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# The **Red Mole**

**WOMEN:** liberation in revolution



**Exclusive interview with John Lennon.**

# AFTER FEBRUARY 21



Photo: George Snow

## Postal strike sold out

As we go to press we see that the leadership of the Union of Postal Workers (UPW) has finally capitulated to the Tory government and has advised its membership to return to work without receiving any guarantees from the Post Office except that of a Court of Inquiry which means absolutely nothing.

We have stressed from the very beginning of this strike that the immediate task which confronted the UPW in the face of their appalling strike fund situation was to call for an extension of the strike and to force the postal engineers to join them on the streets and on the picket lines. This the big moustache consistently refused to do and suggestions by militants that unions outside the post office had the elementary duty to see that their members refused to indulge in strike-breaking activity were brushed aside with the retort that 'this is our strike.'

It wasn't even necessary to have solidarity strike action except from the P.O. Engineers—their one day strike may just have saved Lord Delacourt-Smith's skin but it did little else than create illusions amongst the P.O. workers—all that was needed was to see that no parcels went on lorries driven by T&GWU members, that the same thing applied for British Rail, that scab delivery messengers were thrown off all public transport, and lastly that the TUC dug into its capacious pockets and came out with some real money—at least £2 million.

None of this was done and in view of their role on this strike we can see far too clearly what they will do if they come up face to face with the Tories on the Industrial Relations Bill. They will funk it, as they funk this one. "The Tories will never divide the unity of our great Union movement" said Funky Feather on February 21. Now we can see that they don't need to. Yes, certainly Jones and Scanlon have called out their Unions against the Bill but what will they suggest should be done once the men are out? What are the slogans, what is the strategy? And why should anybody think they will carry out their slogans when they have shown themselves incapable of giving any real aid, of using their Unions for the cause for which they were created, in solidarity with a live struggle.

### STOP-STOP PRESS:

The sell-out by the leadership will not go unanswered and already there are signs of a protest from the militant rank and file workers who have been betrayed and who are preparing to wage a struggle against this bankrupt leadership. In the next issue we will be carrying interviews with leading militants.

The Tories' anti-union bill has been greeted with uproar in all sections of the working class. The diary of protest has been as follows:

*December 8th:* 350,000-500,000 workers strike, against the advice of the TUC;

*January 1st:* 10,000 workers strike in Birmingham;

*January 12th:* 1 million workers are involved in the TUC's "lunchtime" protest; about one-third of them also use the day to stop work completely;

*February 21st:* 140,000 or more workers go on the TUC demonstration in London; probably 1-2 million are there in spirit; this is bigger than any demonstration including the October 1968 demonstration on Vietnam;

*March 1st:* at least 1½ million AUEW workers strike.

But this militancy can quickly turn into apathy if there is no perspective and no clearly discernible line of advance. There has so far been no coordination, no correct national leadership, and a complete alienation of the rank and file from the official trade union leadership. There has not even been any clear common objective, except "Kill the Bill", which may be a good chant but is meaningless on its own as a political slogan. Why all this confusion when there is universal agreement that the Bill represents a direct attack on the working class?

First, nobody has explained clearly what "Kill the Bill" might, realistically, imply. It is utterly misleading to workers, and can only lead to disillusion and defeatism, to convey the impression, as the TUC has tried to do, that protests and demonstrations, especially on Sundays, can have any effect on the Tories at all. The only action the Tories understand is action that effectively stops production. The reason why December 8th, January 12th, March 1st and March

18th have not had effect on the Tories, or will not have any effect, is that the Tories know that the workers will be back the next day. This does not mean that these strikes should be condemned; they should be encouraged as a move in the right direction and used as an opportunity to show how far the working class must go to have any effect on the Tories. The only attack which can have any effect is an unpredictable attack. This means that an indefinite general strike is the only answer. Any action short of this, no matter what illusions are created, will not produce any positive results.

The second question is what kind of immediate results there might be from such action. It is clear that the Tories, no matter what action is taken, will not withdraw the Bill from Parliament. The Tories might take one of two steps. They might interpret the attack as a political attack on the constitution and therefore call for a national government with the right wing of the ex-Labour Government; no one should imagine that this is impossible. Or they might feel confident enough about the result of a general election to decide to call one.

In the last few months we have seen there are up to a million workers who would be able and ready to respond to a consistent and correct political lead. But no such lead exists. Revolutionary socialists must work along with worker militants to hammer out a correct political strategy and identify objectives. Given that these militants see the inevitability of the current situation of struggle, their only way to success will be to develop connections with a revolutionary organisation that can coordinate policy and action nationally.

It is a lamentable fact that at the moment no revolutionary organisation has militant workers in sufficient numbers strategically placed among these million or so militant workers. It would only need, say, 4% of this group to be

connected to a revolutionary organisation for there to be a complete change in the national situation and to create the potentiality of a revolutionary vanguard.

Seen in the context of the massive demonstrations against the Bill, the smallness of the revolutionary groups is obvious. Whether a particular group has 50 or 500 workers in its membership is irrelevant. The absurdity of an arithmetical approach to recruiting workers to revolutionary groups is shown when compared to these demonstrations.

Recruitment by such methods would be likely in any case to dilute the political level of the organisation and thereby decrease its effectiveness. To build a revolutionary party more is needed than an abacus. It will involve a constant process of splits, regroupment, fusions and growth.

As an immediate response to the problem, militants in particular geographical areas can form councils of action to give a lead to, agitate and propagandise among the rank and file. They can also put pressure on official union leaderships to face the realities of the situation. These councils cannot fit into a universal formula. In some areas the local Trades Council may serve. In other areas it may be coordinated district committees of individual trade unions, or just a collection of local convenors, stewards and/or other representatives. It may be the local Confed unions. In areas where there is no realistic prospect of effective action through the existing channels, a new body may have to be formed from scratch.

In any case, the Councils must not be defensive bodies. They must take the offensive, initiate action and provide a political leadership for the rank and file. They must carry the war into the bosses' camp, and they must provide a new accessible leadership for the workers. In time, this can be a step towards destroying the Tories and any other party which supports the existing structure of society.

# for a revolutionary youth movement

Attended by 400 militants, the Spartacus League held its first conference since its foundation, on the weekend of Feb. 20th and 21st in London.

The lessons drawn from nearly eight months' activity and growth were defined and discussed. The conference centred on the main fields of work and posed the tasks which confronted the organisation. In most, the fundamental issues were clarified; in others it was obvious that the problems should continue to be discussed within the organisation.

The conference opened with a report on the political situation in Britain and the world, and

the specific role of the Spartacus League as a youth organisation, while the bulk of the discussion took place in commissions divided according to fields of work. Both the practical and theoretical stage of development of the Spartacus League could be assessed by its members. This revealed our basic political positions on fundamental issues as well as the need to continue discussion of other problems within the organisation at branch level.

## Youth culture

On the question of youth culture, contributions from comrades were very diverse, not only as to

the nature of youth culture, but also as to the perspective it held. It was emphasised that our analysis of the social composition of the youth culture movement—which for example would demonstrate that it is not predominantly composed of students—is basic to a clarification of these points. Spartacus League comrades working in schools and with school students have gained experience in this field. Our support of the struggle against the repressive and authoritarian educational system, which is linked to the attempts among young people to build an "alternative culture" as a substitute for the sterile bourgeois culture, was evaluated in great detail by the commission on schools. Comrades

argued for an orientation towards working class schools and for the building up of work and schools groups in towns, at the present stage. This discussion involved an analysis of past attitudes and policy towards the Schools Action Union.

## Women

The commission on women's liberation tended to revolve around the question of which campaign and which demands should be put forward by revolutionary Marxists working in the movement. What this reflected was the high degree of participation of S.L. comrades in Socialist Women groups in different localities and a higher level of experience in this work. We will continue to state our basic position on the class nature of women's oppression and continue to develop our analysis of the role and nature of the family in capitalist society through work in the Women's Liberation movement and organising educational schools.

## Imperialism

The struggle of the Irish people against British Imperialism has decisively been taken up as our own struggle here. As revolutionaries in the oppressor nation itself, our task is to fight our bourgeoisie. A priority has always been our struggle against Imperialism, but on the question of Ireland has a specific significance. The power that attacks comrades and people fighting in Ireland is based in Britain and can only be defeated here. The Spartacus League will continue to be active in the Irish Solidarity Campaign.

The essential task of generalising and deepening the revolt of thousands of young people against the Vietnam war over the last five years will continue to be a priority. U.S. Imperialism's intensification of attacks must be met by massive solidarity for the Indo-Chinese people's struggle, on the Day of Solidarity on April 24th. The Spartacus League is calling on other tendencies to participate in united solidarity actions. Support of struggles in other areas of intense conflict—in the Middle East and South Africa—was reported on and future work was planned.

## Workers

The theme running through the entire conference was the central role of the working class in all struggle to change the social system. Flowing from this analysis was the basic fact that the revolutionary party cannot be built unless it has firm roots in the working class.

As a revolutionary youth organisation, the task the Spartacus League faces in relation to the young workers is to win them to a revolutionary political position through a rejection of Stalinism and reformist politics. This is how to build a strong revolutionary force within the workers' movement.

To mobilise support for the working class struggles, the youth organisation will carry out work among students, engaging them in active solidarity—this has been our experience during the Dock Strike, on Dec. 8th, Jan. 12th and February 21st, the postal workers' strike—and among young workers and apprentices, who are won to a youth organisation by the political positions it takes in relation to struggles here and internationally.

