

The Red Mole



SPAIN :

The ETA in struggle

IRELAND :

Saor Eire militant interviewed

POLAND :

Workers shake bureaucracy

ETA militant in training

Productivity, the Tories and the trade-unions

In terms of the relationship of forces, the defeat of the power workers was a totally unnecessary setback for the working class. The strike and victory of the council workers had already shown that it was perfectly possible to defeat the Tory government. The council workers were also in a far weaker position than the power workers, whose stronger bargaining position was shown by the fact that after only three days of the work-to-rule, 31% of power had to be cut off. The only reason for the defeat of the power workers was the decision of the ETU leadership to call off the work-to-rule.

Revolutionaries hardly needed to be shown the nature of the ETU bureaucracy, but what is more interesting is the way in which the Tory government tackled the power workers dispute. A careful study provides us with pointers to the future. This is particularly the case with the announcement by the Tories of a new attitude towards productivity deals.

Productivity Deals & The Union Bureaucracy

The productivity deal was a gift from heaven for the union leader. It enabled him to get a wage increase for his members without a real struggle with the employer. The pay increases enabled him to maintain his position inside the union by appearing to "deliver the goods", and the fact that he did not lead big strikes allowed him to maintain his cosy position inside the TUC club and the "corridors of power".

This attractive state of affairs was however entirely dependent on employers "playing the game" and granting wage rises in return for the abandoning of work practices and conditions. When the employers refused to play ball, all hell broke loose. For example in the ETU it was all Les Cannon could do last year to prevent the power men breaking the agreement with the CEGB when they found that the gas and water workers, who had not been involved in

as intensive productivity bargaining as the power workers had, were going to get higher increases than the power men.

The Tory government has now decided that it can no longer afford to "play the game". When they declare that despite the increase in productivity in the power industry, the workers cannot have large wage increases, "because other sectors of workers have not shown the same productivity gains", they show three things. Firstly they confirm yet again that the state of the British economy is now such that it allows the ruling class only a tiny amount of room for manoeuvre. Secondly of course it shows that the Tories are up to their old game of trying to turn one group of workers against another. They are trying to convince the power men that the reason they cannot get a rise is not because the government is unwilling, but because other groups of workers are being lazy or uncooperative. The third thing that it shows is that the Tories are being forced to knock the bottom out of the whole productivity game. Previously the employers said, "If you sell enough working practices and conditions you can have a large wage increase." What the Tories are now being forced to say is, "Even if you sell all the work conditions we can think of, you still can't have a big wage increase."

The implications of this will deal a death blow to the strategy of the T.U. leaders. From now on if they want to maintain their standing in the union they will actually have to fight the employer. This is of course unthinkable to a man like Chapple and will no doubt also give Jack Jones & Co. more than a few sleepless nights.

The trade union leaders are only too well aware of the implications of the Tories' new position. The present complaints of Chapple are those of a man who has faithfully served a master for 15 years and now that master has turned round and stabbed him in the back.

What this new policy means is also well understood by Labour politicians. When Labour front-benchers now say that in the future the Tories will look back on the days of union leaders like Jones and Scanlon with nostalgia, they are for once correct. No matter whatever else the Tories achieve by their new policies, they will certainly place the political life of the

union leaders in jeopardy. Thus when Wilson says that the new strategy of the Tories will provide a "Trotsky charter", he is only half saying this in order to whip up a red scare: he is in fact genuinely worried that things may turn out in exactly that way.

The Struggle Inside The Unions

What all this adds up to is that the internal struggle in the unions will be greatly increased. It means that the traditional demands for election of all union officials, for the right of recall of all officials at any time, for officials to receive the average pay of all members, etc., will become more and more relevant.

At the moment only the first signs are appearing of the coming struggles inside the unions. The attempt to force through a higher wage increase for the miners by an unofficial strike met with considerable success, but it wasn't strong enough to shift a right-wing bureaucracy as well entrenched as that of the NUM. In the ETU the attempt to defeat the executive in the union elections was a welcome sign of the revival of the left inside the union, but it revealed also that there is a long way to go before the right-wing leaders can be removed. Nevertheless, there was in these two unions significant resistance to the leadership—a sign that the militants are becoming more conscious of the problems that face them and also that their voice is finding a wider, even if not at the moment decisive, audience. What is happening is that the most active members of the trade union movement are becoming more aware of the role of their union leaderships, but that they have not as yet been able to convince the mass of the rank and file of the need to fight these leaders.

Dec. 8th & Jan. 12th

The campaign for December 8th showed a very similar pattern of uneven development of ideas. The tremendous success, in terms of numbers attending, of the Liaison Committee meeting on November 14th, plus the fact that a strike was called for in many more factories on December 8th than last May 1st, reveal that an almost qualitative change is taking place in the consciousness of active and politically

aware trade unionists. On the other hand the December 8th strike itself, while it was considerably larger than the May 1st one, did not reflect a qualitative change in the ideas of the mass of workers. Much elementary propaganda and explanation obviously remains to be done.

But because the Tory offensive against the unions will not at all simply be confined to the anti-trade union bill, and because the direction the Tories are now taking will greatly heighten the tension inside the unions, we must not confine our propaganda to simply attacking the Tory Bill. We have to show the nature of the leaderships of the unions—failure to do so can only lead to more defeats such as that of the power workers.

This situation makes it even more vital that the energy and enthusiasm of the militants which was generated in the campaign for December 8th must not be allowed to run to waste in purely individual propaganda or in futile activities such as lobbies. It is only by organising into rank and file committees of action, that such elementary but mammoth tasks as explaining to the great mass of workers the implications of the Tory Bill can be carried out with any hope of success.

What all this means is that we need to see January 12th not as a single protest, as the TUC would wish, but as part of a long-term campaign. Demands on the TUC, for example, to call a general strike, are necessary in order to convince trade unionists that the TUC does not intend to fight the Bill. But such demands are simply empty propaganda unless the working class is also organising independently to fight the Bill. It is in struggle and not through reading newspapers that the mass of the working class learns about who really intends to fight the Tories and who does not. The main task therefore still remains the setting up of trade union rank and file committees which can make propaganda about the Bill and the role of the TUC, but which can also prepare to fight the Bill and its implementation when it becomes obvious that the TUC does not intend to do so.

Stalinism on trial in Leningrad



ONE DAY THE SOVIET WORKING CLASS WILL BRING ALL THESE BUREAUCRATS TO TRIAL FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE PEOPLE

The death sentences meted out to Dymshits and Kuznetsov, together with monstrous prison sentences on other Jews, to be served in forced labour camps that supposedly disappeared along with Stalin himself, show up before all the world the repressive nature of the criminal bureaucracy ruling in the Soviet Union.

The trials were held in total secrecy. No foreign observers were admitted. The "defendants" are to face the firing squad for the "crime" of wishing to leave one country for another. Even if the charges of hi-jacking a Soviet aircraft were true, which is more than doubtful, they serve only to indicate the desperation to which Stalinism reduces its subjects. It is above all the retention of bureaucratic power by naked police violence that is on trial in Leningrad before the international working class. What makes this farce doubly unfortunate is that it enables the assassin Franco to get away with murder and allows the bourgeoisie once more to say: "Well, things may be bad in Spain, but they're worse in Leningrad and Gdansk."

Increasing Opposition in the USSR

The new trials vividly illustrate the insoluble crisis of the regime, faced by growing internal opposition. Haunted by the strikes and street demonstrations that shook Poland in December

and dealt yet another blow to the Stalinist monolith, the bureaucracy diverts the accumulating resentment and popular discontent by staging anti-semitic show trials. Just as in Warsaw in 1968, increasing rebellion is to be safely channelled into a campaign against the Jewish minority, under the pretext of "anti-Zionism".

The Kremlin's Apologists

The Communist Party leaderships in the West, just as when faced with the Polish risings, hasten to preserve their liberal reputations and cement their alliance with social-democracy. Rapid denunciations of the verdicts as "excesses" and expressions of "grave concern", are mixed with approval of firm measures for the defence of the "socialist states" and admissions of the guilt of the accused. "While dissociating ourselves from the anti-Soviet campaign... and in no way condoning crimes of the type of which the defendants were accused, we believe the court proceedings should have been public" (CPGB statement, *Morning Star*, December 28th). Torn between the British/French/Italian Parliamentary "Roads to Socialism", and their loyalty to Moscow, they wriggle, uncomfortably embarrassed by the "errors" of their Eastern comrades which shatter their democratic pre-

tensions.

Fodder for the Zionists

More than anything, the trials provide longed-for ammunition for the Zionist propagandists. Anxious to secure the maximum emigration of Jews from the USSR as from elsewhere, in order to populate new settlements in the occupied Arab territories, the Israeli government is mounting a massive and unprecedented propaganda campaign highlighting the persecution of Jews by the Soviet bureaucracy. Mass demonstrations, called by Zionist organisations in many lands, demand the "return" of Russian Jews to the Zionist "homeland", in a wave of hysterical, anti-communist emotion. The oppression of national minorities in the Soviet Union becomes a handy pretext for the reinforcement of Israeli conquests in the Middle East. These mobilisations, supposedly in solidarity with Russian Jewry, equate the USSR with Nazi Germany ("Hitler-Kosygin" - "USSR, S.S.") and invariably incorporate Israeli nationalism. Patriotic Hebrew anthems and appeals to "Let My People Go!" take the place of support for the civil rights movement struggling against bureaucratic dictatorship in the Soviet Union.

Struggle for Equal Rights

Revolutionary socialists cannot and will not remain silent whilst Stalinism victimises innocent Jews, and Zionist nationalism benefits from the crime. To the Stalinists, we repeat—once more, you drag the name of socialism in the gutter, invoking memories of the Moscow Trials and the vicious "Doctors' Plot" witch-hunt. Today, however, a growing revolutionary movement challenges your stranglehold on the working class and exposes your shameful resort to anti-semitism. You, above all, strengthen Jewish nationalism in the West, in Israel and inside the USSR, fifty years after the October Revolution. To the Zionists, we say—your selective "humanitarianism" recognises only the freedom of movement of Soviet Jews and not that of the dispossessed Palestinian Arabs. Unlike you, we will continue to combat all racism and national oppression, all forms of discrimination dividing the working class, whether in Spain or South Africa, Russia or Israel.

Stalinism, not communism, is on trial in Leningrad!

Smash Stalinist anti-semitism in Russia, Poland and Czechoslovakia!

Long live proletarian internationalism!

A False Dilemma

Some comrades have grappled with the *apparent* problem of whether to work "inside" or "outside" the university. Student socialists feel the pressure of two apparently contradictory necessities:

1. The need to direct all our energies in the most efficient way to strengthen the labour movement.
2. The obvious need and value of doing political work among the mass of students.

On the surface the sharp rise of working class struggles against the government would seem to make this dilemma all the more acute; but if we clarify our ideas on the role of the university for the capitalists, then we can begin to see what *our* role should be in relation to the workers.

Universities in the Class Struggle: The Class Struggle in the Universities

All of us agree that the university is not isolated from the wider society, but is becoming ever more deeply integrated into the structure of advanced capitalism. Moreover, the role of the university within the socio-economic system of capitalism is becoming ever more central as the production of knowledge and the dissemination of ideology becomes increasingly bound up with the day to day stability of the system.

We should therefore expect (otherwise the above theories are wrong) that important developments in the wider society will be reflected in the universities and vice versa. So how does the bourgeoisie's offensive against the working class reflect itself in the university? The offensive has the following main aspects:

- (a) new techniques in "industrial relations" (*A Fair Deal at Work*, etc.)
- (b) new economic measures, e.g. Incomes Policy, Excess Capacity (increased unemployment), productivity deals, etc.
- (c) cuts in the social services.
- (d) new methods of manipulating the legal system.
- (e) new ideological justifications for the system of repression and exploitation.

This list is not only the ingredients of the present attack on the working class; it also outlines the content of much of the "scientific" work that goes on in British universities: the function of the academic economic "technicians" is to tell the bourgeoisie the different options they have in economic strategy and suggest new industrial relations techniques; the social admin., politics, sociology, law, business studies departments, all of them have the function of supplying the knowledge, techniques and justifications for such policies as the government, the mass media and the employers are now pursuing against the working class.

If the workers were led by a conscious proletarian party in the present struggle, such a party would be prosecuting a merciless struggle ideologically, against these lackeys of capital in the universities. No such party exists, but there is a force right in the belly of these institutions which we can try to mobilise for this important fight: the students.

The objective basis for mobilising students for this fight is the simple fact that all this ideological shit is being pushed down *their* throats under the title of "science". This is what the students in these departments are called upon to celebrate and regurgitate, with suitable sanctions against those who refuse to do so and enticing career and status incentives for those who play along.

The practical struggle of the workers against the ruling class's industrial relations will tend to influence the most aware students in the universities to struggle against the ideological content of their courses. Similarly, development of a serious theoretical and political contestation of the existing functions of the university departments in these fields will be a real blow against the bourgeoisie's anti-working class offensive. In this way we can see the apparent dilemma of working class support versus student politics can dissolve: *the class struggle enters the universities and the university enters the class struggle*; the two are, as they say, dialectically linked.

Action

On the basis of this analysis we can map out concrete forms of action to relate student socialists to the workers' struggle against the government measures:

1. Find out whether any of the lecturers in the relevant departments have been doing work directly related to the government measures. Any who have should be viciously attacked.
2. Examine the content of student courses in the relevant fields and expose their ideological content.



