP's backers are not after effective competition with American capital through protection against it, but after *collaboration* with it. In the case of Edward Bates, new whizz-kid merchant bankers, the process has gone even further. Bates' chairman, in his last annual report, announced that profits were down on the previous year. The reason for this, he said, was that investment prospects in Scotland were not adequate. There was no room for expansion for all the capital (Bates expanded from £2.5 million to £24.5 million between 1969 and 1972) they had amassed. They were going to invest it ... in America!

CAPITAL EXPORTED

This follows an all too familiar pattern. The problem for the Scottish economy has never been the amount of capital owned or controlled by or through Scottish bodies. Scotland is the home of one-third of Britain's investment trusts, one-sixth of all life insurance companies, and a substantial part of the unit trust and savings movement. But of all the capital raised in Scotland (capital raised per head of population is *higher* in Scotland than the rest of Britain), one-third was invested in the USA and nearly all the rest abroad. (*The Banker*, May 1974).

The backers of the SNP are not interested in prosperity for the Scottish working class,

THE RAPE O



ment in Scotland for Scottish capitalists. Their job is to pass on the capital generated or sent into Scotland and invest it where it will make the most profit. They are the 'fences' for the super-profits of the oil monopolies, and the fact that they live in Scotland in no way means they will store their goods there.

These events also demonstrate the real nature of the threat posed by the EEC. It is not, as the Labour 'left' would have us believe, the threat to British 'sovereignty'. It lies in the fact that the big firms, the big industries, the big monopolies that dominate the lives of most workers have become *international*. The threat to the working class comes from the fact that these companies want to use institutions like the EEC to strengthen themselves against the world working class.

PAWN

The SNP's strategy is the strengthening of the multi-nationals *by a different road*. They gave the game away when they were interviewed by the *Scotsman* for the April 'Oil Register'. They said, in answer to a question as to what they saw as the relation between oil and Europe, that Scotland should use its oil resources to obtain special trading agreements with the EEC and the European Free Trade Area countries. This means that *the oil companies will use Scotland as a pawn to get the trading agreements they want—willingly assisted by the multi-nationals with branches in Scotland.*

The devolutionists take exactly the same position when they back the Labour left's policy of 'special trading agreements' as the alternative to the Market, accompanied by import and exchange controls. Import and exchange controls can be avoided by the multi-nationals transferring money and products 'internally', and provide no protection against the anarchy of the world market. The 'lefts' take this wrong position because they believe that parliamentary institutions, be they British Parliament or the Scottish Assembly, can possess the powers to deal with capitalism.

Nothing reveals the sham character of the proposed Assembly, and the weakness of the

'lefts', more than the fate of the policies which have already been used, and which the Labour left and the TUC so earnestly back against the EEC — its regional policy.

The Labour Government particularly encouraged American investment in Scotland in the 1960s. In a situation where the number of pits dropped from 166 to 47, and the number of miners from 83,000 to 39,000 between 1958 and 1968, and where the number

THE SOCIALIST

The development of offshore oil could, in a opportunity for the workers of Scotland and B the oil reserves could help to satisfy the energy working class, but of workers throughout the v It would enormously extend the lifetime of emergence of a whole range of oil-related and a stable base for the long term employment of onment and of social amenities and housing co their families in Scotland — particularly in a p starvation of the regions and allocate necessary

But a planned economy would have to be o taking into account the overall and long term e carried out. This would mean at least ensuring

- the stability of the jobs being created,
- the effect on jobs in existing industries of the energy-related industries, ship-building and so o
- the creation of housing and a stable commun are moved to new areas,
- the effects of investment on amenities and th ion, preserving the environment etc.

To carry out such planning, it would be nec tax concessions to the multi-nationals, and utop controls, and occasional free trade agreements,

- the nationalisation without compensation an industries and the drawing up of an integrated i ion of North Sea oil,
- the nationalisation of basic industries and the as part of an integrated plan for the siting of in provision of social and other services in the Sco
- the nationalisation of the banks and financ c ment for these projects,
- complete control of all foreign trade and the countries,
- the development of international working cla the basis for a workers' plan on a European sca Market for a United Socialist Europe.

ber of yards on the Clyde fell from 17 to three with the loss of 15,000 jobs in the same period, Labour's regional policy had the effect not only of accelerating this decline in traditional industry, but also in replacing it with a lesser amount of unstable, multi-national industry.

Furthermore, this investment has done

SCOTLAND



ish poverty. Nearly a quarter of Scotland's population are living in poverty or just above the poverty line. Unemployment continues permanently above Southern levels—above all in the black spots of Clydeside and Tayside. And more ominous still, the new employment resulting from oil-related industry does not extend significantly beyond the construction of rigs and pipelines—which will tail off

ALTERNATIVE

ist planned economy, present a tremendous as a whole. The planned exploitation of raw material needs not just of the British

oil resources. It could stimulate the industrial developments which could provide fish workers. Careful planning of the environment transform the living conditions of workers and British economy which would halt the trees.

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thin four to six years. The Transport and eral Workers Union newspaper *Highway* imates that 58,000 new jobs will be ated from oil—not much over half the ent unemployment rate.

The TUC statement on why the EEC

policy. The most damning indictment of this defence is found in the Scottish Council Research Institute Report on *Economic Development and Devolution*, quoted in the *Glasgow Herald* (12/8/74): 'The report points to the failure of British regional policy despite the fact that in the last decade Scotland received on average more than 30 per cent of all expenditure under the Local Employment legislation, around 35 to 40 per cent of regional employment premium, and nearly 40 per cent of the limited expenditure under the 1972 Industry Act.

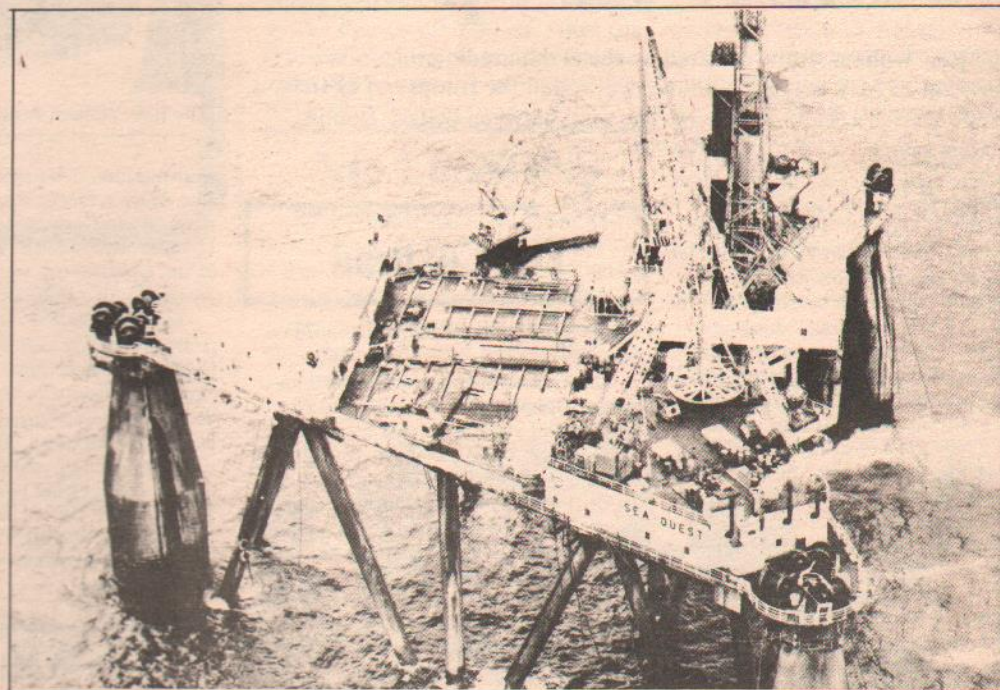
'The report states: "yet unemployment continues unabated ... as though regional policy had never existed."

