

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

169 2 MAY 1970 4d



MAY
DAY 70

FOR WORKERS POWER



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KICK OUT THE BOSSES



MAY DAY 70

by Paul Foot

ON 16 OCTOBER 1964, Mr T Dan Smith, leader of the Labour majority group on Newcastle Corporation, hurried down from the North to sit by the telephone in his Mayfair flat.

He was waiting for a call from Downing Street inviting him to join the new Labour Cabinet.

The call never came and T Dan Smith had to be satisfied with the lesser post of chairman of the Northern Region Planning Council. Yet he had every cause to feel hard done by.

Dan Smith had run the Labour Party's election publicity campaign. In countless colour supplement and television interviews, he had not balked at presenting himself as the new Britain's most glittering representative.

Hard, tough, ruthless, gritty, dynamic and, above all, efficient, Dan Smith was a spokesman for regionalism and technology.

The other side of T Dan Smith, his association with property companies, his 11 directorships in self-made firms, his involvement in property speculation all over Britain was either forgotten or utilised in the creation of the 'whizz kid' image.

Essential votes

As with T Dan Smith, so with the Labour Party. The crude capitalist reality of Labour's policies masked by a welter of Kennedy-style rhetoric and an underlying commitment to reforms.

These reforms, retained in Labour's programme, were enough to mobilise behind Wilson the traditional working class votes which were essential for his victory.

Harold Wilson, in September 1964 had promised a minimum income guarantee for lower-paid workers. He promised to abolish prescription charges and to build 500,000 houses by 1970.

He promised a Rent Act to protect tenants from high rents. His statements on immigration apologised for rattling on Labour's 1961 opposition to Commonwealth immigration control and placed all the emphasis against further control.

As late as November 1964, he promised not to go back to the old 'stop-go' economic policies of the Tories because 'we cannot afford the resulting loss in employment and production'.

Even Labour's policies towards the unions, despite talk of a planned growth of incomes, was relatively friendly. In 1962, Wilson wrote in the Daily Herald:

'We shall not be deterred by any-

How 'T. Dan Wilson'

rattled on the working class



The terrible trio: collapse of their housing policy at Ronan Point



one from springing to the support of the trade unions who find their wages and conditions prejudiced and their negotiation and arbitration machinery set aside by the diktat of a government department'.

One by one, with increasing speed and unerring consistency, the pledges have been broken and the policies reversed. The minimum income guarantee was abandoned as early as September 1965, and since then, under Labour's 'incomes policy' the gap between low-paid and high-paid workers has increased.

In 1967, Harold Walker, 'left-wing' Under Secretary at the Department of Employment and Productivity, finally admitted that the incomes policy was not, as previously stated, to assist low-paid work-

ers but to assist the national (employers') interest.

In January 1968, prescription charges were imposed at a higher rate than they had ever been under the Tories. The raising of the school leaving age was postponed.

Free school milk in secondary schools was abolished (at a 'saving' of £6m).

Later in the month, left-wing Housing Minister Anthony Greenwood abandoned the pledge to build 500,000 houses in 1970. The figure topped 400,000 in 1967, has gone progressively down ever since - and will continue to do so until 1972 - as a direct result of Labour policies.

The Rent Act machinery for fixing rents is now used almost exclusively by landlords. Nearly

half a million tenants previously protected by rent control have now been 'decontrolled' and are subject to legislation like the Housing Act, 1969, which allows landlords to raise rents almost without limit in exchange for 'improvements'.

In every year save one of Labour government there have been more than 600,000 unemployed in winter (compared with one, freak, year in the previous 15). Stop-go has been practised more crudely and viciously than ever Mr Selwyn Lloyd would have imagined possible.

Starting with the seaman's strike in 1966, the government has maintained a consistent and prolonged campaign against the trade unions and the militant sections of trade unions in particular. Had it not been for the opposition of almost the entire trade union movement, Labour might well have legislated to impose penal sanctions on strikers. The unions' negotiation and arbitration procedures have been set aside by the diktat of a government department.

Finally, Labour's immigration policy has been based almost exclusively on keeping blacks out, if necessary by breaking Tory promises to let them in.

The welfare wrapping with which the T Dan Wilsons packaged their goods in 1964 has been torn aside and the gritty technology has been revealed for what it is; a policy for maintaining the rich and the privileged in the way of life to which they have been accustomed.

Harsh competition

While workers and their unions have been exhorted and bullied into productivity deals, wage freezes and higher taxes (mostly purchase taxes which hit hardest at the poor) the fruits of all these 'sacrifices' have been handed out to industrialists, employers and shareholders to enable them to streamline their industries to meet harsher competition from abroad.

Though such streamlining is encouraged, however, it is not an essential condition for Labour government bounty. The slackest, most decadent rich men have only to whistle for the Labour government to come to heel. Earlier this year a few short shouts from the commercial television millionaires produced £6m in tax relief (the same sum as the government had 'saved' two years earlier by abolishing free school milk in secondary schools).

Private airline freebooters had only to complain in one press statement for the government to order a halt to BOAC's proposed take-over of BUA.

Last year £590m was handed out free in investment grants to industrialists who had to satisfy no other condition but that they had set up

plant in a 'development area'.

In every walk of life the government has been driven by a single priority: rob the poor to pay the rich.

From 1964 onwards the profits of building companies, developers and speculators soared with the introduction of new government-encouraged system-built blocks of flats. When Ronan Point collapsed in May 1968, the flats were found to be unsafe and lethal. The ratepayers had then to pay the same contractors to strengthen the blocks.

In the aircraft industry, the government approved unlimited expenditure on the Concorde supersonic airliner which cost some £900m before it flew. If it ever gets into service, the Concorde's fares will be so high as to make it available to approximately 0.5 per cent of the population, while millions will have to put up with its intolerable boom.