SPARTACUS LEAGUE MILITANTS IN ACTION: *In this case demonstrating their solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese revolutionaries.*

3. Work to expose the whole function of such departments as Management Studies and Industrial Relations; we should put forward the concept of abolishing them and replacing them with departments to do research into capitalism and the institutions it creates to maintain its power.
4. We should get sympathetic students to do research that can be of direct assistance to the local workers' movement.
5. All this activity should be linked with day to day propaganda, agitation and action relating to the unfolding class struggle; it should be linked with strenuous attempts on the part of the vanguard within the university to make links with the local working class militants and to draw students into activity in support of the workers' struggle locally; finally it should be linked to the overall practical and theoretical criticism of the bourgeois university.

The specific forms of action that can be taken locally will depend on the nature of the tie-ups that can be made between the university and the ruling class on this issue, on the links that can be made with the local workers' movement and on the relationship of forces generally inside the university. In one place it may be possible to win students' union support for occupying the Industrial Relations department, holding a teach-in on the class struggle, getting local workers to explain industrial relations as they experience them in their factories. In other places it may only be possible to make general propaganda on this issue. What is important however is that we operate within the kind of strategic framework outlined.

The organisational form for this work should be committees in solidarity with the trade unions. It would be a mistake to organise the work simply in committees within the various departments which could easily turn into organs for purely contemplative theoretical criticism; while at the same time relying solely on the socialist society organisation may not attract the widest measure of support and won't have the same sharp cutting edge as Trade Union Solidarity Action Committees.

(Originally issued as a Spartacus League leaflet for December 8th.)

"If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the PROBLEM!" - Cleaver

Come to the SPARTACUS LEAGUE

(REVOLUTIONARY YOUTH ORGANISATION)

National Conference LONDON - FEB. 21-22

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REGISTRATIONS NOW OPEN: WRITE—SPARTACUS LEAGUE, 182 PENTONVILLE ROAD, LONDON N.1.

BLACK DEFENCE COMMITTEE

After consulting Black organisations, the Black Defence Committee has formed a **Black Defence and Aid Fund** to raise funds to assist black people and organisations faced with mounting legal bills and fines as police harassment. The Defence and Aid Fund will announce its fund campaign later this month to raise hundreds of pounds from white sympathisers, trade union and political groups who wish to solidarise with the black struggle in this country. Black Defence Committees have been formed outside London, prompted by the recent speaking tour by the London Black Panthers. In Nottingham a Defence and Aid Fund is forming to protect those who fear they will face charges as reprisals for giving evidence against police in last month's drug planting case.

The Black Defence Committee is accumulating a wealth of information on cases of individual and group harassment and is syndicating this to the press and individuals so that the full extent of police activity can become fully known. Information packages documenting these cases are available.

Recent instances of intimidation include the invasion of a bonfire party in Powis Square, Notting Hill, by 200 police when eight people were arrested and the evening wrecked. *Race Today*, a "neutral" publication of the *Institute of Race Relations*, has recently discussed the question of police activity in Notting Hill. In the December issue is a history of police attempts to close down the Mangrove restaurant, the owner of which, mild-mannered Frank Crichtlow, was sentenced to four months'

imprisonment after an affray charge when police made one of their many raids. The report says: "Since then, the area has not been the same. There is a tension hitherto unknown. The police, the black community insist, are out to kill the Mangrove and other centres where blacks get together." A short distance from the Mangrove, the Metro, a popular youth club used by West Indians, was raided on October 23rd and arrests made. Another black restaurant, Backyard, comes in for constant police attention and raids, and in St. Lukes Mews, black owners and workers at garages are constantly watched. *Race Today* comments: "There is a feeling that the police are arresting as many known coloured 'militants' as possible, as fast as they can."

Events in Notting Hill and in particular against the Mangrove forced Black people to demonstrate against the police earlier this year. 29 people are still awaiting trial as a result of attacks made by police on that occasion, and subsequently when black people have been picked up in police raids on their homes and workplaces. Rudy Kentish has even been charged with attempted murder when police went to arrest him at his work in respect of an alleged offence in connection with the demonstration. Charges ranging up to incitement to riot are being used to commit over two dozen people to the Old Bailey.

Elsewhere in London, cases are still pending arising out of police breaking up a dance at the Oval House (ironically, held to raise money to defend previous victims).

In order to show the degree of the individual cases, we instance the following. In November on Sunday 23rd at 2.30 in the morning in Brixton, people in a house there were rudely woken by the sound of a beating being administered in the backyard of the house. Mrs. Watson, a West Indian, living on the top floor, threw open her window to see three white men beating a black man down below. She heard one of them say, "You black bastard, we'll kill you, don't you fucking talk back to a police officer." Meanwhile her husband had taken the natural, obvious, but subsequently disastrous step of calling the police to the disturbance in the belief that they would restore law and order. Mrs. Watson raised a hue and cry from her bedroom window and the victim was able to escape in the confusion. Deprived of their quarry, the assailants turned on the house, battering down the back door, and went into a ground floor bedroom armed with a shovel that they had already used to some effect, and laid about Joshua Francis on his bed. Francis was already in a bad way, suffering from double vision and a broken jaw resulting from an accident at work, and waiting for an operation. He got hospital treatment sooner than he expected, however, as such a mess was made of him that after he had been beaten bloody he was dragged half naked across the backyard, over broken glass from the smashed door, and, pausing only at Brixton Police Station to charge him with assault, the police took him to Kings Hospital. There, the doctor concerned is said to have asked ironically whether he (Francis) had com-

mitted a murder—his condition was so horrific. Meanwhile, scores of police had entered the house and were busy ransacking the premises. Francis had to receive stitches in his head, groin and legs. He is not a young man and he now lives in constant fear. Some days later a *Mole* reporter and a member of the Black Defence Committee called at the house and were shown two rooms and a passageway, the walls of which were still caked in blood from Mr. Francis's injuries, together with blood-stained bedding, now in the possession of Mr. Francis's solicitors. The Black Panthers helped to get Francis out of the police station and arranged a solicitor.

The Black Defence Committee seeks to publicise this and like cases. But in addition to the day by day work of fund raising and publicity, the Black Defence Committee is developing plans concerning the racial climate in general. It intends to act as a militant group to counter racist and fascist activities. Plans are being worked out to respond to the Tory immigration proposals expected later this month. A campaign will be mounted, in conjunction with other groups, opposing restrictions and detailing the ongoing political implications of the legislation.

The Black Defence Committee needs individual and group affiliation. Its address is 101 Park Avenue North, Cricklewood, London N.W.10. Speakers can be arranged for meetings. In addition, the Black Defence Committee needs to receive information as well as to disseminate, and reports of police activity, harassment and general discrimination will be of assistance.



RED CIRCLES/RED MOLE CONTACTS

BELFAST: Alan Morris, c/o Red Mole.
BIRMINGHAM: Val Graham, 72 Cambridge Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.
BRISTOL: Dave Prior, 7 Ravenswood Road, Redland, Bristol 6.
CARDIFF: Susan Lukes, 92 Llandaff Road, Canton, Cardiff.
COLCHESTER: Ken Browne, Flat 7, Room 10, Bertrand Russell Tower, University of Essex, Colchester, Essex.
COVENTRY: John Presland, 27 Paynes Lane, Coventry, Warwick.
DERBY: Bruce Bebbington, 41 Leopold Street, Derby, DE1 2HE.
EDINBURGH: Brian Gilmore, 17 Hillside St., Edinburgh.
GLASGOW: Ian Stevenson, 3 Doune Gardens, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow.
HERTFORD: Malcolm Harding, 8 Parker Ave., Bengoe, Herts.
HULL: Malcolm Ball, Students Union, Hull University, Hull.
KIDDERMINSTER: Nigel Brown, 44 The Deansway, Kidderminster, Worcs.
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES: Robin Bonner, Flat 1, 66 Cranes Park, Surbiton, Surrey.
LANCASTER: Brian Heron, 29 Clarendon Road, Lancaster.
LEEDS: Ron Thompson, 132 Askeren Chase, Hunslet Grange, Leeds 10.
LEICESTER: Jean Holman, 7 College Street, Leicester.
LINCOLN: Dave Thompson, 65 Tower Cres., Lincoln.
LONDON
CENTRAL: Frank Hansen, City Polytechnic, Students Union, Moorgate, EC1.
NORTH: John Weal, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.
NORTH-WEST: Tony Fry, 101 Park Avenue North, NW10.
SOUTH: Jim Clough, 2 Almeric Road, SW11.
SOUTH: Tony Jones, Furzedown College of Education, Welham Road, SW17.
EALING: Will Rich, 8 Burlington Gdns, W4. (994 6862 weekdays)
HAMMERSMITH: Eddy Arnavoudian, 20 Thorny Hedge Rd, Gunnersbury, W4.
LOUGHBOROUGH: Ann Black, 4 Russell St, Loughborough.

ST. ALBANS/HATFIELD: Chris Pailthorpe, Fairshot Court, Sandridge, Nr. St. Albans, Herts. (Tel: St. Albans 51854)
SHEFFIELD: Paul Neville, Ranmoor House, Shore Lane, Sheffield, S10 3AY.
STAFFORD: Graham Jones, 184a Silkmore Lane, Stafford.
STIRLING: Donald MacDonald, 6 Tarduff Place, Stonehouse, Denny, Stirlingshire.
WEST LOTHIAN: Anne MacLellan, 5 Victoria Place, Bo'ness, West Lothian.
YORK: Phil Hears, Goodricke College, Heslington, York.
MERCHANT NAVY (at sea): Peter Turner, "Oriana", c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.
"THE RED MOLE HOLE"—club for revolutionaries. Meets in the "Hearty Goodfellow" Inn, Arbury Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton. For further info., write to: M.P. Cheshire, 10 Westbury Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton.

EVENTS

MONDAYS: Birmingham Red Circle meets, 7.30 p.m. at the Black Swan, Bromsgrove Street, Digbeth.
WEDNESDAYS: Stafford Red Circle, 8 p.m., Dog & Partridge, South Walls.
THURSDAYS: Glasgow Red Circle, Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, 7.30 p.m.
JANUARY 12th: Leicester Red Circle Meeting, 7.30, 7 College Street, Leicester. Subject: Workers Control.
JANUARY 19th: Left Forum, Commercial Hotel, Bethgate, 7.30 p.m.—"Why Socialism". Free if at all possible.
JANUARY 19th: London Socialist Women Group public meeting. Phone 574 7407 for details.
MARCH 6th: "Women Unite" demonstration. Details later.
MARCH 28th: Day Seminar on "Social Causes & Consequences of Addiction", organised by Socialist Medical Association. Ring 01-346 5867 for details. Campaign against the Tory attack on the N.H.S.—"Your Health in Danger". Leaflets available from S.M.A., 31 Lionel Street, Birmingham 3. Ring 021-236 0635.

Comrades with good knowledge of Marxist Economics (*Das Kapital*) and interested in helping with translation of latest and best German "Introduction to Basic Marxism" into English—no German knowledge necessary—please contact Red Circle, Manchester.

China topical magazines, by airmail, + free 1971 art calendar. Mao Tse Tung's writings. 15% discount: *Lenin on War & Peace*, 108 pages, 3/9. Etc. etc. Full lists: 4d stamp to: D. Volpe, 114 Evering Road, London N.16. Tel: 01-985 3682.

The Situation in Britain, outline Marxist approach, by Dave Volpe. 1/9 to Dave Volpe, 114 Evering Road, London N.16.

NIGHT CLEANERS' CAMPAIGN

In the last *Mole* we reported on the night cleaners' all-night picket of Companies House, Old Street, to get reinstatement of 2 shop stewards sacked from Sanctuary Buildings, Westminster, by the Strand Cleaning Company. A few weeks later all the girls at Companies House found themselves without a job—no connection with the picket, of course. Up until Christmas the Strand went on refusing to offer the women night-cleaning work—but hadn't reckoned with the continued militancy of the Cleaners Action Group who kept up the pressure on the employers by spreading the news of the Strand's behaviour and by holding two more pickets on Sanctuary Buildings and Companies House, where some of the evening cleaners who had replaced the sacked women walked out in disgust when they learned what was happening.

It seems that the cleaners' militancy has made the arguments of the T&G, which is officially negotiating on their behalf, more convincing, as the Strand has now agreed to give the sacked women night-cleaning jobs and, for the first time ever—possibly a sign of anxiety at the growing numbers of cleaners who are joining the union—gave each of the women it employs a Christmas box of £2. As one of the cleaners said, "If they can afford it at Christmas, they can afford it every week."

The Cleaners Action Group badly needs money and support for their fight for union recognition and better conditions. If you can help, contact: May Hobbs, Cleaners Action Group, 13 Middle Lane, London N.8. Tel: 01-348 2817, or London Socialist Women Group, 40 Inverness Road, Southall, Middx. Tel: 01-574 7407.

Underground Press under attack

POLICE ATTEMPT TO SMASH UNDERGROUND PRESS

By our Crime Reporter

4,000 copies of *OZ* magazine, subscription lists and advertising contracts were stolen by police the other week when a lorry was used in a raid on the offices of *OZ*. Ostensibly concocting charges under the reactionary "obscenity" legislation, the police failed to explain why one single copy of *OZ* was insufficient for this purpose.

Later that morning former *OZ* editor Richard Neville was hijacked by police and forced to appear before magistrates after a night in captivity, on a cannabis charge. Despite the fact that Neville is deemed bail-worthy to appear at the Old Bailey in the near future on an earlier obscenity rap, the magistrates took their cue from the police and remanded him in custody until after Christmas. He was later released after an appeal to a Judge in Chambers. There is a clear attempt to fix Neville with a string of offences before his Old Bailey appearance in order that he may be presented to the judge as a man of bad character. In theory (though no doubt not in practice) his attempt to get acquitted on the Old Bailey charge should be successful as he was not even editor of the issue in question which was edited by schoolchildren—the very people who are supposed to be "protected" by the law.

