

CHARTIST

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HALT RISING JOBLESS:

THROW OUT SOCIAL CONTRACT

THE LENGTHENING DOLE queue is now a reality. That is the message behind the latest unemployment figures of 742,000. While Stock Exchange sharks indulge in an orgy of profiteering, over a thousand workers per day are joining the jobless. Firms are determined to close down unprofitable factories. The mass sackings announced by Imperial Typewriters in Leicester and Hull and the fact that thousands in the car industry are on two, three and four-day weeks are only symptomatic. Workers are being made to pay for the crisis and utter chaos of the capitalist system by being deprived of their basic right to work.

Yet, Labour and union leaders alike still babble about 'restraint', 'concessions' and the Social Contract. Denis Healey has told workers to 'accept sacrifices' or face 'disaster'. Jack Jones has said "there must be equality of sacrifice" and TUC leader, Len Murray has pledged "a restrained approach" to wage demands. Their moral is: accept the Social Contract or face the dole. The Social Contract is nothing but a device to blackmail workers into submission. Behind it lies the whiplash of unemployment.

sacrifices

We think it pertinent to ask: in whose interest are the "sacrifices" being made? Clearly not the working class which fought for 3½ years to remove the Tories and return a Labour government which pledged itself to bring about a 'fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power'. This shift is taking place, in the direction of the ruling class because of the retreats of the Labour leaders. There could be no better moment for a real assault on capitalist power. The Tories are in disarray, the ruling class is divided. Still the crisis drives it forward into conflict with the working class, using as its weapon the leaders of the workers' movement. The class collaborationist, Social Con-trick policies of Wilson and Co. open the door to enormous dangers. Unemployment is rising and will continue to rise because it is determined by the crisis of international cap-

by Graeme Atkinson

italism, not ideas about co-operation' and 'national unity' that float about in Wilson's or Murray's head.

wage-cuts

The employers, even though it means courting bitter working class resistance, are for unemployment as a means to cut wages and inflict blows on trade union organisation. The labour movement is strong. It must use that strength to reverse Labour's retreat. Labour Party and trade union members should demand the leadership breaks with the Social Contract and enact the 'fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth' that millions voted for, by taking over, without compensation all firms which threaten workers with redundancy. That way the Labour movement can express its real strength and make capitalism redundant.

Se say: No unemployment! Work or full pay! Down with the Social Contract! Defend jobs! Meet redundancies with sit-ins and workers' control!

£300 FIGHTING FUND

If we are to reach our target of £300 by the end of June, we need £50 a month. This month, we only received £33.58. We ask all of our readers and supporters to help expand and improve the CHARTIST by sending donations however small to: CHARTIST PUBLICATIONS, 82 Loughborough Rd, London, S.W.9.



ABOVE: Richard Crossman, pictured in October 1964 as the new Minister of Housing. "I sit in my own huge room all by myself...."

DIARIES SENSATION:

Crossman blows the gaff

HOW DO OUR RULERS RULE us? On this question, Richard Crossman's diaries tell us more than all the sociologists' studies, political commentators' reports and constitutional experts' analyses of the last half-century or so put together. Their publication could be an event of enormous significance for the workers' movement in this country, provided the material in them is properly used.

Crossman's diaries are about one thing: the utter impotence of a Labour Minister, even though he is supposed to be one of the most powerful men in the land. "I sit", writes Crossman soon after entering his Minister's office in October 1964, "in my own huge room all by myself". He has little idea about the job he is supposed to do—running Britain's Housing policy—because his appointment was a complete surprise. His Private Secretary soon tells him, however, that he needn't worry. For a start, he can forget about the correspondence which comes to him. How is that? "Well", as the Private Secretary tells him, "you put all your in-tray into your out-tray... and then we deal with it and you need never see it again."

Moreover, the Ministry's activities are mostly imaginary in any

case: "...the Ministry does no house-building at all.... Of course, Ministers in the past have always talked about housing drives and pretended to carry them out. But what they have really done is to add up the figures and take credit for the creation of houses...."

which were being built in any case. The Minister is just expected to pretend that things are happening, by issuing statements and talking before the television cameras from time to time.

Yet for much of the time, he needn't even pretend. This, too, is all done for him:

"Ever since I've been Minister I've noticed that each morning the papers carry news of a planning decision I have taken, usually stating that I've considered it sympathetically before turning it down. So there is a whole mass of stuff in the Press about what the Minister has been doing and feeling where in fact the Minister hasn't been consulted at all."

No wonder Labour Governments always carry out the policies of the ruling class! But haven't the Labour Ministers been elected to be the Government? Aren't they supposed to form the supreme

(Continued on page 2)

IRELAND—TROOPS OUT NOW!

THE CHARTIST

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Editor: M. Davis, 82 Loughborough Rd, London SW9. 01-733-8953

Labour's CAS - New straightjacket for trade unions

"A STITCH in time saves nine" is an adage which the Labour government seems to have taken to heart by setting up the Conciliation and Arbitration Service to function as an industrial troubleshooter and prevent what Wilson chooses to call "manifestly avoidable stoppages of production". Under the overall direction of Michael Foot, the CAS has three union leaders on its board. They are Jack Jones of the TGWU, George Smith of UCATT and Richard Briginshaw, Lord of NATSOPA. Along with these august figures will sit three employers' representatives and, to add that vital tinge of impartiality, three university professors. The board will enforce the Social Contract.

fiction

Of course, if CAS is to succeed in doing so, it must appear to be independent of the government and not directly identified with its wages policy. This is especially necessary to the TUC leaders who want, at all costs, to maintain the fiction of a voluntary incomes policy. Nevertheless, in the words of CAS chairman, James Mortimer, "CAS is not primarily an instrument of incomes policy but will have regard to the broad outlines of the Social Contract". This suits the TUC's purposes ideally since what it fears most of all is wages battles against the rising tide of inflation, battles which would put paid to the Social Contract and pose a direct threat to the bureaucracy. At the same time, the TUC does not want to be seen as the broker for an incomes policy. The pres-

ent economic crisis is fraught with too many dangers for that. Thus, they believe that "third party arbitration" is the best course. As the June 1974 TUC document stated "The creation of the new CAS will provide a new service of conciliation, arbitration and mediation to facilitate the quick solution of disputes and the General Council hopes that unions and negotiators at all levels will make use of this."

This approach is entirely in line with the class collaborationist policies of the trade union and Labour leaders who see settlement of disputes in terms of compromise rather than victory. That is why these Social Contractors are building the CAS as a fortress in which they can securely sell workers down the river. In any struggle referred to the 'independent arbitrators', workers will be subjected to an enormous ideological pressure to accept their findings, virtually eliminating any possibility of winning claims in full. And the trade union leaders are up to their necks in it. On the Central Arbitration Committee, for example, there will

be twelve union officers, twelve employers' representatives and one 'independent' chairman. With such heavy union involvement in the panel, the capitalist press will mount propaganda to suggest that workers who do not accept the panel's findings are "wreckers", etc.