Following this extensive discussion in the young workers' commission, the conference followed on with this central theme in the report on our student work. It is our perspective in relation to the working class struggle that has won us student militants, capable of analysing the precise nature of the student milieu and the role of their struggle in relation to the working class militants.

The discussions and decisions taken by the conference have achieved a clarification of our work for the future. They have also shown the strength of the organisation after such a short period since its foundation.



# LETTER FROM MAY HOBBS

Since November last year we have been reporting on the cleaners' campaign to organise themselves into the union to fight for better pay and conditions. The movement has continued to grow, and news of its success has spread to other parts of the country from London, where members of women's and other left-wing groups have been supporting the campaign by helping to recruit cleaners into the union, organising support in cases of victimisation, raising money, etc. As a result, May Hobbs of the Cleaners Action Group has received many invitations to go and speak to cleaners and potential supporters about the campaign, which she has done with great success. We are here printing May's account of her speaking tour to York and Lancaster organised by different women's and left-wing groups from 9th to 12th February.

On the Tuesday we travelled up to York. The situation there is that half the cleaners are in the union and half not, and at the first meeting, which was a workers' meeting, there was this old boy who has been trying to get the other half unionised. When I told him about the way we had been going about it in London, he decided he would do the same, with the help of the students and different groups, whoever wanted to help; and the students said they would stick up for him if he was victimised. In the evening we had a meeting in King's Manor in the town, which had quite a good attendance including some cleaners and some new people who decided to do some research, both about the cleaners' situation and also unorganised factory workers, etc. So it was quite encouraging in York.

Then on Wednesday we went across to Lancaster, and I spoke to some members of the Spartacus League. On the Thursday morning we went into the University, where we met some caterers sitting huddled in a corner of the foyer eating their dinner. It appears they had been asking for a room to have their meals in decently for four years. When they were seen talking to myself and the students, they were told by the supervisor and manager not to talk to the students; and as a result of this they have now got their own dining-room, to keep them isolated away from the students who might encourage them to get organised. On Thursday evening we had a meeting in York House with trade unionists from various factories down there, including a contingent of cleaners, which I thought was very successful, and it woke the men up to help the women. Because of the incident with the caterers, we were afraid the cleaners would be told not to attend the meeting on the Friday, which they were in fact, and I honestly thought only about two of them would come, but over half—sixteen—of the college cleaners turned up. Their main grievance was not over pay but over their bus up the hill. If any of you have walked it, you will know it is rather tiring even for young people, let alone poor tired cleaning ladies and other staff. They told us that during term time there was a bus that went up to the University, but during the holidays the bus stopped at the bottom of the hill. They also said it cost them 3/6 return for this bus, and what they wanted most of all was free transport during holiday time and term time, not only for cleaning staff but all University staff. Another grievance was that if a woman was out sick, they never got any cover money at all for doing her

work. And if they complained, they were told that there were other women clamouring to take their jobs. (The unemployment up there for the size of the town is greater than in any other part of the country. When we saw the constant stream of people going in and out at the Social Security, we thought the place badly needed a Claimants' Union). So that was the threat that was used against them, and that is why the women have been frightened to ask for their rights. But out of this meeting, the students of the University, and the Socialist Woman Group, and I.S. and Women's Liberation have agreed to back them in anything they ask for. And when I left them they had already started to take action.

So in my opinion, all in all it was a very satisfactory tour. Having just returned from this trip, can I use your columns to thank the members of Socialist Woman, I.S., and Women's Liberation Workshop and others, who have shown me personally such hospitality and are doing so much to help the cleaners' fight here and everywhere; and a special thank-you to the Socialist Women of Pentonville Road, who looked after my children while I was away. Without these people's help it would have been impossible to carry on the campaign.

## URBAN INSURGENCY IN NORTHERN IRELAND

This is an unabashedly political film; it sets out to cut through the mystifications about what is happening in the North of Ireland and show, through words and action, what the real situation is.

It makes good use of the rich imagery of the Six Counties—an Orange walk, a Republican Easter march, a woman wearing a dress made from Union Jacks flaunting herself before the Catholic Unity Flats; British troops, driving everywhere with guns at the ready, stopping and searching people; the sharp voices of the officers contrasting with the broad Belfast dialect. We are taken to Ballymurphy to hear about the effects of CS gas from the people who have had to suffer it; and hear Paisley call for "three cheers for the B Specials".

The words and images build up to a passionate condemnation of British imperialism in Ireland. The violence in Belfast today is shown to be the direct result of partition, suppression, bigotry, and corruption on the part of British imperialism, and its Unionist friends.

This film should be given the widest possible showing, the more so since it is not "balanced" enough to be shown on bourgeois circuits or television. It is an essential introduction to the deepening crisis in Ireland, and the national liberation struggle which is now opening up.

*Urban Insurgency in Northern Ireland*—a black and white documentary type film. 16mm, 47 min. Optical sound. Made by Wolf Geesburg.

Available through: Liberation Films, 6 Bramshill Gdns, N.W.5. 01-263 0613. The Other Cinema, 12-13 Little Newport St., London W.C.2. 734 8508/9.

## EVENTS

MONDAYS: Birmingham Red Circle, 7.30, The Black Swan, Bromsgrove Street, Digbeth.

WEDNESDAYS: Stafford Red Circle, 8.0, The Dog & Partridge, South Walls.

THURSDAYS: Glasgow Red Circle, Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, 7.30.

THURSDAYS: Norwich Red Circle, Festival House Pub (opp. St. Andrews Hall), 8 p.m.

SUNDAYS: Ealing Red Circle, The Anchor Pub, Uxbridge Road, West Ealing (next to Daniel's), 7.30.

MARCH 6th: "WOMEN UNITE" demonstration, 1.30 Speakers Corner, Rally Trafalgar Square 4 p.m. Contact March 6th Ad Hoc Committee, 23 Baalbec Rd, London N.5. 01-226 3911.

MARCH 6th: Rosa Luxembourg Commemoration Meeting, Marquis of Granby, Cambridge Circus—7.30. Speakers: Tessa van Gelderen, Judith White. Also a discussion about the demonstration. Organised by Socialist Woman Editorial Board.

MARCH 6th: Frank Keane Defence Committee Social, Kings Head, Fulham Broadway (next to the station).

MARCH 10th: Protest against the Immigration Bill. Picket Immigration Dept., High Holborn, 1—4.30. Black Defence Committee.

MARCH 11th: Meeting on the Immigration Bill. Speakers: Tariq Ali, Jeff Crawford, and other representatives of the Black community and T.U. movement. 7.30, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC2 (Holborn tube). Organised by the Black Defence Committee.

MARCH 12th: "Towards the South African Revolution". Meeting on the arrests of 22 Unity Movement leaders in South Africa and British arms sales. Speakers: Bernadette Devlin, Carl Brecher, Scrape Ntshona. Chairman: John Suddaby. 6.45 p.m. Friends House, Euston Road (opp. Euston station).

MARCH 15th: "The Industrial Relations Bill & Women". Hear May Hobbs, a leading militant in the nightcleaners' fight for unionisation, at Civil Grants Hall, Greenford Hall, Ruslip Road, Greenford, at 8 p.m. London Socialist Women Group.

MARCH 16th: "The sexual revolution and new tensions in the family unit"—North London Red Circle discussion. 8 p.m. 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

MARCH 17th: Protest against the Immigration Bill. Picket Immigration Dept., High Holborn, 10 onwards. Black Defence Committee.

MARCH 18th: Engineering one day strike.

MARCH 23rd: "The unfolding class struggle in Britain"—North London Red Circle discussion, 8 p.m., 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

MARCH 28th: Day Seminar on "Social Causes and Consequences of Addiction", organised by Socialist Medical Association. NUFTO Hall, Jockeys Fields, Holborn. Tickets 5/- per session, 10/- all day. Contact T. C. Thomas, 54 Finchley Court, Ballards Lane, London N.3 1NH 101-346 5867.

MARCH 30th: "Peaceful coexistence—the politics of class collaboration", North London Red Circle discussion. 8 p.m., 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

The Black Defence Committee is calling on all Students Unions to declare Wednesday March 17th a day of protest against the Tory Immigration Bill.

The first response to this call was from LSE Union which (on Friday Feb. 26th) passed the following motion for action on Wednesday March 17th:

- to boycott all lectures and both libraries
- to picket the Home Office Immigration Department
- to hold a teach-in on Racism and Immigration during the afternoon.

The Black Defence Committee is organising a picket at the Home Office Immigration Dept. 276 High Holborn (nearest tube: Holborn), on Wednesday March 10th and Wednesday March 17th from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

There will be a public meeting to discuss the implications of the Bill and how to fight it at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square (nearest tube: Holborn) on Thursday 11th March at 7.30 p.m. Speakers will include Tariq Ali, Jeff Crawford, Gery Lawless and other representatives from the immigrant communities and the trade unions.

For further information regarding the activities of the Black Defence Committee, ring 01-837 01-837 6954.

## 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.  
CANTERBURY: Brian Grogan, Elliott College Canterbury.  
CARDIFF: Susan Lukes, 92 Llandaff Road, Canton, Cardiff.