In shipbuilding, the government triumphed at the launching of the QE2, despite technical problems and despite the certain fact that none of the thousands of workers who built the liner will be able to afford to sail in it.

No aspect of public life has been unaffected by the Labour government's drive to sanctify and subsidise the class divisions which the Labour Party was created to abolish.

Now, however, there is an election to be won and Labour must woo its traditional working class voters to the polls. There has started a slow, shuffle to the left.

Forgotten phrases like 'free health service' and 'Tory union bashing' fall from the lips of Labour Ministers. Old slogans from past campaigns about the Tories wanting a 'means test state' are dusted down and posted on the hoardings.

The tactic may produce for Harold Wilson and his government the votes necessary to win an election (on the negative, if substantial grounds that the Tories would be even worse). But it can never produce for them the semblance of credibility among working class people.

Now, on the sixth May Day of Labour sell-out, the need is clearer than ever for a new organisation and new revolutionary politics to break up the class society which Wilson and his colleagues have so shamelessly stabilised.

Socialist Worker

6 Cottons Gardens London E2

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CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world - a tiny minority - subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power - the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through a state of workers' councils and workers' control of

WHERE WE STAND

production. Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant

struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois. International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations. Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

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SPRING IS ON THE WAY...



MAY DAY 70

VINCENT MALLON recalls past May Days and looks hopefully to the future

'Vote, vote, vote for Bonar Law-aw, Vote, vote, vote for all his men, Then we'll buy a penny gun and we'll make the Germans run, and we'll never see the Kaiser any more.'

THE WORDS of the song were execrable, but they were patriotic. As one of the vast throng of kids following the great Foden wagon that crawled through the streets in our part of Glasgow, I sang with the best.

'VOTE FOR BONAR LAW!' exhorted the posters plastered all over the wagon.

It was my first political experience. The son of an Irish immigrant, I had, since ever I could recall, heard talk of Home Rule and bold Robert Emmett, and I believed that Tone was coming back again with legions o'er the wave., Tone was coming back again the dear old land to save.

But for me and mine the Irish question was not political; it was an article of faith.

I went home bursting with the news about Bonar Law, but when I told my father, a god-fearing, forgiving Christian man, his response was a thunderclap: 'That miserable maple-leaf bastard. There isn't a pit in hell deep enough, nor a fire hot enough for the scut.'



France: May 1968

True nature

As I said, it was my first introduction to politics. Bonar Law had supported Carson and the Curragh conspirators.

The miners' struggle in 1921 was the event that brought home to me the true nature of workers' struggle. In the early spring the Lloyd George government suddenly abandoned national control of coal mines.

The miners were angry and well organised and they had implicit faith in the Triple Alliance of miners,

dockers and railmen. The Glasgow Evening Citizen was anxious. They expressed sympathy with the miners but advised them not to act until the summer in order to avoid hardship to the rest of the nation!

Whatever the miners' view of this strange counsel, they did not have time to say, for they were locked out. Deserted by their associates in the Triple Alliance, badgered and bludgeoned by the police, intimi-

dated by the army, subjected to every kind of strike-breaking technique, the miners fought back for three months, and starved.

At Bowhill, Fife, they printed their own ten shilling notes, which were cashable at the local Co-Op. for groceries. Authority frowned, considered prosecuting the moving spirits behind the scheme, but did not proceed.

Perhaps they did not want to produce a Bowhill Joe Hill. The miners were beaten.

Spring came early in 1926. May Day was a splendid occasion. This time the other organised workers were marching in solidarity with the miners.

Scarlet standard

We went as to a festival, determined, confident, and gay. On Tuesday 4 May we raised the scarlet standard high, beneath its shades we'd live - and live! But we were soon to learn that red is also the colour of shame.

The leading members of the TUC General Council, habituated to fawning on the ruling clique, and Ramsay MacDonald, long practised in the art of pretence, had faces redder than the reddest banner carried on May Day. These eagles proved to be sparrows, more concerned with the present pecking order than in seeing the creation of a new social order.

Ruthlessly they drove a wedge between the miners and the other workers. As Hugh Macdiarmid has said in another connection: 'They have rieved the live rose from the tree and bluided a' her snawy bosom.'

The miners, the red, rosy heart of the working class, were blown from their tree of safety. Disaster followed not just for the miners, but for the whole class.

My third spring dawned in Paris in 1968 when the students held authority at bay in a disciplined



Britain: May 1926, armoured cars against the strikers

struggle. They tried to build bridges to make contact with the workers.

But the so-called leaders of the workers were jealous of their petty privilege. The world was there for the workers to win, but the leaders, the bleeders, preferred to take a pass-out check.

Shall I see a fourth spring? Perhaps. Perhaps not. Anyway, I am not just sitting around waiting for it to happen.

But spring will come. Even now the revolutionary sap is rising. Next time, too, spring may give way to summer. And summer will bloom the buds of spring, the red rose, the crimson poppy.

Over all, high in the sky, the risen sun of the revolutionary workers' dream realised, the dream made manifest by Marx and briefly glimpsed in Russia during and after 1917. Spring is on the way, comrades.

WENDY HENRY writes of a martyr of the international labour movement

'Wobbly' Joe Hill - gunned down by America's rulers

'There is power, there is power, In a band of workingmen, When they stand, hand in hand, There's a power, that's a power, That must rule in every land, One Industrial Union Grand'.

IF EVER the Industrial Workers of the World's hopes and aspirations were summed up, it was in this simple heroic song - There is Power in a Union.

The IWW had started its life in 1905 at a convention in Chicago. It was a broad organisation embracing socialists, anarchists, trade unionists and revolutionaries.

It stood for industrial unionism at a time when the only unionism in the USA was the American Federation of Labour, with its craft unionism and class collaboration, a policy of co-operation between workers and employers.