The reasons for this lie in the very same processes that gave rise to the Common Market itself. The multi-nationals invest where they can get the greatest return on their capital. Scotland has been unable to attract balanced investment because capital investment has concentrated in the growth regions of the Common Market, in the new post-war growth industries—petrochemicals, electronics and so on.

WORKERS' STRENGTH

The multi-nationals are big enough to sell and produce in several countries. They are big enough to organise a division of labour on an international scale. They are big enough to place a branch factory in a declining region such as Scotland, pick up the tax concessions and take advantage of the cheap labour force, and transport the product to where it is sold or assembled. But as soon as the labour force gets too expensive, or the market goes down, or the tax concessions are threatened—the screws are tightened.

In Scotland, where the scale of multi-national investment is *higher*, and the rest of the economy much *weaker*, the multi-nationals have been able to walk all over regional policy, will walk all over a Scottish Assembly, and will continue to walk all over the working class unless it organises *internationally* to use its own strength against them—and the pathetic measures of which any



THE MIGRANT LABOUR FORCE

North Sea oil has not only meant huge profits for the monopolies, but also immense social disruption in Scotland, huge despoliation of areas of natural beauty, no guarantees of any permanent changes in industry leading to an increase in secure jobs, and a very big threat of massive redundancy when rig and pipeline construction tails off in the late 1970s.

The central reason for this is the *process* of oil development. During the initial stages, great expenditure on rig-construction and pipelines takes place to create a system for getting the oil out and ashore. But once this stage comes to an end, the labour required to maintain production and transportation is much smaller.

What happens is that a massive, displaced, migrant labour force is created which has absolutely no job security, atrocious social conditions, and which will have its livelihood taken away as fast as it was given when rig construction ends. The sort of thing which is occurring is well-described in the *Architects' Journal* (June 1974):

'All might have been well there at Nigg Bay, had the American developer kept the promises on which planning permission was awarded. But within eighteen months the workforce had risen from the stated ceiling of 600, who were to be 'local people', to an incredible total of nearly 3,000 coming from all over the UK, Spain and Italy. Ross and Cromarty County ... can now boast a massive immigrant workforce. This includes 800 men who exist on two battered old Greek liners anchored offshore, and 200 female welders putting in continuous 12-hour shifts in working conditions which have created a massive turnover of workers.'

And later, speaking of the same area (widely hailed as Scotland's new 20th Century 'Europort'), it wrote that 'still no long-term industry independent of oil has established itself.'

The oil monopolies are not in the game to build industry or a social structure in Scotland. They are in it to get the oil out—as fast, as cheaply, and as profitably as possible.

THE ANTI-UNION OFFENSIVE

The development of offshore oil has been accompanied by a mushrooming of Scottish financing activity, and by a stream of British and European construction firms rushing to get in on pipeline and rig construction.

Only four substantial projects are using existing labour forces and facilities—this in a situation where Scotland has lost 19,000 jobs in shipbuilding alone since the war. A huge technical fabric of falsehoods have been woven to try to prove that rig construction can only take place away from existing urban centres (and trade union organisation); and the activities of the constructors have totally outstripped and ignored attempts by local authorities to create urban centres in parallel with major construction projects such as the Nigg Bay project.

The constructors' investment is cynically tailored to one objective: how to produce what will sell best, quickest. To get this they have constantly lied, fought unionisation, ridden roughshod over planning machinery (with the assistance of the Labour Government, whose only nationalisation so far has been of development land to make sure that the constructors can get at it), and created a distorted and totally unstable economy.

For example, Taylor-Woodrow/Mowlem tried to justify the building of huge all-concrete production platforms on Loch Carron, which is owned by the National Trust of Scotland, on the basis of the popular myth that its deep water was technologically essential. But as the *Architects' Journal* (June 1974) pointed out: 'The truth, however, is that while Loch Carron may be the only site where *this particular type* of Norwegian all-concrete platform (for which Mowlem hold the licence) can be built, it is not, as implied, the only site where any type of concrete platform can be built.

'Embarrassing proof of this came half-way

through the Drumbuie enquiry when McAlpine announced its intention to build all-concrete platforms on the lower Clyde for use on deep-water (200 metres) sites. The developers' embarrassment was multiplied when a Department of Trade and Industry spokesman supporting them admitted under cross-examination that all the figures backing his case were supplied by Mowlem, the developers, themselves. In defence of his dubious testimony he claimed that the Government lacked sufficient resources to carry out the necessary research.'

When Taylor-Woodrow were bluntly asked at the enquiry why they could not produce platforms on the lower Clyde, using slightly different techniques, they replied that it would be possible but union trouble would be too great. How much easier to deal with a malleable, displaced, fragmented labour force cooped up in labour camps!

MASSIVE ATTACK

The last use of such a policy was made by Adolf Hitler. Now it is hailed as an economic miracle. By making huge pools of migrant labour in areas where no stable employment is being created, by continuing the rundown of the Clyde area, a systematic pattern of anti-union activity is set up. Workers are being forced out of the traditional strongholds of the working class in Scotland into situations where union organisation is a huge struggle—against the lump, against cowboy sub-contractors, and against physical intimidation and victimisation by employers.

This investment pattern is the opposite of planned development in line with social need. It combines the most cynical money-grabbing with a massive, concerted, Scottish-wide attack on working class organisation. The oil and oil-related developers are organising the social and economic rape of Scotland.

Why a loud-mouthed vicar sent the balloon up

When the Rev. William Arlow declared on the Dublin radio programme 'The Week' on 25 May that Britain intended to pull the troops out of Ireland, he certainly started a flurry of activity. The wires between Belfast, Dublin and London have been humming all week.

What Mr Arlow said was that he had reason to believe that the British Government had given the Provisionals a firm commitment to withdraw: 'All that I can say is that I have reason to believe this will happen I cannot add to this statement or take from it'.

In his reply the Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees, was at pains to point out that all he had done was to enlarge on his previous position that the troops would go, given 'a genuine and sustained cessation of violence'. But Arlow went further. His information, he said, was that the troops will go if the Convention collapses.