CHELMSFORD: John Jones, c/o Red Mole.  
COLCHESTER: Ken Browne, Flat 7, Room 10, Bertrand Russell Tower, University of Essex, Colchester, Essex.  
COVENTRY: John Presland, 27 Paynes Lane, Coventry, Warwick.

EDINBURGH: Brian Gilmore, 17 Hillside St., Edinburgh.  
GLASGOW: Roland O'Brien, 38 Pendeen Road Glasgow E.3.  
HERTFORD: Malcolm Harding, 8 Parker Ave., Bengo, Herts.  
HULL: Malcolm Ball, Students Union, Hull University, Hull.  
IPSWICH: Kevin Barter, 2 Carmarthen Close, Ipswich, IP2 8QG.

KEELE: Jason Hill, Flat 37, The Hawthorns, Keele, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs.

KIDDERMINSTER: Nigel Brown, 44 The Deansway, Kidderminster, Worcs.  
KINGSTON-UPON-THAMES: Robin Bonner, 33 Effingham Road, Long Ditton, 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

NORTH: John Weal, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.  
NORTH-WEST: Tony Fry, 101 Park Avenue North, NW10.  
SOUTH: Tony Jones, Furzedown College of Education, Welham Road, SW17.  
EALING: Will Rich, 8 Burlington Gdns, W4. (1994 6862 weekends).  
HAMMERSMITH: Eddy Arnavaoudian, 20 Thorny Hedge Rd, Gunnersbury, W4.

LOUGHBOROUGH: Ann Black, 4 Russell St, Loughborough.  
MANCHESTER: Steve Cohen, 43 Brantingham Road, Whalley Range, Manchester 16.  
NORWICH: John Harris, c/o Ian Douglas, 1 Cow Hill, Norwich.  
NOTTINGHAM: Nick Beeton, 25 Henry Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham.  
OXFORD: Bernard Reaney, 27 Southmoor Road, Oxford.  
POTTERIES: Jason Hill, Students Union, University of Keele, Staffs.  
READING: John Brendan Troy, 55 Gloucester Road, Reading, Berks.

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: Mike Martin, 19 Lovatt Street, Stafford.

STIRLING: Donald MacDonald, 6 Tarduff Place, Stonevwood, Denny, Stirlingshire.  
WEST LOTHIAN: Anne MacLellan, 5 Victoria Place, Bo'ness, West Lothian.  
YORK: Phil Hearse, 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.

# SOCIALIST WOMAN

is produced by the Socialist Woman Groups being formed up and down the country. Special 20-page March-April issue includes articles on: Women versus the Bill; The Politics of Women's Liberation; Women on Strike; Kate Millett's "Sexual Politics" reviewed; and many others. A copy costs 5p + 3p postage, or 48p for a year's subscription (6 copies). Write SOCIALIST WOMAN Subs, c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

# IMMIGRATION BILL :

## A DECLARATION OF WAR



Reprinted from *Flambeau*, March 3rd 1971.

Briefly the Bill requires that black people coming to Britain should:

- \* Get a work voucher for a specific job for one year only
- \* Be admitted to live in an area chosen by the Government
- \* Be required to renew work permits annually
- \* Produce a work voucher or passport to any policeman on demand
- \* Report to police regularly
- \* Not be able to vote or sit on juries
- \* Be unable to change jobs without the permission of the authorities

### The Consequences

What does all this mean for the ordinary black person? Firstly, it has been well established that the worker of today enjoys certain fundamental rights in relation to his conditions of employment.

These rights have been fought for and won by working people everywhere in their defence against profit-grabbing employers and ambitious politicians.

It is well understood that the modern worker is free to sell his labour to whom he chooses, to change his job as he pleases with-

out police intervention, to live in an area of his own choosing. These are facts which no one can deny.

Yet the clauses of the Immigration Bill will ruthlessly violate every one of these principles, without which the ordinary human being finds life intolerable.

The Bill demands that black people, the original producers of Britain's wealth, should live in areas selected for them by politicians whom we do not trust. That black people ask for permission to change their jobs, in fact a raw and naked attempt to reduce black working people to slave conditions.

That the Bill will affect all black people living in Britain, we have no doubt. But it is upon the backs of the black worker, young and old, that the burdens of this racist legislation will fall.

### The Police

Already it is clear that the black communities are in open confrontation with the police. Within six months there have been demonstrations against police brutality and corruption in Islington, Ladbrooke Grove, Lewisham, Wolverhampton and Handsworth Birmingham.

To give the police the powers to stop and demand evidence of identity and details of employment in this highly explosive situation borders on insanity or even suicide.

On closer examination of the clauses of the Bill, one begins to see the tremendous chaos that will result from its becoming law. We are told that at the end of the one year period, the work permit will come up for renewal. Based upon reports from the police

and employers, a decision will be taken as to whether a particular permit will be renewed.

Can anyone foresee a situation in which black people, who have to work in deplorable conditions and afraid to demand their rights from the employer on whom they ultimately depend for a good report.

### Trade Unions

Where do the Trade Unions stand in relation to this attempt to reduce the black population of this country to 17th Century working conditions?

They are the ones responsible for the protection of the interests of the working class in Britain, and their stand on the Immigration Bill will reveal whether or not their attitude to the black worker differs from the attitude to whites.

Not that there is much hope that anything but token opposition will come from them, for there are many reports coming in from factories that trades union officials have one law for blacks and another for whites.

### Black Resistance

Whether the Trades Unions actively oppose or not, black organisations have already declared war against the Bill.

On Sunday 7th February, around 3 p.m., four hundred black people demonstrated in the streets of Bradford, bringing to a dramatic close a weekend conference on the Bill organised by the Afro-Caribbean Association.

Over the weekend the details and consequences of this proposed legislation were outlined to delegates by several speakers. From London, Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield,

representatives of different organisations discussed the ways and means of mobilising the black population against this attack on their rights.

On March 13th, another conference will be held in Sheffield to further coordinate resistance to the Bill. Meanwhile, in London, the Black Panther Movement and the DASHKI Youth Group are hard at work informing the black population of this intended onslaught.

A National Conference on the Rights of Black People is being planned for sometime in April to launch a massive organisational campaign of action which will reflect the deep resentment felt by all black people in the face of this monstrous piece of legislation.

Nothing short of a total declaration of war against the Bill will suffice. Edward Heath's Government should be made to know that any such attempt at the dehumanisation of the black man will be met with maximum resistance.

### Politicians & Big Business Men Fail

One does not have to be a student of politics to understand that the politicians and big business men have made a complete mess of the country's economy.

Nor is it difficult to understand that the passing of the Bill is a shrewd attempt at stirring up animosity against the black population as being responsible for the economic mess in which we all live.

And so we are faced with the task of yet again, to wage a sustained struggle for the preservation of our rights, without which our lives will have little meaning.  
*Black Patch*

# LIBERATION IS A REVOLUTION

How is one to explain the sudden upsurge of political activity among women who have joined in thousands the women's liberation movement in the advanced capitalist countries? This cannot be ascribed only to economic causes. Their traditional duties are perhaps lighter and less time-consuming, and they have some control over their bodies via cheap contraception. But already a hundred years ago women were marching and organising for their rights. The answer must also be sought in the changing political context of the recent decade, the waning belief that bourgeois democratic society can deliver the goods. Legally women are on the whole equal to men. In actual life, however, their position is quite unequal: they get worse education, worse jobs and less money. The choice of having a family or working is predetermined: having children usually means leaving the job, or doing it part time until the children grow up. Household chores leave women little time for,

an active force behind the French Revolution (in 1791 they marched to Versailles, arrested the king and brought him to Paris to be tried). Not only were they members of the various political factions, they also organised for specific women's rights. And earlier still? Little is known about women in history, but the agitation for specifically women's rights came only with fully-fledged bourgeois development. Because of its mode of production based on the sale of individual labour, capitalism has been historically committed to granting equal legal rights to all citizens, women included—although the case of Switzerland, where men gave women the right to vote only last month (and in opposition to a great section of female opinion in the country) reminds one of the fact that even fully developed capitalism with all its democratic trappings does not necessarily grant equal rights to all citizens. The male population in England gained voting rights in stages: bourgeoisie



cal agenda, recognising that men cannot be free until women are free.

#### BOURGEOIS EQUALITY, MALE CHAUVINISM

However, the bourgeoisie did not intend that women should *really* be equal to men and that on acquiring legal equality they would actually exercise it. In their world-view women may go out to work, or take part in other social activities, but women's primary responsibility is the welfare of their husbands and children. This view is inscribed in social organisation: bourgeois society cannot dissolve the family and liberate women. True, women, like men, are allowed to choose alternative bourgeois governments, but real freedom would necessarily involve the destruction of bourgeois society itself. Today, as a consequence of female agitation and militancy, it is seen that male chauvinism in the working class (the acceptance of the bourgeois image of women) is part and parcel of the cultural hegemony that the bourgeoisie maintains over the proletariat. This ideology is not only a personal failing: it represents an alien ideological presence in the proletariat—a class which cannot tolerate inequality among its members without damaging itself. The question of women's liberation must be seen as a political question of highest importance for the revolution.