Leading the song and dance for the CAS has been none other than Jack Jones whose remarks on the matter are a warning to all trade unionists. He says 'Under the Labour government a good independent service is being developed and I believe workers should use it as an alternative to the strike weapon....'. That, more than anything else is the purpose of CAS. The other jobs it has set itself are complementary to this task. For instance, CAS will provide a management consultant service which will dole out advice on such problems as productivity, work study, job evaluation and new payment systems. In fact, advice will be dispensed in every field where workers have resisted stubbornly

over recent years. The CAS will be there to make the class struggle safe for the employers.

Every trade unionist must oppose the CAS, which as its intervention at Cowley shows, is a central weapon in the Labour government's anti strike armoury, an instrument through which the Labour and trade union leaders will attempt to discipline trade unions, strangle shop floor militancy and subordinate workers to the capitalist state.

no compromise

In a period where workers are told to accept cuts in their living standards, to hold down pay claims and make concessions, there can be no compromise with organisations like CAS. Already, industrialists are yelling for arbitration before industrial action. This opens the door to 'cooling off' periods and the virtual ending of free collective bargaining in which the rank and file can have some influence. Workers do not want university professors to mediate for them in this crisis situation. They want work or full pay. Trades unions were built to defend living standards. Why are the leaders helping to erode them? Jones & Co. must be told: Quit the CAS and get down to defending wages, jobs and conditions! Either way, it is the job of all militants to render the Labour government's CAS and Social Contract unworkable and fight for workers control of production, work or full pay and the demand that Labour breaks from the employers and make real inroads into capitalist power.

DIARIES SENSATION: continued from page 1

power in the country? Why do they allow themselves to be simply used by people whom no-one elected at all?

Crossman describes the pressures which go some way, at least, to explaining this. Each Minister is artificially isolated, not only from all contact with ordinary people or with the labour movement, but even from his fellow Labour Ministers. Fed up with being presented with fait-accomplis at Cabinet meetings, Crossman wanted to have lunch regularly with Wedgwood Benn and others, so that they could at least keep in touch. This was forbidden by Harold Wilson. For days on end, the only people a Minister is allowed to see are the permanent officials of his Ministry. They tell him exactly what they want done, and what they don't. They organise and discuss amongst themselves how to "advise" the Minister, even though Labour Ministers themselves aren't allowed to confide in or discuss with fellow members of the Party. Not surprisingly, the Ministers eventually go along with the stream. The depth of Crossman's own corruption may be gauged from the fact that he engaged Harry Hyams as an adviser to him on housing policy!

The desired pattern of respect-

A more extensive analysis of the Crossman diaries will appear next month.

ful obedience to "tradition" is impressed from the start upon the new Ministers by their first meeting with the Queen. In itself, this is only a small matter—yet it must be remembered that the Queen stands at the head of the entire unelected apparatus of state which rules us even when Labour is supposed to be 'in power'. Respect for the Queen is the precondition for respect for everything else. Crossman describes the rehearsals for the "kissing of hands":

"There we were, sixteen grown men. For over an hour we were taught how to stand up, how to kneel on one knee on a cushion, how to raise the right hand with the Bible in it, how to advance three paces without falling over the stools—which had been carefully arranged so that you did fall over them. Oh dear!"

Anyone wanting to defy tradition—i.e. start carrying out socialist policies—would have to start here as he came into office. He would have to defy all this rigmarole, refuse to kiss the Queen's hands and risk being accused of what, to a reformist, would seem the most dreadful of all social crimes—that of personally insulting Her Majesty herself! No-one, of course, has ever dared—just as no Labour Minister in Britain has ever dared take a single measure against the basic interests of the class who rule us.

Labour MPs in new scandal

READERS of the CHARTIST might recollect reference to one Albert Roberts, Labour MP for Normanton in our articles on the Poulson scandal. Roberts was paid commission by Poulson for his useful contacts with the Spanish and Portuguese governments, which helped the now imprisoned architect get building contracts. Well, not dismayed by the unfavourable publicity over this, he is now leading a delegation of three Labour and three Tory MPs visiting South Africa as guests of Vorster's government.

Even hardened right wingers like Chief Whip Bob Mellish are pretty appalled by this latest indiscretion, as are the new right wing 'Manifesto' group (who like to appear radical on some issues at least). Roberts is being accompanied by Gordon Bagier (Sunderland South MP) who in the past has achieved notoriety through links with a Public Relations firm acting for the old Greek junta.

Just in case you might think Roberts & Co. were visiting South Africa out of concern for the oppression of people there, journalist Peter Niesewand rang him up to ask if he was raising the case for release of Bram Fischer (imprisoned Communist Party member) on 'humanitarian' grounds as he is dying of cancer.



S African Prime Minister John Vorster
Host to Labour MPs

Roberts said he hadn't thought about it, and suggested Niesewand ask one of the Tories about it.

Meanwhile John Stonehouse is threatening to blow the gaff about dirty deals in British politics if the House of Commons expels him. Stonehouse is probably very familiar with corrupt practices at the top in the Labour bureaucracy but coming from someone who skipped the country to avoid facing the music when he robbed his own bank and his shaky financial operations collapsed, it takes some beating. However, since he obviously only came into the Labour Party to feather his own nest, it is likely that he knows a thing or two about others who did so too.

The Labour Party leadership should stop shilly-shallying right now, and get rid of such arrogant careerists who get paid £100 a week supposedly to represent us. So should their local Labour parties. This would be a first step towards a fully democratic system whereby MPs and other elected officials are accountable and subject to recall.

Martin Cook

As consultants work - to - rule

Extend Private Practise Ban!

by Clive Pullinger (ASTMS)

THE CONFLICT between Social Services Secretary Barbara Castle and the 12,000 hospital consultants is a revival of the dispute that took place more than a quarter of a century ago when the National Health Service (NHS) was set up. At that time Aneurin Bevan reached a compromise with the consultants, bringing them into the NHS whilst allowing them to carry out varying amounts of private practise.

Last year the consultants represented by the British Medical Association (BMA) and the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association (HCSA) pressed Mrs. Castle for a new contract which would give them better compensation for extra work and administration duties. They could continue working under the 1948 contract with those carrying out private practise earning nine elevenths of the full time NHS consultants' salary. Under this contract, as under the new contract she is offering, Mrs. Castle would allow them to continue private practise at the expense of the NHS, utilising NHS equipment and underpaid staff (NUPE has just accepted a new wage structure for hospital ancillary workers which gives them a mere £31 basic wage).

In answer to the request by

the BMA and HCSA, Mrs. Castle came up with an updated version of the Bevan compromise aimed at making full time NHS work more attractive. She also aims at encouraging more consultants to work in areas like geriatrics and the mentally handicapped. This will be done by changing the system of merit awards which are handed out to two out of five consultants on a highly dubious basis. These awards at present range from £1,250 to £7,500 and enable consultants indulging in private practise to earn upwards of £14,000 a year.

certain

One thing is certain. Mrs. Castle does not intend to abolish private practise, in the foreseeable future at least. But together with the Labour government's commitment to phase out the 5,000 NHS pay beds, the rich Tory minded consultants take the view as the Times (13 Jan) puts it: "The new contracts would certainly diminish the opportunities for new consultants to practise privately, and would greatly alter the relative financial rewards of private and full time NHS practise."

