



WORKERS CAN SOLVE CRISIS

The carefully assembled economic policies of the Tory Government have been torn to shreds—that is the meaning of the latest news on the economic front.

The Tories' policies have been based on the assumption of continuing economic growth in Britain and a falling off in world raw material prices. Only on this basis could they afford to wrap up the bitter pill of Phase 3 in the sugar coating of 'threshold' agreements that provide automatic wage rises if prices rise by 7% or more in the year ahead.

Now all of these assumptions have been reduced to dust: economic growth is grinding to a halt, and the rate of inflation is expected to top all past records, with 'threshold' pay rises becoming due as early as the spring.

This has touched off an urgent debate within the ruling class on how to meet the crisis. Sir Michael Clapham, President of the Confederation of British Industries, delivered a speech on Tuesday in which he proposed a drastic cutback in spending by the Government and consumers. The other solution being canvassed in ruling class circles is the imposition of total freeze on wages and prices.

Whichever of these policies is adopted, the main burden will fall on the working class. The first would result in mass unemployment coupled with an even more serious rundown of public and social services than we have at present. The second would cut working class incomes as prices not subject to Government control continue to spiral upwards.

To sell such a package to the working class movement, the Government will try and turn the present crisis to its

own advantage. It will stress the dire predicament in which the 'nation' is placed and call on the trade unions to moderate their demands in the 'national interest.' No worker should be fooled by this old ploy. The present crisis is not a crisis of the 'nation' but of the British capitalist system, and the concern of Clapham and Heath is not with the 'national interest' but with the interests of the capitalist class.

These attempts to make the working class abandon their struggle 'in the national interest' and accept the consequences of a capitalist 'solution' to the crisis—a drastic cutback in living standards—must be ruthlessly combated. To do this effectively a *working class policy for the crisis* is needed: solutions to the pressing social problems such as prices, housing, pensions, energy, transport, that are in the interests of the working class.

Because they are not prepared to break with the capitalist system, the TUC and the Labour Party are only able to propose a series of half-measures which would create as many problems as they solve. An effective policy must be based on a decisive

break with the capitalist system. The development of such a policy is an urgent task which the labour movement must carry out in the course of preparing the coming struggles.

For example, combine shop stewards committees should begin to work out plans for the nationalisation of their companies; local shop stewards committees should prepare a plan of workers control over all aspects of the production process within individual factories; trades councils and

local Labour councils should prepare plans for the reorganisation of public services, work out solutions to the housing crisis in conjunction with tenants and squatters groups, and prepare, with local housewives organisations, a system for the monitoring and regulating of prices.

The crucial question is how to fight for the implementation of these plans. Such a fight is not separate from the present wages struggles, but a logical

extension of this fight for better living conditions, taking up all the problems facing the working class and seeking a *permanent* solution to them.

Clearly, then, the first step towards fighting for such policies is to launch the present struggles in a determined way: through, for example, a national strike by the miners, the engineers, and the railwaymen, and by building a fighting alliance between these powerful industrial groups at all levels.

The Tory Government will constitute

a powerful barrier to such a fight going forward. A central aim, then, must be to push forward, extend, and unify all industrial struggles into a *general strike* to bring down the Tories. In the course of such a strike the labour movement could put many of these plans and policies into practice, and challenge the right of the ruling class to rule. The coordination of such measures on a national scale would place us firmly on the road to the only real solution to the present crisis—a *socialist, planned economy*.

TORY DEAL CHALLENGE TO PROVOS



Unionist chief Brian Faulkner and Irish premier Cosgrave at last weekend's talks

The negotiations for the setting up of a Council of Ireland reached agreement last Sunday (9 December), after a break of 52 years during which a Civil War in the South, mass sectarian violence in the North, and three IRA campaigns had failed to persuade the participants that such a Council was necessary. Only the mass resistance and military struggle of the last five years had eventually forced them back to the negotiating table.

The only real function in this agreement for the Council of Ireland is the co-ordination of repression, north and south of the border. Far from moving towards a solution to the historic problem of partition, the right of a minority of the population of Ireland to stand in the way of the completion of the tasks of the national revolution has been institutionalised.

The British Government had one major factor operating in its favour: the inability of anyone at the talks to break ranks. All the parties were fully aware that a new crisis of policy for the British Government would leave little option but a withdrawal. The Provisionals would then be seen to have succeeded, and those associated with this latest British strategy thoroughly discredited.

That is why Faulkner, who won a majority in the Ulster Unionist Council on the strength of a promise to make the changing of the Southern constitution a matter of principle, was prepared to accept a mere token statement from Cosgrave on this question.

And the SDLP, which fought the election on the release of internees and reform of the RUC, had to accept that nothing will be done about these issues in the immediate future.

Outside the charmed circle of those who met at Sunningdale, the opposition to the British strategy faces a crucial test. The fire-eating speeches of Paisley and Craig have not been matched by a remobilisation of the mass para-military protestant organisations.

The irrationality of their response epitomises the weakness of protestant resistance. Without a future, having been deprived of the old Stormont parliament and a united Unionist Party, the protestants vent their rage in sectarian murders, and tantrums in the Assembly.

The Provisionals must now be alarmed at the prospect of the SDLP gathering the electoral fruits of the smashing of

Stormont. The *Irish People*, a weekly, edited by the usually well informed journalist Seamus O Tuathail, states that: 'The Provisionals are seeking a truce arrangement with the British Army which could last well beyond the traditional Christmas truce and into the new year'.

The probable rationale for such a truce would be either to gain a commitment from the British on the date for a withdrawal and release of internees, or, more likely, to establish clearly the purpose of a resumed military campaign, in the event of a refusal.

Although the Provisionals can carry a military campaign on over an extended period, they will inevitably fail if they cannot extend their base beyond the catholic chetoes. Sooner or later the slow erosion of support for continued resistance must lead to a collapse of that base, unless a far-ranging social struggle is unleashed that can transcend both the border and sectarian divisions.

However, even immediate success for the Executive and the Council of Ireland, would not amount to a long-term victory for British imperialism: it would only postpone the struggle to free Ireland from British domination.

BOB PURDIE

Judge tells Shrewsbury QC - 'You know very well it can be a conspiracy when they never met and never knew each other'

The verdict in the case of the first six of the 'Shrewsbury 24' building workers is expected to be announced early next week.

The six face charges of 'conspiracy to intimidate with a view to compelling men to abstain from carrying out their lawful work', 'unlawful assembly', and 'causing an affray'. The charges arise from incidents during last year's building workers' strikes when flying pickets attempted to close down various sites in and around Shrewsbury.

EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

What the jurors are being asked to do in this case is to accept the idea that the everyday activities of thousands of trade unionists can be treated as 'conspiracy'; that trade union meetings and gatherings of pickets can be treated as 'unlawful assembly'. They are *not* being asked to reach a judgement on the basis of the evidence presented in the court. On the contrary, the prosecution is attempting to persuade them to make what is in fact a political judgement.

Whether these six building workers can be proved to have met before leading the flying pickets on to the building sites is irrelevant to the charge. As the judge put it to the defence: 'You know very well it can be a conspiracy

when they never met and never knew each other.'

Nobody on the building sites needs to have seen these men meeting and 'plotting' together on the day. Nor is it relevant whether these men *themselves* actually committed violence or intimidation. Convictions for conspiracy can be obtained, as the prosecution so neatly put it, 'by inference of all the circumstances.' In other words, the jury are being asked to convict on suspicion.

ATTACK ON ORGANISERS

What then is the foundation for the charge? The answer is simple. All these first six men were branch secretaries and chairmen in the UCATT or T&GWU at the time of the strike. All were involved in *organising* the pickets. Under the law of conspiracy, an organiser can be charged and held responsible for the actions of persons whom he organises but who remain unknown.

The same goes for the charge of unlawful assembly. If more than three people are pursuing a purpose, even by legal means, which in the opinion of the police is likely to cause a breach of the peace, then they can be charged with unlawful assembly. Why these men? Because as organisers and leaders 'by their presence they were encouraging the others'.

The prosecutor submitted to the jury at the opening of his summing-up speech that: 'This is not an attack on the trade union movement. But it is perfectly obvious that when the jury go out they are being asked to say that working class organisation *as such* is a conspiracy.'

EMPLOYERS' CONSPIRACY

Yet all the charges brought against the building workers could just as well be applied to those they were fighting during the strike. There would certainly be more 'evidence'.

Was it not, for instance, a conspiracy between employers and the State which enabled one employer to say with confidence to a picket leader: 'I've been told I can have every available policeman in the area to keep this job going'? Was there not a conspiracy to intimidate workers when another picket leader could be told that if he did not get off a site, an anti-picket squad of 300 men would arrive from a 'syndicate' created by lump employers, to 'forcibly remove' him and his men? Perhaps when prosecution witnesses can freely admit in court that they waved shotguns at pickets, is there not some kind of 'conspiracy' between the judge, the police and the Director of Public Prosecutions to make sure that such intimidation can continue in future—at least if we are to 'infer from all the circumstances'?

And finally, is there not a conspiracy to

intimidate men to abstain from lawful work when lump workers are forced to work on building sites where building and safety regulations have been ignored by lump employers? The work from which the pickets are alleged to have 'intimidated men to abstain' was, it turns out, not even lawful!

COMING CONFRONTATIONS

No worker should be confused by the conspiracy charges. The ruling class is seeking to attack pickets and picketing, even in court it has to declare the basic organisations of the working class conspiracy in the process.

Shrewsbury is only the focus of a broader conspiracy by the ruling class against one of the weapons—the flying picket—with which the working class is able to take the initiative from the trade union bureaucracy and achieve the practical unity of the working class. In a case earlier this year, which is now being considered by the House of Lords, Lord Widgery ruled that workers are not allowed to 'obstruct' lorries on picket lines, therefore effectively depriving them of the opportunity to exercise their 'legal' right to peacefully persuade the driver not to cross the picket line. All these attacks in the courts are the preparation for giving the police forces a free hand in the confrontations this winter.



To make its intentions clear, the State responded to each demonstration in support of the 24 (left) with a massive show of force by the police (right)



Engineers occupy in Glasgow

An ITC subsidiary in Glasgow, McLaren Controls, has been occupied by 300 workers in pursuit of their struggle over a wage claim.

The workers have been on strike for six weeks following the breakdown of a conciliation meeting. The management refused to shift from their offer of an across the board increase of £2.00 for men, and £4.06 for women. The AUEW, which represents the workers, is claiming £2.25 for labourers and semi-skilled men, £2.50 for skilled men, and £5.27 for women.