#### ROLE OF THE FAMILY

It is plain that legal equality is a spurious equality in a society in which some own

all and some nothing but their labour power. It is therefore conceivable that this society can iron out the remaining legal differences between the sexes as well as grant women *formally* equal opportunity in work—i.e. opportunity to take up jobs traditionally granted to men. But bourgeois society can never liberate women from the hold of the family, and as long as the family persists women cannot be equal to men. Marx and Engels in their writings emphasised the role of the family in the social position of women. The intimate ties between the family and production were broken only with the industrial revolution (although wealth stayed within the family and is passed on from parents to children). Previously women of the labouring classes had worked within the family; now they went out to work and thereby acquired an economic independence on an unprecedented scale. Meanwhile bourgeois women stayed at home, as housekeepers and ornaments to their husbands. Writing at this time on the condition of women, Marx and Engels were clear what an important historical step this participation in public production was in the emancipation of women, but they insisted that economic independence would be partial as long as women were engaged in work at home. Thus the precondition of their liberation was the dissolution of the family as the economic unit. The nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth was a struggle to win civil rights within the bourgeois society; it was well worth it for today women can see that they were only drops in the ocean. Bourgeois society is committed to the family because it cannot break the separation between private existence (the family) and public (production) which characterises its class rule. Production is social but ownership is in private hands: it is symptomatic that the capitalist owner presents every attempt by the workers to increase wages or control the routine of their work as selfish greed of a minority against the "public interest" (i.e. the private interest of capital). When a strike breaks out, the government and employers appeal to "the public"—that is, to housewives (sex strikes against their striking husbands is one of their recommendations to women) and to workers *at home*. (Hence the "public" opinion polls that are always conducted at home or in the streets, but never in the place of work). Can such a society which shackles women to housework and child-rearing be rearranged to give women freedom? Obviously it cannot, and women today are becoming aware that it is not the lack of their rights that oppresses them but the social system.

#### THE BOLSHEVIK EXPERIMENT

The Bolshevik revolution already in its first two years not only proclaimed the legal equality of women, to an extent unthinkable in a bourgeois "democratic" society, but also attempted to create the



political or trade union activities. This means that they are not often unionised and therefore a cheaper and more manageable labour force from the employers' point of view. Within the economic structure there is a rigid definite division of labour between the sexes. Women are in fact second-rate citizens, in this sense comparable to racial or religious minorities.

#### THE PAST

The suffragette movement of a hundred years ago started more or less from scratch: women had virtually no civil or political rights, so that the demand for these rights united women across the class divisions and hurled them into often violent confrontation with the state. A hundred years before that, women were

in 1832, working class by 1884—women not until 1929. It was not the increase in their militancy in the later stages that won them the vote; rather their services rendered to the ruling class in the imperialist war of 1914-18. Women say today: we have got the right to vote, so what? Legal equality has meant very little. But one has to remember the importance of this issue in organising thousands of women in a struggle for basic civil rights. The suffragette movement had a mixed class character, but there is no doubt that theirs was an important part of the class struggle. The existence of obvious legal inequalities in society (whether inflicted on women or blacks) only weakens the proletariat, and (with some exceptions) the revolutionary movement has put the question of women's rights on its politi-

# "Power to the People!"

## JOHN LENNON & YOKO ONO

talk to **ROBIN BLACKBURN & TARIQ ALI**

**T.A.** Your latest record and your recent public statements, especially the interviews in *Rolling Stone* magazine, suggest that your views are becoming increasingly radical and political. When did this start to happen?

**J.L.** I've always been politically-minded, you know, and against the status quo. It's pretty basic when you're brought up, like I was, to hate and fear the police as a natural enemy and to despise the army as something that takes everybody away and leaves them dead somewhere. I mean, it's just a basic working class thing, though it begins to wear off when you get older, get a family and get swallowed up in the system. In my case I've never not been political, though religion tended to overshadow it in my acid days; that would be around '65 or '66. And that religion was directly the result of all that superstar shit—religion was an outlet for my repression. I thought, "Well, there's something else to life, isn't there? This isn't it, surely?" But I was always political in a way, you know. In the two books I wrote, even though they were written in a sort of Joycean gobbledegook, there's many knocks at religion and there is a play about a worker and a capitalist. I've been satirising the system since my childhood. I used to write magazines in school and hand them around. I was very conscious of class, they would say with a chip on my shoulder, because I knew what happened to me and I knew about the class repression coming down on us—it was a fucking fact but in the hurricane Beatle world it got left out—I got farther away from reality for a time.

**T.A.** What did you think was the reason for the success of your sort of music?

**J.L.** Well, at the time it was thought that the workers had broken through, but I realise in retrospect that it's the same phoney deal they gave the blacks, it was just like they allowed blacks to be runners or boxers or entertainers. That's the choice they allow you—now the outlet is being a popstar, which is really what I'm saying on the album in *Working Class Hero*. As I told *Rolling Stone*, it's the same people who have the power, the class system didn't change one little bit. Of course there are a lot of people walking around with long hair now and some trendy middle class kids in pretty clothes. But nothing changed except that we all dressed up a bit, leaving the same bastards running everything.

**R.B.** Of course, class is something the American Rock groups haven't tackled yet.

**J.L.** Because they're all middle class and bourgeois and they don't want to show it. They're scared of the workers, actually, because the workers seem mainly right-wing in America, clinging on to their goods. But if these middle class groups realise what's happening, and what the class system has done, it's up to them to repatriate the people and to get out of all that bourgeois shit.

**T.A.** When did you start breaking out of the role imposed on you as a Beatle?

**J.L.** Even during the Beatle heyday I tried to go against it, so did George. We went to America a few times and Epstein always tried to waffle on at us about saying nothing about Vietnam. So there came a time when George and I said "Listen, when they ask next time, we're going to say we don't like that war and we think they should get right out." That's what we did. At that time this was a pretty radical thing to do, especially for the "Fab Four". It was the first opportunity I personally took to wave the flag a bit. But you've got to remember that I'd always felt repressed. We were all so pressurised that there was hardly any chance of expressing ourselves, especially working at that rate, touring continually and always kept in a cocoon of myths and dreams. It's pretty hard when you are



Caesar and everyone is saying how wonderful you are and they are giving you all the goodies and the girls, it's pretty hard to break out of that, to say "Well, I don't want to be king, I want to be real." So in it's way the second political thing I did was to say "The Beatles are bigger than Jesus." That really broke the scene, I nearly got shot in America for that. It was a big trauma for all the kids that were following us. Up to then there was this unspoken policy of not answering delicate questions, though I always read the papers, you know, the political bits. The continual awareness of what was going on made me feel ashamed I wasn't saying anything. I burst out because I could no longer play that game any more, it was just too much for me. Of course, going to America increased the build up on me, especially as the war was going on there. In a way we'd turned out to be a Trojan Horse. The Fab Four moved right to the top and then sang about drugs and sex and then I got into more and more heavy stuff and that's when they started dropping us.

**R.B.** Wasn't there a double charge to what you were doing right from the beginning?

**Yoko** You were always very direct . . .

**J.L.** Yes, well, the first thing we did was to proclaim our Liverpoolness to the world, and say "It's all right to come from Liverpool and talk like this". Before, anybody from Liverpool who made it, like Ted Ray, Tommy Handley, Arthur Askey, had to lose their accent to get on the BBC. They were only comedians but that's what came out of Liverpool before us. We refused to play that game. After the Beatles

came on the scene everyone started putting on a Liverpudlian accent.

**T.A.** In a way you were even thinking about politics when you seemed to be knocking revolution?

**J.L.** Ah, sure, *Revolution*. There were two versions of that song but the underground left only picked up on the one that said "count me out". The original version which ends up the LP said "count me in" too; I put in both because I wasn't sure. There was a third version that was just abstract, musique concrete, kind of loops and that, people screaming. I thought I was painting in sound a picture of revolution—but I made a mistake, you know. The mistake was that it was anti-revolution. On the version released as a single I said "when you talk about destruction you can count me out". I didn't want to get killed. I didn't really know that much about the Maoists, but I just knew that they seemed to be so few and yet they painted themselves green and stood in front of the police waiting to get picked off. I just thought it was unsubtle, you know. I thought the original Communist revolutionaries coordinated themselves a bit better and didn't go around shouting about it. That was how I felt—I was really asking a question. As someone from the working class I was always interested in Russia and China and everything that related to the working class, even though I was playing the capitalist game. At one time I was so much involved in the religious bullshit that I used to go around calling myself a Christian Communist, but as Janov says, religion is legalised madness. It was

therapy that stripped away all that and made me feel my own pain.

**R.B.** This analyst you went to, what's his name . . .

**J.L.** Janov . . .

**R.B.** His ideas seem to have something in common with Laing in that he doesn't want to reconcile people to their misery, to adjust them to the world but rather to make them face up to its causes?

**J.L.** Well, his thing is to feel the pain that's accumulated inside you ever since your childhood. I had to do it to really kill off all the religious myths. In the therapy you really feel every painful moment of your life—it's excruciating, you are forced to realise that your pain, the kind that makes you wake up afraid with your heart pounding, is really yours and not the result of somebody up in the sky. It's the result of your parents and your environment. As I realised this it all started to fall into place. This therapy forced me to have done with all the Godshit. All of us growing up have come to terms with too much pain. Although we repress it, it's still there. The worst pain is that of not being wanted, of realising your parents do not need you in the way you need them. When I was a child I experienced moments of not wanting to see the ugliness, not wanting to see not being wanted. This lack of love went into my eyes and into my mind. Janov doesn't just talk to you about this but makes you feel it—once you've allowed yourself to feel again, you do most of the work yourself. When you wake up and your heart is going like clappers or your back feels strained, or you develop some other hang-up, you should let your mind go to the pain and the pain itself will regurgitate the memory which originally caused you to suppress it in your body. In this way the pain goes to the right channel instead of being repressed again, as it is if you take a pill or a bath, saying "well, I'll get over it". Most people channel their pain into God or masturbation or some dream of making it. The therapy is like a very slow acid trip which happens naturally in your body. It is hard to talk about, you know, because you feel "I am pain" and it sounds sort of arbitrary, but pain to me now has a different meaning because of having physically felt all these extraordinary repressions. It was like taking gloves off, and feeling your own skin for the first time. It's a bit of a drag to say so, but I don't think you can understand this unless you've gone through it—though I try to put some of it over on the album. But for me at any rate it was all part of dissolving the Godtrip or father-figure trip. Facing up to reality instead of always looking for some kind of heaven.