What was worrying Arlow and others like him was as he said himself, the more than distinct possibility that the Convention will collapse. After that, all he could see was a doomsday situation of civil war and bloodshed. Undoubtedly certain high placed individuals in British ruling class circles hoped that such statements would put pressure on the Loyalist ultras to make a few concessions towards 'power sharing' and other discarded policies of the British in order to avoid just such a situation.

CHARITY

Even the *Irish Times* of 27 May was moved to urge the Loyalist leaders—including William Craig, who at that time had not actually visited the Convention—to walk the hundred yards from Stormont to Lord Craigavon's tomb where they could study his motto: 'Charity Provokes Charity'.

But the writing is clearly on the wall in the north of Ireland. The Convention election results revealed a Loyalist poll of 35%, an SDLP poll of 15% and a boycott of 37%. The middle ground that Rees had tried to cobble together whilst the army

by **Ted Coxhead**

smashed into the resistance has vanished into dust.

On the one side now stands an anti-Unionist population that will not allow five years of struggle to pass by with nothing to show for it, and on the other a brazen Loyalist population with a huge majority in the new Convention bellowing about preserving its sacred rights.

Reverend gentlemen like Mr Arlow might well hesitate before contemplating the future. They see clearly that all the best laid plans of British Governments have come to nothing, for there is no British solution to the legitimate struggle of the Irish people for self-determination. What is evident is that British Government policy is paralysed at the present time, thus enabling the wildest rumours to take on credibility.

Of course the British ruling class would like to have its army back home for the impending battles against its own working class. But it cannot do just as it pleases. It would have liked the Government of the South to police the whole of Ireland for it, but that plan collapsed with Sunningdale. It certainly cannot unleash war against its oldest ally, the Protestant population in the North—and yet just to hand over to these elements would also cause massive problems, not least the prospect of civil war. So it is stuck.

The interesting thing about this situation is the panic into which it has thrown the Loyalist leaders. *Red Weekly* has consistently maintained that the troops do not and



The Rev. William Arlow

were not intended to play peace-keeping role. They in fact give support—moral and physical—to the most vicious elements of Loyalist sectarianism. That is why sections of the Loyalists are so worried about the possibility of a pull-out.

In fact six of the strongest Loyalist groups, including even the 'Red Hand Commando' have now set up a united command structure. They have cooperated before of course, during the UWC strike, but not on this level. These groups have only been able to operate in the way they have because of the benign eye cast by the British Army over their activities. The presence of the British Army is the guarantee that this sectarian statelet can continue to exist.

UNWILLING

This is the framework in which the Loyalist workers have always tried to solve the problems caused for them by imperialism and the capitalist system. If the army goes they will be forced to abandon the old methods and come to terms with the real cause of their oppression—the imperialist system. This is precisely why the British Government is unwilling to just pull out the troops.

It is, of course, precisely for this reason that a massive movement for the withdrawal of troops must be built within the British working class movement. The construction of such a movement is the sure way to get the troops out. Not only would that be a big victory for the British working class, it would be a massive step on the road towards the victory of the anti-Unionist forces. That is the only kind of 'charity' British workers need be interested in.

1. PETER ARNLIS

«Provisional Sinn Fein»

Brian Grogan persists in *Red Weekly* in misrepresenting the Provisionals' good reasons for their political bombing and for their qualification (by 'controlled' violence) of the truce.

For instance, in the issue of 17 April he says: 'They have now moved to a policy of defence'. When has the IRA since 1969 failed to defend its people? He continues: 'This statement (that the Provos were a 'legitimate' community self defence reflex) could be developed by the Provisionals to stimulate the minority into organising its own self-defence'. In late 1969 when our areas first came under siege from the police and the Loyalists we then

apparent differences within the Loyalist ranks are mostly illusory and border on fascism.

As I said in a letter published in *Red Weekly* of 10 April: 'There are a number of excellent reasons for the bombing campaign. Symbolically, buildings and factories owned controlled and exploited by the foreign imperialist are attacked and seen to be attacked. To protect the property of the capitalists the enemy finds it necessary to mount road-checks, patrol and search civilians in the business zones: thus its important tactical value of tying down soldiers who would otherwise be employed in suppressing guerilla strongholds.'

'The (Provisional) leaders are the only people capable of creating a 32-county, Socialist Republic.'

went through the motions of what he is *only now* prescribing!

The organisation of districts undertaken by the Provos was a search for Volunteers to engage in defence; political awareness increased, issues were clarified and the prospects for Revolution enhanced by confrontation with the imperialists. The initial defence was still paramount but the Volunteers were subsequently to defend the socialist ideal through five years of heroic guerrilla warfare.

Grogan's main objections to the resumption of the bombings are that they would dissolve the differences in the Loyalist and imperialist ranks and that they disillusion the minority over the real source of the violence. It must be stressed that the history of the past six years has left the minority in no doubt as to the real source of the violence, and that the

The Government unable to stop the bombings, has to foot an enormous and costly bill, which brings involvement down to an unprofitable level. Profitability — the raison d'être of Occupation — is attacked at the roots. The bombing is complementary to the military attacks waged by Provisional units from their areas (the ghetto, the estate, the suburb) against a now depleted force. To a true revolutionary its polarising effect must be seen as favourable. It divides and commits the society into two camps — those for the IRA and those against.

The immediate effect of this is the visibility and magnitude of a mandate. There are no fence-sitters — even the fences have been blown to bits! It creates ammunition for unimaginable propaganda victories...

'Politically, the bombings increase instability and demonstrate by wide-

HOW BRITISH TROOPS 'KEEP THE PEACE'



These pictures are not pleasant. They are of the faces of inmates of Long Kesh, after they had been 'pacified' by the British Army, during the burning of the camp on October 15, 1974. These photos have just come to light — they are the only ones remaining. The rest, taken in hospital, have been destroyed by British Intelligence.

On the night of October 15, 3000 troops, using tear-gas, truncheons and boots attacked the 600 unarmed internees and between 50 and 200 inmates had to be hospitalised, some for weeks. The man in the middle, Hugh Dorian, lost an eye, as did at least one other prisoner..

And for what? For simply protesting against being imprisoned without trial, for demonstrating to return to their homes and families.

Next time you are told the British Army is playing a 'progressive role' in Northern Ireland, just get out these photos. This is the real face of British government policy in the 6 Counties — barbarism, repression and violence.



POLEMIC

THE WAY AHEAD IN IRELAND



spread disorder that the rule of even oppressive laws is impossible. More importantly, it demonstrates that the long, khaki-coloured arm of the law is of capitalist design. The Irish Republican Army of the working class have shown the working class their capabilities and indomitable strength whilst led by a revolutionary vanguard with good politics.

Implicit in the aims, methods and outcome of Provisionalism is the existence of a revolutionary nucleus. The leaders are the only people capable of creating a 32-county, Socialist Republic. They have considered how to carry this out; and if bombing is an ancillary tactic in their arsenal then its use has been decided upon by an authority—the revolutionary guerilla—and is not to be attacked by an armchair critic.