Following hard on heavy fines imposed at the Old Bailey last month on *International Times*, it is clear that the police are using the courts in an attempt to run the underground press out of existence. Alarmed by the rapid expansion of these papers, presenting an alternative focus to that provided by the official media and a set of political attitudes, half baked and anarchic but expressing the rebellion and anti-authoritarian stance of young people, the police are determined to serve their masters by adding to the list of persecuted minorities.

Attacks on *OZ* and *IT* carry dangers for revolutionary papers. Victory for the reactionaries in this area may give them confidence to attempt the closure of political papers such as the *Red Mole*. We send our greetings to Richard Neville and our support in his struggles against the puritans, manipulators and the senile, decaying officers of law who seek to put him in prison.

EDITORIAL BOARD: Tariq Ali, Robin Blackburn, Cheshamo Chimsizipwende, Peter Gowan, Teresa Hayte, Dave Kendall, Marie-Therese Lignogne, Branka Magas, Neil Middleton, John Weal.
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BREAKAWAY UNIONISM: The blues and the whites

We are now in a period where the conflict between the rank and file of the trade unions and the bureaucratic union leaders is becoming sharper every day. This has led to a big increase in "unofficial" activity and to threats to form break-away unions. In the case of Pilkingtons this threat has been put into practice. This type of movement can only become more frequent as the 1970s progress. It is worth considering the lessons of the greatest union breakaway since 1945—the attempt of 16,000 dockers to leave the TGWU and to join the National Association of Stevedores and Dockers (NASD).

Stress and Strain Inside the TGWU

The Transport and General Workers Union has a long tradition of conflict between its leadership and rank and file. Nowhere has this conflict

been greater than in the docks. In 1923, only a year after the creation of the union, some 20,000 dockers left the T&G to join the Stevedores' Protection Society and in 1932 dockers in Glasgow and Cambletown left the T&G to found the Scottish Transport and General Workers Union. This type of conflict however took on its most extreme form after 1945.

In 1945 a Labour government was elected which succeeded in carrying out the reconstruction of capitalism after the Second World War at the expense of the working class. This reactionary government was fully supported by the leadership of the T&G which was at that time in the hands of extreme right-wingers led by Arthur Deakin. Deakin was a real "Reds under the Beds" man who in 1949 had introduced a resolution into the T&G banning members of the Communist Party from holding office. This was the infamous "Black Circular". Conflict between this leadership and the dockers was inevitable and it followed as soon as the war ended in 1945.

The 1945 Strike and Its Effects

In 1945 a spontaneous strike broke out for an increase in basic pay. It affected almost all the ports during its six weeks' duration and shook the Labour government just as much as it did Deakin. The union eventually succeeded in getting the movement under control again by making a set of promises about pay, conditions, pensions, etc., none of which it intended to fulfil of course. Although the eventual increase in pay won by the dockers was far less than the original demand, the strike had two crucial effects; it established methods of organising which became standard for the next twenty years and it temporarily broke the power of the Communist Party in the docks.

Shortly after the war the C.P. was still pursuing the policies of class collaboration it had adopted between 1941 and 1945. The Party therefore opposed the 1945 strike. The C.P. members on the National Portworkers Committee walked out. This piece of strike-breaking led to the resignation from the Party of several militant leaders, including Bert Aylward. This resulted in a marked decline of C.P. influence on the docks and therefore aided the pursuing of more militant policies in subsequent years.

With the system of casual labour in the docks a workable shop stewards system was impossible. Instead rank and file committees were elected by mass meetings which were often attended by 90% of the men engaged in a dock. Between strikes these committees often only consisted of five or six but during strikes they were expanded to include men who proved themselves in the running of the dispute. An important feature of these committees was that they were subject to instant recall.

The committees naturally came into constant conflict with the union bureaucrats. For example in 1952 three of the most active leaders, Constable, Dickens and Saunders, were expelled from the T&G. The employers then tried to sack Constable because he did not have a union card. This provoked a mass walkout. The power of the committee was great and they were linked in a national committee with Aylward acting as organiser.

Under the leadership of these rank and file organisations a whole series of strikes were waged in the years immediately after the war. For example in 1948 a coordinated strike was carried on in London and Liverpool over the rate for moving zinc oxide. The crunch however came in February-August 1951 in a direct confrontation between the dockers and the Labour Government.

Order No. 1305

Under the Emergency Powers Act, Order No. 1305, passed in 1940, the government could declare any strike illegal. This law had been passed by a "National" government led by the arch-reactionary Churchill, but it was not reversed by the 1945 Labour government. Instead they kept the powers in reserve in order to deal with the working class. The clash that led them to use 1305 began on February 2nd 1951 when Liverpool dockers struck against a

manning and mechanisation agreement signed by the T&G. The strike spread rapidly to Birkenhead and Manchester. The Government used Order No. 1305 to arrest seven of the dockers' leaders. The man who imposed the order was Nye Bevan, now a patron saint of left social democracy.

The seven dockers were charged at Bow Street Magistrates Court and on the same day almost 7,000 London dockers joined the strike. By February 23rd, 16,000 men were out. Solidarity strikes were held on 18th March, 9th April, 16th April and 18th April until the Government were forced to order the men's release. The only part that the T&G played in this campaign was that shortly afterwards it expelled Dickens and Constable, two of the arrested dockers, from the union. A situation like this could not continue indefinitely; at some point the dockers would attempt to break with the T&G, either to rely entirely on rank and file organisation or to attempt to form their own union. They in fact did the latter but in an unexpected form.

The National Association of Stevedores and Dockers

In August 1954 Hull dockers struck work against the dangerous method of unloading grain known as "hand-scuttling". The T&G naturally opposed the strike. The men elected a rank and file committee consisting of four men. All this was perfectly normal. What was however totally abnormal was the recommendation which the committee gave to the men. They suggested that in the light of the T&G's attitude all the men should leave the Union and join the NASD. This was accepted with acclaim by the men.

The principle of leaving one union to join another is completely contrary to the principles of bureaucratic unionism. There is a very simple reason for this, namely that if members were free to leave one union to join another then men would naturally join those unions which win the best pay and conditions, i.e. the most militant unions. If switching unions were allowed, right-wing unions such as the ETU and the GMWU could lose much of their membership overnight. The right of workers to choose which union to belong to is therefore a union bureaucrat's nightmare. In order to prevent it happening, unions convicted of accepting other unions' members may be expelled from the TUC and thus from the "respectable" union "club".

In the case of the dockers, the implications were even more far-reaching. As always the dockers were one of the most militant sections of workers. The only aim of their joining another union would be in order to turn it into a vehicle for pursuing their aims of improving wages and conditions. If they were allowed to join the NASD, the prospect would be opened up of there existing a union which served fully the interests of its members and not that of the union bureaucrats. This would set an example for workers in other unions and was a right-wing union leader's nightmare. Normally an established union such as the NASD would not have contemplated taking the risk of admitting the Hull dockers, but in 1954 the NASD desperately needed members. This led to the opening which the Hull men exploited.

The forerunner of the NASD was the Stevedores' Protection Society to which we have already referred. In 1954 the NASD was confined to the London docks and had a membership of about 4,500 stevedores and 2,500 dockers. Its leaders naturally wanted to extend their influence outside London. It was this that led them initially to take the risk of admitting the northern dockers. For the mass of dockers the NASD had two great attractions, one positive and one negative. On the positive side the union was not affiliated to the Labour Party, and for men sickened by years of clashes with "their" political party, this was a real attraction. More important, however, was the negative aspect which was simply that after years of being messed about by the T&G leadership, the dockers felt that any change could only be a change for the better.

As a result of these factors, the action of the Hull men met a quick sympathy in other northern ports. This was particularly the case at Birkenhead.

Birkenhead had one of the strongest committees in the country and produced a monthly paper, *The Portworkers' Clarion*, which sold to almost 75% of the port's 2,200 workers. Furthermore the leaders of the committee were highly conscious politically and were sympathetic to the group which was later to become the SLL. The Birkenhead committee rapidly contacted the Hull dockers and arranged for a delegation from Hull to speak at Birkenhead. A NASD recruiting office was rapidly established and within two weeks 2,000 of the Birkenhead men had transferred to the NASD.

While this was going on, a struggle over overtime led by the NASD in London came to a head and the union members in London, Hull

and Birkenhead struck. They were supported by 85% of the T&G members in London, Hull, Birkenhead, Manchester and Liverpool. The T&G leadership of course was solidly against the strike and this caused its prestige to fall still further.

The NASD now enjoyed tremendous prestige with the northern ports. It appeared that whereas the T&G leaders were solidly against their members, the NASD would fight for pay and conditions for its members. As a result by May 1955 approximately 16,000 men in Hull, Birkenhead, Liverpool and Manchester had joined the "Blues" (the NASD were so called after the colour of their membership cards; the T&G were known as the "Whites" for the same reason).

It is important to note however that there was no comparable move to leave the T&G in London. This was not due to the fact that London dockers had any faith in the T&G, on the contrary they were if anything even more opposed to it than the northern workers, but simply because in London the dockers had first-hand experience of the NASD leaders and had come to realise that they differed in no fundamental way from the T&G leaders. They knew at first hand that the NASD bureaucrats were no more inclined to militancy and solidarity action than were the T&G leaders.

The Dilemma

The situation as it developed in 1954 and early 1955 posed almost impossible problems for the leaderships of the northern dockers. To join a breakaway union is an extreme step which goes against the traditional union goal of maximum solidarity. Such an action therefore is only generally successful in periods of extreme social crisis and 1954 was obviously not that. Such a step also leads to a head-on confrontation with the bureaucracy of the union which the men are attempting to leave. Thus in the case of the T&G the union leaders made no secret of their aim to smash the NASD. For example P. J. O'Hare, Merseyside area secretary of the T&G, boasted that only T&G members would be allowed to work in the docks and the NASD members would be excluded from the job.

For all these reasons breakaways from unions are not normally supported, but on the other hand in 1954 the tensions inside the T&G had reached breaking point—as revealed by the readiness with which the northern men broke from the Union. The policy of telling these men to stay inside the T&G and fight might appear neat on paper but in practice the dockers knew they stood no chance of changing the T&G machine by themselves. A call to stay in the Union would only have produced disillusionment and apathy. In retrospect it is easy to say that this was nothing compared to the harm done to the union structure by the split in the men in the northern ports caused by the breakaway, but this is to be wise after the event as it presupposes that the attempt to gain recognition would fail. Anyway in the light of the circumstances described above, the dockers' leaders and the SLL group decided to support the breakaway. Head-on conflict with the T&G was now inevitable.

The Struggle for Recognition

The first clash came in April 1955 when at the T&G's prompting the Dock Labour Board tried to deny men who had left the T&G the right to work. This move was defeated by a two-day strike, but it was obvious that the position of the NASD members would not be secure until the union had gained official recognition in the northern ports. Therefore on May 28th the "blue" union began an official strike for recognition.

However as soon as the strike began, all the contradictions inside the NASD were revealed. The men who had left the T&G had done so because they were sick to the teeth of "respectable" unionism. They wanted a union which defended *their* interests and not one which was trapped in the stifling bureaucracy of the trade unions. They desired to have a union responsive to them and were prepared to openly fight the T&G in order to get it. The NASD leaders on the other hand were part of the same "respectable" union set-up as Deakin & Co. They wanted more members in order to increase their own status inside the trade union movement but they were too worried about their respectability to confront the T&G. Therefore as soon as they came into a situation where they were confronted head-on with the T&G apparatus, they began to cave in.

The collapse of the Blues leadership began within hours of the dispute beginning. Outside the Surrey Dock, Ron Pollard, a member of the Stevedores' executive, made an appeal to the men to return to work. The NASD Secretary Barrett rapidly developed an "illness" and disappeared for the duration of the strike. The weak position of the strikers was worsened still further when the C.P.-controlled Liaison Committee and executive of the Lightermen's Union refused to support the strike. The NASD

executive then backed out and began to put forward "back to work" motions. In every port, however, they were overwhelmingly defeated.

Soon it became apparent that the wavering of the NASD executive was having fatal results. Initially in the northern ports the majority of T&G members had come out in support of the "blues". However, once it became apparent that the executive of that union was wavering, then the support began to dwindle. This was particularly crucial in London where, for the reasons we have already explained, the men were less inclined to support the NASD anyway. When the London men saw the Stevedores' executive wavering, they were confirmed in their suspicion that the NASD had only taken the northern men into the Union in order to defend and extend their own bureaucracy, and that it had nothing to do with constructing a militant port workers' union.

The recognition strike lasted seven weeks. The northern dockers, denied strike pay, repeatedly stabbed in the back by their official leadership, unsupported by the London TGWU members, and rapidly losing the support of the "white" union men in the northern ports, were compelled to return to work. The actual decision was foisted on them by a combined vote of the London Stevedores and Dockers' executive. At this meeting, the representatives from the northern ports were even denied the right to vote.

The Outcome

The executive of the NASD was terrified out of its life by the events of the recognition dispute. It was obvious that the men in the northern ports, if they had won, would have turned the NASD from a conservative "respectable" union controlled by a bureaucracy into a union which expressed the interests of the working dockers. This would have destroyed the bureaucracy of the union and brought the NASD into prolonged and bitter conflict with the rest of the bureaucratized trade union movement. This course of events was of course unthinkable for any union's leadership, including that of the Stevedores. Rather than allow that to happen, they ensured that the strike itself failed. From then on the union became more and more right wing. Thus for example in 1957 and '58 it refused to support the two major strikes which occurred in these years. In January 1958 it even refused to support its own members who were striking because a control officer in Liverpool docks was refusing to hire NASD members. The whole activity of the NASD now centred around winning back its place on the National Joint Industrial Council which it had lost when it first recruited the northern men. To get this place back it attempted to prove to the employers that it was a more "responsible" union than the T&G. The NASD leadership showed conclusively that if a union bureaucracy is forced to choose between respectability and the needs of its members, it will always choose against its members.