It is enlightening to note how the Times and other Tory papers have backed the "work to con-



Hospital workers protesting against the pay beds system.

tract" being carried out by consultants since 2 January. These papers cried crocodile tears for the patients supposedly dying as a result of the nurses and ancillary workers strike. Now the Times (3 Jan) says:

"The industrial action that hospital consultants have embarked on is of a kind that will be progressive in its effects."

By progressive is meant what many consultants really want—an extension of private practise. This private practise in the NHS thrives on the situation where patients have to queue for months before being admitted. These queues are deliberately encouraged by many consultants. This leads to those with enough money paying to jump the queue to even getting the doctor of their choice. A report compiled by the Junior Doctors Association states that 40% of NHS out-patients waited six to sixteen weeks before admission. The corresponding figure for private patients is 4%.

It must be pointed out that the consultants have nothing in common with the majority of hospital workers. Junior hospital doctors who work an 80-hour week for

as little as £2,200 per year (i.e. about 50p an hour) and do most of the oncall emergency work, often staying up all night, have nothing to gain from the consultants (much of whose work they do) work to rule. They should support the NUPE private patient ban.

Hospital ancillary workers (200,000 of whom are members of NUPE) have realised this and are stepping up their ban on private patients in NHS hospitals. This ban now includes ten hospitals in the London area plus hospitals in major towns throughout the country.

Barbara Castle instead of hedging on what was to start with a miserable compromise with these blackmailing consultants, should support the action taken by NUPE to force the consultants into full-time work for the NHS.

Control of the NHS must be taken out of the hands of the super-rich Tories in the medical hierarchy. The NHS should be run in the interests of patients and staff by committees representing junior doctors, nurses, ancillary and other hospital workers.

NATIONAL UNION OF Teachers leaders have accepted, with only three exceptions, the insulting recommendations for teachers pay contained in the Houghton Report. After the Review Committee—headed by Lord Houghton and other eminent people had sat for over 7 months the deal was rushed through with indecent haste during the Xmas holiday period. This gave teachers no time to discuss the report or organise any opposition to it.

The settlement gives the vast majority of class room teachers a mere pittance of an increase. For teachers on Scales 1 to 4—over 80% of all teachers—the increase is not been enough to keep pace with the 20% and still rising annual cost of living. Young and new teachers on Scale 1 will receive £228 per annum (£4.37 per week) or a 16 per cent increase. After tax and other deductions this is just over £2.50 a week. A savage wage cut!

bonanza

At the top levels of teaching the picture is quite different. A cash bonanza of £2,067p.a (£40pw) has been given to heads in Group 14. The increase alone for top heads is greater than the starting salary of over 50% of primary school teachers and 33.7% of secondary teachers.

But the political connotations of Houghton are clear. If the total sum offered by Houghton was re-distributed equally among all teachers approximately £14 each would be available. The settlement is so heavily weighted at the top that 80% of teachers will get less

HOUGHTON AWARD:

Teachers' leaders accept squalid pay deal

by Mike Davis (N.U.T.)

than this figure.

Now all teachers can see the cynical way in which the "Social Contract" is being used by our trade union and Labour leaders to depress still further the wages



Houghton: slap in face for teachers

of the low paid and especially women workers (a majority of teachers are women) and boost the incomes to top people way above the cost of living. At the same time as Houghton was reporting, judges, admirals, generals and nationalised industry heads were being handed increases of £8,000 plus. So much for the Labour Government's promise "to help the low paid"!

The Houghton Report and settlement strengthen the so-called 'career structure' in teaching. The whole agreement is a political attempt to divide teachers amongst themselves. The increase in differentials and emphasis on the archaic 'professional status' notion of teaching is a deliberate move

to weaken teachers organisation and break trade union methods of struggle. The vast majority of teachers who actually do the teaching, have to cope with the stress and strain of over-sized classes, poor facilities and short staffing (allied with the Labour Government's further education expenditure cuts) are supposed to fight it out for the few rich plums at the top. Meanwhile we can eat our new found "professional status".

New recruits will be deterred because of the lousy starting pay. Under Houghton it will take teachers 13 years to reach the average manual earnings. Pupils will also suffer. Stability in schools will now be non-existent. Teacher turn-over will accelerate.

But despite all this, Houghton, the Labour government and our NUT leaders acting as the obedient servants of big business will not be able to break the unity and militancy revealed by the determined strike action of Scottish teachers and the London Allowance struggles.

By accepting Houghton's despicable insult to teachers and then hailing it as the biggest pay increase ever for teachers the NUT executive has completely abandoned democratically decided conference policy. Gone is the

fight for a £2,000 starting salary for teachers, a reduction in differentials and the achievement of the average manual workers wage within five years of starting teaching. The heads who dominate the NUT Executive have abandoned primary school teachers. Women teachers have been snubbed.

Clearly Houghton, along with several other wage-cutting settlements imposed on nurses, farm-workers is an attempt to offload the burden of British capitalism's economic crisis on to the backs of these least able to bear it. But teachers will not accept responsibility for this crisis.

stage-managed

Following on from the completely stage-managed Special Conference of 25 January, where acceptance of the deal was railroaded through by general secretary Sir Edward Britton aided by ex-President and Stalinist Max Morris—with only six minutes discussion from the floor—the way forward now for teachers is twofold One: the fight for union democracy. For an end to the bureaucratic domination of heads and administrators; for annual election, the right of recall and democratically represented Conferences. Two: the fight for Conference policy of a £2,000 starting salary. An end to widening differentials. For a rising scale of wages clause—extended threshold payment—to ensure full and automatic compensation for cost of living increases. Local teachers' Associations must begin organising for the struggle now with a perspective of official action.

CAR INDUSTRY ON BRINK OF COLLAPSE

Thousands of Jobs Under the Axe

1975 HAS STARTED ominously for Britain's two hundred thousand car production workers. At the end of January, at least 23,500 workers employed directly in the car industry were working on short time—mainly on a 3-day week. Alongside these semi-redundant line workers are 12,000 men and women similarly affected by the crisis in the industry who work in components factories which supply vehicle parts.

In the main car manufacturing companies, the bulk of these short time workers are the 10,000 from Chryslers' Ryton, Coventry, Linwood and Stoke plants. Chrysler's management began to introduce the 3-day week from the first days after the Christmas shut down.

Short-time

In the following weeks in January, short time working was forced on Jaguar's 7,000 workers (4-day week) and at Vauxhall's Merseyside Ellesmere Port plant 6,000 production workers were put on a 3-day week. And these gloomy facts have got to be considered against the collapse of Aston Martin, redundancies at Jensen's and British Leylands £23m. loss and request for financial aid from the Labour government. It is clear that the raging crisis in the world car plants throughout Europe and America, is now taking its toll amongst car workers in Britain.