The IWW pledged its undying support for the class struggle 'that must go on until the workers of the world organise as a class, take possession of the earth and the machinery of production and abolish the wage system' - these were the fighting words in its constitution.

The author of the song was Joel Hagglund, known to his comrades and workmates as Joe Hill, a Swedish immigrant who stacked wheat and laid pipes, played the piano in saloons, dug copper and worked on docks. And he 'scribbled' - writing poems, composing songs and bits of verse.

In 1910 Joe joined the IWW and within the space of a few years became the organisation's leading song writer. They were songs that with humour and satire made a tremendous impact and got across the IWW's message of Education, Emancipation and Organisation to thousands upon thousands of semi-liter-

ate workers.

By 1913 Joe was an IWW 'boomer', moving from one 'Wobbly' (as the IWW became popularly known) meeting to another. He helped out with strikes, assisted in free speech struggles, fought alongside the Mexican revolutionaries, worked at various trades and always composed his songs.

He became a leading figure in the American labour movement, giving hope and practical assistance to numerous working-class struggles.

On Saturday 10 January 1914, two armed men walked into a grocery store in Salt Lake City, Utah and killed its owner J G Morrison and his son. They fled, taking nothing.

Determination

Three days later Joe was arrested. During his arrest he was shot, although at the time the police broke into his home he was asleep and without weapons of any kind.

He was then interrogated continuously and it was a full three days before he was allowed to see a doctor. By this time he was fully expected to die and only his sheer determination to live pulled him through.

Other suspects, often with more concrete evidence against them, were released. Joe was finally charged and a trial set for 10 June. But the press and the police had condemned Joe before he got to the court room. Their attitude was that he was a member of the IWW and a trouble-maker and even if he hadn't committed the crime, American society was better off without him.

The case against Joe Hill stood or fell on the identification of the two men who entered Morrison's store. Yet none of the state's witnesses identified him as being one of those two men.

The state's most important witness was Morrison's younger son, a mere child of 13 who constantly contradicted himself.

On the flimsiest of evidence on



26 June, the jury found Joe guilty and he was sentenced to death. However the court stayed the execution until argument for a new trial could be heard.

Now the IWW's defence campaign really got under way. Throughout the affair Joe had opposed a defence campaign, insisting that the matter was a personal one and the IWW's much needed money should not be wasted.

Finally he relented and the massive defence campaign, which was to stay the guns of execution for more than a year, started.

Letters and telegrams demanding a new trial or a pardon poured into the Utah authority's offices. For the first time, Utah's Governor Spry realised that he was dealing with an explosive issue.

Mass meetings of workers up and down the country, numerous branches of all kinds of political parties and scores of individuals registered their protest at Joe's conviction. In the words of an oil millionaire (perhaps not the most sympathetic of characters) who promised \$50,000 to the campaign, the trial was frankly a farce.

The movement spread rapidly. The first protest of an international nature came from London. On 19 December 1914 a mass meeting of British workers passed a resolution 'joining with the fellow workers of America in demanding the unconditional release of Joe Hill'.

The awe-struck Salt Lake Herald Republican newspaper announced that the Governor's office was being

was granted.

But in spite of the universal outcry, the appeal for a new trial was rejected and numerous other appeals were quashed. On the morning of 19 November 1915, four bullets pierced the target placed over Joe Hill's heart and at 7.42am he was pronounced dead.

A great man died as he'd lived. Among his last words was the final fighting sentence: 'I have lived like a rebel and I shall die like a rebel.'

Joe Hill wasn't the first man to die for his belief in the working class and he certainly wasn't the last. Great men like Ruthenberg - Ruthenberg the fighter, Ruthenberg the tireless worker against oppression - who stood up in a capitalist court in New York in 1920 facing a ten year sentence and hurled all the scorn and defiance of the working class in the face of the judge and prosecutor.

At a time when the left in America had been outlawed and driven underground, this man rose from his seat in the courtroom and calmly informed all present that the cause they sought to imprison would emerge triumphant.

Such names as William Heywood, Sacco and Vanzetti, Frank Little, Tom Mooney, Eugene Debs and Billings give the American labour movement a heritage to be proud of.

Those who strove to remove these men from living memory only succeeded in burning their names on the hearts of all militants and socialists.

The world-wide campaigns they evoked proved the potential power of the international working class when moved by the spirit of solidarity and the never-ending fight against capitalist oppression.

Jeremy Bugler in New Society: 'If Lord Stokes wants a hernia, I recommend him to read...'

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MAY DAY 70

The Ford strike this year: management threatened to run down Dagenham and step-up European investment in a bid to weaken the strike



Threat of the international giants

by Sabby Sagall

IT HAS BEEN predicted that in 15 years' time the third biggest industrial power after the United States and Russia will not be Europe but American industry in Europe.

One of the most striking features of the last 10 years has been the rise of the giant international corporations with factories and offices in several countries.

These giants are a threat to workers employed by them in the different countries. The bosses of these 'multinational' firms attempt to weaken workers in one country by threatening to transfer investments and production to a subsidiary in another country.

During the 1969 Ford strike in Britain, the management threatened to scrap their future investment plans for Dagenham and instead build up their works in Germany and Belgium.

When Ford built its plant in Genck in the Limburg region of Belgium the management deliberately chose an 'underdeveloped' area with little industry and high unemployment. They blackmailed the unions into accepting worse conditions than those in Ford plants in Antwerp or Cologne by threatening to withdraw their Belgian investments altogether.

During a strike at Genck in 1968 for 'parity', that is the same working conditions with the Ford Antwerp assembly plant, the management also threatened to move production to other countries.

Strike weakened

In the recent Genck strike this year, the management moved machinery to Cologne to maintain the same level of production. Militants at Genck failed to get their Cologne brothers to reject this strike-breaking attempt. The result was a weakening of the Genck strike.