**R.B.** Do you see the family in general as the source of these repressions?

**J.L.** Mine is an extreme case you know. My father and mother split and I never saw my father until I was twenty, nor did I see much more of my mother. But Yoko had her parents there and it was the same . . .

**Yoko** Perhaps one feels more pain when parents are there. It's like when you're hungry, you know it's worse to get a symbol of a cheeseburger than no cheeseburger at all. It doesn't do you any good, you know. I often wish my mother had died so that at least I could get some people's sympathy. But there she was, a perfectly beautiful mother.

**J.L.** And Yoko's family were middle-class Japanese but it's all the same repression. Though I think middle-class people have the biggest trauma if they have nice image parents, all smiling and dolled up. They are the ones who have the biggest struggle to say, "Goodbye mummy, Goodbye daddy".

**T.A.** What relation to your music has all this got?

J.L. Art is only a way of expressing pain. I mean the reason Yoko does such far out stuff is that it's a far out kind of pain she went through.

R.B. A lot of Beatle songs used to be about childhood . . .

J.L. Yeah, that would mostly be me . . .

R.B. Though they were very good there was always a missing element . . .

J.L. That would be reality, that would be the missing element. Because I was never really wanted. The only reason I am a star is because of my repression. Nothing else would have driven me through all that if I was "normal" . . .

Yoko . . . and happy . . .

J.L. The only reason I went for that goal is that I wanted to say: "Now, mummy-daddy, will you love me?"

T.A. But then you had success beyond most people's wildest dreams . . .

J.L. Oh, Jesus Christ, it was a complete oppression. I mean we had to go through humiliation upon humiliation with the middle classes and showbiz and Lord Mayors and all that. They were so condescending and stupid. Everybody trying to use us. It was a special humiliation for me because I could never keep my mouth shut and I'd always have to be drunk or pilled to counteract this pressure. It was really hell . . .

Yoko It was depriving him of any real experience, you know . . .

J.L. It was very miserable. I mean apart from the first flush of making it—the thrill of the first number one record, the first trip to America. At first we had some sort of objective like being as big as Elvis—moving forward was the great thing, but actually attaining it was the big let-down. I found I was having continually to please the sort of people I'd always hated when I was a child. This began to bring me back to reality. I began to realise that we are all oppressed which is why I would like to do something about it, though I'm not sure where my place is.

R.B. Well, in any case, politics and culture are linked, aren't they? I mean, workers are repressed by culture not guns at the moment. . .

J.L. . . they're doped . . .

R.B. And the culture that's doping them is one the artist can make or break . . .

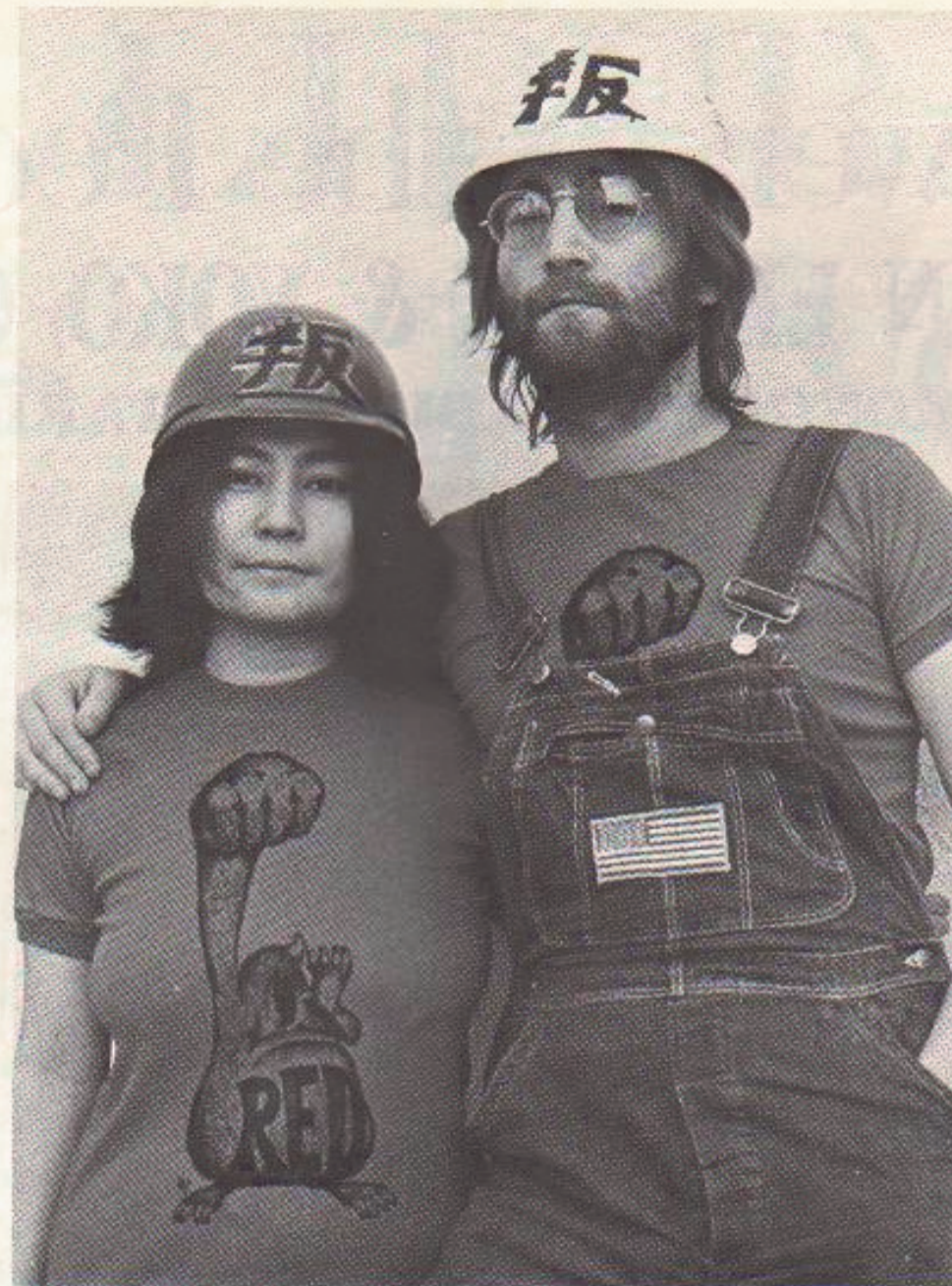
J.L. That's what I'm trying to do on my albums and in these interviews. What I'm trying to do is to influence all the people I can influence. All those who are still under the dream and just put a big question mark in their mind. The acid dream is over, that is what I'm trying to tell them.

R.B. Even in the past, you know, people would use Beatle songs and give them new words. Yellow Submarine for instance had a number of versions. One that strikers used to sing began "We all live on bread and margarine", at LSE we had a version that began "We all live in a Red LSE".

J.L. I like that. And I enjoyed it when football crowds in the early days would sing All together now—that was another one. I was also pleased when the movement in America took up Give peace a chance because I had written it with that in mind really. I hoped that instead of singing We Shall Overcome from 1800 or something, they would have something contemporary. I felt an obligation even then to write a song that people would sing in the pub or on a demonstration. That is why I would like to compose songs for the revolution now . . .

R.B. We only have a few revolutionary songs and they were composed in the nineteenth century. Do you find anything in our musical traditions which could be used for revolutionary songs?

J.L. When I started, Rock and Roll itself was the basic revolution to people of my age and situation. We needed something loud and clear to break through all the unfeeling and repression that had been coming down on us kids. We were a bit conscious to begin with of being imitation Americans. But we delved into the music and found that it was half white Country-and-Western and half black rhythm and blues. Most of the songs came from Europe and Africa and now they were coming back to us. Many of Dylan's best songs came from Scotland, Ireland or England. It was a sort of cultural exchange. Though I must say the more interesting songs



to me were the black ones because they were more simple. They sort of said shake your arse, or your prick, which was an innovation really. And then there were the folk songs mainly expressing the pain they were in. They couldn't express themselves intellectually so they had to say in a very few words what was happening to them. And then there was the City blues and a lot of that was about sex and fighting. A lot of this was self-expression but only in the last few years have they expressed themselves completely with Black Power, like Edwin Starr making War records. Before that many black singers were still labouring under that problem of God, it was often "God will save us". But right through the blacks were singing directly and immediately about their pain and also about sex, which is why I like it.

R.B. You say Country and Western music derived from European folk songs. Aren't these folk songs sometimes pretty dreadful stuff, all about losing and being defeated . . . ?