The car industry is the most effective barometer of Britain's relative standing in the world, in terms of the health and the wealth of the country's financial and industrial trading activities. In 1971 for example, the industry's combined workforce of 700,000 in both motor production and components, produced 7.2% of the country's gross domestic product and 11% of visible exports. Also, in that year the industry earned a bigger surplus on the balance of trade than did the economy as a whole. A report issued by the independent Counter-Information Services last year assessed the position of the car industry as having 'acquired a symbolic significance, as an indicator of national economic potency.'

As a result of this importance, Government representatives and industrialists alike see the car industry as being central to the fight for greater profits for British industry. The strategy that the car bosses are today hammering out in their Board meetings and at Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders con-

By Don Flynn (TGWU)

ferences, is the plan of action upon which the entire capitalist class intends to wage its offensive against the whole of the working class in this country. The short time working, the enforced and unpaid holidays which will lead up to factory closures and mass, full time redundancies in the months immediately ahead, spells out the potential fate of millions if our ruling class of millionaires and their boot-licking hangers-on have their way. This is why we say that millions of working men and women today depend upon the car workers to strike a blow against mass unemployment and in defence of workers' living standards.

Factory Closures

Over the last few months, statements from leading executives from several motor companies operating in the UK have indicated that factory closures and the abolition of plant bargaining rights are central to the employers strategy. Lord Stokes of BLMC stated in December of last year that his company intended to tackle the problems of increasing cost to the industry by wastage—10,000 jobs had already gone in the previous year—and by transferring workers within factory complexes and localities. He added that the unions had been approached on the question of flexibility and the response had been 'favourable'. Mr. John Barber, the managing director of BLMC elaborated on just exactly what British Leyland workers will have to expect when he addressed a conference of

delegates of the corporation's 165,000 employees, saying that only 'improved efficiency' could save jobs in the industry. But 'improved efficiency' he apparently meant the utilisation of short



Terence Beckett
Ford's Managing
Director:

time working as the market conditions get even worse.

And from loss-making BLMC to the affairs of the Ford Motor Company of Britain which last year made a pre-tax profit of £65.4m, the message is exactly the same. Ford managing director Terence Beckett spelt out the company's prospects for 1975 at the annual conference of company convenors last month when he gave an absolute promise of Ford's intention of bringing about unemployment in the industry this year. And this was to be carried out, as he patiently explained, on the basis of an expected increase in sales of 22,000 Ford vehicles!



Lumbered with 120 days' supply of unsold cars, Chrysler has already been forced to lay off its workers in the American city of Detroit. Now there is talk that its British subsidiary will be shut down permanently.



Chrysler stewards at Linwood fear the company may stop producing

Right to Work Campaign

A campaign for the Right to Work for all workers in the industry needs to be undertaken with urgency. An initiative taken in this direction by shop stewards committees at plant and regional level would find a powerful response from every single worker presently experiencing, or threatened by, short time working and speed up.

Shop stewards committees should immediately establish Right to Work Committees based on the broadest and fullest representation from the shop floor and mandated with responsibility for drawing up a strategy aimed at defending all jobs in the industry.

Open the Books

- Demands for the opening of the books of the whole industry and the abolition of business secrecy should form an essential part of this strategy. We have a right to see the account ledgers, the stock records the profiteering and wastefulness not just of individual bankrupts like Leylands but of the whole industry.

Workers Control

- On the basis of such knowledge workers can prove the case for control by the producers. The slogan 'workers control of production' will become a clarion call to the takeover of the factories by the workers who have built and laboured in them. With the development of genuine workers' control—not the phoney class-collaborationist exercise of 'workers' participation', or the Lord Stokes' plan of a joint consultation board between workers and management in which the trade union bureaucracy foists upon responsibility for redundancies—the case for nationalisation can be made on the Labour government with real muscle and power. The development of dual power in the factories and industry is the key to building a correct understanding of nationalisation the need to confiscate all industry from the capitalist parasites and lay the bridge to the direct management of industry by the working class.

- The strategy should contain demands on the Labour government for an extensive system of public works and the guarantee of jobs through state contracts.

The long queue for NEB aid

MORE BLACKMAIL - MONEY TO CAPITALIST BANKRUPTS?

BY Mark Douglas

WITH THE latest report of Wedgwood Benn's Department of Industry on 'business trends'—that the forecast for manufacturing investment will fall 7-10% in 1975 and 1976—the 'strike of capital' has begun in earnest against the Labour government.

While the large capital 'strikes' small and peripheral capital is collapsing at a regular pace. The string of companies which fell in 1974 due to 'cash shortage' 'liquidity bottlenecks' etc. totalled 1,532 ('74 fig. 1,526) (Sunday Times 5.1.75). 'The big surge came in Oct/December when 532 orders were made (in the bankruptcy court). In the same three months last year the figure was 312—an increase of 220'. The Sunday Times Business News went on to explain that—"over-borrowed property companies undoubtedly pushed up the figures..." Of course property companies, like the Stock Market, the banks, insurance etc. produce no wealth at all, they are all parasites on the real capital producing industries.

Sickness

It is this massive wave of bankruptcies—a product of the terrible sickness of British capitalism—which lies at the base of the latest surge in unemployment to over 7,420,000 workers jobless. Operations which go to the wall are merely the other side of the "strike of capital". The majority are small manufacturers, components suppliers, plus legions of brokerage firms, small time insurance funds, property developers and so on. But there have also been big operations like Ferranti, a giant of electro-based manufacture—computers, radar, radio etc. Of the car companies, British Leyland is bankrupt, Aston Martin is on the precipice, Rolls Royce is state owned. The only motor cycle manufacturers BSA at Triumph Meriden is hobbling along with parts under workers occupation. The Court Line Company has been nationalised, with generous compensation. The aero space industry based in Bristol and elsewhere is planned for nationalisation by Tony Benn with further compensation. The investment company, turned oil operation, Burmah Oil, has been parcelled out to other companies.

Just as the Labour manifesto pledged to nationalise the shipbuilding and repairs, marine engineering and the aircraft construction industries all with massive compensation, the government is 'persuaded' to hand out an average of £5 million per day to private industry in all manner of ways. All these handouts come on top of the gift to big business of £1,600 million in Chancellor Healey's budget last November.

The Finance for Industry (FFI) bank under Labour's economic adviser and millionaire Harold Lever has £1,000m to loan out at an interest rate of 16% to



Anthony Wedgwood Benn and Eric Heffer announce the air take-over.

help big business. All this money plus the proposed National Enterprise Board is to go to 'productive investment' while at the same time private investment, 95% of which has been pure finance capital not profits straight from industry, is at its lowest level since the mid-1930s in real terms.



SIR DON RYDER

This expresses in the clearest fashion the complete bankruptcy of all industries, private or state owned. With a queue building up for state subsidies that will take Benn the rest of the century to organise, the leading capitalists sit back resigned to the coming slump and demand that the Labour leaders hold down the movement of workers against inflation and the disease of increasing unemployment.

Public investment is now more than all private investment put together. Private manufacture is kept going on a mix of re-cycled capital from the banks, the pension funds and insurance accounts and huge state subsidies, loans, mid-term, long-term, you name it, they have it!