ITC has stated that the strike could lead to redundancies, because of the weakened trading position of the firm, and the management has sent a letter to the workers, threatening dismissals unless the dispute is settled.

When, following these attempts at intimidation, the Works Director Stewart Black dismantled a machine which was then removed from the factory, the workers occupied the factory. They are currently maintaining the occupation on a 24 hour basis. The management has called in security guards with an albatross dog, but the occupation remains firm.

This is one of a series of small strikes which have taken place in the Glasgow area in the recent period. At Singer, Clydebank, there was a ten day strike by a section of the factory over the inadequacy of an incentive bonus scheme, and last month there was a thirteen day strike at Weir Pumps, Cathcart. These kind of actions will increase as the struggle over the Engineering pay claim approaches.

There must be all-out support for the fight at McLaren's, which represents an important development in the struggle of engineering workers in the Glasgow area. Without support throughout the industry in Scotland—and beyond—the workers could become isolated, and subject to pressure from management threats. The difficulty of developing a struggle where workers feel isolated was seen recently at Yarrows Shipyard, where the recommendation of shop stewards for a strike over wage demands was rejected by the workers.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to:

John Morrison, c/o Alex Ferrie, AUEW House, 145 West Regent Street, Glasgow.

Ex-army chief rejects British Third Force as too provocative

A leading British counter-insurgency expert claimed last Thursday that Britain did not need a 'Third Force' along the lines of the CRS in France, or the National Guard of the United States.

Major-General R.L. Clutterbuck, author of *Protest and the Urban Guerilla*, and now lecturer in Politics at Exeter University, was speaking at a seminar at Reading University on the subject 'Does Britain need a Third Force like the C.R.S.?' The seminar was part of a series on 'Military and Police in Society', which is open to academics in the Politics and Sociology Departments of Reading University, and of Bramshill Police College near Reading.

TOO PROVOCATIVE

Major-General Clutterbuck's conclusion was that Britain had no need of a CRS-type force, which would be too provocative, and would run the danger of leading to incidents like that at Kent State University in the USA, when students were killed by National Guardsmen. His reasoning is that Britain does not need a 'Third Force' because there is 'mutual confidence' between the police and 90% of the population: Ireland is a 'special case'.

Clutterbuck also made the extraordinary claim that the army had not been used inside Britain for 54 years; obviously he has not read his recent history—from the Glasgow firemen's strike, the use of men from the Special Air Services regiment to back up the police during the bomb scares in Birmingham in August this year, the London dock strike, and back to the General Strike.

Despite the apparently 'liberal' views expressed by Major-General Clutterbuck, it is clear that

this seminar was part of a campaign to sound out liberal and academic opinion in Britain towards the moves to a strong state. Clutterbuck's remarks should be taken in conjunction with a recent speech made by the Assistant Chief Constable of Birmingham, Peter Bellamy, who said recently that 'a police force which is not an instrument of power is nothing', and that a police force should be a 'sensitive instrument of social control rather than a simple law enforcement agency' (see *Daily Telegraph*, 29 November).

IMG ACTION

This shows the correctness of the IMG's action in Reading in putting forward a motion calling for the cancellation of the meeting to the Students Union. The motion was defeated, although it received the highest ever vote for

an IMG motion on Ireland in the Students Union.

A mobilisation took place despite the defeat of the motion, but when the demonstration had assembled, it was discovered that the meeting had been moved out of the University on the instructions of the University Administration, who obviously feared that the meeting would cause disruption in the University.

When the meeting was eventually located at a hotel in the town, there were not enough people to stop the meeting. Nevertheless, the demonstrators were able to put forward a political statement against the role of the British Army in Ireland, and the role of academics in counter-insurgency.

ROSEMARY SULLIVAN

Essex occupation ends but struggle continues

Students at Essex University in Colchester decided to call off their occupation on Tuesday night after general agreement that they had wrung the maximum concessions possible from the Administration this term.

It has been agreed by a general meeting of the Students Union that action will be continued next term, with a rent strike and the threat of an indefinite academic strike if any disciplinary measures are taken by the Administration. There is also the possibility that further occupations and such measures as canteen boycotts will be used as tactics in the struggle if the situation demands it.

However, the Administration is already trying to hit back, and a large number of students have received letters charging them with various offences and summoning them to appear before the University Disciplinary Committee. The dates for these appear-

ances have yet to be fixed.

A national conference of student union representatives at the beginning of next term to assist national co-ordination of the struggle and strengthen links with the labour movement in the fight against the Tory Government had earlier been agreed to by an occupation general assembly, but this decision was unfortunately reversed by an alliance between the Communist Party-dominated 'Broad Left' and the Right at a Students Union meeting on Tuesday. Attempts were made to counterpose this proposal to the decision by NUS to hold a conference in February, but it is obvious that moves to strengthen national co-ordination of the struggle will be required before then, particularly in light of the very real threat of victimisation which now exists.

Red Weekly Reporter

Which way forward for engineers?

Last week the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF) gave its reply to the claim presented by the Confederation of Shipbuilding & Engineering Unions (CSEU) for £35 for 35 hours, 4 weeks annual holiday and equal pay for women.

Predictably, the union negotiating team led by Hugh Scanlon were told that they could only receive the amount permissible under Phase 3—£2.50 for skilled workers, £2 for unskilled and £1.80 for women.

The burning question now facing the engineers is—what way forward? When the claim was adopted by the National Committee in Torquay earlier this year, Scanlon pointed out that this would inevitably mean a confrontation with the government. Since the AUEW leadership has been aware of the kind of confrontation involved in pursuing this claim from the beginning, thorough preparations could have been made for this struggle. But, in fact, the Executive Council have done nothing except produce 200,000 leaflets publicising the claim—for over a million members!

OVERTIME BAN

Now that the claim has been rejected Scanlon is going to have to come off the fence and commit himself to some specific form of action. The first indications of what this action might be came from a meeting of over 200 shop stewards in the Sheffield-based district of the CSEU on Sunday 2 December. That meeting called for a national overtime ban from 1 January. This is also likely to be the call that comes from the national conference of convenors and senior stewards in Manchester on 14 December. If this is the kind of action which the leadership of the CSEU opt for, then all the talk about fighting Phase 3 and showing the employers we mean business will have been so much hot air.

An overtime ban in the engineering industry will split the workers right down the middle. The people who will be hardest hit will be the day workers (generally the lowest paid), since they often depend on overtime to maintain a decent income. Pieceworkers, on the other hand, will have the opportunity of making up some of their lost earnings by stepping up production. The gap which normally exists between the wages of pieceworkers and dayworkers will, therefore, be opened even wider, with the latter feeling that they are making the major sacrifice in the struggle. At a time when the unity of the engineering workers is vital this kind of tactic would be disastrous.

An overtime ban does not even make sense as a tactic to prepare for a strike. Engineering is not an industry which produces an item that is consumed from week to week like coal. If the miners plan on striking, then an overtime ban can be used to run down stocks of coal, thus ensuring that the strike would begin to bite immediately. But the effect of running down stocks in the engineering industry would be extremely uneven. There are some firms who depend on a lot of overtime working to keep up with their order books, while others, particularly those on shift systems, do not depend so heavily on overtime. The EEF will centralise its resources and will be able to absorb any type of 'needling' tactic, such as an overtime ban.

There is also talk of banning piecework as a second stage in the campaign, if no progress is made with the overtime ban. This proposal was defeated at the Sheffield conference. Its effect would also be extremely uneven. The likely result would be a drastic drop in production in some firms, leading to lock-outs. This would simply ensure the fragmentation of the struggle with no centralised united effort

against the employers. The employers would then be able to pick off different sections of workers one by one. The lessons of the localised struggles over last year's claim should be borne in mind.

Quite apart from all this, the idea of an overtime ban looks particularly absurd when the employers could well have to put workers on short time because of the energy crisis! If the overtime ban is actually imposed then, obviously, there should be no scabbing since this would aggravate disunity even more than the overtime ban itself. But it must also be made clear that this kind of tactic will lead nowhere and agitation should be carried out during the overtime ban for the immediate calling of a full-scale national strike.

NATIONAL STRIKE

The challenge which the engineers are making to Phase 3 is a challenge to the entire strategy of the government. If Phase 3 is smashed, the ruling class will be thrown into a complete political crisis; they will be unable to put together even a temporary solution to British capitalism's economic problems. For that reason the government will not surrender on the wages front without a tremendous struggle.

The engineers must prepare for precisely such a struggle—an all-out national strike. Anything short of this—such as overtime bans, bans on piecework, local strikes—will only divide and fragment the struggle. The workers will merely be sacrificing wages without seeing any real prospect of breaking the resistance of the employers. The engineers can well do without that kind of 'preparation'.

The national conference called by the rank and file paper *Engineering Voice* in September this year gave a lead by calling upon all militants in the industry to fight for a national strike to be called by the recall National Committee of the AUEW if the claim is not met.

This call should be taken up and pushed at every level within the union. Commitment to this policy by the national convenors' conference on 14 December in Manchester would be a big step forward. Preparations should be made up and down the country for such a struggle. A national strike committee should be elected to co-ordinate actions during the strike. Local conferences of shop stewards should be organised to elect local strike committees and to plan a campaign amongst the membership to publicise the claim and to gear up for a national strike. Occupations of big factories in every area should be planned in advance in order to stop movement of stocks and to create bases for holding mass meetings and running the strike.

MINERS-ENGINEERS ALLIANCE

In addition to the engineers, 4 million other workers have wage claims in that go against Phase 3. If the working class united and centralised all its forces it could go into battle almost certain of victory. The miners are already in the front line of this fight. If the big battalions of the miners and the engineers went into struggle united they would give the go-ahead to other sections of the working class to throw in their forces. Such an alliance would act as a pole of attraction for the dockers, ambulance men, railway drivers, power workers etc. and the way would be opened for a general strike to bring down the Tory Government altogether.

The inclusion of the important demand of equal pay for women in the national engineering claim means that the fight for this claim can be a focus for the struggle of an important group of workers—women workers. A serious fight for equal pay would not only draw women engineering workers into the centre of the struggle, but ensure active support for a national engineering strike by women workers in all industries.