J.L. As kids we were all opposed to folk songs because they were so middle-class. It was all college students with big scarfs and a pint of beer in their hands singing folk songs in what we call la-di-da voices—"I worked in a mine in New-cast-le" and all that shit. There were very few real folk singers you know, though I liked Dominic Behan a bit and there was some good stuff to be heard in Liverpool. Just occasionally you hear very old records on the radio or TV of real workers in Ireland or somewhere singing these songs and the power of them is fantastic. But mostly folk music is people with fruity voices trying to keep alive something old and dead. It's all a bit boring like ballet, a minority thing kept going by a minority group. Today's folk song is Rock and Roll. Although it happened to emanate from America, that's not really important in the end because we wrote our own music and that changed everything.

R.B. Your album, Yoko, seems to fuse avant-garde modern music with Rock. I'd like to put an idea to you I got from listening to it. You integrate everyday sounds, like that of a train, into a musical pattern. This seems to demand an aesthetic measure of everyday life, to insist that art should not be imprisoned in the museums and galleries, doesn't it?

Yoko Exactly, I want to incite people to loosen

their oppression by giving them something to work with, to build on. They shouldn't be frightened of creating themselves—that's why I make things very open, with things for people to do, like in my book (*Grapefruit*). Because basically there are two types of people in the world: people who are confident because they know they have the ability to create, and then people who have been demoralised, who have no confidence in themselves because they have been told they have no creative ability, but must just take orders. The Establishment likes people who take no responsibility and cannot respect themselves.

R.B. I suppose workers' control is about that . . .

J.L. Haven't they tried out something like that in Yugoslavia, they are free of the Russians. I'd like to go there and see how it works.

T.A. Well, they have, they did try to break with the Stalinist pattern. But instead of allowing uninhibited workers' control, they added a strong dose of political bureaucracy. It tended to smother the initiative of the workers and they also regulated the whole system by a market mechanism which bred new inequalities between one region and another.

J.L. It seems that all revolutions end up with a personality cult—even the Chinese seem to need a father-figure. I expect this happens in Cuba too with Che and Fidel . . . In Western-style Communism we would have to create an almost imaginary workers' image of themselves as the father-figure.

R.B. That's a pretty cool idea—the Working Class becomes its own Hero. As long as it was not a new comforting illusion, as long as there was a real workers' power. If a capitalist or bureaucrat is running your life then you need to compensate with illusions . . .

Yoko The people have got to trust in themselves.

T.A. That's the vital point. The working class must be instilled with a feeling of confidence in itself. This can't be done just by propaganda—the workers must move, take over their own factories and tell the capitalists to bugger off. This is what began to happen in May 1968 in France . . . the workers began to feel their own strength.

J.L. But the Communist Party wasn't up to that, was it?

R.B. No, they weren't. With ten million workers on strike they could have led one of those huge demonstrations that occurred in the centre of Paris into a massive occupation of all government buildings and installations, replaced de Gaulle with a new institution of popular power like the Commune or the original Soviet—that would have begun a real revolution but the French C.P. was scared of it. They preferred to deal at the top instead of encouraging the workers to take the initiative themselves. . .

J.L. Great . . . but there's a problem about that here you know. All the revolutions have happened when a Fidel or Marx or Lenin or whatever, who were intellectuals, were able to get through to the workers. They got a good pocket of people together and the workers seemed to understand that they were in a repressed state. They haven't woken up yet here they still believe that cars and tellyes are the answer. . . You should get these left-wing students out to talk with the workers, you should get the school-kids involved with *The Red Mole*.

T.A. You're quite right, we have been trying to do that and we should do more. This new Industrial Relations Bill the Government is trying to introduce is making more and more workers realise what is happening. . .

J.L. I don't think that Bill can work. I don't think they can enforce it, I don't think the workers will co-operate with it. I thought the Wilson Government was a big let-down but the Heath lot are worse. The underground is being harassed, the black militants can't even live in their own homes now, and they're selling more arms to the South Africans. Like Richard Neville said there may be only an inch of difference between Wilson and Heath but it's that inch that we live. . .

T.A. I don't know about that; Labour brought in racist immigration policies, supported the Vietnam war and were hoping to bring in new legislation against the unions.

R.B. It may be true that we live in the inch of difference between Labour and Conservative but so long as we do we'll be impotent and unable to change anything. If Heath is forcing us out of that inch maybe he's doing us a good turn without meaning to . . .

J.L. Yes, I've thought about that, too. This putting us in a corner so we have to find out what is coming down on other people. I keep on reading the *Morning Star* (the Communist newspaper) to see if there's any hope, but it seems to be in the nineteenth century; it seems to be written for dropped-out middle-aged liberals. We should be trying to reach the young workers because that's when you're most idealistic and have least fear. Somehow the revolutionaries must approach the workers because the workers won't approach them. But it's difficult to know where to start, we've all got a finger in the dam. The problem for me is that as I have become more real, I've grown away from most working-class people—you know what they like is Engelbert Humperdinck. It's the students who are buying us now, and that's the problem. Now the Beatles are four separate people, we don't have the impact we had when we were together . . .

R.B. Now you're trying to swim against the stream of bourgeois society, which is much more difficult . . .

J.L. Yes, they own all the newspapers and they control all distribution and promotion. When we came along there was only Decca, Phillips and EMI who could really produce a record for you. You had to go through the whole bureaucracy to get into the recording studio. You were in such a humble position, you didn't have more than twelve hours to make a whole album, which is what we did in the early days. Even now it's the same, if you're an unknown artist you're lucky to get an hour in a studio—it's a hierarchy and if you don't have hits, you don't get recorded again. And they control distribution. We tried to change that with Apple but in the end we were defeated. They still control everything. EMI killed our album *Two Virgins* because they didn't like it. With the last record they've censored the words of the songs printed on the record sleeve. Fucking ridiculous and hypocritical—they have to let me sing it but they don't dare let you read it. Insanity.

R.B. Though you reach fewer people now, perhaps the effect can be more concentrated.

J.L. Yes, I think that could be true. To begin with, working class people reacted against our



openness about sex. They are frightened of nudity, they're repressed in that way as well as others. Perhaps they thought "Paul is a good lad, he doesn't make trouble". Also when Yoko and I got married, we got terrible racist letters—you know, warning me that she would slit my throat. Those mainly came from Army people living in Aldershot. Officers. Now workers are more friendly to us, so perhaps it's changing. It seems to me that the students are now half-awake enough to try and wake up their brother workers. If you don't pass on your own awareness then it closes down again. That is why the basic need is for the students to get in with the workers and convince them that they are not talking gobbledegoose. And of course it's difficult to know what the workers are really thinking because the capitalist press always only quotes mouthpieces like Vic Feather anyway. So the only thing is to talk to them directly, especially the young workers. We've got to start with them because they know they're up against it. That's why I talk about school on the album, I'd like to incite people to break the framework, to be disobedient in school, to stick their tongues out, to keep insulting authority.

**Yoko** We are very lucky really, because we can create our own reality, John and me, but we know the important thing is to communicate with other people.

**J.L.** The more reality we face, the more we realise that unreality is the main programme of the day. The more real we become, the more abuse we take, so it does radicalise us in a way, like being put in a corner. But it would be better if there were more of us.

**Yoko** We mustn't be traditional in the way we communicate with people—especially with the Establishment. We should surprise people by saying new things in an entirely new way. Communication of that sort can have a fantastic power so long as you don't do only what they expect you to do.

**R.B.** Communication is vital for building a movement, but in the end it's powerless unless you also develop popular force.

**Yoko** I get very sad when I think about Vietnam where there seems to be no choice but violence. This violence goes on for centuries perpetuating itself. In the present age when communication is so rapid, we should create a different tradition, traditions are created everyday. Five years now is like a hundred years before. We are living in a society that has no history. There's no precedent for this kind of society so we can break the old patterns.

**T.A.** No ruling class in the whole of history has given up power voluntarily and I don't see that changing.



**Yoko** But violence isn't just a conceptual thing, you know. I saw a programme about this kid who had come back from Vietnam—he'd lost his body from the waist down. He was just a lump of meat, and he said, "Well, I guess it was a good experience."

**J.L.** He didn't want to face the truth, he didn't want to think it had all been a waste . . .

**Yoko** But think of the violence, it could happen to your kids . . .

**R.B.** But Yoko, people who struggle against oppression find themselves attacked by those

who have a vested interest in nothing changing, those who want to protect their power and wealth. Look at the people in Bogside and Falls Road in Northern Ireland; they were mercilessly attacked by the special police because they began demonstrating for their rights. On one night in August 1969 seven people were shot and thousands driven from their homes. Didn't they have a right to defend themselves?

**Yoko** That's why one should try to tackle these problems before a situation like that happens.

**J.L.** Yes, but what do you do when it does happen, what do you do?

**R.B.** Popular violence against their oppressors is always justified. It cannot be avoided.

**Yoko** But in a way the new music showed things could be transformed by new channels of communication.

**J.L.** Yes, but as I said, nothing really changed.

**Yoko** Well, something changed and it was for the better. All I'm saying is that perhaps we can make a revolution without violence.

**J.L.** But you can't take power without a struggle . . .

**T.A.** That's the crucial thing.

**J.L.** Because when it comes to the nitty gritty they won't let the people have any power, they'll give all the rights to perform and to dance for them, but no real power . . .