State Cash

The last 'strike of capital' in 1965-6 forced the Labour government to throw its minimal reforms through the window and led to its defeat in 1970. This must not happen again. NEB head, Sir Don Ryder, leading capitalist and declared opponent of nationalisation, should be removed immediately from his post. The NEB must not become a crutch for capitalist lame ducks. But the current approach of the Labour Government is entirely in accord with the demands of big business for cash aid.

In the meantime the cynical capitalists will wait out the 'established logic' of the economic slump. No amount of reforms, regeneration, whether it is the Capital Transfer Tax, Wealth Tax or

current role of the National Enterprise Board, can halt the 'slide into the abyss' of British capitalism.

Our Labour leaders must immediately break from policies of state-managed capitalism and launch a struggle to crush the power of the capitalists and their blackmailing policies. Benn talks about planning. But you can't plan what you don't control. The present policies of the Labour government and trade union leaders like Jones and Scanlon who call for more "economic growth" and "demand incentives" are a recipe for disaster.

Inflation can only accelerate with the methods of state financing and "demand manipulation". At a time of an enormous £5,000 million trade debt such policies mean huge inflationary increases in paper money and international borrowing at colossal interest rates. The Labour Government is leading workers down the slippery slide of economic slump with such policies.

Leadership

The TUC and Labour Government must provide leadership to the existing struggles in defence of jobs and living standards and abandon the wage-cutting social contract which attempts to hold back workers resistance to inflation with the whip of unemployment.

The immediate task of our Labour and trade union leaders is to force open the accounts and business secrets of the entire economy. Let the trade union committees in each plant and office draw up a balance sheet of the stocks, then with independent socialist economists and planners the entire trade union ranks can be mobilised to implement a national plan of production with work sharing and guaranteed pay. If the owners of industry refuse, they must be removed of their ownership and control. The leading sectors of the economy could then be reorganised according to the plan under workers control. The pre-condition of this is that the Labour government refuses to take responsibility for the capitalist crisis and launches a struggle to overthrow of the reign of capital. Only on the basis of working class power can socialist reconstruction begin.



cars there altogether.

● Above all the demand must be raised for a sliding scale of hours with no loss of pay and a rising scale of wages (indexed by trade union and price committee calculations of the increase in the cost of living). Work sharing and a reduced working week without loss of pay is essential to ensure NO REDUNDANCIES!

The all important tasks of agitation, publicity and education should be undertaken by these committees, they must go out to the entire labour movement and explain the basis for their campaign to workers in industries similarly threatened with redundancies. But just as importantly, any campaign around the issue of the Right to Work must direct itself towards the leadership of the labour movement, in the trade unions and the Labour Party. Workers must understand that the responsibility of ending the threat to unemployment lies in the hands of the people who control the oldest, and in some senses, the most powerful organisations of workers that the world has ever seen. The whole might of this movement must be won to the support of demands that would secure the Right to Work for the entire working class.

This demand should be used to counter the excuses of reductions in the demand for motor vehicles as the basis of factory closures, short time and wage cuts. The demand for new cars in 1975 is expected to be running in the region of 1,150m. vehicles: more than enough work for all those presently employed in the industry.

Occupations

The question of plant occupations should be considered as a part of the fight against unemployment. Every occupation must be preceded by mass meetings and launched with the utmost consideration of all the necessary tactics that should be employed in the fight; whether it should be a work-in or not, how units on wheels and other stocks can be seized and held by the occupiers.

But most importantly, a campaign around the issue of the Right to Work must take every opportunity to draw full-time trade union officials into the centre of the struggle—particularly the national leaderships! We must allow these bureaucrats no opportunity to avoid their responsibility to lead the labour movement with a strategy that will provide a cast-iron guarantee for every single job in the industry.

Thieu regime:

Near the end of the road?

By Chris Knight

IT SEEMS AS if the Vietnamese war may be approaching its conclusion. Since its loss of the entire province of Phuoc Long early last month, the South Vietnamese regime's position has steadily deteriorated. "Morale is getting worse throughout the army," a Western military source conceded to a "Times" reporter, (15.1.75) adding that a number of army officers are hinting that South Vietnamese President Thieu "must go".

Since the fighting increased in the middle of December, the loss of Phuoc Long province to "the communists" (i.e. to the National Liberation Front) has not been the only disaster to befall the Thieu regime. Also 47 outposts in Kien Tuong province (in the Mekong Delta near the border with Cambodia) have been abandoned, collection of much of the rice harvest has been made impossible, the Mekong river has been virtually closed to traffic by shelling, huge fuel reserves, have been destroyed, anti-government protests have erupted and it has been clearly demonstrated that the United States administration

can no longer come to the rescue of its old ally and puppet.

One of the few permitted opposition groups in areas controlled by Thieu is the "Catholic People's Anti-Corruption Movement." This group persistently point to the total corruption of government officials and army officers—who create, for example, phantom divisions in order to protect the pay of non-existent soldiers—as the cause of the Saigon regime's defeats. At a rally of 700 people following the fall of Phuoc Long province, leaders of this movement accused the Thieu government of abandoning the provincial capital of Phuoc Binh. The story behind this accusation tells a good deal about the predicament Thieu now finds himself in. A thousand of his troops were dropped into the town before it fell. But they were sent in, so it is suspected, not really to defend it, but simply to drag out the fighting long enough for it to come to the notice of military officials in Washington. As a "reliable source" put it to the "Times" reporter:

"It was a cruel military decision to lose 1,000 men but it may



NLF forces on the move in South Vietnam

have the desired effect in getting that extra aid from Washington."

The desired aid is hardly likely to come. Senator Mike Mansfield, majority leader in the American Senate, has flatly said so, knowing that Congress will not permit any real resumption of the US involvement in the war, however many "gestures" are made in Thieu's direction. But this does not mean that there will be a quick victory for the liberation forces in Vietnam. The NLF leaders—and their counterparts in Cambodia whose capital Phnom Penh is being successfully blockaded—will be in a position to seize power with relatively little bloodshed in the very near future. But to do that would necessitate mobilizing the masses, which would threaten their own bureaucratic positions and privileges. To avoid a mass upris-

ing, the NLF leaders are hoping simply that their military victories will put pressure on Thieu to resign, making way for a more pliable capitalist president who would let them into a coalition government. Then the Stalinists, with the bulk of armed power already in their hands, could organise the state on the lines of North Vietnam, Russia and China, without involving the masses in any revolutionary upheaval. Such a congenitally deformed bureaucratic "socialist" state, however, would distribute land to the peasants, plan the economy and enormously increase the living standards of the vast majority of the people. It would be an enormous step forward, bring nearer the date of the revolution throughout South East Asia and, ultimately, the world.