I would add further how the bombing campaign is able to highlight oppression and in appealing to world opinion win support for the Irish cause (acknowledge TOM)

JUST A TACTIC

Thus, the Provo tactics of the last few years work into a pattern of measures contingent to victory; the truce must be seen as just one more tactic. In the truce the Provos have laid their emphasis on their sincerity and discipline; on the insincerity of the established politicians; they have again confirmed the real source of the violence; gained the confidence of wider sections of the minority subservient to an SDLP analysis; and finally braced themselves for the oncoming struggles. Incident centres have the added attraction of provoking antagonism from the losers.

A letter from Jim Clayton also appears in your columns. Himself and Grogan are like twin brothers, for he highlights the crucial political weakness of the Provos as their 'elitism'; yet his interpretation of Irish events is so far removed from informed revolutionary opinion that it is the epitome of its own attack: elitism.

To quote him: 'In the defence of the ghettos... the Provisionals failed to develop mass self-defence'. He fails to define 'mass self-defence', but I detect a point: ignorance of the geography of the Irish city ghetto and a readiness to accept the term 'no go' as definitive inclines Mr. Clayton to conclude that somewhere the Provos are failing.

'NO GO AREA'

The answer is simple. The term 'no go area' implies a formidably barricaded and constantly besieged quarter. In reality 'no go' areas never existed for any great length of time (apart from Derry, where there was little sectarianism and where mass mobilisations against Army intrusions were quite successful).

For four weeks in late summer of 1969 no security forces entered the Catholic ghettos because of barricades. To this day RUC incursions meet fierce successful resistance. It is these areas hostile to the RUC which have been termed 'no go'. As the war developed these areas opted

by thousands of British soldiers who commandeered schools, stadiums and playgrounds. Barricades have existed whilst street battles ensued or as a token of mass resistance. Each time the masses were involved and the armed Volunteers gave cover.

Jim Clayton also attacks the bombing campaign, mouthing the overall *Red Weekly* attitude. However the logistics of guerrilla warfare dictate the Provo approach, which is more to be admired than your strict adherence to political dogma over and above successful military considerations.

Mobilisation of the masses can

again be expressed when the occupation forces have been pulled out and effective leadership given by politicals from within the Revolutionary Army. Such overt leadership if given presently would be tantamount to giving the enemy intelligence which they can only gather from intimidation and torture.

Perhaps it's just a particular trait of the Irish method that Clayton's 'Provo conspirators' do exist. However; in contrast to yourselves, their popularity and dissemination of the socialist philosophy is particularly admirable. Their excellent relinquishing of the armchair most notable

2. BRIAN GROGAN

 replies

The policy of the Republican movement is decided by two contradictory factors. Above all else the Provisional IRA is a genuine product, and a genuine expression, of the spontaneous aspirations of the Catholic minority in the ghettos. The reason that the Provos are the most important and most respected force is because—unlike every other organisation—they provided a means by which the minority could organise to fight for their demands.

However, the Provos are still trapped in all the prejudices of traditional Republicanism. They define the struggle as essentially a military fight against the British Army. They extol the heroic role of the individual or the small group above the need for mass involvement.

APRON STRINGS

They are also confused about the class nature of the fight against imperialism. Hence they do not see the need to link up the struggles against both the Loyalists and the Southern Irish capitalist class, although both the Loyalists and the Southern Irish capitalists are inseparably tied to the apron strings of imperialism.

Caught on the one hand by the enormous pressure of the oppressed, essentially working class Catholic masses, and tied down by their traditional ideology, the Provos swing back and forth. This irresolvable tension has been responsible for the oscillations, ambiguities and mistakes of the last two years. It reveals itself in the Provos' attitude to the present truce and Peter Arnlis shows it in his letter.

The Provo leaders claimed the ceasefire and the subsequent truce as a major victory for their strategy. Hailing it as a defeat for the British Army, they said that it laid the basis for negotiations with the British. Arnlis claims 'the truce was just one more step' in the pattern of measures contingent to victory.

This wild overestimation is the result of the Provos' confusion about the nature of the Loyalists

to imperialism.

The Provos mistakenly saw the tactical upset for British imperialism following the successful general strike in May last year as a step forward for the anti-imperialist forces. Unfortunately, the reverse was true. The minority was on the defensive and in danger of becoming seriously demoralised. The Provo bombing campaign was becoming less and less relevant to their needs.

As a result the 'peace' movement began to grow and the Social Democratic and Labour Party began to recover lost ground. The Provo leaders instinctively recognised this new reality, which is why they made such a vigorous fight to preserve the truce after the ceasefire had initially broken down. The improvement of morale amongst the minority since then has shown that the Provos were right on this issue.

But the belief that it is possible to get a victory by negotiation and by compromising with

'.....only the masses through the construction of alternative mass organisations of power can actually bring about socialism.'

British imperialism has inevitably conflicted with the needs of the mass struggle.

We can see this if we look at the way the Provos have dealt with the question of political prisoners and internees since the truce. The overwhelming burden of Provo policy has been to rely on their negotiated 'deal' with Rees. But that deal was an effort by Rees to hold the internees in pawn to the good behaviour of the minority. Thus mass pressure was initially frowned upon in an effort to keep up the Provo end of the deal.

This attempt to keep their side of the 'deal' continues in uneasy

action. From the very start the Provos presented themselves as attempting to police their side of the 'deal' to defend their negotiating position. But the Provos have a big dilemma. In rejecting the RUC they have recognised the need for 'a community police service set up amongst the people' (Belfast Brigade statement), and have suggested a united front of armed vigilantes.

But to whom should this community police force be responsible? What role should it play in defending the minority against violations of the truce from the British Army? Unfortunately, the Provo policy of 'retaliation and defence', carried out by the Provos themselves, takes the Provos right back to square one and again substitutes for mass involvement.

NO LESSONS

By posing the question yet again in terms of the Provisionals operating on behalf of the minority, rather than mobilising the minority for self-defence, the Provos are showing that they have not really drawn any lessons from the past failure.

The question of mass self-defence



Hard at work organising mass self-defence in the Catholic ghettos in 1969

is of crucial importance in this period. The overwhelming logic of events, especially given the victory of the Loyalists in the Convention, is towards the re-creation of the ascendancy. The question of mass attacks on the minority—even civil war—is on the cards. The minority as a whole has to be prepared for this.

However, this question of mass self-defence is by no means equivalent to the 'search for Volunteers', as Arnlis would have it. Of course, it is ludicrous to demand that every single person is armed. But what is of crucial importance is the need to have mass control over self-defence

the IRA gives no way forward for mass struggle. This is why we say the Provos are elitist, because the only concrete perspective they offer is 'join the IRA'.