**Yoko** The thing is, even after the revolution if people don't have any trust in themselves, they'll get new problems.

**J.L.** After the revolution you have the problem of keeping things going, of sorting out all the different views. It's quite natural that revolutionaries should have different solutions, that they should split into different groups and then reform, that's the dialectic, isn't it—but at the same time they need to be united against the enemy, to solidify a new order. I don't know what the answer is; obviously Mao is aware of this problem and keeps the ball moving.

**R.B.** The danger is that once a revolutionary state has been created, a new conservative bureaucracy tends to form around it. This danger tends to increase if the revolution is isolated by imperialism and there is material scarcity.

**J.L.** Once the new power has taken over they have to establish a new status quo just to keep the factories and trains running.

**R.B.** Yes, but a repressive bureaucracy doesn't necessarily run the factories or trains any better than the workers could under a system of revolutionary democracy.

**J.L.** Yes, but we all have bourgeois instincts within us, we all get tired and feel the need to relax a bit. How do you keep everything going and keep up revolutionary fervour after you've achieved what you set out to achieve? Of course Mao has kept them up to it in China, but what happens after Mao goes? Also he uses a personality cult. Perhaps that's necessary, like I said, everybody seems to need a father figure. But I've been reading *Khrushchev Remembers*—I know he's a bit of a lad himself—but he seemed to think that making a religion out of an individual was bad—that doesn't seem to be part of the basic Communist idea. Still people are people, that's the difficulty. If we took over Britain, then we'd have the job of cleaning up the bourgeoisie and keeping people in a revolutionary state of mind.

**T.A.** A personality cult is totally alien to Marxism, which is about ideas . . . Marx, Lenin and Trotsky were always against it and so was Mao to begin with but then he found it politically useful to use it to break the grip of the Liu Shao Chi group on the Party. I was in China briefly last year and it was obvious that the cult of Mao had got out of hand. Of course Mao is quite different from Stalin—Mao led a revolution while Stalin betrayed one. But that doesn't mean that there aren't serious weaknesses in the Chinese revolution. During the cultural revolution some very interesting criticisms were developed by Red Guard groups in Shanghai and elsewhere—they insisted on discussing the real issues much more openly than they were being encouraged to . . .

**J.L.** The cultural revolution seems to have been instigated by Mao himself, wasn't it? There was no national feeling "Well, there are too many opportunists and too much apathy".

**T.A.** A revolutionary leadership is necessary and one that trusts the masses, but in China the leadership stopped the cultural revolution as

well as starting it.

**R.B.** Clearly the cultural revolution was a very bold step despite the limits set on it. Mao felt in a position to take it partly because the popular participation in the Chinese revolution, built up over twenty years of people's war, was much deeper than it could be in Russia where the old order almost collapsed of itself under the tremendous strain of the First World War. Mao couldn't have instigated the masses against the Party bureaucracy unless he was confident of their support. But of course the decisive thing is to build popular power right into the heart of the new revolutionary state. In Britain unless we can create a new popular power—and here that would basically mean workers' power—really controlled by, and answerable to, the masses, then we couldn't make the revolution in the first place. Only a really deep-rooted workers' power could destroy the bourgeois state.

**Yoko** That's why it will be different when the younger generation takes over.

**J.L.** I think it wouldn't take much to get the youth here really going. You'd have to give them free rein to attack the local councils or to destroy the school authorities, like the students who break up the repression in the universities. It's already happening, though people have got to get together more. And the women are very important too, we can't have a revolution that doesn't involve and liberate women. It's so subtle the way you're taught male superiority. It took me quite a long time to realise that my maleness was cutting off certain areas for Yoko. She's a red hot liberationist and was quick to show me where I was going wrong, even though it seemed to me that I was just acting naturally. That's why I'm always interested to know how people who claim to be radical treat women.

**R.B.** There's always been at least as much male chauvinism on the left as anywhere else—though the rise of women's liberation is helping to sort that out.

**J.L.** It's ridiculous. How can you talk about power to the people unless you realise the people is both sexes.

**Yoko** You can't love someone unless you are in an equal position with them. A lot of women have to cling to men out of fear or insecurity, and that's not love—basically that's why women hate men . . .

**J.L.** . . . and vice versa . . .

**Yoko** So if you have a slave around the house, how can you expect to make a revolution outside it? The problem for women is that if we try to be free, then we naturally become lonely, because so many women are willing to become slaves, and men usually prefer that. So you always have to take the chance "Am I going to lose my man?" It's very sad.

**J.L.** Of course Yoko was well into liberation before I met her. She'd had to fight her way through a man's world—the art world is completely dominated by men—so she was full of revolutionary zeal when we met. There was never any question about it: we had to have a fifty-fifty relationship or there was no relationship, I was quick to learn. She did an article about women in *Nova* more than two years back in which she said, "Woman is the nigger of the world".

**R.B.** Of course we all live in an imperialist country that is exploiting the third world, and even our culture is involved in this. There was a time when Beatle music was plugged on Voice of America . . .

**J.L.** The Russians put it out that we were capitalist robots which we were I suppose . . .

**R.B.** They were pretty stupid not to see it was something different.

**Yoko** Let's face it Beatles was twentieth century folksong in the framework of capitalism, they couldn't do anything different if they wanted to communicate within that framework

**R.B.** I was working in Cuba when *Sergeant Pepper* was released and that's when they first started playing rock music on the radio.

**J.L.** Well I hope they see that Rock and Roll is not the same as Coca Cola. As we get beyond the dream this should be easier, that's why I'm putting out more heavy statements now and trying to shake off the teeny-bopper image. I want to get through to the right people, and I want to make what I have to say very simple and direct.

**R.B.** Your latest album sounds very simple to begin with, but the lyrics, tempo and melody build up into a complexity one only gradually becomes aware of. Like the track "Mumma's Dead" echoes the nursery song "Three Blind Mice" and it's about a child-hood trauma.

**J.L.** The tune does, it was that sort of feeling, almost like a Haiku poem. I just recently got into Haiku in Japan and I just think it's fantastic. Obviously, when you get rid of a whole section of illusion in your mind you're left with great precision. Yoko was showing me some of these Haiku in the original. The difference between them and Longfellow is immense. Instead of a long flowery poem the Haiku would say "Yellow flower in white bowl on wooden table" which gives you the whole picture, really.

**T.A.** How did you find Japan?

**J.L.** I think it's ripe for Communism, I mean the workers have terrible conditions there and many unions are just run by the big companies. They're building factories coast to coast and the smog is dreadful, it chokes you. It's all bullshit about them doing so well in Japan. The workers in different countries have got to get together. What's your position on the Common Market? The *Morning Star* is against it but I'm not sure at all. The feeling I have is that it would be a conglomeration of Capitalist Europe but that the movement of workers throughout Europe would bring them together so that it could consolidate communism as well as capitalism I think.

**T.A.** We should work for a united workers Europe, a Socialist United States of Europe, a Red Europe . . .

**J.L.** It is fantastic to think of the power workers could have with the Italians and Germans together and all that gear.

**T.A.** How do you think we can destroy the capitalist system here in Britain John?

**J.L.** I think only by making the workers aware of the really unhappy position they are in, breaking the dream they are surrounded by. They think they are in a wonderful free-speaking country, they've got cars and tellys and they don't want to think there's anything more to life, they are prepared to let the bosses run them, to see their children fucked up in school. They're dreaming someone else's dream, it's not even their own. They should realise that the Blacks and the Irish are being harassed and repressed and that they will be next. As soon as they start being aware of all that, we can really begin to do something. The workers can start to take over. Like Marx said, "To each according to his need"—I think that would work well here.



But we'd also have to infiltrate the army too, because they are well trained to kill us all. We've got to start all this from where we ourselves are oppressed. I think it's false, shallow, to be giving to others when your own need is great. The idea is not to comfort people, not to make them feel better but to make them feel worse, to constantly put before them the degradations and humiliations they go through to get what they call a living wage.

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# the records



## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Power to the people  
Power to the people  
Power to the people  
Power to the people right on

Say we want a revolution  
We better get it on right away  
Get on your feet  
And into the street, singing...  
Chorus... Power to the people

A million workers working for nothing  
You better give 'em what they really own  
We gotta put you down  
When we come into town, singing...  
Chorus... Power to the people

I gotta ask you comrades and brothers  
How do you treat your own women back home  
She got to be herself  
So you can free yourself  
Chorus... Power to the people

*John Lennon's forthcoming single.  
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## John Lennon/Plastic Ono Band PCS 7124

When I first heard about this record I was worried that Lennon might have done a Godard—that politics might have smothered art. Listening to it I realised that I could not have been more wrong: the politics and the music are bound together through aesthetic necessity. Godard's problem is that his ultra-revolutionary world-view is simply and directly transposed onto the aesthetic level in a war against all artistic forms and conventions. Lennon refuses to make any equation between his music and politics or to imply that rock = revolution as The Doors or Jefferson Airplane have done. Indeed, *Working Class Hero* explicitly asserts the opposite: that the proletarian super-star is a convenient safety valve for bourgeois society, not an index of social liberation. The reason why the LP is able to fuse music and politics so successfully is almost certainly that both grow out of very deeply-felt personal experience: of oppression and neglect in childhood, and their complementary obverse when he became naked Emperor of the Dream. This is why the songs about childhood so powerfully reinforce the political theme, and why both lyric and melody have the simplicity of an elemental force.