EGYPTIAN workers have recently erupted in a massive wave of strikes and demonstrations in Cairo against the policies of President Anwar Sadat. With a 50% inflation rate, massive overpopulation in the towns, food rationing, high unemployment, poor working conditions without independent trade unions or political parties and with the threat of another war casting its shadow over the whole Middle East, it is small wonder that the Cairo workers welcomed the new year with the largest anti-government demonstrations seen since the fall of ex-King Farouk more than 20 years ago.

precarious

The one-party state governed by Anwar Sadat, like that of many undeveloped countries pay lip-service to socialism while balancing precariously between private and nationalised industry at home. This reflects its equally precarious international position between the Soviet Union and world imperialism. The attempt to modernise the country's economic structure has created more problems that it has solved.

The collapse of the old peasant economy is one of the reasons for food shortages—tea, sugar, cooking oil, all being strictly rationed. The influx into the cities, too has stretched all services to breaking point and forced wages down—the much evaded minimum wage (the equivalent of £20 a month) has increased by only half the increase in the cost of living. Appalling conditions prevail in the new technological industries.

The New Year day riots in Cairo were sparked off by the

EGYPT:

Sadat shaken by new workers upsurge

by Geoff Bender



EGYPT'S SADAT

use of troops to prevent steel workers from Helwan steel works entering the National Assembly. Strikes are illegal in Egypt but Sadat and his corrupt henchmen were rocked by the Helwan steel workers determination to fight for a wage increase of 30% to 40%, improvements in conditions and productivity payments.

The Helwan steel works, 15 miles south of Cairo is rife with industrial accidents as untrained and unskilled workers are expected to operate complex and dangerous equipment without safety devices. It was to accommodate this militancy that President Sadat held his last May Day rally here.

Sadat has clamped down since the latest upheaval by arresting and imprisoning hundreds of workers, students and socialists. Over 400 have been arrested and imprisoned sin-

ce the New Year demonstrations. Such repression and the witch-hunts of the right wing press of the banging of the nationalist drum with the defence of the 'gains' of the October war cannot stem the tide of rising revolutionary disquiet amongst the Egyptian working class.

steel workers

The initial cause of the steel workers protest was the draft laws which discriminate against workers—revealing the underlying war anxiety. Egypt has already suffered most heavily of all Arab states in confrontation with Israel. The U.S. trades arms on very favourable terms to the Zionists, the Soviet bureaucracy drives a much harder bargain in arms deals with Egypt.

The Egyptian workers have causes in plenty and have revealed their willingness to fight. It remains to be seen whether they can organise to withstand the patriotic fervour used to cover class divisions as war approaches and join with other workers, peasants and refugees in struggle for a Socialist Federation of the Middle East. The only solution to their problems.

PORTUGAL:
Worker-soldier
alliance
rebuffs rightists

HUNDREDS of soldiers from Portugals' conscript army refused orders to break up a large demonstration of workers and students in Oporto at the end of January.

Militants successfully besieged a Conference of the reactionary Centre Democratic Social party (CDS)—a haven for former fascists—which stands for a return to the 40 year old military dictatorship of Salazar and Caetano overthrown by the revolution last April.

Trapped in the Oporto Sports Pavilion—where only 300 of an expected 1,000 delegates assembled—were right-wing Tory MPs Geoffrey Rippon and Peter Kirk.

After dozens of demonstrators had been injured in repeated clashes with the police involving baton charges, tear gas and rubber bullets, local infantrymen, instructed to assist the police, fraternised with the workers and prevented cavalry troops from breaking the siege. Only after reinforcements from COPCON, the specially-trained counter-revolutionary troops, had arrived, was the demonstration broken up.

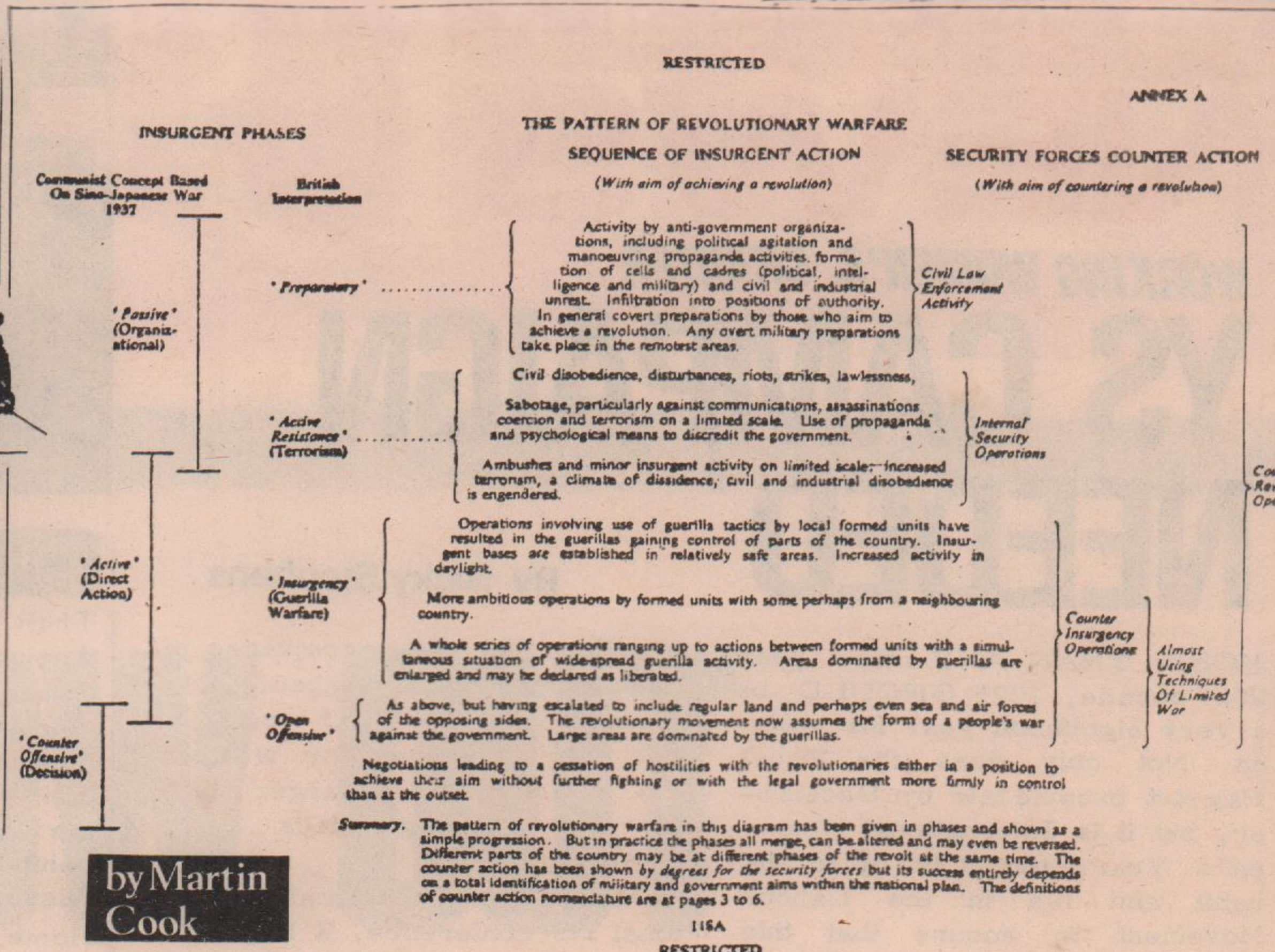
Events like these at Oporto reveal the knife-edge which the present regime of class-compromise in Portugal is balancing on.