In a few years, some 200 to 300 giant international company will dominate industrial production in the West. The typical multinational firm is the American-owned company with subsidiaries dispersed throughout Europe, Canada and parts of the underdeveloped world, especially Latin America.

From 1965 to 1967 direct American investments in Western Europe increased from 14 to 17.9 billion dollars. Table One gives a breakdown of these figures for individual countries.

In 1950, only 14 per cent of American investment abroad went to Europe. The average in recent years has been around 35 per cent of a much larger total.

In Britain at the latest estimate there were about 1600 American subsidiaries and Anglo-American financed firms operating here. Together, they employed 6 per cent of the labour force in manufacturing industry, they supplied 10 per cent of the total goods made in British industry and accounted for 17 per cent of Britain's export of goods.

A striking example of increasing international concentration of resources is the car industry. Out of 23 firms there are now six which can each produce one million cars or more a year. Together, they control more than 80 per cent of world output. See Table Two.

The major international oil companies - British Petroleum, Shell and Esso - have production facilities in more than 40 countries. Two car firms - General Motors and Ford - have plants in 20 countries.

The American computer firm IBM (International Business Machines) provides a good example of the kind of international link-ups which the most highly centralised multinational firms are trying to achieve. IBM is the sixth biggest firm in the world and its assets have been valued at 40 billion dollars, which is roughly equivalent to the annual production of Italy.

Computer market

IBM manufactures in 14 different countries and employs 250,000 people throughout the world. It controls 65 per cent of the computer market in the West. Only in Britain and Japan does it have less than half the national market.

IBM has divided its manufacturing among the various countries. Each country specialises in the research and development of a certain model in its range of computers.

Once a model has been developed, each country specialises in the production of a particular part. In the European section of the IBM empire, the final components are assembled either in Germany or France.

Table Three gives figures for four firms in 1969. It is a further example of the size, scope and wealth of the multinational corporations.

There is one basic reason for the rise of the multinational corporation: growing international competition. In the jungle of big business competition, only giants can survive.

The law of the jungle is expand or die. To be able to stand up to this rat-race and increase their profit margins, firms must continually search for means of reducing their costs and enlarging their markets.

The size of a firm makes a crucial difference: the bigger its output, the more cheaply it will be able to produce. But it is no longer enough for mergers and takeovers to



in 1961 and set up plants in Belgium and Germany. General Motors bought up Vauxhall's in Britain and Opel in Germany. Chrysler took over Rootes in Britain and Simca in France.

It also became clear that in various industries, such as computers or cars, the single national market was no longer large enough for firms to win the maximum advantage from increased scales. Ford and General Motors have tried to integrate production in their European and American plants.

GM have decided that Vauxhall should produce all their trucks outside America, while Opel will export to most of those markets which can be supplied from either Germany or Britain.

As in the case of IBM, Ford are producing different components in different countries. There are three main tractor plants in Essex, Antwerp and Detroit. Antwerp produces all the transmissions, Essex produces all the engines and hydraulics and Detroit all the gear systems. The finished tractors are then sold in all countries.

For the multinational bosses, the ever-widening scope of their operations enables them to raise profits by playing off one national group of workers against others. A single giant employer negotiating with workers divided into many separate national groups is in a strong position to dictate terms.

He can weaken particular struggles by threatening to transfer production and future investment. He will always attempt to isolate and break particular strongholds of militancy.

It is clear that if workers are to defeat the strategy of the multinational firm, they must counter it with their own international strategy. The great strength of the working class has always been its ability to unite in the face of employers who by the very nature of their system can never completely eliminate competition among themselves.

Strategy needed

For an employer to go on taking profits from his workers, he must be able to point to his competitors and say: 'They are the reason why I cannot give you higher wages'.

There are some basic points in any international strategy to defeat the multinational firms.

Firstly, the prevention of stockpiling of components in different countries in the period before wage demands are to be put.

Secondly, preventing the company moving machinery from one country to another so as to keep production going in the event of a strike.

Thirdly, preventing the company from increasing its schedules in one country so as to defeat workers in

another. Beyond such basic trade union solidarity actions, the aim of international rank and file link-ups should be to achieve international bargaining on wages and conditions. This should be done by demanding international parity - the raising of the lowest levels of wages and conditions within the firm to the highest.

The American United Auto Workers were able to achieve wage parity between Canadian and US car workers, which was not just in the interests of the previously lower-paid Canadian workers. The security of jobs of UAW members was in potential danger due to the wide range of differentials between American and Canadian workers employed by the same firm.

Planned struggles

The fight against the multinational firm will increasingly have to take the form of internationally planned struggles over key issues of control. Three kinds of demands are relevant here:

First, workers' control over hire and fire. If, as seems likely, the rate of growth of world trade falls in the future, the multinational firms will try to cut costs by creating redundancies and spreading them over different countries at different times.

It will only be possible for workers to fight such measures by linking up internationally and demanding the maintenance of the existing level of employment throughout the combine under the threat of international strike action. Alternatively, in any country where redundancies are threatened, the demand should be raised internationally for the individual state to take over the firm's assets so as to guarantee jobs for the displaced workers.

Secondly, international parity on work standards must be demanded by all workers within an international combine. The same firm often tries to impose worse conditions on its European workers than on its workers in America: faster line-speed, shorter relief time and fewer relief workers per shift.

Thirdly, workers will increasingly have to intervene internationally on the issues of company investments.

The demand for control over investments is the only effective way of stopping multinational bosses from blackmailing a national or regional section of their workers by threatening to withdraw or run-down their plants.

Workers throughout the multinationals should join forces to demand the opening of the books throughout each combine. They should demand the right to carry out an international comparison of the whole of the firm's sales, profits and production costs.