The Lessons

The attempt of dockers to leave the T&G shows clearly what the penalties for unsuccessful break-aways are. The failure in the northern ports led to the demoralisation of many militant dockers and to a tragic splitting of the unofficial movement. It appeared to show all the lessons which the events at Pilkington may yet confirm. Yet the problems that faced the dockers in 1954 still remain and still no satisfactory way of tackling them has been found. The recent case of the power workers shows only too clearly how even the most powerful group of workers can be defeated as long as their union leaders are able to make deals above their heads.

Workers today are facing an attack on their living standards by the employers and their government. Obviously the rank and file trade unionists are going to demand of their leaders that they fight these attacks and this is going to mean a fight for more democracy inside the unions and a much more critical attitude towards the union officials. Many of these leaders are going to resist such a movement from their members and will quite correctly see them as an attack on their privileges. This inevitably will lead to fierce disputes between the membership and the union bureaucracy and in some cases a majority of the members are going to want to join another union which is fighting the bosses and the Tories. As revolutionary socialists it is our duty to put the interests of the working class first, and although we always point out the difficulties and problems "breakaways" can lead to and certainly argue against them in the present period, nevertheless if a majority of workers took such action we would be duty bound to aid them and not to condemn the movement from the sidelines.

Bob Pennington
Alan Jones

THE ORIGINS AND PO

The Government of "Union Jack" Lynch in Dublin has announced the discovery of a "kidnap plot"; on the strength of this they have re-opened the internment camps, preparatory to detaining unspecified people without trial. The brunt of the witch-hunt has been borne by a group whose name up to now has been practically unknown to the British left—Saor Eire.

In this interview, obtained in Ireland by a *Red Mole* reporter, a leading Saor Eire militant explains the nature, and politics, of the organisation. In publishing this interview, we express our militant solidarity with the comrades of Saor Eire in face of the witch-hunt against their group. We agree with them that this latest act of repression in Ireland is not directed against Saor Eire alone but aims to smash all who challenge the Green Tory regime. It is necessary for the British left to prepare to mobilise for action if even one person is put in the Curragh.

Note: Saor Eire = Free Ireland
Saor Uladh = Free Ulster

Can you tell us something about the origins of Saor Eire?

I'll have to go back to the '60s and trace the development of the Republican movement. After the failure of the mid-'50s military campaign in the Six Counties, a certain amount of disillusionment set in within the IRA and Sinn Fein. People saw the futility of a purely military campaign not backed up by some form of political action. In the early '60s some people connected with the London-based "Irish Democrat" joined the movement. Their Stalinist politics were not accepted overnight, but on account of the lack of clear-cut politics within the Republican movement, the position was that any brand of politics was accepted. With the influx of these people, political classes were started, which were good in themselves, as they gave many members of the Republican movement their first knowledge of left-wing politics, but hand in hand with the growing political awareness, there began a running-down of the armed section, the IRA. This unfortunately led to a lot of people equating left-wing politics with reformism. Many of our members at this stage started to voice their objections to this running down of the IRA. These people were either dismissed on trumped-up charges or left of their own accord. Other members saw through the politics of Stalinism and left on a political basis.

At this time too, many English-based revolutionary groups started to spring up. People saw in these groups alternatives to the Irish Communist Party and to the current Stalinist orientation of the Republican movement, and thought that maybe, through such organisations, a new fusion could be made between left-wing politics and the traditional militancy of Republicanism. Some people who had been involved in the Trotskyist English-based Irish Workers' Group formed an important section of Saor Eire and began to form links with these dissident elements of the Republican movement. This resulted in a loose organisation being formed in Dublin about three to four years ago, which carried out some arms raids and some bank raids in an attempt to try and get a militant, politically conscious, armed group off the ground. After these initial actions there was not such a mass movement towards this grouping as was expected, since its actions were seen as more in the tradition of the international revolutionary movement, as opposed to the Irish movement. The next period was spent in discussion with various political groupings, and various members of the Republican movement, in an attempt to win them over to this new concept of political action.

—Could you describe very briefly just what kind of a movement Saor Eire is?

Saor Eire is a left-wing armed group which is attempting to act as a fuse or detonator to the Irish revolutionary struggle. It is attempting to step up the tempo of development of political life. It is part of the Republican tradition but also draws from the international revolutionary movement, both politically and in a military sense. As opposed to past forms the Republican struggle took, Saor Eire is centred around the cities and could be called an urban guerrilla



INTERNMENT: 1921 STYLE. Dublin citizens are rounded up while the body of a dead "Sinn Feiner" lies on the pavement, when the IRA set fire to the Dublin Customs House, headquarters of the British Civil Service in Ireland.

group, inasmuch as it sees the main struggle taking place in the cities, and within the working class directly, and doesn't hold to the old conception that the fight is in the countryside, or that the classic kind of rural guerrilla warfare can bring about a Workers Republic in Ireland. We do not ignore the problems of the struggle in the countryside between the small farmers and the large ranchers, but we see the leadership of this struggle coming from the cities, and the final blow to capitalism in Ireland coming from the working class. For this reason we base ourselves in the cities as opposed to the countryside.

—What kind of activities is Saor Eire involved in at present?

Unfortunately due to publicity given to us by the bourgeois press, people seem to think that we are only involved in robbing banks and living high lives, etc. etc. This could not be further from the truth. We have robbed many banks and taken responsibility for them. But we have also been involved in armed raids, in industrial disputes, in direct confrontations with the state and its agents, also in local disputes and tenants' disputes. The money expropriated from the banks is used to purchase arms and equipment for the forthcoming struggle in Ireland. A lot of our finances have gone to aid the Catholic population of the North who have been under attack from British imperialism. This took the form of money, ammunition, weapons and equipment. The money is also used for the maintenance of our revolutionaries in the field, who, at the moment, number quite a few. It is also used for political education, the arrangement of classes, camps, and all of the other running expenses that any armed group is liable to. We're also involved in military training of members of other left-wing groups in Ireland, people from the North, and the broad Republican movement, who have not been able to get this training within their own organisations.

—How would you define Saor Eire in terms of the various strands of the revolutionary movement on an international scale, i.e. Maoist, Castroist, Fourth International, etc.?

While not falling into any particular political category, we have learned much from all the main revolutionary tendencies at work in the world today. For example there's a lot of Mao, especially on guerrilla warfare, which is very relevant to Ireland. However we reject much of their politics, their Stalinist orientation, and their role in such defeats as Indonesia. The Cuban revolution had a profound and deep-going effect on the Republican movement and on the development of our own members. While it brought a new conception of action into the world revolutionary struggle, that of the guerrilla foco, we feel that it has certain limitations. The same land problem does not exist in Ireland upon which the guerrilla movements are

based in Latin America. We don't believe that the foco itself can become the party of has any monopoly on the revolution. But small guerrilla groupings, to a certain extent independent of the working class, can help to raise the level of the working class and so help to create the party.

As regards the Fourth International: we recognise the revolutionary role it has played since its inception; how it came to the aid of the Algerian revolution with arms and weapons while other so-called revolutionary organisations failed to fulfil their duty. We also admire how they came to the aid of the Cuban and Vietnamese revolutions and defended them against imperialism, in America and throughout the world. We are particularly sympathetic to the political assistance it is giving the Irish struggle at the moment. While the Stalinists have consistently dilly-dallied and vacillated on the question of Ireland and on the role of armed struggle in Ireland, the Fourth International is probably the only organisation which has consistently given it support. A lot of our members have been, at some time or other, members of Trotskyist groupings. We recognise that the Trotskyist arguments against Stalinism and reformism are the only consistent political arguments which lead to revolutionary conclusions. We recognise that the Fourth International among the "Trotskyist" groupings internationally is the only one which can properly be termed Trotskyist; for this reason I suppose we are more sympathetic to the Fourth International than to any other political international group. It is worth noting that in the witch-hunting against our group in Ireland over the last six months, the small League for a Workers' Republic and the Young Socialists were the only groupings which consistently fought and defended us against these attacks and slanders. While recognising that these groups have differences with the Fourth International, we still feel that their principled stand arose from the fact that they base themselves on the main current of Trotskyist ideas.

—How would you define Saor Eire in terms of the Irish revolutionary tradition? Specifically, does your name signify an attachment to the tradition of the old Saor Eire and/or Saor Uladh?

We see ourselves as an inherent part of the Irish revolutionary and Republican tradition. We have been deeply influenced by the Fenians, by the Irish Volunteers, by all the progressive movements up to the present-day IRA. We feel that we have certain points in common with many of the splinter groups which have arisen, and possibly originated for the same reasons as we did. To take specifically the old Saor Eire, we have much in common with their attempts to weld militant Republicanism, that is armed guerrilla warfare, with left-wing politics. This does not mean, of course, that we agree implicitly with the political line or tactics

at the time.

As regards Saor Uladh, again we have much in common with them. This was a group which broke away from the Republican movement specifically on the question of armed action, which is a revolutionary feature. We also believe in their concept that the resolving of the Irish national struggle could not take place in the Six Counties alone, but would be resolved in a Thirty-Two County context. However, unfortunately, with Saor Uladh, this military outlook was not accompanied by the relevant and necessary political framework. For this reason they failed.

—Do you do any open political work? And if not, do you see this as an important field of activity?

We are not participating directly as Saor Eire in any open political work. Some of our members who are as yet unknown to the police are involved in open political work, but our organisation has to be close-knit and very security-conscious. We are unwilling to risk our members'



THE FORERUNNERS. A member of James Connolly's Citizen Army on guard in 1916.

identity and the security of our whole network just to have a number of our members in open political work. This has been one of the things that has made the present-day IRA so open to

LAND: POLITICS OF SAOR EIRE



BRITISH TROOPS IN IRELAND 1916 and what they left of Dublin after giving the Irish Law and Order.

Special Branch infiltration. This is a lesson we have learned from them which we have no desire to repeat.

—Do you see Saor Eire as a revolutionary party in the Leninist sense? If not, what is your attitude to the building of such a party in Ireland? And if you do see the importance of such a party, how do you see Saor Eire contributing to this?

We would not fall into the category of the party as Lenin understood it. We do not believe that we are the party that has a monopoly on the revolution or is going to lead the working class to socialism in Ireland. Rather, we see ourselves playing a part in creating the objective conditions in which such a party could take power, and help in the formation and creation of such a party. In this, we do not see ourselves in opposition to any of the present-day groups; rather as an aid to help them build a party which can lead the working class to power.

—What is your analysis of the crisis in Fianna Fail? And do you regard the Lynch or the Blaney-Haughy wing as the most dangerous for the Irish revolution?

Well, considering the present conflict within Fianna Fail, it must be understood that there is a distinct difference between the leadership and the ordinary members. The rank-and-file believe Fianna Fail to be a Republican party; we have received help from rank-and-file Fianna Failers who are staunch militant Republicans, in the old Fenian tradition; who support, for example, the breaking up of large estates, militant campaigns against the border, and take many other progressive stands. For this reason we believe that there are very progressive sections of Fianna Fail rank-and-file who could be won to a militant revolutionary political position if the proper tactics are applied. The leadership makes no such pretensions. By its very history over the last forty years, it has shown itself to be completely hostile in practice and in theory to Republicanism. Whereas the new technocrats of the party, such as the Coileys, the Haughy's, etc., use Republican phraseology to advance their own political careers.

As regards the present split in Fianna Fail: Lynch on the one hand has stated his own position plainly: he is anti-Republican, anti-revolutionary, and makes no pretences. On the other hand, the Blaney-Haughy wing are obviously more dangerous since they make Republican sounds, and are capable of preserving the Republican image of Fianna Fail. They have sent some aid to the North, but we know that they have sabotaged twice as much as they have sent. For example, as regards this recent controversy about arms deals, we know that they have sabotaged certain arms deals and that through a member of their military intelligence, Kelly, they infiltrated certain Republican circles, found out the source of arms suppliers to the North, and then either bought off these suppliers with money (God knows where it came from) or operated in such a way that these arms never found their way to Ireland. And they have also set up numerous individuals to be grabbed by the police. As this involves our own security, we are unable to name names or

dates at this present moment, but they can be made known at some future date.

If this is Republicanism, it is not what we stand for. Definitely in this present split they are the most dangerous element. At least with Lynch we know where we stand; the Blaney-Haughy faction is quite another matter.

—What is your attitude to the recent split in the Republican movement? Which section do you see as the most progressive?

Well, we have seen the inevitability of such a split occurring for the last eight years. We did not particularly favour it since, unfortunately, it happened over wrong issues. In the official section we have an amalgam of peaceful roadmen, reformers, and left-wingers; and within the Provisionals, we have more militant elements, but right-wing politics. In practice, we have found ourselves more closely aligned to the Provisionals; it is among those elements that



BRITISH TROOPS IN IRELAND 1970 protecting "civil rights" by invading the Falls with armoured cars and CS gas.

we draw a lot of our support.

Of course, it is important to draw a distinction between the leadership and the rank-and-file in both these organisations. Both leaderships seem equally opposed to us and equally capable of spreading slanders about us, whereas with both rank-and-files we have very much in common. We are grateful for the help that Cathal Goulding, the chief of staff of the official IRA, sent in relation to Frank Keane's case. But we condemn unequivocally their actions in issuing disclaimers and thereby helping the

police to finger our organisation for the Arran Quay robbery.

The issue of these disclaimers met with hostility within both organisations and shows the support we were able to command among the rank-and-file.

—What is your attitude to the attempts of sections of the Irish left to win over the Protestant workers in the North? And what is your policy in relation to the Protestants?