If we look at the period of the greatest successes of the minority, we can spell out what we mean. It was the Provisionals who first understood the development of the struggle from one for civil rights to that of a fight against imperialism. But it would be a mistake to see the bringing down of Stormont purely as a product of the military activity of the Provos. On the contrary, what the focus of the smashing of Stormont allowed was the development of a variety of forms of struggle—mass street demonstrations, confrontations with the British army, rent and rate strikes, etc.—in which the masses could be involved, all aimed at the same goal. All sorts of rank and file committees sprang up as a result of this mass activity—street committees, defence committees, rent strike committees and prisoners release committees. The development of the mass struggle was such that even the SDLP was forced to withdraw from Stormont, support the rent and rates strike and pledge themselves never to return

until all internees were released.

It was these developments which led to the 'no go' areas. Comrade Arnlis trains his fire in the wrong direction. We never equated the 'no go' areas with barricades. What threw the British into so much consternation was that the minority opted out of the legality of the system and developed for themselves an independent embryonic power counterposed to that of imperialism embodied in Stormont. Without doubt, the Provos were the acknowledged leaders of this. But it was the mass institutions which grew up—not the Provos—which were the alternative authority.

SOCIALISM

For this reason we would totally disagree with Arnlis's assertion that the 'leaders are the only people capable of creating a 32 county socialist republic'. In fact only the masses through the construction of alternative mass organisations of power can actually bring about socialism.

It is only through the construction of such an alternative economic and social system that profits will be really hit. Blowing up some economic targets may well have some tactical value in the fight against British imperialism, but it is complete confusion to think that this really strikes at the root of the economic system.

To learn from this whole experience is, then, the task of the hour for revolutionaries in Ireland. The reconstruction of the 'no go' areas in the sense we outlined is vital. This means a policy which can involve the mass of the people once again and create organisations which embody their power and their legality.

Some big strides forward have been made since the beginning of the truce. As we have said many times before, to go back now to the bombing campaign or any armed struggle course not based on developing the mass



BENN and the Revolutionary Left



In the last two issues of *Red Weekly* ALAN JONES explained the nature of Tony Benn's economic policies and the problems that would arise in attempting to implement them. This week he concludes by looking at the attitude that revolutionaries should take to these proposals.

There is no doubt that the emergence of 'Bennism' as a force in the labour movement has left most of the revolutionary left in confusion.

The reasons for these confusions are not accidental. Bennite policies occupy the peculiar position of *simultaneously* failing to challenge the historic interests of capitalism (the capitalist state and the capitalist economy)—and therefore failing to solve any long term problems of the working class—while also going against the immediate interests of the ruling class.

ABSTAIN

The most obviously inadequate response is simply to say that even the most radical 'Bennite' policies cannot solve the problems facing the working class, which is really to abstain on the question. This is the view which is put across, for example, by the International Socialists when they content themselves with writing that Benn 'has no answer at all to the problems facing workers here and throughout the world' (*Socialist Worker*, 29 May). There is no doubt that this statement is perfectly true—but unfortunately it does not solve the problem of what attitude revolutionaries should take towards Bennism.

Revolutionaries do not at all abstain on questions which do not solve the basic problems confronting the working class. For example, a wage claim can at best transfer resources to the working class and cause a short-term increase in the standard of living of the workers. It certainly does not solve any of the basic problems confronting the working class. But would any socialist therefore conclude from this that the working class movement should be abstentionist on wage claims?

SHORT TERM

As for Benn's policies themselves, certainly they provide no long term answer to the problems of the working class. But the short term effects of such policies, if applied in any radical form, would have very different effects to the policies of Wilson or the Tories.

Wilson or Thatcher's policies mean an immediate reduction in the living standards of the working class and a giant leap in unemployment. Any radical form of Bennite policies would produce a short term effect of an increase in living standards and a reduction in unemployment. It is ridiculous to propose to the working class that they should be indifferent as to whether even in the short term their standard of living is rising or falling, or whether they are in jobs or not.

This is particularly the case as increased employment would increase the confidence of the working class and lead to workers themselves going beyond even the most radical Bennite proposals. Certainly revolutionaries must warn against the inability of Bennite policies to tackle the basic problems facing the working class, but it is only complete Sunday School socialism which can equate Bennite policies with those of Thatcher or Wilson

But if 'abstentionism' is a wrong policy, should revolutionaries therefore follow the *Militant* in demanding the implementation of Benn's policies as set out in Labour Party conference resolutions? Some revolutionaries, claiming to be guided by Trotsky's writings of the 1930s, have suggested this as the correct line of action.



Where undoubtedly the advocates of 'implement your programme' are more correct than the 'abstentionists' is in understanding that just because a particular policy is reformist, and cannot solve the long term problems of the working class, this does not at all mean that revolutionary socialists cannot demand that such a policy is implemented. For example, Trotsky characterised the 'de Man' plan in Belgium as 'a programme of *state capitalism* that the Social Democracy passes off as socialism', yet at the same time he demanded that the Belgian Trotskyists take as one of their central implementation of this plan.

He wrote: 'The criticism of the plan has been made many times. If we had to present a plan to the Belgian proletariat this plan would have an altogether different aspect. Unfortunately the Belgian proletariat gave this mandate not to us but to the Belgian Labour Party, and the plan reflects two facts: the pressure of the proletariat on the Party and the conservative character of this party ...

'Allow me comrades, to recall a classic example. The Russian Social Revolutionary Party formulated in May 1917 its 'plan', that is to say its agrarian programme ... What was the attitude of the Bolsheviks? They criticised the internal contradictions and inadequacies of the programme. But, before all, they

recognised that the realisation of this programme would mean an enormous advantage for the peasants, for the whole people. The Bolsheviks did everything to draw the peasants into the struggle for their plan. They even finished by inscribing the plan into their programme of action ...

'This policy was neither trickery nor treason. It was the true policy of Marxist realism... The revolutionary policy consists in demanding that the Belgian Labour Party take power in order to put its own plan into effect.'

ETERNAL RULE?

There is no doubt that on the de Man plan Trotsky was absolutely correct, but does this mean that a sort of eternal rule exists which says that whenever left reformists draw up a plan which, even if only in a short term sense, is in the interests of the working class, then revolutionary socialists must demand that it is implemented?

A moment's thought would show that this view is nonsense. Revolutionaries demand the implementation of an imperfect programme *only if no other real option exists in the situation*. Thus the reason why the Bolsheviks demanded the implementation of the imperfect land programme of the Social Revolutionaries in 1917 was not just because it was 'abstractly' a step forward, but because concretely there was no other progressive option.

NO CHOICE

No significant forces, at that point in time, could be polarised around the actual programme of the Bolsheviks and against the imperfect programme of the left Social Revolutionaries. The choice was not between the land programme of the Bolsheviks and the land programme of the Social Revolutionaries, but only between the land programme of the Social Revolutionaries and the continuation of landlordism.

Similarly the period in which Trotsky was writing, the 1930s, was one when the working class was suffering mass unemployment and had been hit by great defeats. Under these circumstances it was absurd to say that the choice facing the

working class, the possibility inherent in the situation, was whether to start the struggle on a revolutionary programme or on the left programme of the reformists. The only *real* choice was between whether to launch no struggle at all or to launch one on the left programme of the reformists.