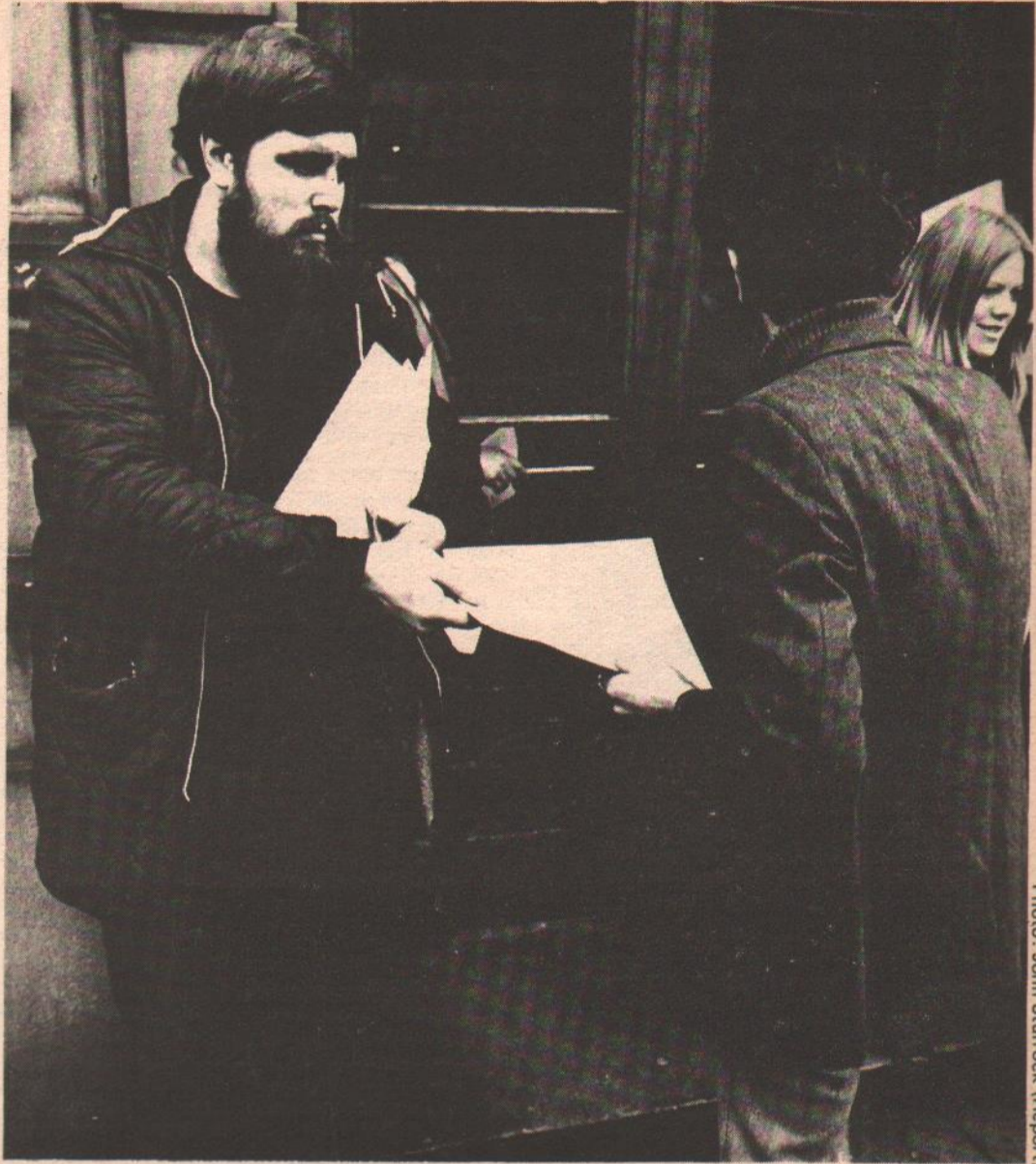


Photo: John Sturrock (Repos)

Along with national strike must go unity with other groups of workers: here miner who spoke at Sheffield CSEU stewards meeting hands leaflets out beforehand

Certain moves have already been taken towards unifying the present struggles. In Sheffield the District Committee of the CSEU have invited a miner to speak at all the meetings held as part of their campaign on the national engineering claim, and the recent CSEU stewards' meeting was addressed by a miner. A meeting of engineering delegates, held in connection with last Friday's lobby of the AUEW-EEF negotiations, overwhelmingly adopted a resolution calling for... 'a triple alliance of the AUEW, NUM and ASLEF, to organise an emergency conference for the calling of a General Strike to bring down the Tory government and elect a Labour government pledged to socialist policies...'

These are all important steps forward, but by themselves they are not enough. Certainly, the national executives of the NUM and the AUEW should be called on to meet and plan a united strategy for struggle. But practical steps should be taken now to forge this unity at all levels. Representatives from pits across the country should have been invited to the convenors' conference in Manchester. Joint conferences of engineering stewards and delegates from the pits should be organised in every locality.

Last Saturday the Political Committee of the Communist Party stated in the *Morning Star*: 'The TUC should be urgently recalled to mobilise the full industrial strength of the movement in solidarity behind the miners, train drivers, pensioners and every other section in the battle, and to smash Phase 3 and the Industrial Relations Act.' When the CP says that the full strength of the labour movement should be mobilised to smash Phase 3 they are absolutely correct, but the record of the general council of the TUC shows beyond doubt that they cannot be depended upon to do this.

The CP themselves denounced the TUC's talks with the Tories as a 'crime and a scandal'. If these 'criminals' can be forced into taking some action to fight Phase 3 all well and good, but to centre all our plans on this prospect is a recipe for defeat. The experience of the struggle to free the Pentonville 5 shows that the TUC will act only when they are forced to by the struggle of the rank and file.

The CP are in an excellent position to initiate this kind of struggle against Phase 3. Many of their militants are in leading positions in the trade union movement, not least in the engineering and mining industries. They can play a decisive role in taking the necessary steps to 'mobilise the full industrial strength of the movement' to smash Phase 3.

A national engineering strike would be an important step forward. But the CP have remained silent on this question for months. When it comes to the crunch, the position of the CP is determined, not by the real interests of the working class, but by the interests of their alliance with the 'left' in the official trade union leadership. This is why the CP zig-zags all over the place, denouncing the talks with the government in the *Morning Star*, yet attempting to stop a resolution forbidding Scanlon to participate in the talks from going before the AUEW conference.

The most absurd example of this 'don't embarrass Scanlon' campaign is the current effort of the CP to organise calls for a national overtime ban in the engineering industry. The shop stewards conference in Sheffield and the convenors conference in Manchester are seen by the CP as means of giving a rank-and-file stamp to the overtime ban.

Among those in Sheffield who pushed most vigorously for this policy are Albert Knight, District President of the AUEW, and Cyril Morton, convenor of Shardlows (who moved the resolution). Both are members of the CP and both voted for the resolution at the *Engineering Voice* conference calling upon all militants to fight for a national engineering strike. There will be many CP members at the conference in Manchester who also voted for that resolution. If CP militants are serious about 'mobilising the full industrial strength of the movement' then they should stop flip-flopping and fight for this perspective—even if it means fighting Scanlon.

MINERS IN STRUGGLE

Interview with Jack Collins, Kent area delegate to the NUM Executive

What is the current situation in the mining industry?

The miners are completely solid. There does not seem to be any attempt by the men to go against the position of the National Executive. All the indications are that the miners are prepared to continue the struggle until the claim is met in full. The effects of the overtime ban are increasing. The production losses attributed to the miners are incorrect. Although I haven't seen the latest figures, more coal is being lost than the NCB is prepared to admit.

Do you think that the overtime ban will be enough to win the claim, or will a strike be necessary?

If the executive were to make a call for strike action to win the claim, and providing they work to implement this call and give a positive lead, it would undoubtedly have a unifying effect throughout the coalfields

In that situation, with a large majority supporting the executive's call, what we saw in 1972 would pale into insignificance compared to this time.

With other sections e.g. railwaymen, ambulance men etc., on the move, unity is the key question. How do you see this being achieved?

I think it is important that each section, as it comes into struggle, should not only declare solidarity with other groups, but be prepared to meet and discuss possibilities for calling the labour movement together, so that unity can be achieved and we can smash Phase 3.

What are the possibilities for unity between the miners and engineers?

The prospects have always been there, but never more so than right now. It is desirable that these two sections in struggle work to bring about a united front.

already been meetings and discussions between the miners and engineers, such as at Kinneal, with the obvious intention of working towards such unity.

CORRECTION

A number of errors unfortunately crept into the interview with Philip Sutcliffe printed on page 3 of last week's issue:

1. Philip Sutcliffe is a member of the branch committee, and not a union official as stated.
2. The men in the three East Kent pits are still working five days, not three days as stated; production has fallen to approximately 8,000 tons, not 6-7,000 as stated.
3. The second and third paragraphs, which reported that the pit had been flooded on Tuesday, 4 December, were wrong and were not part of the original interview.

We apologise for any inconvenience which may have

WORKERS

VS

Part 1 The 1912 Miners' strike



THE FINAL ARBITER.

The scales of Justice - IF YOU CAN'T SETTLE THIS, I WILL.

The ruling class had few qualms: Punch's view of how to settle the strike

The year 1912 saw the largest industrial dispute that had ever taken place in any industry or any country shake Britain—the first national miners' strike.

The strike occurred at a time not unlike the present one: economic problems were beginning to plague the country, and a deep social crisis, reflected in industrial struggles on an unprecedented scale, the growth of the republican and nationalist movement in Ireland, and the women's suffrage movement in this country, threatened to split British society wide open.

The year before the miners' strike had seen a general strike of transport workers in Liverpool and a national railway strike. The following year there was a general transport workers' strike in Dublin.

The 'social peace' for which Britain was so much admired by the rest of the capitalist world had come to an end, and an upheaval of revolutionary proportions was on the cards. Only the timely intervention of a World War in 1914 enabled the ruling class to regain control of the situation and shift the scenes of bloodshed temporarily from the streets of Dublin and Liverpool to the plains of Belgium.

'ABNORMAL PLACES'

From the beginning of this century onwards the economic problems of the average miner became particularly burdensome. Wage rates were closely related to coal prices, and, because of growing international competition, these tended to remain stagnant. At the same time growing inflation pushed up the prices of the necessities of life. Moreover, the age of the British coal industry was beginning to tell: the richest portions of many seams had been worked out and miners often found themselves labouring under difficult conditions. This, added to the fact that the introduction of new machinery into mining was proceeding at a slow pace, resulted in falling productivity as the years passed. For face workers, whose pay was totally determined by piece-work, this had drastic consequences.

One of the bitterest grievances of these years was the 'abnormal places' problem. If a collier was unfortunate enough to find himself working an 'abnormal place'—under adverse natural conditions or facing difficulties due to inept management—he might end up earning nothing at all, even after a hard day's work. It was customary for a collier in this position to receive some sort of relief payment from the company, but the amount of this was totally dependent on individual negotiation, and the courts had ruled that the company was under no legal obligation to make this payment at all.