While recognising that the unity of Protestant and Catholic workers is essential in the interests of the Irish Revolution, we do not believe in the present situation that it is correct to hold off or to disclaim any militant action by the Catholic working class for fear of alienating the Protestants. We do not believe in pandering to the backwardness of the Irish Protestants. Rather we think the situation in Northern Ireland today has a lot in common with the struggle of the black working class against fascism and racism in the United States.

It must be understood in talk of Catholic-Protestant unity, there are two strands at work. One section has been epitomised by the Coopers and Humes, who will use this fear of alienating the Protestant working class as an excuse for holding back on any revolutionary action.

On the other hand there have been organisations such as PD in its early stages who, for lack of understanding of the Irish national question, placed too much emphasis on this aspect of the struggle, and thereby fell into a Walkerite position. While we believe in the necessity of Catholic-Protestant unity and while recognising that much of the Progressive movement in Ireland through the years has been made up of sections and members of the Protestant working class, we do not believe in this present epoch and in the present course of events that there can be a breakdown in this pro-imperialist consciousness of the Protestant working class.

—What is your viewpoint in the discussion on the Irish left about the resumption of civil rights demonstrations?

We accept the need to keep up the pressure on imperialism and on the puppet regime in the Six Counties, but we do not believe that solely a resumption of civil rights marches is the most effective way to aid the struggle. While disagreeing with the arguments of some sections of the Northern left that the creation of more factories means less violence, we recognise that unless the civil rights marches are accompanied by a greater revolutionary political awareness of the necessity to take this form of protest to a higher stage of development, it will shortly lead to disillusionment among the Catholic sector of the population. We recognise that civil rights can never be obtained within the present framework of the Northern state since this state itself is based upon the very denial of these rights to a substantial minority of the population. Unless it is coupled to an all-Ireland revolutionary struggle against capitalism and imperialism, the civil rights struggle can never be successful.

—What is the attitude of Saor Eire to the struggle for Gaelic culture and the language question in Ireland?

Imperialism exploits not only politically and economically but also culturally. This is evident in Ireland where British imperialism over the centuries attempted to smash the Irish language and Irish culture. We do not agree with the present methods adopted by the Fianna Fail government and its front organisations such as Conradh na Gaelge which, under the guise of attempting to preserve the language and our culture, are in actual fact condemning them to death. Fianna Fail have adopted the guise of protector of the language as a cover-up for their sell-out to British imperialism.

We recognise that we can never hope to revive Irish as a spoken language within the framework

of capitalism—it involves the fight for a workers' republic. Thus, it becomes a revolutionary slogan, just as the creation of the Gaelic League in the 1900s gave birth to the Irish Volunteers and to the Irish War of Independence. Undoubtedly, this is in the mind of Fianna Fail and the other reactionary forces. They are afraid of any form of political awareness growing out of a cultural reawakening. As the Gaeltacht, the Irish-speaking areas, becomes more economically depressed, the attitude of Fianna Fail towards the cultural question and their attempt to fossilise the thing as some form of a tourist attraction rather than as a living cultural force within the country, is exposed.

—What is your attitude toward Fianna Fail reintroducing the Offences against the State Act?

This basically just legalises the position that has existed for us for some time. While we condemn most vehemently this piece of legislation, we welcome it to a certain extent; inasmuch as it strips the Fianna Fail government of any liberal and pro-Republican facade.

Although the government is using our past actions and fear of our future activities as a reason for opening their concentration camps, we do not believe that it will just be used against our activists and sympathisers. Rather, this is an outright assault on all progressive forces. Undoubtedly, we will be the first people to end up in these camps (if we're lucky, that is, as already we have been sentenced to death unofficially by certain members of the Special Branch, notably one Sgt. Johny Walker, a prominent Special Branch harrier in Dublin, who says that he would rather shoot the lot us than ever try and arrest us). The government fears that our activities may lead to a new resurgence of militancy within the Republican movement and new concepts of action directed against the so-called Free State. This means that this act will be used against people at all levels of the Republican movement. This act will also be used, not only against Republicans, but against anyone who speaks out against the regime, against any progressive group, any trade union leaders, any unofficial strikers, in fact against anyone who opposes Fianna Fail or they consider dangerous enough.

Fianna Fail's information about so-called kidnappings and bank robberies is spurious—it is supposed to be based on information from an informer in Dublin. The Special Branch could not infiltrate our organisation; they were forced to invent an informer and to invent this information which has provoked the threats of internment.

—What do you think revolutionaries in Britain should be doing in solidarity with the Irish struggle?

This depends, I think, basically on the stage of development of the struggle in Ireland. At present undoubtedly the greatest asset they can give is political solidarity: bringing the question to the British working class, explaining the problem, explaining its relationship to them, how it affects them, how they fight the same enemy—imperialism and capitalism—how in actual fact they are comrades in the same struggle. We believe in the old Marxian concept that a nation who oppresses another nation can never itself be free. It is very important that the British left stress this point and impress this point upon the British working class. As the struggle develops, I think that this solidarity should take a more positive physical form by sending if possible arms, equipment, medical supplies, etc. to the comrades in Ireland.

As regards the Irish section of the population in Britain, it is very important that they should be organised, and this falls within the scope of the British left, since there is no Irish organisation which can do this. We welcome and support the creation of the Irish Solidarity Campaign in Britain as a way of mobilising the Irish workers as a step to getting through to the British working class.

741 05LAI5 NA héIREANN—Irish Volunteers
"B" COY., 10th BATTN., GALWAY REGIMENT.

DRAWING OF PRIZES (in aid of Equipment Fund)

At HEADQUARTERS, BALLYCANALAN, CORT, Co. GALWAY,
On FRIDAY, 17th MARCH, 1916, at 7 o'clock p.m.

1st Prize—A MAGAZINE RIFLE

SECOND PRIZE—
A HARRINGTON & R. REVOLVER,
.22 Cal., nickelled 3-inch barrel.

THIRD PRIZE—
A BEAUTIFUL PIKE HEAD,
of the best Kt-steeel, nicely finished.

Ticket - Sixpence Each.

Winning numbers will be published in the "Irish Volunteer" of March 20th, 1916.

a tupamaros manifesto

The manifesto of the Tupamaros which we print below was read out in the Uruguayan parliament by Senator Zelmar Michelini. The latter stressed in his own remarks that he was totally opposed to the methods (i.e. violence) of the Tupamaros, though he shared some of their aims. *The Red Mole* does not share the Senator's qualms regarding armed struggle and in printing this document reaffirms its solidarity with the comrades of Tupamaros. A more detailed analysis of the politico-economic situation in Uruguay and the effect of the Tupamaros will be appearing in the next number of *International*, the bi-monthly theoretical journal of the International Marxist Group, British section of the Fourth International.

Everyone knows of the exchange proposal we made to the Government. Everyone also knows of the Government's irresponsible reply.

While the Government was telling the people that "it was not prepared to negotiate with criminals", it was secretly initiating negotiations with us; at one time it would not agree to our terms, at another it would abandon them mid-stream.

The people were not informed, for example, that just before the deadline ran out, the chief of police, Colonel Rivero, prevented the judge, Dr. Diaz Romeu, from suggesting to a mediating committee that the deadline be extended by 72 hours in order to continue negotiations over Mitrione and Diaz Gomide.

Nor were the people told that high-ranking police officers with the Minister of Culture had intervened in the Punta Carretas negotiations, when the Government accepted a proposal that kidnapped foreign officials should be exchanged for student prisoners, the others brought to trial, and a manifesto published.

The lives and personal safety of our prisoners have been jeopardised, not in defence of any high principle, as has been alleged, but as the result of an infamous and wretched piece of haggling. This then was the so-called "principled" conduct, and this the people were not told.

In the meantime, they launched an unprecedented campaign of repression against our organisation and the people as a whole; they put the country on a war footing, brought troops into the streets, breaking into thousands of homes at all times of day and night, invading hospitals, schools and colleges, sports clubs, and churches. They suppressed—this time formally—the few individual guarantees still left to us; they arrested and humiliated thousands of citizens; they closed down the secondary schools; they clamoured (in the most high-flown language) for the use of torture. Selling information has been made official, and millions of "pesos", which the workers have systematically been denied, have been paid to the stool-pigeons. Through the press an unprecedented smear campaign and reign of terror have been unleashed. They have turned heaven and earth upside-down.

This is not the first time they have attacked the people and their organisations. They have been doing it for nearly three years. During this time they have closed down daily newspapers, dissolved political parties, forced down the workers' wages, held thousands of Uruguayans in prisons or barracks, and beaten up and assassinated students and workers in the most cowardly manner, establishing torture as a normal and regular procedure, as parliament itself has been able to verify. They have censored daily newspapers, broadcasts and passages quoted from Artigas*; they have forbidden the use of certain words and songs; they have interfered in education and every aspect of culture. They have parliament, the

constitution and individual and collective rights under their thumb; like traitors, they have sold the country to foreign interests, closed down unions, and prohibited de facto any union activity, etc.

All this, of course, has been perpetrated in the name and defence of a social order and way of life. The order of this minority which has taken possession of our country and is exploiting the mass of the population is the order of unproductive latifundo which condemns the rural peasants and the small producers to remain on the borders of poverty. It is the order of the great banking octopi with their financiers and administrators, police chiefs and the poncing thieving politicians; the order of unemployment and luxury dwellings; the order of the youth denied any goal, forced into delinquency or emigration, and wining and dining in Punta del Este**. It is the order which tosses old people and pensioners into poverty and oblivion, where the poor die in hospital of starvation just as in the Colonia Etchebarre; the order of the Uruguayans with no roof over their head, no culture, no salvation, no work; the order, in short, of a minority which grows rich at the expense of the suffering of a great majority.

It is against this social order and this life-style that we rise up in rebellion; and our rebellion cannot be stifled by raids, nor by truth drugs, nor by informers however highly paid.

Gentlemen of the Government: once again you have made a mistake; once again you have been irresponsible.

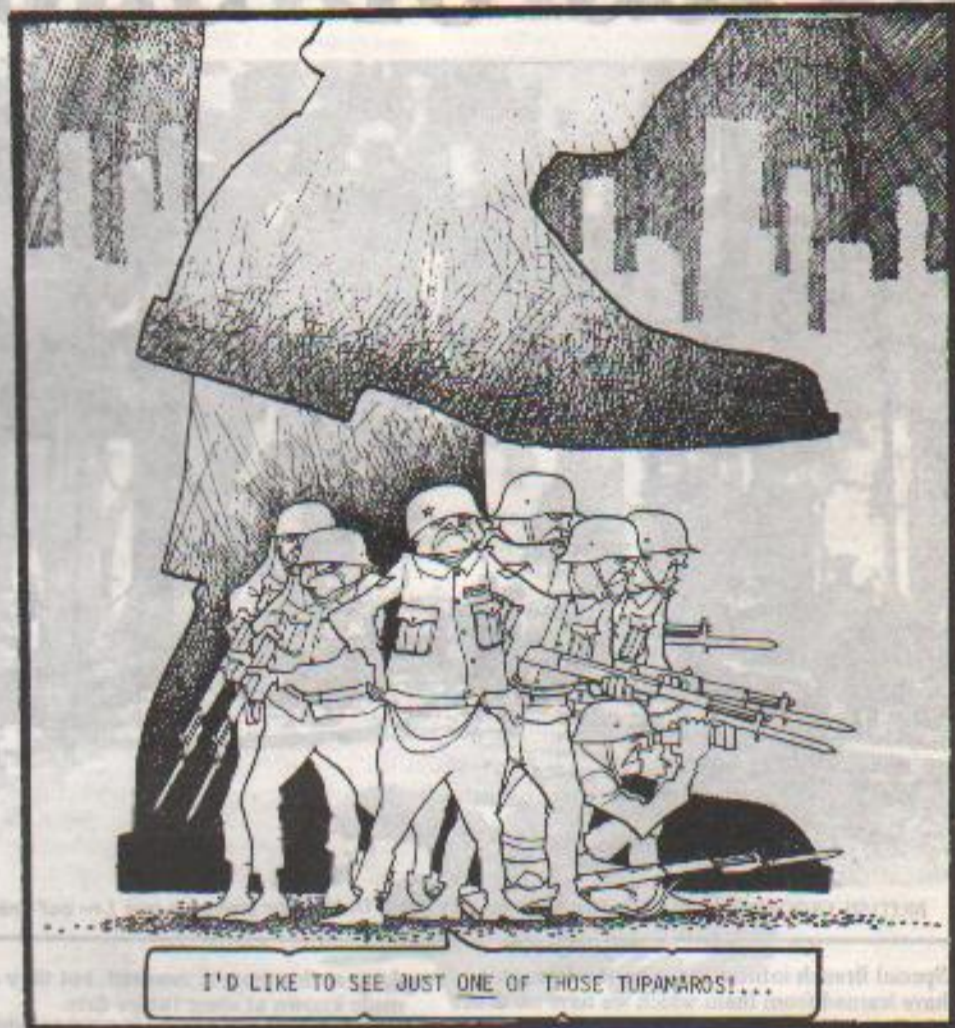
The present-day situation in this country demands political, economic, and social solutions. Repression is no answer. We hope that now, having mobilised all your available forces against us, and having utilised every imaginable police method, you have understood once and for all that the National Liberation Movement is not a gang of criminals. The NLM is nothing other than the armed political organisation of the students, the workers, the employees, the rural wage-earners, the intellectuals and the unemployed; in short, of all those social sectors which are exploited and discarded by your order of injustice.

It is from these sectors that we draw our militants. In these sectors we organise and have our base. And it is in defence of the interests of these sectors that we struggle.