The whole working class could be polarised behind the reformist policy but no significant forces could be polarised behind any revolutionary alternative. Only *after* some sort of struggle had been started would it be possible to seriously talk of a revolutionary programme as a real alternative to that of the reformists. It was for this reason that Trotsky said that revolutionaries, while all the time pointing out the inadequacy of the de Man plan, must concentrate their main resources on demanding a real struggle to implement this inadequate programme.

The situation of the working class today is very different. The Benn proposals are not a banner around which the whole working class has grouped. On the contrary, Benn's proposals are only the *first* stage in thrashing out an alternative programme for the labour movement.

It is of course possible, even likely, that after a certain period a particular set of left reformist policies will be thrashed out which will polarise the labour movement and group around it the most militant sections of the working class. Under these circumstances revolutionary socialists should not hesitate to demand the implementation of these plans. But for now the task of revolutionaries is not to demand the implementation of the very first policies which emerge from this debate within the working class, but to join in the discussion in order both to win the maximum number of workers to revolutionary policies and to push the whole process to the left as far as it will go.

SOCIALIST PROGRAMME

While revolutionary socialists must support particular proposals of Benn—for example, the nationalisation of shipbuilding and the aircraft industry—they should not call for the implementation of the Benn proposals. Instead they must centrally counterpose a socialist programme—based on a sliding scale of wages and nationalisation under workers control against unemployment...

But while revolutionary socialists should not call for the implementation of Benn's programme, this does not at all mean that they should not take any position on the clash which appears increasingly likely between Wilson and Benn. Just because a particular struggle is between two bureaucrats, neither of whose programmes can be supported, this does not mean that the working class should be neutral in the fight.

In fact, there are at least three reasons why socialists should adopt an attitude of fighting with the Bennites against Wilson rather than saying 'a curse on both your houses'. Firstly, as we have seen, an equals sign cannot be put between the programme of Benn and that of the present dominant section of the Labour leadership.

Secondly—reflecting the differences in programme—lined up behind Benn would be the forces of the left of the Labour Party and the overwhelming bulk of the rank and file leadership of the working class, while lined up behind Wilson would be the right wing sections of the Labour bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. A defeat for the Bennites would be a significant victory for the most right wing forces and socialists cannot be neutral in such a fight. Thirdly, again reflecting this line up of forces, any move by Wilson against Benn would concretely be a preparation for even more



Imperial Typewriters occupation—again, they appealed to Benn to save their jobs.

open attacks on the whole working class, with the Benn-Wilson struggle marking the opening shots in a war over this question.

Socialists would therefore have to take up their attitude to the Wilson-Benn clash not in terms of the personalities involved, but in terms of what such a clash signalled in terms of the policies being prepared by Wilson.

The attitude which revolutionaries should adopt to Bennism should therefore be very clear: No support for the programme of the Bennites, but defence of the Bennite forces against any attack by Wilson.



The effect of Bennism in boosting working class confidence has already been seen in the effect of the Larkhall Steel Works strike.

Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

RACIST COVER FOR NHS CUTS

At a large Yorkshire hospital an unexpected vacancy recently came up on the medical staff. Although there were plenty of applications the post was deliberately kept vacant until the consultant could find a white doctor. In the same city a British doctor applying for a job was told by the hospital secretary that he would get the job because all the other applicants were black.

These are just two blatant examples of the racism that runs like a sewer through the National Health Service. On 23 May the General Medical Council (GMC), legitimised it by deciding to cut the number of Indian doctors practising in Britain. In future they will only be given temporary registration.

This means they will not be able to prescribe drugs and will only be allowed to work in specific hospitals. If they want to move hospitals they will have to re-register. They will also have to pass examinations in language ability and in medicine.

REACTIONARY

These measures apply only to Indian doctors—but they are being considered for Pakistani, Arab and African doctors. They do not apply to Americans, Australians and white Europeans. These reactionary and discriminatory measures are justified by the GMC on the grounds that they are safeguards against declining health standards.

In fact, if Indian and other black doctors had not come to Britain the NHS would virtually have collapsed some years ago. During the 1960s the number of overseas doctors in Britain increased by 10,000. In

by
Doctor I. Davidson

that period British doctors were emigrating at a rate of about 400 a year to the more lucrative posts in the United States. At the same time another 3,000 recruits were lost to the medical profession because of Government cut-backs in education. The GMC remained quiet about so-called declining standards then!

Although Indian doctors are practising all over the world, it is only in Britain that the accusation of incompetence has been made. The GMC are of course correct when they talk about declining standards in the NHS. But they have a miserable record on tackling this question. They have taken no stand on the real issues such as private practice; cuts in social expenditure; the run-down of hospital building programmes; the archaic organisation of the medical profession; and the total lack of any realistic preventative and occupational health schemes.

Instead of dealing with these problems the GMC has simply used

Indian doctors as a scapegoat. It wants to limit their numbers to make way for the first wave of graduates from the five new medical schools and the increased intake in other schools. Because the NHS is starved of sufficient funds to run an adequate health service, there is a growing shortage of suitable posts for these new graduates.

Instead of demanding that the Government makes more money available for improving conditions and enabling the NHS to create more medical posts, the GMC hopes to force out Indian doctors, so that what is left of a declining NHS can be shared out by British and white doctors.

MORE DOCTORS

The working class movement must oppose these racist measures. More doctors are needed in the NHS, not less. By taking up the fight on behalf of the Indian doctors the labour movement will be defending its own interests. It will also be allying itself with doctors who have come to work in Britain because they are strong supporters of a free health service and are opposed to private practice.

Furthermore, many of the skills in surgery and other specialities which the Indian doctors learn in Britain they can eventually take back to India. If the GMC is successful in cutting down the number of Indian doctors it will worsen health standards in India as well as Britain.

NALGO CONFERENCE

rubbish collection. After attending a banquet given by Manchester City Council a few weeks ago, Labour Minister Tony Crosland announced that as far as local authorities were concerned 'the party was over'—local government workers' pay and public services had to suffer. Yet the response of the NALGO leadership to these attacks has been muted—tied to the sinking ship of the social contract, they would rather see their members drown than rock it.

NALGO's leaders are mandated to bring back proposals for industrial action to a meeting of all local government delegates at the annual conference if the claim has not been met by that date. After the rejection of the employers' offer widespread support needs to be developed in the labour movement for such action, linking it to the defence of social service spending. But so far little action has been taken even to explain the claim and prepare the union members for industrial action.

CUTBACKS

A number of resolutions coming up at the conference reflect NALGO members' growing awareness of the need to fight the cutbacks. Even the motion from the National Executive Committee, while continuing to wave the tattered banner of the social contract, calls on the Wilson Government to raise public expenditure and improve the standards of public services. The Greater London Council branch is calling on the NEC to campaign directly and through the TUC for the restoration of all the cuts, and an amendment from Islington branch calls on the NEC to fight to maintain and improve services with industrial action if necessary.