The 'abnormal places' question brought together the growing accumulation of economic grievances felt by the miners and a new mood began to stir in the coalfields. In 1910 South

Wales, the area in which the power of the coal-owners and the moderation of the miners' leaders had combined to produce a particularly oppressed workforce, was shaken by the

Cambrian Combine dispute. A lock-out in one pit owned by the powerful Cambrian Combine, imposed because of the refusal of eighty men to begin work on a new seam until there were some guarantees on the 'abnormal places' question, developed into a strike of more than 10,000 miners working in pits owned by the Combine, and at one time almost 30,000 miners were either striking or locked-out.

The struggle lasted for a year and, because of the refusal of South Wales miners' leaders to do anything more than provide financial aid, ended in defeat. But the Cambrian Combine dispute—with which are associated such legendary events as the Tonypandy disturbances and the dispatch of troops to the coalfield by Winston Churchill—dealt a powerful blow to the hold of the moderate leaders and made 'abnormal places' into a national question which they could no longer ignore.

NEGOTIATIONS

From 1910 on the Miners' Federation of Great Britain had been urging local Districts to take up the 'abnormal places' question with the coal owners. At a special conference held in July 1911 the results of these negotiations were found to be uneven: progress was being made in some areas, but the South Wales and Scottish owners refused any concessions. To deal with this

almost 80% in favour of strike action, and Britain's first national miners strike began on 1 March.

GOVERNMENT INTERVENES

A strike of this proportion, which involved the total stoppage of coal production in Britain and had inevitable repercussions on the country's transport and industry, could not be ignored by the Government. Two days before the strike began the Liberal Prime Minister, Asquith, called the miners' delegates to a meeting at the Foreign Office. There he endorsed the principle of the minimum wage (not surprisingly, since the most important section of coal-owners had already accepted this) and pledged the Government to establish this principle. On this basis he urged the Federation to call off the strike and take part in District negotiations to fix the exact level of the minimum wage.

For the Federation this was an impossible demand. They had already made important concessions in formulating their demands. They had adopted a schedule providing for different minimum rates for each District (and in four Districts there were two different rates according to the efficiency of the colliery concerned). Moreover, rather than adopting the bargaining positions which each District had put forward in local negotiations, they cut these back drastically so that they were asking for no more than the prevailing day rate. Their only point of insistence was that the minimum



Shops boarded up in Tonypandy during the Cambrian Combine dispute

problem a meeting was sought with the national organisation of the coal owners—the Mining Association of Great Britain—to discuss the MFGB demand for 'a definite payment for all abnormal places of 7s. per day or such payment equal to day-wage caling rate for each respective county or district in this Federation.'

The Mining Association, however, had a long-standing position that wages could not be discussed on the national level and at the meeting which finally took place they persisted in this position.

The meeting had taught the MFGB representatives one thing, however—that to focus on the question of 'abnormal places' was to open themselves up to all sorts of quibbles from the owners. Accordingly, the MFGB annual conference decided to replace the demand for 'abnormal place' payment with one for a minimum wage for each District, to apply to all mine workers. The negotiations on this demand were to be carried out locally, but the whole Federation was to meet to discuss joint action if any District failed to get satisfaction.

The owners in the English Federated Districts (Yorkshire, Lancashire, Midlands, North Wales) were prepared to concede the principle of the minimum wage, but none of the other Districts had any success and all efforts at national negotiations were turned down flat by the owners. So a strike ballot was held throughout the coalfields, which resulted in a majority of

wage for non-piece workers should not be less than 5s. a day for men and 2s. for boys. Any further reduction in the MFGB proposed rates would actually mean negotiating a wage cut for many miners.

After the strike began the Government undertook to organise a joint meeting of the miners and coal-owners, but the coal-owners were unprepared to make any concessions and, as before, the MFGB felt it could not retreat beyond its original claim. The Government then decided to resolve the matter by bringing in a bill which would establish the principle of the minimum wage in law.

The MFGB executive hoped that the Government might meet their demands and urged Asquith to incorporate their proposed rates into the bill. The Government refused, however, and the bill merely established District arbitration machinery to fix District rates. Attempts by Labour MPs to insert the MFGB proposals during the Parliamentary debate were defeated by the Government. Finally, in frustration, the MFGB called on Labour MPs to vote against the bill, but it was carried by combined Liberal and Tory votes on 26 March anyway.

LEADERS RETREAT

Faced with the enactment of the minimum wage, but in such a way that it met few of their actual demands, the leaders of the MFGB were in a quandary. A special conference decided to



Miners vote in the 1912 strike ballot

hold a ballot on whether or not to continue the strike, but refused to make any recommendation to the membership for the voting.

However, they were not to get off the hook so easily. On 4 April the Executive Committee, meeting to consider the results of the ballot, found that all but two Districts showed majorities in favour of continuing the strike and that nationally the vote was 244,000 for continuing against 201,000 for resuming work.

FIGHTING

The violent tensions which marked the memories of thousands. Yet the vital organisations like the National Front Union of Fascists, in the first article

The roots of British fascism stretch far back through a variety of strange conceptions and many weird groupings which sprang up in the early years of this century. It was not until the mid-1920s that it first appeared as any kind of organised force, with the 'British Fascisti' and its offspring, who provided stewards for Tory rallies and strike-breakers in 1926. But at this stage they remained marginal to the armoury of the ruling class, the State relying instead on its police and judiciary, along with the trade union bureaucracy, to defeat the General Strike.

It was only with the onset of the spectacular economic crisis of 1931 that the picture began to change—and drastically. The depression destroyed the aspirations of the Ramsey MacDonald government, forcing a bitter debate within the ruling Labour Party. As overseas markets disintegrated, and unemployment reached 2½ million, the aristocratic Oswald Mosley abandoned high office and established the New Party to campaign for tight government controls over credit and currency.

Mosley's prestige amongst bourgeois statesmen rapidly began to attract dissidents from the mainstream parties, who enthused over the solutions offered by his new organisation for capitalism in crisis. The project foundered, however, when the ruling class turned decisively towards a coalition ('national') government as a solution to its problems. Virtually deserted, Mosley then began to experiment with the 'corporate state' theories of continental fascism, and visited its adherents in Italy and Germany.

On his return, with simple ceremony, he inaugurated the British Union of Fascists on 1 October 1932—his 'instrument of steel'. In a series of violent raids, the BUF rapidly wiped out its main rivals on the extreme right.

THE STATE



The executive, unwilling to take the responsibility for calling off the strike but even more unwilling to lead a fight against the Government, decided to crawl under the constitutional stone: they claimed that since it required a 2/3 majority to begin a strike the same was required to keep it going, and, therefore, 'seeing that a two-thirds majority is not in favour of the continuance of the strike, and acting upon that vote, we advise the resumption of work.'

So ended the 1912 strike. As the MFGB had expected, the Government's bill turned out to be a serious defeat. After months of futile negotiation the District boards were unable to agree on minimum rates, and so the matter passed to the 'independent' Government-appointed chairman, who invariably fixed rates substantially below the miners' demands and, in some cases, even below the 5s. and 2s. level.

The defeat of the 1912 strike was engineered by

one of the most important weapons in the hands of the ruling class—the loyalty of the trade union leadership to the basic institutions of ruling class political power (Parliament, the Government, the Law) and the confusion that exists in the minds of many workers about the true nature of these institutions.

The Asquith Government was prepared to use force against the miners. The Home Office was in regular contact with local Chief Constables and had advised them the previous autumn to enrol special constables in anticipation of a strike. Plans were laid to move troops into the coal fields, if necessary. Tom Mann, a prominent revolutionary working class leader who had played an important part in the Cambrian Coal dispute and the transport and railway struggles of 1911, was arrested along with a number of his associates and prosecuted for issuing a leaflet calling on soldiers not to shoot down workers.

However, with the full accompaniment of a concerted press propaganda campaign, the Government wanted to play the last of its 'democratic' cards before resorting to naked force.

Despite the fact that the miners' leaders saw through the manoeuvre of the Government's bill, they were unable to lead a struggle against the Government and the Parliament to which they were so deeply attached—even though it meant selling their membership down the river.

The miners in the coalfields thus found themselves disoriented by the Government's trick and demoralised by the refusal of their 'leadership' to lead. One out of every five miners who had voted in the original strike ballot found himself unable to make up his mind in this situation and simply failed to vote. Many others decided it was best to call it a day. The fact that a majority stuck out for continuing the strike is powerful testimony to the determination and fighting spirit of the rank-and-file. But once the leaders decided to retreat the rank-and-file were left with no alternative but to follow these traitors to defeat.

All of these elements will appear again in the coming industrial struggles. The Government

will try and use the Parliamentary tricks (like a general election) and exploit the hold of capitalist ideas over the trade union leaders, and the influence of these ideas among the rank-and-file, to split and confuse the movement. In most cases the 'leaders' will run away from a fight of this sort (indeed, many are already doing so). Unless there exists a powerful, organised rank-and-file leadership inside the working class movement, with clear ideas about the nature of the struggle and the nature of the capitalist state and its institutions—the Government, Parliament and the Law—such manoeuvres will probably succeed.

Elected strike committees, local and national gatherings of rank-and-file representatives, local Councils of Action based on representatives from the whole labour movement, must all be built before and during the coming struggles. While the official leadership is actually leading the fight these rank-and-file bodies can work alongside them, strengthening the struggle; when the officials move to sell-out, the organised rank-and-file must be prepared to take over the leadership.

But in order to do this they must understand that Parliament—and any Government basing itself on that Parliament—represents the interests of the capitalist class. The interests of the working class are represented only by their own struggle and the organisations that are created out of that struggle. Only when that is clearly understood will the working class movement be able to defeat the Parliamentary manoeuvres of the ruling class and its Government.

Today we have two central sets of tasks to carry out to ensure the victory of the working class movement: to fight the influence of capitalist ideas in the labour movement and, to expose the nature of the capitalist state, on the one hand, and to destroy the ability of the trade union 'leadership' to mislead and betray by propelling forward the independent organisation of the rank-and-file at every opportunity in the struggle, on the other. This is the way to ensure that the tragedy of 1912 is not repeated in the great strikes of 1974.

BRIAN SLOCOCK

FASCISM IN THE THIRTIES

Struggle against fascism in the streets of Britain in the 1930s still survive today in the practical lessons flowing from these conflicts, increasingly important with the rise of Hitler. It remains unclear to many. Below, TOM CAMERON looks at the rise of the British Fascist Movement in a two-part series. Next week: Cable Street and after.