With the Communist Party and Socialist Party—who have the overwhelming backing of the working class—refusing to take the power staring them in the face, the door is left wide open to counter revolutionary forces like the CDS, in alliance with the military tops, to restore dictatorship.

Secret British Army manual reveals »

The enemy within!

FIFTY THREE local counter-revolutionary wars—that's how many the British army has fought since the war (not counting Korea and Suez). Ireland is the latest in a long line through Malaya, Kenya, Cyprus, Aden etc. Britain played its role of junior partner to American imperialism in keeping the colonial world 'Free' (free for profitable looting by the West) right up to when it could no longer afford it. Now things are different. The remains of the Empire are nearly gone, and so is the post war 'boom' which papered over the rottenness of the British economy for 20 years. Now, the ruling class must turn for once on its 'own' workers. It will use every technique, brutal and sophisticated, it has developed in the past 30 years of butchering workers and peasants in every other corner of the world.



pattern

The pattern of counter-revolutionary warfare is set out in an Army Land Operations manual which has recently been publicised in 'Time Out' and elsewhere. A radical activist called John Russell was recently held in prison for over a week under the Official Secrets Act for possession of copies of this, before charges were dropped. The manual makes it quite clear that the army has developed a standard model of 'counter insurgency' operations, which it sees as a response to an international communist conspiracy of subversion, in straight Cold War terms. Defence Secretary Roy Mason has recently stated that the main purpose of the Army in future will be 'maintaining

internal security at home'. This means, when it comes down to it, security against US, the organised working class movement and especially socialist and left groups.

Recent advertisement for officer trainees have appealed to young men anxious to defend "their country" from being "taken over by force" to rally to the colours. What are they getting at? In the next few years, it is inevitable that there are going to be strikes, factory occupations and the like to make the events of recent years look like a picnic, as workers fight to defend their jobs and standards by the only means they know. Whether or not such conflicts escalate to General Strike level, the ruling class will be forced to suppress sections of the Labour movement by force, as the future of capitalism itself will be at stake. Strike leaders and socialist activists will be denounced as 'communists' and 'terrorists' who are trying to 'take over the country'. The army, as many of the top brass like Kitson and Calvert admit, will have to move in, in support of the police and

the civil power. This is not to be paranoid and prophesise police states or military dictatorships round the corner: the bosses will try to play by the 'rules of the game' that have served them so well for centuries—as long as they can.

requirements

Among the Army's requirements for effective Counter-Revolutionary Operations are: political and economic measures to win popular support, joint civil-military organisation at all levels, a nationwide intelligence set up, and ensuring the loyalty of the forces themselves. This approach is exactly that used in the present campaign in Ireland. But the manual itself has been massively updated with new methods learned over there: e.g. rubber bullets, CS gas, use of helicopters, procedures to deal with 'sit-ins', wholesale photographing of demonstrations, and snatch squads to pick off 'ringleaders'. The Irish situation comes in handy in all sorts of other ways of course. Like the Prevention of Terrorism

Act which can be used to persecute or deport anyone the police don't like as a suspected 'bomb-er'. Like the way workers are encouraged to see the army and police as neutral peace-makers (which is hardly how they see themselves) and as 'on our side'.

The exercises at Heathrow and the extensive use of the army in recent industrial disputes, such as in the Scottish firemen and ambulance strikes last year, show they are already limbering up in readiness for the crunch. What is our Labour Government doing about this? Standing aside and giving the army leaders an occasional pat on the back. No repeal (so far) of the Official Secrets Act. No union rights for soldiers. No end to the army terror campaign in Ireland. No action about the CIA's stepped-up infiltrations of our trade unions. Not so much as a clap on the wrist for the army brass whose dearest wish is to batter down the whole labour movement. The CHARTIST calls on every reader to raise these issues in their L.P. and T.U. branches—to ensure our leaders get moving on this.

A REPORT issued by Lord Gardiner's committee investigating "security" problems contains an attack on the N.Ireland prison system. Released last month, it serves as an interesting background to the weapon that Merlyn Rees is currently using to blackmail the people of N. Ireland into an acceptance of the permanent presence of the British Army in the Six Counties. This weapon is the internment of 500 men and women - held without trial in bleak and barren prison-camps.

Just how bleak and barren such places as the Maze (Long Kesh) and Magilligan camps are was powerfully described in evidence to the Gardiner investigation team.

In Long Kesh Camp nervous breakdowns are multiplying and the use of tranquilizers ('happypills') is widespread. A sixteen year old internee from Ballymurphy went into the lavatory to cry for several hours each night. He is now eighteen, and still held behind the wire of the prison-camp. Young men such as Alex Murphy who, detained at the age of fifteen,

NORTHERN IRELAND

BEHIND THE WIRE

COLIN KENNEDY

has recently spent his seventeenth birthday in Long Kesh; Sean McKenna from Newry, seized by the army in the first early morning raids on the ninth of August 1971 and described by one witness as now looking "like a ghost" — these men are just two examples of those held without trial and without justice, over this three and a half year period.

The Belfast newspaper, "Republican News" described life in the prison camps in the following terms:

"The whole structure is jerry-built of the cheapest materials. From top to bottom everything leaks, creaks and is inefficient.

"A prisoner is entitled to a 30 minute visit per week. Before the actual visit your people must wait for up to five or six hours in dirty, insanitary huts in the prison car park. The visiting boxes are dirty, filthy places, where no privacy whatever exists."

In response to such intolerable conditions, the prisoners' riots of October last year took place. The riots brought tens of thousands of people out into the streets in the towns of N. Ireland, demanding the release of their people and the ending of the system of internment.

The so-called ceasefire talks between Merlyn Rees's Stormont office, Ulster Churchmen and the Sinn Fein have centred around the condition of the internees. Rees has told the republicans through his Methodist intermediaries that unless the people of N. Ireland buckle down and accept the right of Britain to control the affairs of Northern Ireland through the operations of her police forces, courts and armies, then the 500 men and women of Long Kesh and Magilligan will continue to be subjected to the brutal and inhumane system of internment without trial.

Against Rees's offers of "moderacy" in the Six Counties, Socialists and trade unionists in Britain would be well advised to note the use of the anti-IRA Act by Roy Jenkins' Home Office. The continued use of the right of arbitrary expulsion under this Act is a clear challenge to the democratic rights and civil liberties of any section of the labour movement in Britain. By mid January, over fifty people have been held for the seven days period allowed for in the legislation, many have been deported, and the raids and snatches being organised by the police into the Irish Community are growing every day.

The CHARTIST is deeply opposed to Rees and Jenkins' attempts to terrorise Irish people in Britain and in Ireland through the use of the political hostages seized under the N. Ireland Special Powers Act and the British Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act. We call for the immediate release of all these hostages and the repeal of these laws now!

young socialist NEWS

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER

YS CAMPAIGN NEEDED

By Nicky Stephens

MORE THAN ANY other year this decade, 1975 SHOULD be a very significant year for women. Not only does the Equal Pay Act become law by December, but it is International Women's Year, and it is up to the rank and file in the Labour Movement to ensure that this event is no meaningless anniversary, but an effective step forward for the women's struggle.