Following a circular at the end of

General Secretary, which called on branches to oppose any cuts and monitor those which were forced through, NALGO's general policy has been one of verbal opposition to the cuts. Activity to enforce this policy has generally been limited, but in Manchester NALGO, together with other public sector unions, recently formed a joint action committee to monitor and publish information immediately on any cuts and develop proposals for fighting them.

Local government workers are also fighting to defend their living standards. With inflation eating away at both resources and pay packets, the fight to defend both must include the struggle for automatic compensation of wages and expenditure against the effects of inflation. NALGO is separately pressing the employers for an ongoing threshold agreement for 60p for every percentage rise in the price index, backdated to October 1974.

Unfortunately a motion from Islington NALGO at the time when the claim was being drawn up calling for 1½ per cent pay increases for every 1 per cent rise in prices, together with a £15 across the board and a £40 per week minimum, was 'referred' to the NEC where no doubt it will be conveniently lost.

A fight around these types of class wide demands to defend the living standards of workers in the public services, together with a rigorous defence of existing services, would gain wide support in the whole labour movement. If the present union leadership abstains from mounting this campaign then it will be the job of rank and file union members to carry the struggle forward.

Andrew Bennett



ATTI BACKS WOMEN'S CHARTER

The Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions voted overwhelmingly at its recent annual conference in Scarborough to support a motion on Women's Rights. As well as containing detailed sections on child care provision and maternity leave, the motion supported the Working Women's Charter and called for a campaign to implement the demands of the Charter. It also urged the Association to approach the TUC for support.

This follows on the support given to the Charter by the annual conferences of the National Union of Journalists, the civil servants' union the CPSA, and the AUEW-TASS, and contrasts markedly with the way the Charter was manoeuvred out at the National Union of Teachers' Easter conference.

The ATTI conference also passed overwhelmingly an amendment deploring the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill and called on the ATTI National Council and National Executive 'to encourage members to participate in the national demonstration being organised against the Bill on 21 June'. This follows the recent decision of the ASTMS conference to campaign against the Bill and should aid the mobilisation for 21 June.

WORKERS GO INTERNATIONAL

The strengthening of the Common Market runs directly counter to the interests of the entire trade union membership employed by the General Electric Company. This is the agreed view of the GEC Action Committee, which receives active support from stewards' committees and office committees on the best organised GEC sites in Stafford, London, Rugby, Wigan, Wolverhampton, Coventry, Treforest, Leicester, etc.

The growing trend for mergers on a European scale represents a real threat to trade unionists in the electrical industry throughout the world. The importance of developing links with trade unionists working for GEC in other countries was stressed at the Action Committee's meeting on the weekend of 17-18 May. Links have been established with GEC workers in Dundalk and Dun Laoghaire with the help of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, and letters have been sent to the CGT and the CFDT in France enquiring about union organisation in the 'Lincoln' washing machine factories which are now part of the GEC group. Similar efforts are being made to get in touch with GEC employees in Germany and Portugal.

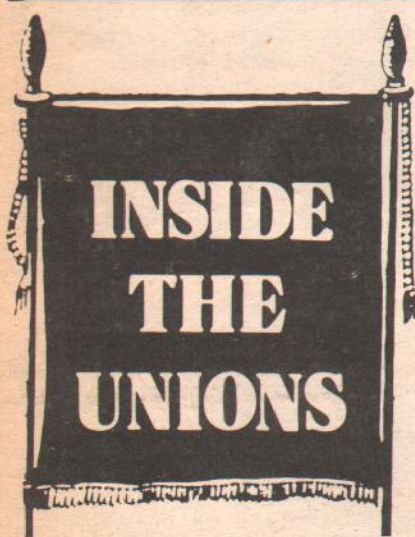
Future copies of the GEC Newsletter should contain reports from factories in these countries, as well as information on disputes and wages in the British factories. Any trade unionist working for GEC can obtain copies from the Secretary, GEC Action Committee, 140 Clarence Road, Peterborough, PE1 2LE—please send a stamped addressed envelope.

STUDENT-WORKER UNITY AT UEA

Over 700 teachers, students, tradesmen, cleaners, catering staff and part-time employees attended a mass meeting last week called by the Joint Shop Stewards Committee at the University of East Anglia, in reply to threatened economy cuts made by the Vice Chancellor. The University is the largest single employer in Norfolk with 1400 workers. The authorities plan a total freeze on all new appointments and rent increases of around 25 per cent, and have re-affirmed their intention to make catering self-financing.

The Joint Shop Stewards Committee, which has been extended to include two student representatives, had its proposals overwhelmingly adopted by a mass meeting. These include:

- Outright opposition by all means possible by the trade unions to redundancy;
- All vacancies must be filled immediately. No person is to take on the work of anyone who leaves;
- No overtime working to be made up for people not replaced or to cover the proposed cut in the hours of part-time employees.



The Labour Government's squeeze on the social services will be the key question facing the annual conference of the National and Local Government Officers Association which meets on 9 June.

With members in local government, health, education, gas and electricity all under attack, it is now crucial for the union to develop an overall strategy for fighting the cut-backs—to defend both the jobs of its members and the many social aspects of the whole working class.

Having rejected the latest offer made by the employers on the claim for £10 a week more plus 15 per cent across the board, NALGO is faced with a hard struggle to defend its members' living standards. Already massive attacks on the claim have been launched in the press, linked to the cutbacks that the Treasury and the employers are demanding in the social services.

The Economist magazine, pointing out that 85 per cent of local authority spending is labour costs, has called for widespread redundancies and the hiving



Hundreds of people took part in a demonstration through London on 26 May demanding the immediate dropping of all charges against 21 Iranian students accused of 'conspiracy to trespass' after occupying the regime's Embassy in protest at the murder of nine political prisoners.

Committal proceedings in the case have now been put back to 16 July, which means that it is unlikely to come to trial before the autumn. Meanwhile the defence campaign is steadily gaining impetus, and defence committees for the 21 have now been set up on university campuses across the country.

GLASGOW RIGHT-WING LABOUR CLIQUE MUST GO

ALL last week, militants of the Glasgow labour movement trooped through the Glasgow Sheriff Courts and the Govan Police Court. In the aftermath of the police riot against the anti-National Front mass picket of the Kingston Halls on Saturday 24 May, it has become clear that the 78 arrests represent the largest frame-up in Scotland since the mass arrests at anti-Polaris demonstrations in 1961

Sixty-five have been sent for trial in ten groups over the first three weeks of September, all charged with forming part of a disorderly crowd. The remaining

13 are charged variously with breach of the peace, police assault, assault, malicious damage, etc. These are to appear at the Govan Police Court next Tuesday for charges to be final-

ised and pleas to be taken.

But the police rioters and their sponsors among the Labour Corporation bosses are already reaping the whirlwind of their organised thuggery. The response of the Glasgow working class was described by John Reidford, Glasgow Trades Council Secretary and one of the many local labour leaders arrested, when he addressed the Glasgow District Council to demand a ban on future use of Glasgow halls by the fascists: 'I have never known such fury and frustration among the ordinary people of this city.'