Recruiting with speed, it proclaimed its programme for 'modern' capitalist rule.

WHAT FASCISM OFFERED

A stream of publications now detailed Mosley's proposals for a rapid transition to managed capitalism—not unlike the 'New Deal' in the USA—via the introduction of one party dictatorship and state incorporation of the trade unions. His 'revolutionary creed' proposed a 'National Corporation' sub-divided into 23 industrial 'Corporations' with 'trade union sides' and a re-styled 'parliament' representing 23 'Occupations,' under a retained Crown.¹ Only with this machinery could a massive public works scheme be initiated to absorb unemployment and impose controls over banking and foreign investment. As the BUF's paper *Blackshirt* declared: 'Fascism retains the benefits of privately controlled capital... though it lays down definite limits within which capitalism might operate.'²

For the workers, guaranteed work and a National Health Service contained real attractions. These measures were presented as liberating the pent-up passions of 'Youth' and 'Science', so long frustrated by the 'Old Gang' of politicians.

TRADITIONALIST LAYER

As the black vans of the BUF took this message out into the streets, a traditionalist layer of the middle class together with sections of the ruling class proper began to prick up their ears. The black-shirted Mosleyites appeared to be ahead of the National Government—which despite protectionist tariffs and controlled currency relied primarily on 'natural' market forces to revive the economy—and offered a practical, though brutal, return to the glory of Empire. Though the prospects for British capitalism were already improving again after the slump, memories of 1931 were sharp, unemployment was still high, and the proletariat were growing restive. In a gathering rush, money began to

pour into the BUF's coffers from anxious industrialists.

Prominent figures in this period who (openly, or according to persistent rumour) provided finance for the Mosleyites included Sir William Morris (later Lord Nuffield), a powerful capitalist in motor manufacture; Sir A.V. Roe, aircraft industry; Lord Inchcape, shipping and insurance; Lord Rothermere, national newspapers; and the management of Courtaulds, the textiles firm.³

But another factor also demanded consideration. Each fascist rally, each demonstration, encountered opposition and protests from the militant left. A new BUF office in Walworth was picketed by angry workers for two weeks. The labour movement was slowly waking up to the Mosleyite threat. But it was to be very seriously impeded here by elements within its own ranks.

WORKING CLASS DISUNITY

An era of savage disunity between the organisations of the working class was only just ending. Hitler's advent to power in Germany in 1933 shook British social democracy, but throughout the period of Mosley's rise the Labour Party confined domestic anti-fascism to paper denunciations. Indeed, it advised workers to avoid clashes with the BUF, and pointed to the 'equal' dangers of communism. This seriously damaged the development of an action-based anti-fascist campaign, although a number of local Labour Parties took part in various mobilisations against Mosley at this time.

Further to the left, the Communist Party had been dreadfully hampered by the Moscow inspired ultra-leftism which had already wrecked class unity for their German comrades in the face of Hitlerism. Mosley and the 'social-fascist' Labour Party had been condemned simultaneously: 'The Communist Party leads the fight against Fascism in every country where Fascism has shown itself. Social Democracy surrenders to Fascism and passes

over to Fascism... the Trades Union Congress Citrine-Cramp-Bevin line of co-operation with capitalism already contains in germ the whole line of Fascism... the British Labour Party is already assisting the development of the British capitalist state in the direction of Fascism,' warned Palme-Dutt.⁴

RANK-AND-FILE

Both before and after the abandonment of this 'Third Period' line, following the seventh (and final) Congress of the Communist International in 1935, the CPGB perceived 'fascism' in the anti-working class legislation of the British government as well as in the BUF, and often also in Trotskyism. These confusions however could not deter substantial activity by CP members in demonstrations specifically directed against Mosley.

By 1934, a Printing and Allied Trades Anti-Fascist Movement was functioning among print workers. Its objectives, where they concerned the Mosleyites, included 'work in all sections of the printing trade by forming a group in each chapel for the purpose of building a mass anti-fascist movement... organising in our Trade Unions for the following demands... to secure the closing down of Fascist barracks; to organise with a view to ensuring full support for all workers who refuse to print or handle any Fascist propaganda... to co-operate with the continental workers in every way possible in their heroic struggle against fascist terror.'⁵

ANTI-JEWISH CAMPAIGN

By mid-1934, the BUF had turned to fierce campaigning against the Jews in Britain. Their 'philosophical' paper later theorised: 'Talmudic materialism... in Karl Marx, the son, the grandson, and the great-grandson of Rabbis... reveals itself by the hand of Jewish organisers and Tatar executioners in the Communist Revolution... Communism is Judaeo-Asiatic. Out of the East it comes, like a poisonous vapour.'⁶ Several alarmed leaders of the Jewish bourgeois community arranged private talks with Mosley's deputy, Forgan, to try to avert the danger,⁷ but the mass of Jewish workers increasingly threw their weight behind the anti-BUF mobilisations of their class.

Incidents multiplied as fascists and anti-fascists clashed with mounting ferocity. 10,000 marched against a huge BUF rally at

Olympia on 7 June 1934. Blackshirt stewards tossed hecklers bodily down staircases, and injured workers were treated by anti-fascist doctors to avoid hospitalisation and police detection. Membership of Mosley's movement now ran to 20-30,000 on paper, with a small 'Fascist Union of British Workers' established and links with overseas sympathisers through a 'New Empire Union.'

It is clear that by late 1935 the funds of the BUF had begun to sag, as the gently easing economic climate dissuaded individual capitalists from further large-scale investment in the movement. But the momentum of the fascist cause was too great to brake sharply. Attracting widespread acclaim, the blackshirts prepared for victory within the coming months.

October 1936

We stood at Gardiner's Corner,
We stood and watched the crowds,
We stood at Gardiner's Corner,
Firm, solid, voices loud.

Came the marching of the blackshirts,
Came the pounding of their feet,
Came the sound of ruffians marching
Where the five roads meet.

We thought of many refugees
fleeing from the fascist hordes,
The maimed, the sick,
The young, the old,
Those who had fought the fascist lords.

So we stopped them there at Gardiner's,
We fought and won our way.
We fought the baton charges,
No fascist passed that day!

Milly Harris

Taken from *Elders*, a 'collection of poems by elder citizens' compiled by Chris Searle and available at 25p plus 5p (p&p) from Centerprise, 34 Dalston Lane, London, E.8.

The Revolutionary Explosion in Athens

Statement by the United Secretariat
of the Fourth International

Since 21 April 1967, Greece has lived under a military dictatorship. This dictatorship was imposed to resolve the grave crisis of bourgeois rule following the pre-revolutionary situation of 1963-65, but it has become strikingly clear that this solution has failed.

The dictatorship of the colonels was never able to build a popular base in support of the regime and its policies. This led to the continuation of the institutional crisis of the bourgeoisie; for which the formal proclamation of a 'republic' by the colonels was in no way a solution.

The repression and the wage freeze, which were supposed to guarantee increased profits for the Greek capitalists and their imperialist backers, have failed to prevent the runaway inflation which has been undermining the economy for the last two years. The virtually uninterrupted application of martial law, along with the use of military tribunals and torture to intimidate opponents of the dictatorship, failed to stem the powerful popular upheaval that took shape in the revolutionary explosion in Athens.

The Greek ruling class had become aware of the glaring weakness of its policies, which had been exposed over the past year by a developing radicalisation among important sections of young workers and students. In response of this development (and after the lamentable failure of the Navy's attempted coup d'etat), leading figures in the Greek ruling class pressed for a 'liberalisation.' This actually meant no more than the normalisation of the military regime, giving it some formal trappings of bourgeois democracy: the referendum on the abolition of the monarchy, the proclamation of a republic, and the organisation of elections.

The proclamation of a 'republic' was intended to establish a new institutional framework following the collapse of the monarchy. The nomination of a civilian cabinet under Markezinis, the preparation of elections for 1974, and above all the lifting of martial law were supposed to create the conditions for establishing a strong state as a legacy of the years of military dictatorship. In this way the ruling class aimed to obtain the maximum room for manoeuvre in dealing with the popular demands.

This political operation required the acquiescence of those sectors of the ruling class hostile to the junta (represented by such figures as Kanelopoulos and Mavros). Their participation in the elections was intended to give credibility to Papadopoulos's project. Only on this condition could Papadopoulos expect to be assured of full control of the key sectors of government.

The Stalinists at first took a 'sympathetic' attitude towards this 'opening', which was expressed in the hesitation and vacillation of the leaders of the Bureau of the Interior of the Greek Communist Party (which is opposed to the Moscow-loyalist wing). But finally, these advocates of a dialogue with the dictatorship were forced to adopt a negative position towards



Outside the Athens Polytechnic during the revolutionary explosion

the elections, under pressure from the popular mobilisation which ruled out in advance any possibility that this 'normalisation' might gain credibility.

The student vanguard, whose confidence had been buoyed by the struggles in the spring of 1973, took advantage of the new conditions brought about by the lifting of martial law. They began to organise just as the political consciousness and will to struggle of sections of the working class and the peasantry were ripening. A succession of strikes and demonstrations reflected this new political reality.

A sharp drop in the purchasing power of the exploited classes in the last few months considerably extended the audience of the young vanguard of students and workers which, outside the direct control of the Stalinist and reformist bureaucracies, pushed forward the radicalisation of the struggle. The position and pretensions of the Markezinis government, already rendered precarious by its isolation from the bourgeois politicians who were boycotting Papadopoulos's operation, became untenable with the revolutionary explosion of the Athenian workers and students on 16 November. The fate of Papadopoulos was sealed.

This new irruption of the masses on to the scene came as a much greater threat to bourgeois rule than the mobilisations of 1965. The anti-capitalist nature of this explosion broke out of the reformist limitations imposed on the resistance by the Stalinists and liberal politicians since the coup of 21 April 1967. This was the most important aspect of these events, expressed by the extraordinary combativity, the very high level of politicisation, the quality of

democratic and technical organisation, and the national impact of what will go down in history as the Athens revolutionary explosion of November 1973. At the same time, this development shows the failure of the combined policy of the imperialists and the Greek capitalists, and most of all the acceleration by leaps and bounds of the revolutionary struggle in Europe.

A new generation of workers and students has taken the initiative in the revolutionary struggle. The demonstrations and barricades of November 1973 have created a new situation, marking a turning point in the revolutionary transformation of the mass movement and the mass mobilisations. The emergence of an integrated *worker and student vanguard* guarantees the failure of any future 'normalisations.' Even more certainly, it ensures that the resistance will widen and deepen, going more and more on to the offensive. The first concrete elements of a response to the *crisis of leadership* of the mass movement were thrown up in action in the course of the revolutionary explosion in Athens.