The acceptance of the "Working Women's Charter" throughout the Labour Movement would be a major advance for the women's struggle. For not only does it incorporate demands for equal pay, related to a national minimum wage, but it also includes demands which cover women's oppression in the home and socially. It insists that nurseries, with hours suiting working mothers, should be set up in each locality, along with family planning clinics supplying free contraception. The Charter does not go far enough in that it does not really attempt to lift the burden of housework from the shoulders of women. To do this, the Charter must call for state-financed communal restaurants and laundrettes. But there is no

question that the acceptance of the Charter by the Labour Government and the TUC would be not only a victory for women, but a victory on a larger scale for the working class as a whole.

At this year's Regional and National YS conference, it is essential that the fight for Equal Pay and the whole Working Women's Charter is taken up and fought for throughout the whole labour movement by YS branches. Already the employers have used the past year as a breathing space, to give them time to work out loopholes in the Equal Pay Act and accordingly get out of giving their women employees equal pay. Many women have had to undergo constant job evaluations and have been segregated from their male workers so that no job comparison exists. It is up to us in the Labour movement to point out these anomalies and to get them rectified before December 1975. These demands must be taken up, as embodied in the Working Women's Charter if International Women's Year is to hold any significance for women at all.



Franco Caprino

Jenkins frees Franco Caprino

FRIDAY 24 January saw the release from Pentonville Prison of Franco Caprino, an Italian socialist and hotel worker, threatened with deportation under the Immigration Act 1971, section 42.

This limited victory against arbitrary 'police state' methods of imprisonment without trial can be credited to the 'Franco Caprino Support Committee' and local Labour Party militants in the North Kensington area where Caprino has been active.

After 'guilt by association' was levelled against him earlier in January by the capitalist press, it was falsely assumed that the police had interned Caprino on the grounds of suspected 'complicity in terrorism and the Irish question'. It has now been recognised as an 'unofficial' test case and possible precedent in the use of a notorious section of the 1971 Immigration Act.

Caprino is an active member of the international branch of the TGWU, organising many immigrant hotel workers. For this activity Home Secretary Roy Jenkins has used the 'catch all' powers of 'deportation...to be in the public good, as being in the interests

of national security, or of relations between the UK and any other country, or for other reasons of a political nature'.

This law remains on the statute book along side the 'Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act' stamped through the House of Commons last December. Together these laws constitute the most diabolical attack on democratic rights since the Second World War.

Whilst the 'CHARTIST' can never be accused of "alarmist" agitation we repeat that these two laws: 1971 Immigration Act and the 1974 anti-terrorist law indicate the most dangerous precedents in recent times towards the 'strong state'. Following the successful campaign in defence of Brother Caprino we call on all Labour activists, trade unionists and socialists to fight for the unconditional and retrospective repeal of these laws by the Wilson government.

Their continuing existence fully justifies the present demand that the refusal to repeal these laws, by Jenkins and his right-wing cronies means their removal from the Labour government forthwith.



FREE THE TWO

THIRTEEN thousand marched through London on 14 January demanding the Labour government release the two building worker pickets, jailed 15 months after their strike in 1972. However, the Labour government, hiding behind the 'British Constitution' passed the buck to Roy Jenkins. Home Secretary Jenkins, sounding remarkably like Ted Heath (when doesn't he?), refused their release. This was despite the fact that both TUC and Labour Party Conferences had demanded their release.

We say: the T.U.C. must be attacked for its appalling lack of publicity and organisation of the lobby. Jenkins must be forced out of the Labour Party for deliberately flouting Labour Party and TUC decisions.

Vauxhall YS Inquiry: NO CLOSEDOWN

BUT

VAUXHALL YOUNG Socialist branch still exists.....despite the efforts of the bureaucrats of London Regional Labour Party Office. Last October the branch was threatened with suspension after distributing a leaflet attacking their millionaire, right-wing MP George Strauss. But in January the Management Committee of the Vauxhall Labour Party agreed merely to reprimand the YS for being 'in error'!

However the threat to the YS still exists. "What it means", said Regional bureaucrat (youth officer) George Catchpole, "is that if you do it again, you'll be closed down. We shall also have to ensure there is closer control over the YS." But Vauxhall YS remains undaunted. The struggle will go on to replace Strauss with a socialist fighter as Vauxhall's MP. To do this the Labour Party in Vauxhall will have to be transformed into a centre of local working class struggle,

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Joint Hackney YS meeting on Housing Crisis. Speaker from UCATT and a local Labour councillor.

Monday, 3 February 8.00 p.m. LP Rooms, 5 Stamford Hill N.16 HACKNEY NORTH LPYS

Jumble Sale:
Sat. 15 February 11.00-7.00 pm Abney Church Hall, Church St. N.16. ALL WELCOME

Support Manchester Anti-Fascist conference. Lesser Free Trade Hall. Feb. 16. Speakers inc. Paul Rose MP. Further details from

Southwark Trades Council meeting - Women's Rights campaign to continue

WOMEN'S RIGHTS was the subject of a public meeting held by Southwark Trades Council on 24 January. 400 people attended the meeting, and the discussion at the end centred on the desperate need for provision of child care facilities which would enable women to take up their nominal legal and equal rights, which they have only in theory at the moment. This must involve a greater provision of nursery, laundry and dining facilities to enable women to free themselves from the burdens placed upon them by their position within the family.

One hair-raising instance was given by a woman, who in order to be able to obtain a mortgage had to sign a piece of paper saying she would not have a child for 10 years and that on this condition, she would get a mortgage. So much for legal equality when we do not have the social facilities needed, like effective contraception, abortion or 24 hour nurseries to back us up!

However in its present crisis, capitalism requires cuts, not increases, in social service spending of all kinds. These cuts will increasingly transfer the burdens of child welfare, early education, laundry and other services from the State back on to housewives whether they have a job outside the home or not.

The Trades Council was surprised at the response to its meeting and have now had to commit themselves to an on-going campaign for Women's Rights. But can we force the rest of the labour and trade union movement to recognise the importance of women's needs? *by Ann Harber*

and taken out of the hands of the right-wing careerist Councillors.

With the referendum on the Common Market now booked for June, the next stage in the struggle opens for the YS in Vauxhall. Strauss wants a 'yes' vote. The YS wants the Labour Party to campaign for a 'no' vote and for a socialist Europe. YS branches should start now to tackle their MPs committing them to a similar campaign along with their Constituency Labour Parties. No Labour MP must be allowed to stand for a 'yes' vote. Where the MPs refuse to follow the Party we must begin to remove them now!

82 Loughborough Road, SW9

6 February YS film on 'The Fakenham Occupation' 8 o'clock 264 Rosendale Road.
22 February: DISCO at All Saints Church, Rosendale Road (in the Crypt) at 8 o'clock.

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