International link-ups of shop stewards and rank and file committees are a vital part of this strategy. Dockers and Ford workers from Britain, Belgium and Holland took important steps in this direction earlier this year with conferences on the continent.

Only such a planned workers' strategy will be able to fight off the attacks of the multinational corporations. The building of international organisations will mean taking the offensive against the powerful giants and muscling in on their control over the lives and conditions of millions of workers.

Such struggles will form a vital part of the road to international socialism.

TABLE ONE

Recent trends in book value of US foreign direct investments in Western Europe (in billion dollars)

	1965	1966	1967
Common Market of which:	6.3	7.6	8.4
W. Germany	2.4	3.1	3.5
France	1.6	1.8	1.9
Italy	1.0	1.1	1.2
Benelux	1.3	1.6	1.8
Britain	5.1	5.7	6.1
Switzerland	1.1	1.2	1.3
Other W. Europe	1.5	1.7	2.1
Total W. Europe	14.0	16.2	17.9

TABLE TWO

World private car output figures for 1968

General Motors	5,963,563
Ford	3,784,864
Chrysler	2,416,160
Volkswagen	1,680,694
Fiat	1,617,439
British Leyland	943,560

TABLE THREE

Figures in million £ sterling

	Total sales	Assets (capital employed)	Profits	No of employees
British Petroleum	2080m	1557m	371m	68,000
ICI	1237m	1505m	182m	187,000
Unilever	1047m	1355m	187.5m	312,000
Ford	5864.7m	3730.4m	260.8m	415,000

Trinidad fights the grip of oil and sugar bosses

by Martin Tomkinson

REVOLT hit Trinidad, Haiti and Costa Rica last week. The Americans were so alarmed that they immediately sent five frigates into the area, backed up by three British frigates.

The days when the West Indies was regarded as a politically quiet and 'safe' area are rapidly drawing to a close.

Trinidad is the second largest of the West Indian islands with a population of just over one million people. Of these about 41 per cent are Negroes and about 36 per cent are of Indian origin.

Most of the rest are of mixed race. There are only a few thousand Europeans on the island.

Nearly all of the inhabitants are descendants of slaves from Africa or forced labourers from the East Indies. This is a fact of great importance in the culture and society of the whole of the West Indies.

The most disastrous effect of slavery were the divisions it created in the culture of the islands. Social conflicts have often arisen between the two major racial groupings.

This can be seen in Guyana and these have been exploited and stirred up by the big business interests on the island.

It is important to stress that in Trinidad last week this element was completely absent. Negroes and Indians worked closely together against their common oppressor — imperialism.

Flagrantly robbed

Although Trinidad is the only West Indian island to have a balance of payments surplus, all Trinidadians are most flagrantly robbed and exploited of their country's natural wealth. Economically, Trinidad means oil and sugar and oil and sugar means Texaco and Tate and Lyle.

Texaco owns 80 per cent of the island's oil production and last year 'earned' net profits of \$835m. Tate and Lyle's subsidiary, Caroni, controls 90 per cent of the sugar production and refining and last year earned a trading profit of £8.1m.

Nearly all of these super-profits are not spent or reinvested in Trinidad but are repatriated to banks in Switzerland, Britain and America.

It is easy to see why most Trinidadians see their 'independence' as a fraud. The economic power of the island is held by foreign big business.

The millionaire press has dubbed the struggle a 'Black Power' one. They use the term in a narrow sense to create the impression that a racial minority is attempting to overthrow the majority.

In fact, the struggle in Trinidad is a political one led by black people in an almost totally black island. That is the real meaning of 'black power' in this context.

Unemployment is running at over 15 per cent of the labour force and both Britain and America have cut back drastically on their immigration quotas. Britain allowed labour vouchers to a mere 34 Trinidadians last year.

And if Britain were to join the Common Market, Trinidad's assured sugarmarket would take a severe dip and could only lead to further unemployment.

After last week's uprising, Eric Williams, Trinidad's Prime Minister, must be ruefully reflecting on the ironies of history, because he has probably done more than any other Trinidadian to re-establish a pride in black values and black culture. Through books like Capitalism and Slavery and constant campaigns and public meetings, he built up his People's National Movement which swept into power in 1956 and has remained there ever since.

As Prime Minister, Williams threw the Americans out of their base in Chaguaramas and has undertaken some radical measures like



Police tearing down militants' posters in Port of Spain. . .



. . .while smoke billows from a ransacked building

the nationalisation of certain foreign banks.

But these measures have been unable to satisfy the needs and aspirations of the mass of the people. In the crunch, Williams was prepared to call in the American Marines to safeguard his own position.

What started in February as a protest against the trial of seven West Indian students at Montreal University for their part in disturbances there has escalated into a huge, national movement for real political and economic independence. In one week the masses have learnt more about the realities of political power than in 14 years of supposedly 'radical' rule.

Paralysed island

The demonstrations organised by the National Joint Action Committee (which consists of 26 organisations including student bodies and trade unions) have affected every industry and paralysed the whole island. Williams has been forced to declare a state of emergency and was only saved from complete overthrow by the action of British coastguards who shelled the road along which mutinous troops wished to travel.

A strict curfew has been imposed and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs, A N Robinson has resigned in protest at Williams' handling of the situation. It is now certain that Williams' political career has been massively dented if not finished for good.

The main problem now facing the NJAC is to know how to organise a meaningful opposition in the island without getting bogged down in parliament. Their main hope would seem to lie in linking up with similar groups throughout the West Indies.

The demonstrators have been supported at all the West Indian universities and an all-Caribbean movement is a possible development.

The effect of the Trinidad events on the whole of the area cannot be overestimated and the shock-waves stemming from this explosion will continue for many months.