The achievements of this revolutionary explosion have been many. The resistance to the dictatorship has assumed a clear working class and revolutionary character, breaking from the Stalinist class-collaborationist, popular-frontist orientations put forward by the two Greek CPs, who shouted 'provocation' when the barricades first went up. The impetuous assault of the insurgent students, who raised the slogan 'power to the workers and peasants,' and the building workers, who demonstrated with banners proclaiming the vanguard role of the working class—this shattered

the bourgeois democratic illusions that had been poisoning the popular resistance to the dictatorship. Neither the curfew, nor the tanks, nor the murders were able to halt the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses. Bourgeois liberals and Stalinist reformists have tried, however, to falsify the political character of this revolutionary explosion in press articles and broadcasts. Their aim is to minimise the political implications of an event which exposed their own particular policies.

The coup d'etat carried out by a new military junta on 25 November primarily reflects the weakness of the dictatorial regime and the splits within it. The situation has changed since 21 April 1967. The resistance has organised during the years of the dictatorship—it has learned how to fight, how to organise, and can no longer be surprised and disorganised as it was six years ago. The reformist apparatuses, notably the two Greek CPs, have lost control of the masses and especially the youth.

The growing mobilisation of the European working class, in which the emigrant Greek workers have taken part, has had a direct effect on the Greek masses. The isolation of 1967 has been broken. The internationalist character of this explosion rang out loud and clear when the students shouted, 'Thailand showed the way,' or, 'Greece, Spain, Chile, forward to democracy!' The struggle for the Greek socialist revolution has been considerably advanced.

Long live the struggle of the Greek workers and students!

Down with the new military dictatorship!

Forward to the Greek socialist revolution!

WHAT'S ON

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every second and fourth Tuesday in the month, 8 p.m. at the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

REVOLUTIONARY XMAS CARDS: Trotsky slaying the counter-revolutionary dragon (old Russian poster), 50p for 10 from Red Books, 24 Boundary Road, London NW8.

'NATIONALISATION OR EXPROPRIATION': Translation of a pamphlet originally produced by the Communist League in France as a critique of the 'Union of the Left.' Very relevant to the present debate in Britain around the Labour Party's programme of nationalisations. Produced by Birmingham IMG for the Red Weekly Fund Drive. Rush orders to: Alex Stein, 281 Tiverton Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham. 10p per copy plus postage.

IMG RED FORUM: Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday at 8 p.m. in the General Picton, Caledonian Road (5 mins. Kings X tube). 18 December: 'Internationalism and the Fourth International.'

DEFEND POLITICAL PRISONERS in Iran. Public meeting Friday 14 December, 7 p.m. in Mechanical Engineering Department (Room 342), Imperial College, Prince Consort Road, London, SW7. Organised by Confederation of Iranian Students.



Reviews

The Politics of Homosexuality, by Don Milligan (Pluto Press, 10p).

This pamphlet should be welcomed by socialists and revolutionaries as an interesting document for preliminary discussion on the much neglected issue of homosexual oppression. Milligan analyses various aspects of discrimination in jobs, housing and legally, and discusses the factors which lead to the oppression of homosexuals.

He particularly discusses the role of the family, which is essential to capitalism as a mechanism of social control in that it imparts the ideology of capitalism. Homosexuals are seen as a threat to the family in general, in that they are outside its structure. Further, they are not absorbed effectively into the family structure of the working class, which has a further function under capitalism—namely, to reproduce and maintain a labour force for the capitalists.

Milligan's descriptions of the nature of homosexual oppression are thorough and excellent. His analysis of the law reform lobby is that law reform makes no practical difference to the plight of the homosexual, but that the demand for it does bring the homosexual issue into the

public eye. This would seem to be the correct perspective.

Milligan also asserts that 'life-style politics' are necessary but not sufficient. Again this is correct. 'Coming out' is vital to gay politics. A political and personal identification with homosexuality is an essential part of gay activism. But that identification must be translated into action before it acquires political validity. Once more Milligan is right to say that the London Gay Communes are important because they demonstrate the possibility of non-oppressive living situations.

Although homosexuals are an oppressed minority group, however, they are classless and as a group hold no homogeneous economic power. Therefore, as Milligan correctly argues, homosexuals on their own have no hope of being accepted under capitalism. Even though 'the popular hostility to homosexuality ... in the working class influences the labour and socialist movement very deeply,' the liberation of homosexuals is dependent upon the seizure of state power by the working class, for 'the workers possess the social and economic strength to overturn the present system.'

In raising the question of homosexual oppression in this way, realising that liberation is impossible under capitalism and that it is only possible under an alternative system of social relations which the abolition of capitalism would bring about, Milligan discusses the status of homosexuals both in the workers' states and in socialist organisations. Equality of status with heterosexuals will not be inevitable

under socialism, and in fact will only be possible if socialist organisations take up the issue now.

He points out that many socialists in Britain think that homosexuality is a 'middle class or upper class disorder,' a problem which Kollantai took up in her writings in 1919 when faced with the same attitudes, saying 'the problems of sex concern the largest section of society—they concern the working class in its daily life.' Socialists should learn from Milligan's criticisms, and encourage much more actively the contribution of gay comrades to the struggle. Actions such as the recent fight against the Heneky's discriminatory ban on homosexuals at a Leeds pub point the way forward here.

'INTERNATIONAL'

Summer 1973 Volume II, No. 2

Dossier on the Chilean Coup

Statement by United Secretariat of the Fourth International

A. Said and M. Machover

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RED BOOKS, 24 Boundary Road, London NW8

From the battlefields of Sinai to the drawing-rooms of Geneva

David Ben-Gurion, who died last week, and Gamal Abdel Nasser would seem to have had little if anything in common; but both were men whose death symbolised the end of an era.

Nasser died in 1970 just as the aura surrounding his name in the Arab world was beginning to crumble under the combined impact of the Israeli victory in the war of June 1967 and the rise of the Palestinian resistance. The decay of petit-bourgeois Arab nationalism, represented par excellence by the man who ruled Egypt for 18 years, had already set in after the 1967 debacle, but Nasser's death came just in time to save what remained of his prestige among the Arab masses.

David Ben-Gurion, Nasser's arch-enemy and a leading figure in the Zionist colonisation of Palestine, was the very incarnation of the petit-bourgeois Zionist dream. An ardent nationalist, he dedicated his life to fostering a massive Jewish settlement in a country populated by an overwhelming majority of Arabs, and didn't shrink from using any methods necessary to achieve his aim of a Jewish State. It is only fitting, therefore, that Ben-Gurion's passing should prefigure the fate of the system in whose creation he was so instrumental—for this founding father of Zionism, well-versed in Cervantes, Plato and Aristotle, yet unable to speak a word of Arabic, lived just long enough to witness the beginning of Zionism's death agony.

BURIAL GROUND

The epitaph for both Ben-Gurion and Nasser is soon to be writ large in Geneva, where Israel, Egypt and Syria are scheduled to meet on 18 December to try to work out a definitive Middle East settlement under the friendly guidance of US imperialism and the Kremlin. Geneva, that hallowed site of bourgeois civilisation, will come to be seen as the burial ground both of Nasser's anti-imperialist rhetoric and of the doctrine of unlimited Israeli supremacy. Here, under the auspices of imperialism, the changed balance of forces created in the Middle East as a result of the last war will be consecrated by an agreement in vowing withdrawal by Israel to its pre-1967 borders and recognition by the Arab ruling classes of the permanence of the Zionist State.

No doubt that is how the future is envisaged by Sadat of Egypt, Assad of Syria, and the increasingly important man-behind-the-scenes, Faisal of Saudi Arabia. There is no doubt either that the United States, for whom the oil boycott (whatever its inconveniences) facilitates a shift away from unilateral support for Israel towards a more 'even-handed' policy, is determined to enforce its will upon its Israeli ally.

The immediate problems of enforcement of the ceasefire terms remain, however, and if the

Egyptian and Syrian regimes prove unable to deliver the goods to their newly self-confident peoples in the next few months, their whole strategy of reliance on American imperialism will be seriously called into question. Sadat and Assad are well aware of the possible pitfalls, and it is for this reason that they are insisting on moves by Israel to withdraw to the 22 October ceasefire lines prior to the Geneva conference. They correctly believe that Israel's response will be a useful indication of her long-term intentions.

RIGHT-WING OPPOSITION

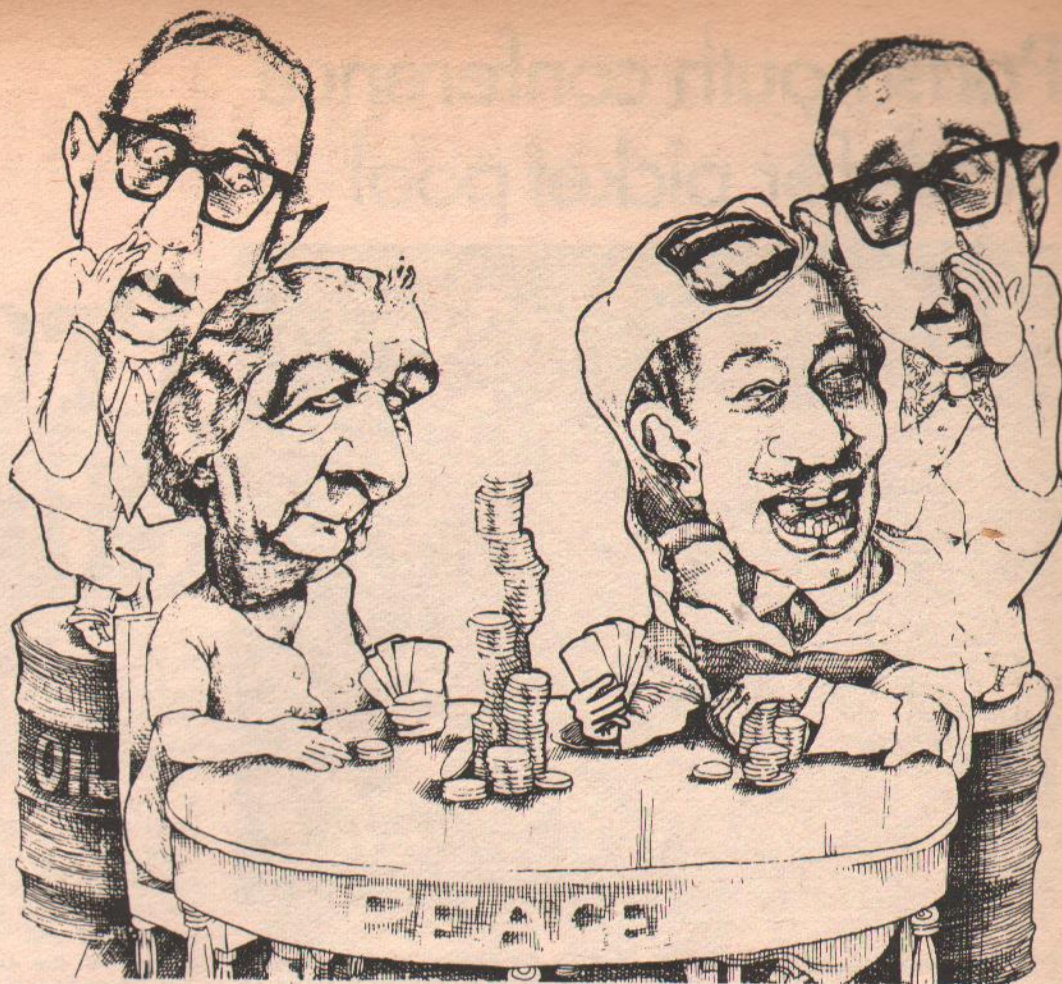
The right-wing opposition within Israel, however, is using the emotional issue of alleged Syrian and Egyptian torture of Israeli prisoners to block progress towards a settlement. The hypocrisy of this blatant propaganda exercise is breathtaking—Israel inflicted devastating losses on the Syrian economy in the last war (of the order of £750 million), as well as deliberately bombing civilian population centres in Damascus and elsewhere, and expelling the inhabitants of newly-conquered areas.