There is no need for you to look beyond this country for explanations to define and classify us. Our struggle is the natural and logical continuation of the struggle of our most worthy predecessors, and we use the means most suited to the historical moment in which we live.

Our fate lies in the barrels of our clandestine guns just as yesterday it lay on the points of the lances we fought with in the hills, but with this difference: yesterday our victories were taken from us, today this can no longer be done. For today is clearly and definitively against you. Now it is a matter of the dispossessed masses consciously entering history in order to forge their own destiny.

And our programme comes from these sectors and this historical tradition. We believe that this country's problems will be solved when the land is at the service of society as a whole and not of a handful of privileged people; when we produce the wealth that should be produced and use it to serve the people's needs; when the land is and remains, as Artigas wanted more than 150 years ago, at the service of the most wretched; when monopoly capital of the banks, industry and commerce has been eradicated, and when these three key sectors of the national economy are at the service of the workers and



the people as a whole; when those contemptible strings tying us to foreign exploitation have been cut and we develop a patriotic and truly independent foreign policy; when the right of every person to a roof, to good health, to work and to a culture is realised—a right that at present exists only in theory but which could become a reality when the riches which today are channelled abroad, into luxuries, speculation and unproductive activities, are returned to the people; when all the money gained fraudulently in big political and economic settlements is returned to the people and the country as a whole, and the ones guilty of these crimes are punished; and when the workers can genuinely fulfil the role which is theirs by right, of determining their own destiny and that of the country.

These are the general lines of our programme. The same things have been demanded for many years by the most representative popular organisations.

Our struggle will not cease until this becomes reality.

In the name of these exploited sectors of society, in the name of our historical traditions and in the name of this programme, we say to you:

We no longer have any respect for your order. We no longer accept our condition as marginal human beings. Now we demand the right to forge our own destiny, and the weapons in our hands guarantee us this right. Some time ago the Uruguayan people decided to begin to respond to the blows that were being dealt. The war of repression will be answered in the only possible way: by our revolutionary war. This is our task.

Lastly, and as a demonstration of our desire to spare the country from suffering which nobody wants, but which we have resolved to undergo—for this we have our reasons, our

arms and our martyrs—we publicly declare that we are ready to discuss a cessation of hostilities for a period of time in order to seek an agreement on the following points:

1. The release of all political prisoners.
2. The restitution to their posts of all those dismissed from their offices and the compensation for all earnings deducted from the workers for trade union sanctions.
3. The elimination of all wage-freeze laws and decrees.
4. The cessation of all acts of intervention, especially those directed against educational institutions.
5. The restitution of all individual and collective rights and guarantees violated by the present government.
6. The elimination of all the reactionary and regressive measures adopted by the present government.

We must say in advance that under no circumstances do we accept any argument regarding our possession of arms and the existence of our organisation, as we consider both to be the only guarantee that the people have in the last instance.

We are therefore taking this initiative publicly. Now it is up to the government; if it accepts we shall negotiate and fulfil our part of the agreements.

If it refuses, it will have chosen war, and in that case: "IF YOUR HOMELAND CANNOT BE FOR EVERYBODY, THEN IT WILL BE FOR NOBODY". This is our battle cry.

This is all.

*Artigas: 1746-1826. Uruguayan hero of the war of independence against Spain.

**Punta del Este: International summer resort for the rich—Uruguay's equivalent of Cannes.

Austria collaborates with Persian gestapo

On the morning of Wednesday 9th December some 40 Persian students from various universities in Austria occupied their embassy here in Vienna. The action was in protest against the recent kidnapping in Teheran of a Persian student, Rezaei, who had travelled to Iran as an interpreter for Amnesty International in the company of a German lawyer, Dr. Heldmann. They were to investigate prison conditions and supposedly had the protection of international law.

While studying in Germany and Austria Rezaei had been active with the "Confederation Iranischer Studenten" and had agitated against the regime of the Shah. He was kidnapped by the SAVAC (the Persian Secret Police). He is

tortured in prison and along with 13 others may well be executed.

The occupation of the embassy lasted two hours. The students barricaded themselves in and when the police arrived they arrested all 40 with great brutality. As they left the building each prisoner was photographed by a member of SAVAC.

The SAVAC has been active for some time in Vienna. For instance, two years ago during the annual visit of the Shah there were massive demonstrations. The SAVAC attempted to kidnap three Persian students outside the university. They were thwarted only after bitter street fighting. One SAVAC and one student were arrested. The public scandal lasted 9 days.

The 40 demonstrators are still held by the police. Their fate is as yet uncertain. No guarantee has been given against extradition... torture... death.

In the afternoon 40 other Persian students began a hunger strike to draw attention to the plight of their comrades. As part of the agitation in their support we are organising tomorrow (December 11th) a demonstration against the Iranian Embassy and the Police Headquarters. The whole Austrian left is being mobilised.

We are writing primarily as a plea for solidarity. We ask you, as soon as possible, to organise demonstrations against the Austrian and Iranian Embassies; to publish articles about Persian fascism and its activities in Europe; and generally to use all the means available to pressurise the

Austrian Government about its collaboration with the Persian Gestapo.

The prisoners must be freed. You can send telegrams of protest to:

Der Osterreichische Bundeskanzler Bruno Kreisky, Bundeskanzleramt, 1010 Wien, Ballhausplatz 2,

and telegrams of solidarity to:

Die Iranische Studenten, c/o VSSSTO, 1010 Wien, Werdertorgasse 64.

Rot Front! SPARTAKUS—Vienna, c/o Jakob Mytteis, Theobaldgasse 15/5, A—1060 Vienna. Telephone: 0222/57 59 342.

POLAND

When Gomulka first became secretary of the Polish C.P., he said that the revolt of the Polish workers symbolised, of course, at Poznan, had been justified and that the men against whom they had revolted would have to go. It has taken him fourteen years to grasp the profundity of his statement.

Carried to power by a mass movement unparalleled in breadth, Gomulka pledged that socialist democracy which had been liquidated in previous years would be reestablished. A year later in 1957, the army and police crushed workers' strikes and the best elements in the Party who had supported the 1956 movement for workers' councils were purged. In 1965 the communist militants Kuron and Modzelewski were imprisoned. In 1968 a savage repression was meted out to the militant students who were struggling for socialist democracy. In the end the army had to massacre unarmed workers for Gomulka himself to be kicked out of power. The least one can say is that workers democracy has clearly not been established!

Economic Failures/Decrease in Living Standards

Gomulka had also promised that the economic growth of the country had to be increased in order to improve the living standards of the Polish people. In the economic field as well, the record has been one of complete failure. The productivity of labour is still low and there is a criminal waste of the economic surpluses. From 1961-63 the Polish economy lost 21 million zlotys, something had not been foreseen in the plan. The objectives of the 1961-66 Five Year Plan were only partially realised: 57% for new products, 44% for mechanisation and 29% for automatisation. During the 1966-71 Five Year Plan the investment did not keep pace with population growth. This meant numerous redundancies to be able to find a place for young people newly arrived on the labour market. The prices of foodstuffs where there are grave shortages rise at regular intervals. The economic and political balance sheet of Gomulka is a complete failure. Will Gierek do any better? At first sight it seems that history is repeating itself but only at first sight: after the experience of 14 years "Gomulkaism" the working class seems to greet the departure of Gomulka with the same indifference as the arrival of Gierek.

Reformers...

Without going into details about the way these gentlemen are thinking we can say with certainty that the whole Polish bureaucracy is united in thinking that reforms are necessary. It must carry out the reforms to preserve its power and privileges: if it does not ameliorate the situation it runs the risk of being swept away by popular discontent. On the other hand the experience of reforms carried out to date shows that while they are conducted by the bureaucracy in its own interest, they nevertheless engender an anti-bureaucratic dynamic. Here are two examples:

1. To carry out reform properly some discussion has to be allowed on the problems of the economy as a whole. It's very difficult to prevent this discussion spilling over into other aspects of social life. The resultant politicisation can shake the bureaucratic monolithism, since it encourages the masses, particularly the worker masses, to take an interest in their own problems. Furthermore, in specific conditions, such a liberalisation can immediately put in process a widespread critique of the bureaucratic system, as was the case in Czechoslovakia.
2. In every country of the Eastern bloc, central planning has permitted the development—by a conscious break with the laws of the market—of sectors which would not have stood any chance of development if capitalism had been maintained in these backward countries; in the Popular Democracies these sectors have been considered social priorities: in addition to heavy industry, which is well known, among others accommodation, transport, practically free health service, free education open to all... We should remember too that the system guaranteed to the



worker wage stability (it's true that this means nominal and not real wage stability) and security of employment. The reforms by introducing the criteria of "profitability" (enterprises will be judged on the difference realised between cost and sale price) bring about a tendency for the destruction of these conquests. If an enterprise maintains a crèche for workers' children, it will tend to lead to the abolition of this as an unproductive expense. Job and wage security is similarly menaced: every time that the revenue of the enterprise is lowered, decreased salaries or unemployment will result. A number of non-profitable enterprises close down, and unemployment reappears. All these phenomena already exist at this time in Yugoslavia.

Many similar examples can be quoted (for instance the extraordinary increase of rents) but what one must understand is that the working class will fight back against every attack on their social conquests. This fight has already been started in Yugoslavia where the increase in strikes has been phenomenal.

... Who Are Not Necessarily Liberals

Although the new Government team in Poland promises to make reforms just as in the case of Czechoslovakia, it is important not to argue by analogy. In Czechoslovakia just the same the whole of the bureaucracy agreed that reforms were necessary. In practice, however, a section of the bureaucracy (the "conservatives") sabotaged the day-to-day application of these reforms. It was this section of the bureaucracy which was most intimately bound up with the Novotny regime. The section of the bureaucracy which wanted to put the reforms into practice (the "liberals") was then forced to allow a political critique of the Novotny period and to place heavy reliance on a mobilisation of the masses to chase the conservatives out of office. The liberals opened the road to reform by a kind of retarded version of the 20th Congress. We already know how this process drew the Czech masses into political action forcing the Kremlin bureaucracy to intervene in the name of the international interests of the bureaucracy. Again we come across the limits of the reforms which we mentioned earlier.

What is peculiar to the Polish situation is that the Polish leaders have already gone through their national experience of the 20th Congress (the movement of '56) and of the accompanying dynamic (the organisation of the workers in soviets, formation of a workers' militia, the weakening of the bureaucratic monolith). It seems that compared with elsewhere the Polish leaders cherish fewer illusions about the "internationalism" of their Soviet brothers—they know very well that if they lose control of the situation they will very quickly be persuaded to ask for the aid of their sister armies.

So if two distinct groups within the governing team can be distinguished, they do not conform to the liberal-conservative dichotomy. To give a brief characterisation, we have:

The Technocrats—the technicians of the economy with the responsibility for working out the organisation of the reforms and applying them. The technocrats are grouped around the new first secretary Gierek.

The "Partisans"—the group which controls the leadership of the militia, political police and army, in short the whole of the repressive

apparatus grouped around the former minister of the interior, the sinister General Moczar. Among this group not infrequently "comrades" can be found who are motivated by purely nationalist ideologies, anti-intellectualism and anti-semitism.

We're not going to delve into the personal ambitions of members of the two sections—let's simply note that each seems to need the other. No power can maintain itself by brute force alone, so the "Partisans" need the technocratic personnel to realise reform. At the same time, the technocrats need the "Partisans" since they need a strong police force and army to suppress any mobilisation of the working class against the attacks on their standard of living.* Another factor specific to the "Polish road" at the present time is the strictly economic level of the last struggles. It's thus different from the Czech movement in 1968 and even from the 1956 Polish events. Undoubtedly this lack of a political perspective has enabled the bureaucracy to limit the movement more easily. The roots of this lack can be found in the check of the movement in 1956: the Polish working class will not readily involve itself in new "political" struggles without having a guarantee that they will not be exploited by a section of the bureaucracy which wishes to take power for itself. This question poses the whole problem of the organisation of the Polish proletariat on an independent programme.

It's too soon to say precisely how long lasting the new regime will be. But one can say straight away that the contradictions caused by the bureaucratic framework of the reform will not be long before they break to the surface in a fresh outburst. The most probable hypothesis in the light of what has been described here is that it won't be liberalisation which will be the fundamental factor in the resumption of the struggle.

Ingoing onto the streets of Gdansk and Szczecin the Polish workers have affirmed their determination not to leave the question of their living standards to the mercy of the bureaucrats who are conscious at most of the increase in price of French Cognac (one-third of a worker's wages). There will not be any solution to the economic problem of the popular democracies

dictatorship.

The Fourth International expresses total solidarity with the Polish workers, students and intellectuals struggling for the anti-bureaucratic political revolution which will consolidate the foundations of socialism in Poland, foundations which are being undermined more and more by the bureaucracy.

We denounce the vicious repression against the workers and the bankruptcy of a regime which dares call itself "communist" and which opens fire on strikers and on worker and student demonstrators and in this way gives the best possible help to the assassin Franco, who can now cover his own crimes by those of the Polish bureaucracy.

We call upon all communist militants to

Gomulka's removal will not solve the bureaucracy's problems



TANKS IN POZNAN, 1956: GOMULKA RISES TO POWER AND PLEDGES REFORM

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as long as decisions are not taken democratically by the whole of society. The restarting of the economy, the liberation of all the potentialities of the economic system first of all demand the democratisation of political and social life, the taking of decisions by the working class, the abolition of bureaucratic privileges and the state apparatus which defends them. The bureaucracy remains trapped in a contradiction; if it does not carry out reforms, it will be swept away by a revolution; if it reforms and at the same time attempts to preserve its privileges, it will sooner or later provoke an anti-bureaucratic movement. The bureaucrats in every country will sooner or later learn at their expense that there is no path to economic reform that does not involve political revolution.