For the first time, many West Indians have been brought up against the harsh reality of American power by the presence of the warships just off their islands. This lesson will not soon be forgotten.

The demonstrators have called for real nationalisation of all foreign companies and this demand must be re-echoed throughout the Caribbean.

The people of Trinidad have advanced the interests of revolutionary socialism in the area one step further. The next step will inevitably come sooner than either the Americans or Eric Williams expect.

Cottons Column

ONE COMMON CAUSE of aeroplane accidents is the impact of landing on the liquid fuel in the plane's tanks. The bump can cause an explosion severe enough to blow the plane to pieces during an otherwise 'normal' landing.

But jelly fuel instead of liquid cuts out virtually all danger. In 97 per cent of cases, to be precise.

The airlines will not use jelly fuel. It is not 'economic', they say. You see, on a plane there are eight fuel pumps. To use jelly fuel they have to be marginally more powerful. The necessary enlargement of capacity means also that each one is 40lbs heavier. This is a total of 320lbs extra weight.

And 320lbs extra weight of this kind means one and a half less paying passengers with luggage on every non-jet plane, or 320lbs less paid-for freight.

So rather than cut back on their profit margins, the airlines quite deliberately leave out an elementary safety device which eliminates almost all the possibilities of such accidents.

election period for two reasons.

'One might be called a rallying of the faithful: there is a tendency for there to be a swing back of voters towards their normal allegiances. . .

'The other usual movement during a nationwide campaign is a leftward reassembly of the meek: a greater turnout in favour of the poor and ignorant'

Having dismissed at least half the country as thick louts, Mr Burnett turns his attention to what will happen after the election.

'...the election should be held as early as possible. One (ground) is the need to stop the present wage inflation and to restore some semblance of an incomes policy. This will not be attempted by a Wilson government on this side of the general election. After the election, a government of either party would have to think of returning to some sort of statutory wage control—how ever much both may at present deny it.'

'We've been saying that for some time. But according to The Economist's definition, we're stupid. What's your excuse, Alistair?'

DAVID MORELL, chairman of Mitchell Construction, the firm that was unable to build a hospital in Peterborough even to the pathetic standards agreed to in the contract, recently had this to say of the nation's plight:

'The people we do overseas business with have no particular sympathy with our poverty either as individuals or as a country.'

In the year ending 31 December, 1968 Mr Morell was paid a total of £57,693.

Double take

GOOD JOURNALISTS are taught to watch carefully for contradictions in stories and speeches. It seems that they are not so good at spotting them when they meet together in conference.

Last week the National Union of Journalists' annual meeting threw out a motion — originally put up by Socialist Worker NUJ members — that sought a press blackout on the Springbok cricket tour.

Speakers waxed indignant at the very idea. 'This is a threat to the freedom of the press,' thundered new-elected-for-life general secretary Ken Morgan.

Next day, up came a motion concerning press coverage of the World Cup soccer saga. Sports writers were angry at a Fleet Street move to sign up famous footballers to comment on the games.

'If this is allowed to happen,' roared one tweedy sportsman, 'we will shut down every paper in the country.' The cheering delegates carried the motion unanimously. . .

Idiots unite

THE EMPLOYERS' paper The Economist believes in speaking its mind. Its contempt for the working class is never hidden behind honeyed phrases, as so often happens in high Tory papers like The Times.

Last week, the paper — edited by telly pundit Alistair Burnett — commented on the swing back to Labour shown by the opinion polls. It expected this trend to continue in an

THE BURMAH Oil Company, anxious that you should instal their central heating system in your semi (basic price for boiler and eight radiators is a mere £380), paints an enthusiastic picture of its facilities:

'Standing in the middle of the Burmah Oil refinery, on the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal, one has the illusion of having strayed into some Martian territory. Huge storage tanks dot the landscape; complex cracking plant spears the skyline, helmeted figures in protective clothing hurry about their arcane business.

'And behind all the activity lies some very good news about central heating: Burmah Wamlife. Burmah Wamlife, from one of the world's major oil companies, means just what it says.'

It does indeed. It means that it is cluttering up the country with hideous contructions to supply heat for the few while the majority are left to rot in slums and crowded conditions.

Anyone got a match. . .

He means meat balls

THE RICH and privileged are pretty disgusting at the best of times. They are never more insufferable than when boasting of all the fine and unpronounceable goodies they stuff down their fat throats while 19 per cent of working-class families live below the barest subsistence level for nutrition.

Listen to Mr Christopher Driver, editor of the Good Food Guide, writing in The Times nosh column last Saturday:

'I have had a weakness for quenelles ever since a night in Nantua at the Hotel France on a family holiday, when the head waiter flattered my adolescent ego by congratulating me on the choice of a Meursault Goutte d'Or to drink with those divinely rich quenelles de brochet sauce Nantua.'

The effect on me of this arrogant bilge is similar, I understand, to that of eating too many marinated mussels.

Join the International Socialists

There are branches in the following areas

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Aberdeen; Clydebank; Dundee; Edinburgh; Glasgow; East Kilbride.

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Durham; Newcastle upon Tyne; Teesside (Middlesbrough and Redcar)

NORTH

Barnsley; Bradford; Derby; Doncaster; Hull; Leeds; York; Selby; Sheffield.

NORTH WEST

Lancaster; Manchester; Merseyside; Preston; St Helens; Stockport; Wigan.

MIDLANDS

Birmingham; Coventry; Northampton; Leicester; Oxford; Potteries.

WALES and SOUTH WEST

Bath; Bristol; Cardiff; Exeter; Swansea

SOUTH

Ashford; Brighton; Crawley; Folkestone; Portsmouth; Southampton.