But Kissinger is unlikely to tolerate such 'sabotage' on the part of Israel's hawks. The deep malaise within Israel now reflects itself in a growing polarisation—between those who realise that the Jewish State can no longer remain the all-powerful Queen of the area, and must accommodate itself to the new realities, however bitter, and those whose obsession with Royal status inclines them towards renewed war. But since money is the nerve of all war, and the United States controls the flow of funds to Israel, it is clear that the diehard militarist faction of Zionism stands little chance of holding out against the tide of 'constructive diplomacy' under way.

PALESTINIAN STATE

Not least of all the problems faced by the organisers of this Geneva summit is the conflict which has arisen between Hussein and the Palestine Liberation Organisation over the issue of Palestinian representation at the forthcoming conference. Egypt, Syria and the Soviet Union favour the establishment of a Palestinian State on the West Bank of the Jordan, and even US imperialism is not necessarily hostile to the idea. Jordan and Israel, on the other hand, are totally opposed to the creation of a third state in the Palestine area, especially a state controlled by the Palestinian resistance.

This is nothing but the latest instance of a 25-year old partnership between Zionist colonialism and the Hashemite monarchy. In 1948, Ben-Gurion and Abdullah of Jordan, Hussein's father, agreed in a secret deal to the annexation by Jordan of the area allotted by the United Nations for the formation of a Palestinian Arab State; and both Amman and Tel-Aviv have a long history of co-operation to crush all independent activity on the part of the Palestinians (in September 1970, Israel threatened to intervene in Jordan if there was a danger that Hussein might be overthrown). In this situation, *revolutionary Marxists uphold*



Newsweek's view of Kissinger's role in the Middle East peace talks

the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, and oppose both continued Israeli occupation and the re-annexation of the West Bank by the butcher of Sandhurst, both of which prospects are abhorrent to the vast majority of the West Bank population. Internationalists must respect the democratic wishes of oppressed nationalities, in this case the Palestinian Arabs. We have to defend their right to form such a state against Meir and Hussein.

HOSTAGE STATE

However, we are opposed to the 'Palestinian State' idea for reasons of our own, even if the inhabitants of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are themselves drawn towards it as a 'lesser evil.' Such a state will not solve the Palestinian problem: squeezed between the Zionist State of Israel and the pro-imperialist Hussein regime, it can only be a hostage state, a glorified Bantustan, independent only in name. Such a state will inevitably find itself dominated by its powerful Israeli neighbour, which has already integrated the West Bank economy into its own to all intents and purposes. Moreover, it can only provide a left cover for the Arab ruling classes' horse-trading, embellishing any eventual peace settlement and helping to blind the Palestinian and Arab masses to its reactionary nature.

The fact that the West Bank State plan has been endorsed by the leadership of the Palestinian resistance is a measure of that leadership's incorporation into the official Arab world. To present this ill-conceived historical abortion as a solution to the Palestinian problem is a tragic mockery of those thousands of men and women who have fought in the Palestinian resistance, and who have, however confusedly, opened the road to

'the Arab socialist revolution, which alone is capable of finally solving the national and social problems of the Arab and Israeli working masses.

Alan Adler

Some are more Jewish than others...

Austrian police were called in on Monday for the second time in a week to eject Russian Jews from the Soviet consulate in Vienna. Neither incident received more than a few lines in the press. Apparently headline treatment is reserved for Zionists demanding that Jews be allowed to emigrate to Israel, while this group has on the contrary been trying for two years to gain re-admission into the Soviet Union, after becoming disillusioned with life in Israel.

The Soviet bureaucracy is refusing to re-admit them because it wants to use them as an example to all other would-be emigrants, Jewish and non-Jewish, of what can happen if you leave Russia and then decide to come back. It knows that there are thousands who want to leave, and, incapable of creating conditions in which people would not feel the need to go elsewhere, it seeks to clamp down on emigration by bureaucratic fiat.

Nor are the Vienna refugees (who went on hunger strike earlier this year in support of their demand) of any interest to the Zionist Establishment. They have refused to contribute to the 'national renewal', and renegades and traitors cannot expect gratitude. Evidently everybody is Jewish, but some are more Jewish than others...

Thailand: Generals waiting in the wings

The overthrow of the Thai military dictatorship in October by a coalition of students, workers, and small shopkeepers was welcomed almost universally. The King of Thailand gave the movement his blessing, and formally inaugurated the new civilian regime which was entrusted with the task of preparing a new constitution. The new Prime Minister was a former university rector, Sanya Thammasak.

The action of the Thai students has been welcomed by important sections of the ruling class in the United States and Thailand. The British *Economist* regarded the Thai students' moderation as a contributing factor to the success in overthrowing the dictator Kittikachorn, and contrasted this with the French students in May '68. What is then the real nature of the student movement in Thailand?

The organisation which played a co-ordinating role during the October demonstrations was the NSCT (National Student Centre of Thailand). It is the equivalent of the NUS in this country before the CP-Broad Left took over control. It found itself at the head of a mass mobilisation which involved 300,000 people at its height (in a country where there are only about 40,000 university students).

VACUUM

The reason behind this rapid involvement of other social layers was the vacuum which existed because of the complete absence of political parties in the life of the country. An analogy could be drawn with the South Korean and Pakistani student movement of the 60's in this regard. In any event the NSCT found itself confronted with a semi-insurrection

However, the ideology of a large bulk of its leadership could be characterised as liberalism, spiced with the teachings of Buddha. At a crucial stage, when the question of dual power was posed, the NSCT simply asked the demonstrators to go home. It took care that the insignificant government buildings which were set on fire were burnt carefully: ie the portrait of the monarch and his queen was removed beforehand.

The NSCT was also very careful not to burn any properties owned by foreign companies. Thus on the main boulevard of Bangkok, you can still see a burnt office and next to it an untouched and unscarred shop with a glass front exhibiting two dozen of the latest model Mercedes Benz cars. It is these and other related factors which have led a number of local leftists to speculate as to whether the overthrow of Kittikachorn might not have been decided by the King and Washington.

NSCT SPLIT

The most militant wing of the NSCT was led by

Seksan Praserkul. After October, he, together with his supporters split from the NSCT and set up the FIST (Free Independent Students of Thailand). The political basis of the split was confused, but essentially FIST argues that instead of taking up some of the functions of the bourgeois state, the NSCT should instead have organised popular brigades and militias to defend some of the gains. The NSCT's last public function was to organise a conference on underdevelopment from which China, Laos, the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam, North Vietnam and the Cambodian FUNK were excluded. The conference was supported by the Thai government.

The big outbreak of strikes over the last six weeks has also shown the differences that exist between the NSCT and FIST. While the former has appealed to the workers to go back to work in the interests of the country, the latter has supported the workers' strikes and explained why they are taking place.

The strikes are fairly widespread and involve large sections of the working class including workers from hospitals, banks, and hotels, teachers, government servants, etc. There have been violent scenes—in clashes between bus workers and the transport companies, buses operated with scab labour were wrecked and burnt. While the generals, such as Prachuab Suntrangkoon, have blamed the strikes on communists, the Thai Communist Party is in fact virtually absent

from the major cities. It seems to be confined to the North Eastern provinces of the country, and appears to have played no role whatsoever in the city rebellions which have shaken Thailand.

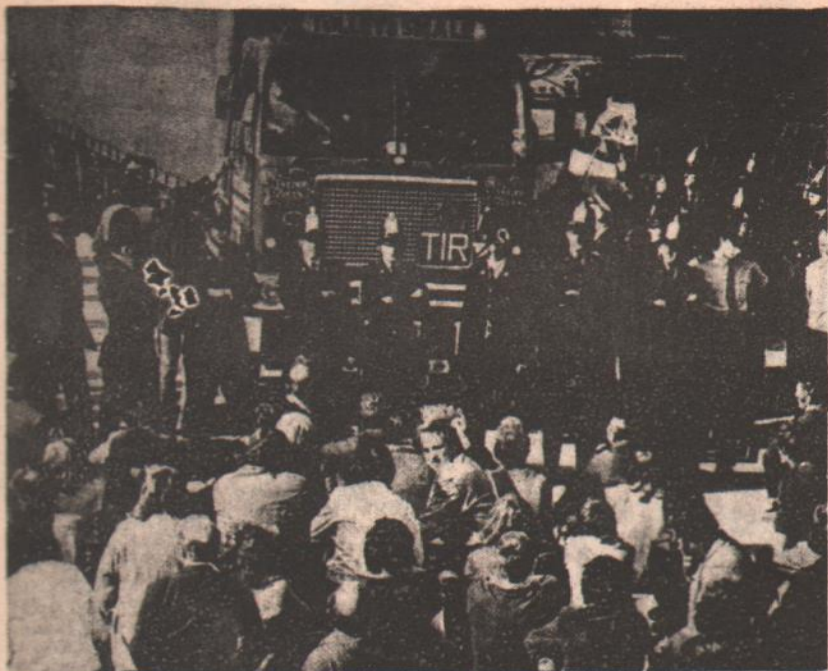
WAITING IN THE WINGS

Despite the fact that strikes are taking place and the army is not formally exercising power, it would be naive to imagine that the military has been defeated. The generals are waiting in the wings, and if any political force sympathetic to the communists rears its head there is little doubt that the army would intervene. Thus communist literature is still banned, no criticisms of the monarchy are tolerated, and a self-imposed censorship exists in the country. If the spontaneity of the workers begins to break out of this cage, the military will be back and with a vengeance.