—In Poland, as in the other Popular Democracies, political revolution is inevitable.

*If there were "liberals" among the technocrats who disliked the alliance with the Partisans, the Gdansk events have probably convinced them to pass over these considerations.



TANKS IN GDANSK, 1970: GOMULKA FALLS, BUT THE BATTLE IS ONLY JUST BEGINNING.

Statement issued by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

The Polish workers who have been on strike in the shipyards against the speed-up, sackings and increase in food prices have been victims of brutal repression by the bureaucracy which felt itself at bay. Forgetting the solemn promises of the 9th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Polish C.P. of November 1965, which proclaimed the right to strike and rejected the slanders according to which "hooligans" were responsible for "interruptions of work" and "disturbances", the bureaucracy now labels the Polish workers in precisely those terms which it refuted.

Because of this, it implicitly recognises that its own reactionary threat of 1965

to the democracy of workers councils, in the USSR and in Eastern Europe. This is the only way of overcoming and transcending the terrible disgrace that Stalin and his successors have inflicted on the name of communism.

We call upon all revolutionary militants to demonstrate everywhere in the world, their solidarity with the Polish workers in their struggle, without in any way confusing their banners with those of the anti-communist capitalists and without making any concessions to those who conceal and justify aggression against the Vietnamese people and the repression against other victims of imperialism.

PAKISTAN

After the December election, what next?

For the feudal landlords, the big bourgeoisie and the Pakistan Army, the result of the December 7th General Election is a much bigger shock than the aftermath of the cyclone which left nearly a million dead Bengali bodies in its wake. It was widely expected that Sheikh Mujibur Rehman and his Awami League would win an overwhelming majority in East Pakistan.

In the circumstances the Awami League has won virtually every seat in the East which gives it an overall majority in the new Constituent Assembly. However, what must have come as an even graver surprise to the ruling class is the election results in West Pakistan, where Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's P.P.P. (People's Party of Pakistan) won an overwhelming majority and has virtually destroyed the Muslim League (the party which established Pakistan) as a political force in West Pakistan. The General Election result therefore represents a crushing defeat for the reactionaries in West Pakistan and a tremendous victory for Bengali nationalism in East Pakistan. But while there is no doubt in any one's mind that the masses overwhelmingly rejected the reactionaries, at the same time no socialist can afford to have any illusions regarding either the Awami League or the P.P.P. They are both thoroughly bourgeois parties and will be unable to implement even the most modest reform as promised in their pre-election rhetoric.

Mujibur Rehman—The Paper-Tiger of Bengal

The rise of the Awami League is undoubtedly due to the inability of the left to understand the importance of the national question in Bengal. By the time the leftists had begun to come to grips with the fact that East Pakistan was a neo-colony of the Western part of the country, they were a bit too late. Mujib had already spent some time in prison because of his agitation on this precise question. The 6-point charter of demands on which he has been campaigning represents the programme of the Bengal bourgeoisie and as such visualises the Central Government dealing only with Defence and Foreign Affairs. It demands "two separate but freely convertible currencies for the two parts of the country", the right of the provinces to taxation and revenue collection, the separate accounting of foreign exchange earnings for the two different parts of the country and the setting up of a militia or paramilitary force for East Pakistan. What Mujibur Rehman is demanding on behalf of the aspirant bourgeoisie of East Bengal is an equal share of the capitalist cake.

Will the Pakistan Army and the capitalist barons of West Pakistan allow these demands to go through? The answer is quite clearly no. What will probably happen is that in the short-term Mujibur Rehman will be allowed to increase East Pakistan's percentage of import and export licences and will be allocated a larger share of foreign capital investment. These are the "concessions" which the Army will be prepared to make in the coming few months. If Rehman accepts them, he will be allowed to stay in power. If not, it will be back to business as

usual in the shape of the Army. Of course there is no doubt that in the event of another military coup there will be no holding back the immense grievances of Bengal and the desire for an independent Bengal will increase a hundred-fold. What follows will depend on whether Bengali revolutionaries succeed in building a revolutionary organisation to pose the question of state power. If the political leadership remains in the hands of the Awami League, the result will be yet another betrayal. The Awami League's leader is guided first by the global interests of American imperialism and secondly by the urge to replace West Pakistani capitalists by Bengali capitalists. And a change in oppressors is not exactly what East Pakistan needs at this particular moment.

While the Awami League's victory represents a slap on the face of the ruling class by the Bengali masses, the latter will discover that a) one slap alone is not sufficient and b) they will have to kick the Awami League as well. The new period which is unfolding in Pakistan today could be the most vital period in its history and in this history the role of Bengal is pivotal. An independent socialist Bengal recognised by China could be the spark which could set alight the whole Indian sub-continent and pave the way to a period of protracted and uneven struggles throughout South Asia. This process the United States will try and prevent from the very beginning. They will try and ensure a period of elected government in Pakistan to try and stem the tide. They will even try and press the Pakistan Army to make concessions to the Bengali bourgeoisie, but they will not succeed. They will not be able to interrupt the march of history.

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto—Whose Grave Will He Really Dig?

The total lack of a viable leftist opposition to the Ayub regime and the inability of both the pro-Peking and the pro-Moscow factions of the National Awami Party to oppose the dictatorship, was one of the main reasons for the meteoric rise of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as an oppositionist. For seven years he had served Ayub faithfully and the fact that he could emerge as the strongest oppositionist in West Pakistan despite being tainted with his service to Ayub shows clearly the bankruptcy of the traditional left parties.

The victory of Bhutto's People's Party is in reality a sign of the fact that the masses in West Pakistan are determined not to go on living in the same old way as before. In his rhetoric Bhutto offered them a new deal. He promised an end to oppression, poverty and misery. He even talked in vague terms of land reform, of social equality, etc. etc. His "left" face, his "left" voice swept him to power in the cities of West Pakistan and in doing so smashed into smithereens the right-wing and semi-fascist parties which with their talk of Islam and their acts of terrorism had petrified a section of the left into virtual impotence.

But West Pakistan is not only changing in the cities. In the countryside too there is a feeling of change in the air. That is one of the reasons why many landlords hitched their star firmly to the Bhutto bandwagon and have now been elected



General YAHYA KHAN: The election result represents a big defeat for him and the Army. The question is how long will he let the politicians stay in power.

to the Constituent Assembly. The leftists inside Bhutto's party are now coming forward and beginning to make serious allegations of treachery and betrayal in semi-public. Evidently a large number of socialists belonging to the P.P.P. were encouraged by Bhutto to court arrest by openly attacking the military dictatorship of Yahya Khan. He assured them that he would get them out before the General Election. Soon after they were arrested, Bhutto made pacts with leading landlords and distributed the seats accordingly. It is acts like this which cause many militants to remark that Bhutto is a gravedigger of socialism rather than feudalism. Only recently Bhutto proudly boasted to a *Times* correspondent that his victory had "saved Pakistan from Communism."

The change in the countryside is reflected by the fact that in North West Pakistan, near the city of Mardan in Northern Hasht Nagar, the peasants have been engaged in armed conflict with the landlords. The peasants have resisted all attempts to evict them and have had to face Sten guns and light machine-guns of the landlords. In some battles they have routed the police on several occasions and have suffered some casualties themselves. Over a hundred peasants have been arrested. What is interesting is that one of the landlords, Nisar Ahmed Khan, is a leading light of Mr. Bhutto's P.P.P. Small wonder then that the P.P.P. newspaper *Musseawat* has ignored the Hasht Nagar battles completely as has a bulk of both the government and the opposition press. Only *Sanobar*, the

organ of the militant Kissan Mazdoor Party (i.e. Worker-Peasant Party) has published detailed reports.

Two, Three, Many Hasht Nagars

Episodes such as Hasht Nagar are likely to multiply in the near future as the more "advanced" landlords are today attempting to "modernise" their part of the countryside by evicting the peasant proprietors and replacing them with tractors and agricultural labourers. The next period is therefore going to see an intensification of struggles in the countryside against the landlords. No matter what political party the latter aligned themselves with, their end is not far off.

While Bhutto and Sheikh Mujibur Rehman celebrate their pyrrhic victories they prefer to forget that there are many working-class militants in prison in both East and West Pakistan. Raja Anwar in West Pakistan and Mahbubullah in East Pakistan, who have only recently been released (i.e. after the election), understand better than most the real meaning of the General Election. The trade union leaders who are in prison for leading strikes will no doubt be better prepared to struggle against the capitalist class with added fervour once they are released. We will see whether or not the new government releases the political prisoners, guarantees trade union freedoms, allows the establishment of a Communist Party, removes the curbs on the Press and takes out of the statute book all the repressive regulations which have existed since the days of British imperialism and which have been improved by the Pakistan Army.

The new constituent assembly has been given 120 days to frame a new constitution. But it has to be approved by General Yahya Khan before it is allowed to operate and if it is against "the interests or the ideology of Pakistan" then, of course, the General can refuse to approve the new Constitution, dissolve the Assembly and call a new General Election. With Mujibur Rehman having won a complete majority of the seats, it is clear that he will try to reach some sort of an "understanding" with Yahya Khan and maybe even with Bhutto. This "understanding" whatever it is will sound the death-knell of any hopes the Bengali masses may have placed in their leader.

The General Election has shown quite unambiguously that the objective conditions in both parts of Pakistan are rotten ripe for socialism. The task of creating the necessary subjective factor—a revolutionary party of the urban and rural proletariat—confronts the socialist left as a stark necessity. Unless the revolutionary left wakes up to this task it will find that well-organised fascist parties, like the Jamaat-i-Islami, will move in with a distorted populist rhetoric and it is possible that in the absence of a left alternative they could pose themselves as a credible force. If the United States decide to pressurise the Army to allow a period of bourgeois democratic government (in order to try and delay a mobilisation of the masses) then clearly this period should be utilised to try and create the necessary subjective conditions—a revolutionary force with its roots in the urban and rural proletariat.

Tariq Ali

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THE MAN WHO WILL NEVER BUY A RED BOOK

USA : Lessons of the General Motors strike

"What's good for General Motors is good for the nation."
(Charles E. Wilson, director of General Motors, Defence Minister in Eisenhower's administration, 1953.)

The strike by the American workers of General Motors finished some weeks ago. The workers of the biggest automobile giant have been on strike since mid-September. Right from the start every prediction was that it would be a long strike. It lasted two months; 59 days to be more exact.

1. The outcome of the negotiation approved by the delegates

The strike ended through the acceptance by the G.M. workers' delegates of an outline agreement which must be concretised in a new agreement jointly agreed upon for three years.

The negotiations had been conducted by the G.M. management and the team of negotiators appointed for G.M. by the United Automobile Workers Union. The draft was approved unanimously by the executive committee of the UAW and the negotiating team.

Meanwhile the UAW President Leonard Woodcock took the precaution of saying while addressing 350 members of the G.M. Union Council: "I want to tell you that I'm not satisfied with this compromise", at the same time adding "But there are times in the course of the struggle when the gains made must be weighed against the hardships inflicted on the front line troops." The G.M. Union Council of the Car Union then approved the draft agreement which had been adopted by a majority of four out of every five delegates on the 12th November last.

2. The content of the agreement

The content of the agreement has been described as "the most expensive settlement that an American company has ever had to bear".

Very briefly, the conditions agreed on are as follows:

1. An increase in wages, which will be 51 cents (approximately 4s 3d) an hour—a minimum of 49 cents and a maximum of 61 cents. The average hourly wage at G.M. is 4.02 dollars (£1 13s 6d). The increase is therefore 12.5%. In addition to this immediate rise, there will be an increase of 14 cents during the second and third years.

2. An increase in the retirement pension: the agreement stipulates that the retirement pension will be granted at the age of 58 during the second year of the agreement's validity and from 56 for the third for workers who have completed 30 years' service in the enterprise. The pension will be 500 dollars (£210+) a month. Under the old agreement the monthly pension was only 104.22 dollars for a worker who retired at 55 and 165 dollars at 65 under the same circumstances.

3. The restoration of the sliding scale. A "cost of living" escalator has been introduced into the agreement, that is a sliding scale without limit. From now on wages will be automatically linked to the consumption goods price index and will undergo quarterly adjustments in accordance with that index's fluctuation. Remember that the sliding scale had been won in 1948 but that the introduction of a ceiling to these increases in 1967 had strongly curbed the buying power of the General Motors workers.

3. Assessment of the agreement: varying opinions

A leading union militant has stated that the new agreement would by the end of three months increase wages and social benefits by 1.80 dollars per hour on average. An employer's delegate declared that the agreement provided for increases "substantially larger than the predicted growth in productivity" and has described the agreement as "inflationary". The bosses of other sectors fear that the G.M. agreement is "a dangerous precedent" and are not prepared this time to share the opinion of an ex-G.M. director that "What's good for General Motors is good for the nation". The New York Stock Exchange has given the agreement a rather cool welcome. Some estimates put the financial cost resulting from the agreement at about 2 million dollars for the three years of its validity.

Meanwhile this has not prevented Henry Ford II from saying that Ford will follow this move and accept a similar agreement without increasing the price of 1971 models. A strike is not to be expected at Ford's then despite the union's advanced warning which expired on December 7th.

The assessment made by the employers then is not so unanimous as it might seem at first sight. On the other hand we must take careful

note of the opposition of a fifth of the Union's delegates to the agreement.

4. Some comparisons

These differences can only be understood if the outcome of the agreement is compared with the initial demands.

1. Original Demand: 61.5 cents (first year) + 30 (second year) + 30 (third year). Total: 1 dollar, 21.5 cents an hour.

2. Employers' original offer: 30 cents (first year) + 12 cents (second year) + 12 cents (third year). Total: 54 cents.

3. Agreement: 51 cents (first year) + 14 cents (second year) + 14 cents (third year). Total: 79 cents.

The final agreement seems to be a compromise between the two proposals. At the end of three years it provides however for an increase which is nearer to that proposed by the employers. But as far as the first stage is concerned, the agreement seems nearer the union's demand.