EAST

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GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES

Acton; Angel; Camden; Chertsey; Croydon; Dagenham; Deptford; East London; Enfield; Erith; Fulham; Greenford; Hampstead; Harrow; Hemel Hempstead; Hornsey; Ilford; Kilburn; Kingston; Lambeth; Merton; Reading; Richmond; Stoke Newington; Tottenham; Walthamstow; Wandsworth; Watford; Victoria (SW1).



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name _____

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Send to IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.



Socialist Worker

BOSSES' SPIES KEEP TABS ON MILITANTS

SW Reporter

AN EXTREME right-wing, anti-trade union organisation called the Economic League is used by employers to spy on militants.

This was discovered last week when a newspaper reporter attempted to track down Glasgow workers who are fighting the planned sacking of 3500 men at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders.

When he arrived at the home of a Glasgow draughtsman who has campaigned against the sackings, the journalist said his London office had suggested he contact the Glasgow branch of the Economic League for names and addresses.

We are withholding the name of the journalist because he gave valuable information to his questioner. He said the Economic League's Glasgow branch was run by a man named Teacher who had an extensive card-index file on 4-5000 militants in Scotland.

DETAILS

The file contained names, addresses and telephone numbers, plus details of militants' close friends and articles they had written for papers, with titles and dates. The file listed the jobs and activities of militants.

According to the journalist, Teacher claimed that 60 or 70 firms in Glasgow alone are affiliated to the Economic League. They phone Teacher when taking on new workers to see if they have 'records' as trouble-makers.

The League is a national organisation, financed by big business. There is no doubt that its spying activities are countrywide.

'DEMOCRACY'

Here is another glaring example of our 'democratic' society. The bosses own the means of production — the factories and the machines.

But because they are a tiny minority who live by exploiting the majority, they need an army of spies and security men to keep watch on those who are active in trade union and left-wing affairs.

Compare the bosses' underhand methods to those of the workers. They have no secrets. They take their important decisions at factory or mass meetings, open to all.

One lesson is that the Economic League should be exposed as a witch-hunting agency.

But there is a bigger lesson to draw: that real democracy is workers' democracy. And that will only be achieved when the bosses and their spies are kicked out for good.

London IS meeting

MAY DAY

Left unity and the working class

SPEAKERS
Duncan Hallas
Terry Barrett

John Palmer
Chairman: Paul Foot
Friday 1 May 7.30pm
Holborn Assembly Hall,
Johns Mews WC1

(off Theobalds Road, rear of
Holborn Library — two minutes
from Central Books



March backs W. Indies struggle

A SECTION of Sunday's London demonstration against the Vietnam war and the threat of British and American intervention in Trinidad. At the end of the march, police launched a vicious attack on black demonstrators in Hyde Park and arrested 20.

ALSO ON SUNDAY, a gang of white youths attacked and beat up a small group of Pakistanis in Brick Lane, East London. Police arrived — and arrested two Pakistanis and two youths. The Pakistanis were charged with possessing offensive weapons. The incident spotlights the urgent necessity for black defence squads to beat off both the youths and the racist police.

Colleges on the march

STUDENTS are beginning to fight back against the mounting attacks by university authorities.

At Liverpool, where 10 students have been expelled or suspended,

NOTICES

NORTH LONDON IS Women's Group: 3pm Sun 3 May: 18 Dickenson Rd NS. 'Advertising and sex' plus FILM.

NORTH LONDON Stop the Seventies Tour: Fri 1 May, 7.30pm Ladbroke Hse, 62 Highbury Grove N1 to plan activities. 2 MAY 11.30am, Picket Lord's cricket ground, St John's Wood.

IS London student committee: Mon 4 May 7pm, LSE room 5421 to plan new journal Members only.

WANDSWORTH and LAMBETH IS branches: Productivity Deals. Spkrs Tony Cliff and Jim Atkinson, sec. Wandsworth Trades Council, Assembly Rooms Clapham Baths, Clapham Manor Rd SW4 (near Clapham Common tube). Mon 4 May, 8pm

MAY DAY March: Tories out, workers in Sun 3 May, Folkestone Harbour, 3pm. March to Civic Centre to demand an end to all political arrests, full employment and a £20 minimum wage, a democratically run society under workers' control. Also May Day greetings to our comrades in Canterbury nick. Folkestone March 25 movement.

MARXIST STUDIES — spring issue. Workers' Control and Marxists, John Walters. Self-management in High Schools in France 1968, Nicolas Baby. The Law of Value and Self-management in the Workers States, Ernest Germain. Factory Councils, Gramsci. Book Reviews etc. 3s 4d pp BMS Publications, 16a Holmdale Road London NW6

A WOMAN's work is never paid for. Public meeting on Women's Equal Rights, Fri 8 May, 7.30pm. Spkrs Chris Norwood MP, Anne Spencer NUTGW, Audrey Wise, USDAW, Chair: Brian Nicholson TQWU. Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1.

Published by the International Socialists 6 Cottons Gdns London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd. (TU all depart-

students are striking on 1 May. They will march through the city with the Trades Council May Day demonstration.

At Oxford, students have occupied university buildings in protest at the expulsion of IS member Steve Bolchover.

Now LSE Students' Union, whose honorary president Paul Hoch was jailed last week for 28 days, has called for a national demonstration on May Day against repression.

The march will leave Lincoln's Inn Fields at 1pm and go to Central Hall, Westminster where Education Minister Edward Short and several vice-chancellors will be at a meeting.

The march will be followed by a meeting at LSE at 4pm. A number of colleges have promised support.

But demonstrations and local occupations are not enough. National strike action must be the aim.

Emergency general meetings of every student union should be called to support this demand and to send delegates to the national conference of student unions called by LSE on 8 May to plan action.

Irish left fights ban on Belfast May Day march

SOCIALISTS and trade unionists in Northern Ireland are mounting a campaign to stage a May Day march on Friday in defiance of the official union machine.