The mass upheavals in Thailand provide us with yet another glimpse of the role students can play in dictatorships where political parties are weak or non-existent, while at the same time revealing the limitations of the student movement and its ideology. In addition, the Thai events have shown the increased social weight of the proletariat in semi-colonial countries after the limited industrialisation created by the economic/military penetration of imperialism. This change must be fully comprehended and incorporated in working out a strategy and tactics for the socialist revolution.

TARIQ ALI

Portsmouth conference votes for picket pool



Tampax strike in September showed need for picket pools

Portsmouth and Havant Trades Councils sponsored a conference on picketing and the Shrewsbury trials last weekend.

Attended by some 40 delegates, it was addressed by Jack Dunn, Area Secretary of the Kent NUM, Paul Davidson, one of the Birmingham 5, Frank Judd, local Labour MP, and a representative from the legal department of the TUC.

The conference unanimously passed a resolution from the Lee Park branch of the AUEW for strike action should any of the Shrewsbury 24 be jailed. It was agreed that the local Shrewsbury Defence Committee should organise factory

meetings and circulate a regular bulletin. Shop stewards committees will send delegates to the defence committee. It was also decided, especially in light of the police attacks on pickets during the recent Tampax strike, that a picketing pool should be created.

The conference also agreed on the need for an action committee against Phase 3. Its first job will be to conduct solidarity work for the miners, arrange for accommodation for miners' flying pickets, and win more backward sections of workers locally to their support.

It remains for the Trades Councils to ratify the decisions.

Rent strikers jailed

The daily routine of orderly repression in Walton jail, Liverpool, has been interrupted in the last week by mass picketing outside the gates.

The pickets have been protesting at the fact that Brian Owen, a rent striker arrested in a dawn raid by bailiffs, is being held in the jail. Another rent striker, Larry Doyle, has been released, but ten more tenants face imprisonment for contempt in ignoring court orders attaching their earnings.

The raid was the latest move in the attempt to break the 14 month rent strike at Tower Hill, Kirkby. The strike, against the Labour Council's operation of the Housing Finance Act, contrasts with the struggle at Clay Cross, where the Council has led a fight against the Act. At Kirkby the Labour Party supports Parliamentary Law and Order right down to the last brick in Brian Owen's cell.

The fact that Brian Owen is a building workers' shop steward emphasises the fact that his arrest, like the trial of the Shrewsbury building workers, is part of a generalised state offensive

in preparation for the big industrial confrontations that lie ahead. The message is clear—the repression will not stop at the factory or building site, but will strike at workers in their housing estates and homes.

The arrests at Tower Hill were well planned. They occurred just before Christmas, a time of great personal vulnerability for the arrested men and of financial pressure on those who live in this area of high unemployment.

There has, however, been some limited industrial action. Three local factories came out on a one day strike in protest, but further action of this kind has been put into cold storage until after New Year. In the meantime pickets and demonstrations outside (and inside) the jail continue, to keep up the momentum while further action is prepared, and in order to attract the attention of the labour and tenants movement across the country to this new attack.

The Tower Hill Rent Action Committee needs money and messages of support. Send these to: Tower Hill RA Committee, A12 Ravenscroft, Tower Hill, Kirkby, Lancashire.

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Prepare now for Shrewsbury verdict

Next week, the jury will go out to decide their verdict on the first six of the Shrewsbury 24. They are being asked to give a political judgement in a political trial. They are being asked to say that the act of organising pickets for struggle where physical confrontations occur can be called conspiracy. The Shrewsbury trials are the most serious attack on the right to organise and to picket since the passage of the Industrial Relations Act.

The first leg of the trial has been timed to finish just before Christmas, making it difficult to achieve a big reply in terms of industrial action to any conviction which may result. Some firms may already be taking their holidays when the jury returns its verdict. Nevertheless, there must be immediate industrial action on a massive scale if any conviction occurs, irrespective of whether the six are fined or imprisoned.

The purpose of this action must be to lay the basis for a sustained campaign for a pardon (if they are convicted), a campaign to run into the New Year when the other 18 will be facing the next round of trials. If any of the six are convicted, strikers in every area should demonstrate locally, and flying pickets should be sent out to hold factory gate and site meetings with

the aim of bringing home once again the need to defend the Shrewsbury 24 and to fight for action on the scale that greeted the jailing of the Pentonville 5.

The movement of opposition to the trials has had to be built by rank and file initiative. The trade union bureaucracy have ignored the question and sabotaged workers' attempts to take it up by threatening them with all sorts of penalties. Yet at the time of going to press, none of the central rank and file bodies have put out any call to prepare the movement for strike action which other groups of workers could take up and organise around.

It is precisely because the trade union bureaucracy, even its left-wing, are utterly opposed to defending the Shrewsbury 24, that the Communist Party is now playing Shrewsbury in a low key just at the time when the campaign needs stepping up. The Liverpool Conference in October, which the Communist Party dominated, produced no plan of campaign for defending the 24, despite all the militancy and promises. The national Shrewsbury Defence Committee has so far made no national call, nor has the Liverpool Trades Council in whose hands responsibility for the campaign was placed. The London Joint Sites Committee, although known to be preparing for some strike action before Christmas, has made no definite public call either.

Meanwhile the *Morning Star* has remained strangely silent on future perspectives for

the campaign, and the CP-sponsored Liaison Committee for the Defence of the Trade Unions has been no more forthcoming.

The attitude of the Communist Party towards Shrewsbury is the result of certain considerations.

It is perfectly clear that the preparations necessary for a serious struggle against Phase 3 must involve co-ordinating and synchronising the existing struggles from below. It is also clear that when the ruling class are preparing their special anti-picket squads, and even calling for the creation of special 'tactical reserves' trained in riot control, that it is vital that militants take measures in each locality to defend any pickets from attacks by police or scabs.

This can best be done by the creation of picketing pools and 'alert systems'. Yet out of such practical steps to unite the working class movement locally, might arise the beginnings of cross-union alliances against Phase 3, support for which would shatter the relationship the CP cultivates with the left trade union bureaucracy.

Yet these are precisely the lines along which the defence of the Shrewsbury 24 and the actions for which they are on trial must proceed. In several areas local conferences are being organised to discuss and prepare in an integrated manner, the local defence of picketing, the struggle against Phase 3, and the defence of the Shrewsbury 24.

Real facts on Irish prisoners

Confused and contradictory reports have appeared in the press about the hunger strike of the Republican prisoners sentenced at Winchester recently. The Provisional Republican Movement has issued the following statement which makes the question clear.

'Since the trial ended in Winchester on November 15 last, many statements reported in the media regarding the "Winchester Prisoners" are not in accordance with the facts. These are the facts:

'Seven of the nine who were sentenced—not all nine as has been invariably stated—announced at the end of the trial that they demanded political status and the right to serve their sentences in Northern Ireland. They also said that they would go on hunger strike until their demands had been conceded. All seven are continuing to press for these demands for themselves and for all Republican prisoners in British jails who regard themselves as prisoners of war and wish to be repatriated for the dura-

tion of their sentences. Four of the seven are still refusing food and are now being forcibly fed. They are the Price sisters, Dolours and Marion, Gerald Kelly and Hugh Feeney. The Republican Movement asks the public to treat with the deepest scepticism the statements made by the Prison Authorities that Paul Holmes and Roy Walsh voluntarily agreed to don the convict garb and abandon their hunger protest. When Paul Holmes was visited by his brother in Parkhurst Prison, Isle of Wight, on Saturday last he appeared to be deeply drugged.

'Roy Walsh has been held almost incommunicado since the trial and is seriously ill from the effects of force-feeding and from a severe beating received in the prison when he allegedly refused to co-operate with the prison authorities.

'Dolours Price (aged 21) and her sister Marion (aged 19) were forcibly fed for the first time on Wednesday last (December 5th). They had been

on hunger strike for 22 days and were drinking water only.

'A lawyer acting for the Price sisters is seeking permission from the Home Office to apply to the High Court in London for an injunction restraining the authorities from force-feeding prisoners.

'Early developments are expected in an assault action by Gerald Kelly and Hugh Feeney and Roy Walsh against those responsible for force-feeding them.'

Support action

Over 70 supporters of the Irish Political Hostages Committee marched to the High Barnet home of the Home Secretary, Robert Carr, last Saturday to hand in a letter calling for political treatment for the nine Irish Republicans sentenced to life imprisonment at Winchester last month.

'A "women's vigil" will take place outside Brixton Prison (where the Price sisters are being held) from 8 pm this Saturday evening (15 December) to 8 am the next morning in support of the prisoners' demands.

T&GWU militants call for fight against NIRC

The fine recently imposed on the Transport and General Workers Union by the NIRC, following on the heels of the fine on the AUEW, has provoked an angry response from militants.

Building workers in the No. 9/79 branch of the T&GWU in Leeds, have passed the following resolution which points the way forward. This initiative, if acted upon and taken up in other areas, could be the basis for a successful fight against the NIRC.

In view of the recent judgement by the National Industrial Relations Court in the case of 'General Aviation Services v Transport and General Workers Union' that the T&GWU is liable to pay compensation to GAS for loss of earnings during an industrial dispute, this Branch of the T&GWU (No. 9/79):

1. Calls on the General Executive Council to refuse to pay any compensation whatsoever, and to take immediate steps to mobilise the entire membership of the T&GWU in defence of the union.

2. Demands that the Regional Secretary of Region No. 9 immediately convenes an emergency meeting of the Regional Committee to plan the steps it will take in the region to defend the union. As a first step we demand that a mass meeting of members and shop stewards in the Region be called, at which the membership can decide the practical steps which can be taken in the Region to defend our union.

3. In view of recent attacks by the NIRC on other unions, notably the fines imposed on the AUEW, the greatest possible unity of all sections of the labour move-

ment is needed to defend trade union rights. T&GWU Branch No. 9/79 of Leeds therefore calls on Leeds Trades Council to organise a local conference of all affiliated bodies and members as a first step in building united action against the NIRC and the Industrial Relations Act.

4. We call on the Regional Secretary to immediately circulate copies of this resolution to all T&GWU branches in Region No. 9.

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