We are careful to say "seems nearer". For the union's demand was calculated in such a manner as to compensate for the loss of 26 cents an hour (14 cents in Canada) through the application of the ceiling on the sliding scale. If these 26 cents are deducted, only 25 cents increase in hourly wages is left, which is not such a very large rise. This somewhat qualified then the victory gained with regard to the sliding scale...

As for pensions the UAW demanded a pension of 500 dollars after 30 years' service without an age limit (a worker joining G.M. at 20 could retire at 50). The negotiation ended in a compromise: an age limit would be fixed (58 in 1971; 56 in 1972). G.M. has calculated that it can't do without its most experienced workers overnight.

In conclusion

The G.M. workers have fought well. Their two months' strike demonstrates the advantage of having a well-organised union at one's disposal. Remember for example that after the manner of numerous other American unions, the UAW is an "international" union including workers of all the automobile concerns in the USA and Canada. Nevertheless the gains that the workers of G.M. have won have been essentially through their militancy and in spite of a certain number of weaknesses in their union.

The principal weakness has been what has brought about the long duration of the strike and then its ending.

The strike fund of the UAW was in the order of 120 million dollars. This allowed a strike of eight weeks unless support came from elsewhere. That's exactly how long the G.M. strike lasted: eight weeks.

The strategy of the "selective" struggle (choosing one of the three car giants) is the principal strategic weakness of the UAW. The Union leadership has in fact avoided striking simultaneously the three large manufacturers—Ford, G.M. and Chrysler. After having made a show of preparing to strike against G.M. and Chrysler, it abandoned the Chrysler objective supposedly through "a chivalrous spirit". This firm is in fact less competitive than the others and would suffer more than them from a strike.

In addition the abandoning of the other objectives has been accompanied by an important limit to the effectiveness of the struggle against G.M. The G.M. factories which provide parts to other firms have not been affected by the strike: if the other car giants had had to close some divisions through lack of parts provided by G.M., wouldn't this have allowed a greater pressure to be brought to bear on the G.M. negotiators?

The UAW leadership has avoided posing the question in this fashion because of the national repercussions which a strike conceived in these terms would have.

It has similarly avoided posing the question of price and workers' control. G.M. has already made it known that the price of cars would increase because of the increase in wages. In 1946 the Union demanded an increase in wages "without price increases". G.M. then replied that the question of the price was its concern and not the Union's. The UAW then retorted by demanding workers' control over the account books. This was at the time when the influence of the Left was strong in the Union.

The conditions which characterised this period are not joined together today. But little by little they are beginning to fit into place.

There are extremely interesting developments taking place today inside the American workers movement which deserve the attention of all socialists.

G. Desoire



The Fourth International flag which fluttered over Brussels University last November when 3,500 Trotskyist militants met to discuss the struggle for Red Europe. The message below was only one among many the Congress approved. In a subsequent issue we will carry a special supplement on the Fourth International.

GREETINGS TO THE COMMUNIST MILITANTS OF EASTERN EUROPE

The international conference of European revolutionaries, meeting in Brussels on the 21st and 22nd of November 1970, to work out a strategy for the struggle for a Red Europe, sends its warm greetings to the Communist opposition which fights against bureaucracy and for socialist democracy in Eastern Europe.

—to the old Bolshevik, Major-General Grigorenko, imprisoned in a mental hospital for his heroic defence of civil rights in the USSR;

—to the young Leninist, Ivan Jakimovich, incarcerated in the goals of Stalin's successors for having dared to proclaim in the Red Square of Moscow: "Stalinism—No! Leninism—Yes!"

—to the Polish Communists, Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski, who embody the hopes of the Polish October of 1956;

—to comrades Vlado Mijanovic and Bozhar Borjan, leaders of the revolutionary students of Yugoslavia, thrown into prison for having defended the socialist conquests of the Yugoslav workers;

—to the victims of neo-Stalinist repression in

Czechoslovakia, who have fought shoulder to shoulder with the workers and students of the Spring of Prague for a regime based upon the exercise of workers power;

we send our fraternal support.

You are the continuers of Bolshevism and the Left Opposition to Stalinist usurpation. Your struggle and that of your comrades in the labour camps will tomorrow be taken up by millions of workers, students and intellectuals who will rise to smash bureaucracy and re-establish proletarian democracy.

RED STAR OVER SPAIN

BACKGROUND

The fierce repression which has been meted out to the militants of the ETA over several years and which reached its climax with the Burgos trial, reveals better than anything else the burning actuality of the national question in Spain.

1. The roots of this problem are deeply embedded in Spanish history:

The Spanish bourgeoisie, because of its peculiarities and the specificity of the development of capitalism in Spain, proved itself incapable of achieving the tasks of the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Spain at a time when they were being achieved by the other bourgeoisies in Europe.

Faced with the dangers of the young Spanish working class learning and assimilating the lessons of its European comrades, the Spanish bourgeoisie made an alliance with the reactionary layers of the landlords and hid behind a strong dictatorship to ensure its continued domination. It is this historical incapacity of the Spanish bourgeoisie to liberate the peasant masses from the yoke of feudalism, to unify the different nationalities of Spain into one cohesive nation, in short, it is this abortion of the bourgeois democratic revolution which represents the historical roots of the problem of nationalities as it exists in Spain at the present moment.

2. The bloody counter-revolution which put into power the fascist Franco dictatorship has meant a further historical regression in all fields.

In order to reassert capitalist domination throughout Spain, the Franco regime carried out the most ferocious repression against all the differing national characteristics of the population, including imprisonment for those who spoke Catalan or Euskera, and even to the extent of erasing names from streets and funeral stones.

The growing working class movement which was rising with new strength from the ashes of the severe defeat it had suffered found it impossible to get rid of the reformist carcass of its traditional leadership. As a result of this, nationalist organisations such as ETA have been able

to act as the vanguard of the struggle against the Franco dictatorship. The article that we publish below was written after a discussion with some militants of the ETA who recently escaped from Franco's jails.

The Birth of ETA

In 1953 after agreements had been ratified between the Spanish State, the Vatican and United States imperialism, the Basque Nationalist Party virtually ceased all its activities.

It is in 1958 that the ETA appears on the scene. It was founded by young nationalists who had split from the youth organisation of the Basque Nationalist Party (PNB). At this stage the ETA took over the old programme of the PNB, apart from the question of clericalism, and hoped to put into practice some of the concepts on which the PNB leaders had only theorised. The changing international context, particularly in the semi-colonial world such as the victory of the Cuban revolution, the growing Vietnamese revolution, had a big effect on the ETA militants. In a text written in 1963 they reveal their preoccupation with the question of "Armed Insurrection".

In 1967 at its 5th Congress the ETA openly defines itself as a revolutionary socialist organisation, but the orientation still remains vague and confused and the struggle of the Basque proletariat is still conducted within a purely nationalist framework. No links are envisaged with the struggles of the rest of the Spanish proletariat. The documents of the Congress are basically a translation of the Vietnamese experience. The ETA sets the struggle on four fronts:

- workers' front
- military front
- cultural front
- political front

Many ETA militants begin to read Debray's *Revolution in the Revolution* and talk about the setting up of a NLF against the Franco regime. An analogy is made between the Basque people and that of neo-colonised peoples, but in practice the military activity predominates.

The Creation of a Workers' Front

During the winter of 1967 the ETA militants create a larger structure (of course underground)

in order to lead the economic and political struggles in the factories. This structure they call *The Workers' Front*. From the very beginning the ETA militants refuse to allow trade-union bureaucrats of the Spanish C.P. to participate in the front and try to dominate it bureaucratically as they do the Workers' Commissions in certain areas. During the February 1969 strike wave the Workers' Front played a considerable part and particularly in Biskaye and Giposkoa where there was the biggest Basque strike since 1947, involving 50,000 workers. The strike brings to the fore the contradictions in the ETA leadership, which was bypassed during the strike by the spontaneous militancy of the workers. In desperation the ETA leadership organises a military adventure involving a minority. Twelve bombs explode in the army barracks, the Stock Exchange and in some offices of the official trade unions. The Franco government answers this with fierce repression. The entire leadership falls. Forty militants are arrested in April, May and June 1969. Two hundred militants go into exile. The new leadership which emerges and builds the organisation up again has emerged from within the Workers' Front.

The Split from Nationalism and Militarism

The new leadership created immediately organisational structures oriented towards the realisation of their professed socialist aims. They realised that it was essential to end the period of armed populism; the real task that confronted them was to build an organisation which could penetrate into the Basque working class and poor peasantry and thus set into motion a mass movement.

At the same time an ideological debate took place inside the ETA. The break from nationalism which had already been taking place was given a further impetus by the killing of Spanish workers in Granada by the police. The ETA solidified itself with the Granada workers by despatching a few well-timed Molotov cocktails in the direction of the Spanish police (Guardia Civil) in several Basque towns. For the first time they demonstrated concretely their solidarity with other fellow workers in Spain.

At the 6th Congress held in September 1970 all the tendencies of the ETA were represented. The nationalist fraction denounced the majority

for evolving towards Marxism and attacked the leadership for its "Espanolismo". After heated debates the nationalist fraction was expelled at the end of the conference. The fraction, very small in size, continued to use the name ETA and was responsible for kidnapping the West German official in San Sebastian. Today this nationalist fraction is linked with the old PNB elements and with reactionary Spanish and American interests. The Spanish bourgeoisie and American imperialism are both interested in using this "nationalism" in an attempt to stop the formation of a united class front including both Spanish and Basque workers.

The moves towards revolutionary Marxist positions do not take place overnight. The comrades of the ETA are today involved in a period of research and discussion. Some of them are in favour of a revolutionary party embracing the whole of Spain and uniting the Spanish working class for a struggle against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Others stress the socialist character of the revolution and the hegemony of the proletariat in the coming struggles. Today these discussions still continue. What characterises the militants of the ETA today is an enthusiastic search for new ideas combined with the fact that for them it is not an academic question. They cannot afford to dabble in ideas. They move towards revolutionary Marxism while experiencing the most ferocious repression and displaying a fantastic courage in the face of the enemy. The ETA militants are a decisive part of the new revolutionary vanguard which is today being forged in the Iberian peninsula.

The revolutionary movement in Europe and elsewhere must try and play a decisive role in ensuring that Izko and his comrades are released. It is our responsibility to organise a campaign of solidarity with the Burgos prisoners. What we are witnessing are the opening shots of the new civil war in Spain, which will continue until capitalism has been overthrown in Spain. Those who betrayed this struggle in the past, stand exposed before the revolutionary movement throughout the world today. The new revolutionary organisations in Spain will not let Stalinism stand in their way. They have learnt this lesson the hard way.

[ETA stands for Euzkadi Ta Azkatasuna which means "Freedom for the Basques"]

Text of 'Communismo' leaflet

The following is the text of a leaflet distributed in Barcelona by our comrades of the COMMUNISMO group during the recent mass mobilisations. Apart from participating actively in these actions, the COMMUNISMO militants themselves organised several large demonstrations in various other towns in Spain.

WORKERS! STUDENTS! COMRADES!

We, the militants of *Communismo*, call for an acceleration of the struggle against the judicial farce of Burgos and against capitalist repression.

**DOWN WITH THE SIX DEATH SENTENCES!
FREEDOM FOR IZKO AND HIS COMRADES!
DOWN WITH THE STATE OF EMERGENCY
IMPOSED BY THE REGIME OF ASSASSINS!**

Already we are beginning to see quite clearly the nature of the "new" and "progressive" government, formed nearly a year ago—a government of Opus Dei, technocrats and bankers and of tarted up Falangists. Like its predecessors this government is a dictatorship of assassins in the pay of the bourgeoisie and of imperialism.

This is the democracy that the capitalists want for Spain. It was already on display at Erandio and Granada. It can be seen today in the tortures, the special tribunals and other "legal" methods. The proclamation of the State of Emergency constitutes the last recourse to try and damp down the mass struggle against the dictatorship, and to facilitate the systematic persecution of the most ardent defenders of working class interests and the oppressed layers of the Basque people.

Once again the response which we are

giving to capitalist exploitation and its political oppression through our struggles unmasks the manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie. Our struggle has obliged the Spanish capitalists to bring forward their sly political solution—THE STATE OF EMERGENCY against the workers and oppressed masses.

No one stands outside the class struggle, no one is "innocent". The German consul had chosen his place in this struggle just as much as Meliton Manzananas.

All methods of struggle are legitimate against capital and its government, which condemns to misery and continually represses the vast majority of the population. But communists can only support those actions which drive forward the mass movement and extend its scope, combativity and organisation in face of capitalist power. The seizure of a hostage from imperialism, even if it shows courage in the struggle against bourgeois oppression, leads the masses to have more confidence in external forces than in their own capacity for struggle.

—ONLY MASS STRUGGLE OF THE EXPLOITED AGAINST BOURGEOIS REPRESSION.

—ONLY INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY WITH OUR STRUGGLES, WILL FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO LIFT THE STATE OF EMERGENCY AND FREE THE BASQUE COMRADES THREATENED TODAY WITH DEATH AS A BLOODY WARNING TO THE WHOLE WORKERS' MOVEMENT.

Consequently, we renew the call of *Communismo* to extend the mass struggles (stoppages and assemblies in the factories, rallies and massive actions in the University, mobilisations and struggles in the street), in the most organised and prepared manner, with fighting squads in order to reply to the repression of the police with the violence of the masses.

—Issued by militants of "Communismo" in Barcelona, 10th December 1970.