The Labour Party in Newtonabbey has called a meeting this week to set up a committee for a May Day march. The meeting is supported by the militant socialist movement, People's Democracy. Inquiries have been made

Reduced staff

Both the leaderships of the two main unions, SOGAT and NGA, are on record as being in favour of productivity bargaining. Richard Briginshaw, joint general secretary of SOGAT, in a letter to Lord Drogheda, chairman of the NPA, boasts that since the schemes came into operation they have reduced staff in the national papers by 2000 workers.

Similarly the NGA can claim to have been in favour of prod dealing in the whole industry for many years.

In the general print industry last year they signed a deal which, in return for selling a whole host of conditions, gained for their members 20s a year for two years. During the first year of this deal, the cost of living will rise by approximately 14s.

By making an official strike call, the NGA leaders have ended the policy of non-cooperation by the minders on the Mirror just when it was beginning to hurt.

This takes the power of decision-making and negotiations away from the shop floor and gives the leadership, with the help of Vic Feather, until 8 May to work out some compromises with the bosses.

Although the language of the minders' claim is one of differentials and craftsmen against unskilled, the essential point about the claim is that it opposes the idea of increased productivity as the only basis of gaining increases. In fact, far from increasing the antagonism which undoubtedly exists between some NGA and SOGAT members, there are signs that at the Mirror the present dispute is pulling them closer together.

Important break

Many SOGAT members who have opposed the productivity bargaining in the past, see a victory for the minders as an important break in the stranglehold that prod dealing has in the industry. The minders say that they are encouraged by the amount of support that exists for them among SOGAT workers.

Of course many SOGAT members would like the minders to succeed as they see it as a return to the leap-frogging wage claims that existed before the days of prod bargaining. But the more realistic workers look upon the solidarity shown by the bosses' organisation, the NPA, as a lesson to the workers.

It is only by concerted action of all workers against the power of the press barons that they can succeed in reversing the worsening of conditions and job security that have been the result of years of prod dealing.

Full support must be given to the minders at the Mirror. If they can succeed in cracking the monolithic structure of the newspaper industry's bargaining procedures, then the task of forming the demolition squad will be made easier.

Fleet St. lock-out threat as printers reject prod deals

by Ross Pritchard (NGA)

WHILE VIC FEATHER is sitting down with the Newspaper Publishers Association in a bid to avert the closure of Fleet Street papers on 8 May, the 120 machine-minders at the Daily Mirror have touched off a spark that could have repercussions throughout the newspaper industry.

The National Graphical Association members at the Mirror are pressing for a no-strings, 48s increase to restore the differential that existed between themselves and members of the Society of Allied and Graphical Trades before the latest round of productivity dealing took place. The bosses have threatened to lock-out all Fleet Street printers if the NGA men at the Mirror strike on 8 May.

The machine minders rejected a recommendation from their union leaders to accept the bosses' offer to restore the differential in return for increased productivity.

After years of comprehensive schemes and productivity deals in Fleet Street, many of them pioneered at the Mirror, the machine-minders say that they have now reached the stage where any further increase in productivity can only mean phased redundancy.

Pay battle ahead at seamen's conference

A TOUGH FIGHT is expected at the annual conference of the National Union of Seamen in Hull next week following the executive's acceptance of a 20 per cent wage award.

The union had demanded 50 per cent and rejected the employers' first offer of 19 per cent. But last Friday the negotiators caved in and accepted 20 per cent.

Union secretary Bill Hogarth said he was 'disappointed' and admitted the increase would mean a mere £2 16s a week extra for most seamen.

'Left' members of the executive criticised the award, but one told the press 'It is the end of the fight'.

But rank and file seamen, badly paid and overworked for years, are determined to stage a show-down at the conference, which starts on Monday.

'Failing in duty'

A leading militant, Joe Rourke, who is delegate from the Liverpool NUS branch to the conference, told Socialist Worker this week:

'I assure all members of the NUS who have the interest of all British seamen at heart that this is not the end of the fight to secure a decent wage. The fight actually begins on the floor of the annual general meeting on Monday.

'As the delegate from Liverpool, I would be failing in my duty if I did not abide by the decision of the Liverpool men who have told me in the last three days to lead a fight in instructing the negotiating committee to go back to the shipowners and bring back a more realistic basic monthly wage.'

Joe Rourke added: 'If they are not successful, then we should withdraw our labour until our just demands are met. I am convinced that the majority at AGM will support this line of action.'

Glass workers stay out

ST HELENS: 9000 striking glass workers at the Pilkington factories have rejected a £3 a week pay offer. Their strike is now in its fourth week.

The strikers are demanding a £25 a week minimum for all workers, men and women, for a 40-hour week.

Officials of the General and Municipal Workers Union have made strenuous efforts to break the workers' solidarity. At a mass meeting last week, strikers produced evidence to show that a ballot arranged by the union to get them back to work had been rigged.

Last Thursday a GMWU official attempted to call a snap meeting to get a vote for a return to work. But the rank and file strike committee heard of his plans, rushed out 4000 leaflets and made sure that strikers packed the meeting to vote to stay out.

Workers at Speke Airport voted on Tuesday morning to block Belgian glass being flown in by car firms in a bid to break the strike.

throughout Northern Ireland.

The traditional May Day march was called off this year by the northern committee of the Irish

Congress of Trade Unions. A leading ICTU leader, Billy Blease, said the cancellation was necessary to 'avoid a confrontation with hostile groups and for fear of infiltration'.

The PD paper Free Citizen

union leaders had let themselves be intimidated by the right-wing thugs into calling off the only demonstration of working-class solidarity that Belfast sees each year.

'The reference to infiltrators presumably means the PD. It's time Blease got it into his head that the overwhelming bulk of PD members are trade unionists and have every right to march on May Day