BRUTALITY

The workers of Glasgow require few reminders of the notorious brutality of the city's police. But on this occasion the Strathclyde Division and its 'Support Units' may well have bitten off more than they can chew. The Scottish press has been filled with photographs of demonstrators being punched and kicked in front of a completely orderly picket.

Trying to defeat the press clamour for a public inquiry, Chief Constable McNee issued a statement stressing the 'fact' that no demonstrators were injured while 18 police had received hospital treatment. The President of the Glasgow Bar Association, a well-known Tory, immediately denounced McNee's statement: he called it 'astonishing' and 'unprecedented' and declared that the Chief Constable had prejudiced the trials of those arrested. Defence lawyer Kevin Breslin promptly filed ten charges of assault for McNee to investigate against identified policemen.

An IMG press statement, widely quoted by the press, radio and television, exposed the absurdity of McNee's remark that no demonstrators had filed complaints when they were arrested. The police had removed identification numbers. Unidentifiable Special Branch officers had carried out many of the arrests. Legal and medical aid was refused to all prisoners. Finally, the *Daily Record* pointed out that there was no record of any police officer being treated at any city hospital on the Saturday night!

PLATFORM

The right-wing Labour clique controlling Glasgow District Council decided to give the fascists their first Labour-authorized platform in Glasgow knowing full well that the police planned to enforce the decision by 'smashing the left'. Two days before the mass picket a Labour Councillor remarked to an IMG member: 'Let's face it. We all know there's going to be a riotous situation'.

RED WEEKLY



Demonstrators picket Glasgow Council meeting last Thursday demanding the dropping of all charges against the arrested anti-fascist militants

The Labour Council now stands alone before the City's labour movement. Dick Dynes, the Labour boss and architect of January's military strike-breaking against the Council's dustcart drivers, has tried to cover up his complicity by whining about 'the law and morality of politics', 'impartiality' and 'free speech'. But Dynes' 'impartiality' does not explain why the Council has maintained a *secret ban* on the letting of halls to Clann na h'Eireann for the last year.

On Thursday 29 May, 300 people picketed the Council Chamber demanding a ban on all future hall-lets to fascists. All major union district committees, the Scottish NUM, and the Clydeside Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Unions (180,000 members) were represented among the 29 organisations which put their case before the Council.

An IMG leaflet was distributed and several hundred copies were taken by trade union delegations for distribution in their workplaces. The leaflet called for:

- A trade union workers' enquiry into the police riot.
- The disbanding of the police 'Support Unit'.

● The expulsion of the Dynes clique from the Labour Party and the Council Labour group.

The Glasgow Trades Council and many other labour organisations have offered legal and financial assistance to the defendants, and the Trades Council is holding a meeting this week to co-ordinate a united defence campaign. The miners of Polkemmet colliery have called for a one day strike of all Scottish miners when their branch president and Scottish NUM vice-president David Bolton goes on trial. Discussions are also taking place among Glasgow transport workers for similar action when T&GWU District Secretary Hugh Wyper appears in court.

The Glasgow IMG, which organised a picket outside the first hearing on 26 May, is playing a leading part in the defence campaign. Thousands of copies of the IMG leaflet are being distributed throughout Glasgow this week, and factory gate meetings are being organised to build the benefit rally on the eve of the first court appearance for the remaining 13 defendants on 10 June.

BENEFIT RALLY FOR DEFENDANTS

Kingston Halls, Paisley Road, Glasgow—Monday 9 June, 7.30pm.

SPEAKERS: Charlie Montgomery (defendant, former candidate for EEUU Exec) Defendants from IMG, IS, CP

plus songs from Matt McGinn, The Laggan, Chilean folk group

TICKETS 25p from 18 Carrington Street, Glasgow (332-8728)

IMG DEFENDANTS SPEAK AT—

Birmingham Tues 10 June

Oxford Weds 11 June or

Thurs 12 June

Manchester Fri 13 June

Canterbury Sat 14 June

London Sun 15 June

Leeds Tues 17 June

Contact your local IMG branch for time and venue.

GLASGOW IMG PUBLIC MEETING

'Kingston Hall—the real guilty men'

SPEAKERS: Steve Potter (IMG Representative at Scarman Tribunal)

IMG Defendants

Thursday 19 June at 7.30 p.m. in the

McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall St.

(Details: 332-8728)

IMG INFILTRATES POLICE?

The Workers Revolutionary Party, who so often bandy around accusations that the IMG and other groups are full of police agents, have found a new ally. Home Secretary Roy Jenkins admonished policemen who persistently heckled him at the Police Federation Conference in Blackpool for 'behaving like International Marxists'.

We can assure the WRP that we have not established a cell in the police force, and they and Mr Jenkins can also rest assured that the only police cells IMG members are likely to see in the near future are those with bars on. Nor are the 'International Marxists' in the police force likely to be sending us a donation from their conference. For some strange reason the Home Office and Scotland Yard do not subsidise the IMG—perhaps that is because we are for smashing the capitalist state and putting those coppers to work on more useful social projects.

So that brings us back to the question—where do we get our money from? This is the first issue of the new month and the long climb towards our monthly target begins again. Last month we just scraped home. This month we need to pass the target of £500 and again we appeal to all our readers to send a donation. With your help we can make it: Red Weekly Fund Drive, 182 Pentonville Road, London N1.

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'CLEAN-UP' BID FAILS

If you fish around in the slime of a cess pool you will find sludge and muck. If you look at the National Front you will find a rag-bag of violence, race-hatred and thuggery.

The new leadership of the National Front is desperate to try to 'clean' up the public face of the NF. First casualty is Hitler-worshipper John Tyndall, who has now been stripped of his executive powers. But removing Tyndall to try to give the NF a new image is like trying to cure cancer with an aspirin.

The race-hating, anti-working class ideas of fascism attract a particular kind of scum. Brian Hosie, the NF member recently sentenced in Glasgow for murdering a black man, is the kind of hooligan that fascism needs.

Mr Keith Squire, the NF parliamentary candidate for Wood Green in the October 1974 General Election, is another. Squire has just been fined a total of £125 for hitting Terence John Donaldson on the head with an

amplifier. Squire was reported to have had three previous convictions for assault, causing bodily harm, receiving stolen property, and stealing a vehicle and its contents.

Squire, Hosie and Tyndall are not exceptions to the rule. The whole outfit is full of people like that. The NF, like all fascist organisations, cannot function without thuggery and violent racism. Hitler's SS drew towards itself all the dregs of society who were able to work out their perverted cruelty on the working class and racial minorities. The *Horst Wessel*—marching song of the SS—glorified a pimp who like NF member Hosie lived off unfortunate prostitutes.

No matter how much the more sophisticated 'new' leaders of the NF try to put on a show of cleaning up the image and applying a cosmetic touch of respectability it will always remain fascist.

Kingsley Read, the new 'white' hope, is currently being charged by the Race Relations Board and stands for the violent whipping of so-called delinquents. Last week in Glasgow when he met the pickets outside his meeting he too dropped his pretence and gave the Nazi salute!

Bob Gordon