## Yoko Ono/Plastic Ono Band Sapor 17

Although at first listening Yoko's sound seems to derive from contemporary avant garde music in fact it is closer to the roots of rock than is at first apparent—which is why it goes so well with Ornette Coleman's trumpet or Lennon's guitar on this LP. Andrew Chester has suggested a distinction between two types of musical construction, the extensional and the intensional, which can help explain this (NLR 62). Most Western classical music is *extensional* in the sense that it builds up themes, variations and counterpoint on the basis of musical "atoms"—standard notes which do not themselves vary but which form intricate patterns of sound. This is why the human voice is not a dominant element in composition and is encouraged to develop the precision and invariance of an instrument when it is used. Jazz, and much other non-European music (including the Japanese), develop sound in a quite different, *intensional* manner: the music emerges from continual modulations of harmony and inflections of the beat. The human voice as the most flexible of all instruments is naturally dominant. Yoko's music is intensional in this sense, that is why it is so close to the blues and has a similar emotional impact on the listener, and is so far from atonal music with its geometrical constructions. A number of rock groups have recently sought to return to the roots and recapture the intensional complexity of country music. Creedence Clearwater can produce an acceptable carbon copy of the original and The Band have sought to develop and re-interpret this tradition. Those who are finding Creedence Clearwater increasingly mechanical, The Band increasingly insipid, and both groups repetitious, should welcome Yoko's new record as a fascinating and potent new departure. Feeling is transmuted into liquid sound—a cleansing torrent which obeys no formal rules that do not flow from within itself. It will be interesting to see whether musicians who do not have Yoko's evident familiarity with oriental musical traditions will be able to follow her. Whether they can or not, this double album helps to prove that the way out of the present stagnation of rock lies as much in rediscovering the intensional as in pursuing the path of extensional development.

R.B.

## OPEN YOUR BOX

Open your box  
Open your box

Open your windows  
Open your closets  
Open your bottles  
Open your skirts  
Open your flies  
Come on come on open your pants

Open your ears  
Open your eyes  
Open your nose

Open your mouth  
Open your cold feet  
Open your thighs  
Come on come on John open your legs

Open your doors  
Open your schools  
Open your prisons  
Open your factories  
Open your parliaments  
Open your cities  
Come on come on lets open the world

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## WORKING CLASS HERO

As soon as you're born they make you feel small  
By giving you no time instead of it all  
Till the pain is so big you feel nothing at all  
A working class hero is something to be  
A working class hero is something to be

They hurt you at home and they hit you at school  
They hate you if you're clever and they despise  
a fool  
Till you're so fucking crazy you can't follow  
their rules  
A working class hero is something to be  
A working class hero is something to be

When they've tortured and scared you for 20 odd  
years  
Then they expect you to pick a career  
When you can't really function you're so full of  
fear  
A working class hero is something to be  
A working class hero is something to be

Keep you doped with religion and sex and TV  
And you think you're so clever and classless and  
free  
But you're still fucking peasants as far as I can  
see  
A working class hero is something to be  
A working class hero is something to be

There's room at the top they are telling you still  
But first you must learn how to smile as you kill  
If you want to be like the folks on the hill  
A working class hero is something to be

Yes, a working class hero is something to be  
If you want to be a hero well just follow me  
If you want to be a hero well just follow me

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# LIBERATION OF WOMEN A REVOLUTIONARY TASK

conditions for their economic and social emancipation. By removing all legal and economic props to the family and marriage, it freed women and children from the power of the father and husband. It abolished the connection between property and paternity and the exclusive sanction of marital sexuality. To allow women to participate in production on an equal footing with men, the economic functions of the family were socialised. No doubt much of this remained on paper for a greater part of the population; this gigantic and novel experiment had an almost utopian character in Russia at the time, but it provided invaluable experience for all other revolutions. Trotsky was to write, in his "Problems of Life" that it had been relatively easy for the Bolsheviks to grant women *legal* equality; that it was proving far more difficult to give them *economic* equality (in the sense of introducing them into production on the same footing as men); that the really difficult task, and that which was still out of reach for the moment (this was in 1924), was however to make women *socially* equal—i.e. equal inside the family. The accomplishment of this last task would in fact mean an end to the family, at least in any form in which it had existed hitherto. It would involve removing from the shoulders of women all responsibility for housework and childrearing and the socialisation of these functions would require vast investments, investments which were still far beyond the capacities of the isolated and war-devastated Soviet State. It would mean constructing public kitchens, restaurants and laundries for the entire population. It would involve the provision of creches and infant schools for all—ultimately it would involve a massive revolution in housing and architecture to accommodate the new forms of social organisation, which would spring up in the place of the old family, once the latter's economic props had been removed. The Stalinist counter-revolution terminated this experiment and turned the clock back so that in the late thirties the Soviet Union was hardly distinguishable from the capitalist world in its treatment of women.

## ECONOMY AND IDEOLOGY

Between the thirties and the sixties there has been a fluctuation in the female labour force in the advanced capitalist countries. At the time of the war women participated massively in production; after the war they were withdrawn from the labour market—showing once again the role of the female labour as a reserve of force. This withdrawal of women from the labour market is always accompanied by an ideological onslaught that has been vividly described by many women writers. Betty Friedan in her *Feminine Mystique* described the situation of women in post-war United States. De Beauvoir's *Second Sex* is a landmark in the history of revolutionary



writings on women. Although not a Marxist, she succeeded better than previous writers on this subject in capturing the essence of bourgeois ideology in relationship to women. Much work still remains to be done: the classical Marxist tradition has not provided an adequate theory of the role of the family in the social formation or the role of women in society. The relationship between female militancy in the capitalist countries and the periodic reconstitution of the labour force in the search for cheaper labour remains to be explored as well as the connection between this militancy and other forms of the class struggle.



## NEITHER MALE CHAUVINISM NOR FEMINISM

The women's liberation movement of today lacks the concreteness of the demand for the vote, but its literature is genuinely radical in the sense that women realise more and more that they cannot be free under the present system. However, *feminist* recommendations for the future are doomed to impotence. Society cannot be changed radically without the *proletarian* revolution—any other

perspective leads either to a struggle to change the women's status within the present system or utopian daydreaming. Talking in terms of the generic categories of "men" and "women" only produces confusion. For women, an insistence on *female* solidarity against *male* oppression has historically been necessary. But to characterise "men" as enemies is a disastrous political position, because men and women equally belong to different and antagonistic classes, and therefore have different class loyalties. Bourgeois men in the past have talked about female emancipation. For a social-democrat today, the struggle against women's oppression may seem a struggle for "human rights"—but how to specify these rights in a society based on inequality? Feminism claims that women's lib is an inter-class movement because all women are oppressed irrespective of their class background. Male chauvinism on the other hand presents all men as superior sex. Both are twin ideologies of the ruling class, the consequence of its sexual politics (male chauvinism being more reactionary because directed by a privileged against an oppressed sex).



## LIBERATION OF WOMEN IS A REVOLUTIONARY TASK

For a revolutionary the struggle for women's liberation is a vital question of the revolution to come, a revolution that is not just the overthrow of the bourgeois rule but a long and painful process of preparation for and consolidation of this decisive rupture. Political and cultural revolution must necessarily accompany changes in economic organisation. The revolution in the West will take off from a more advanced economic base than did,



for example, the Russian revolution. But the bourgeois rule in the West is much more entrenched ideologically, less visible and thus in some ways more powerful. It poses for revolutionary women special and difficult tasks never tackled before. Should women organise on the basis of women's demands alone or do they have to attack all aspects of the bourgeois rule? This rule has proved itself to be immensely flexible; is there anything to prevent it from granting greater freedom to women? It certainly cannot grant *all* women equality with men, even if this equality is defined in bourgeois terms—but it does not follow that one has to wait for the revolution to occur, because the revolution cannot happen *at all* without the participation of women. Women cannot agree to the argument often presented within the trade union movement that "it is not the right moment" to push their demands or that their political activity divides the working class—nothing divides the working class more than the persistence of inequality and bourgeois ideology among its members. The revolution starts *now* and immense work remains to be done.



Starting now our demands must incorporate demands for real liberation of women. The four demands around which women are uniting today are only a beginning.

Branka Magas

# PALESTINE: THE FUTURE OF THE RESISTANCE



The clashes in Jordan of a few weeks ago are an additional proof of the deterioration of the relationship of forces at the expense of the Palestinian resistance. During the previous crises before September 1970 the resistance was able to ride the rising tide of mobilisation. Now, however, it is suffering the direct political and military consequences which follow from the putting in practice of the Cairo agreements. Today the resistance is isolated, it is outside the camps and towns, and that means outside the protection of the Jordanian and Palestinian masses. It is concentrated in places which have been agreed on in Cairo and is therefore exposed to the attacks of the Jordanian army. For four months the army has been hunting down the resistance... or what is left of it.

## The "strengthening" of the Throne

Wasfi Tall's nomination as Prime Minister is Hussein's way of strengthening and to some extent even reconstructing the state apparatus, which had been damaged by the development of the resistance. He had to eliminate every possibility which could lead back to the "dual power" situation which developed in the course of '69 and '70. The first acts of the Government were the purging of the administration and the police (the army having been already quite thoroughly purged after the June '70 crisis). During his international tour last month, Hussein obtained financial and military aid from Great Britain and the United States (Kuwait and Saudi Arabia having restarted their financial aid). An airlift between West Germany and Zarka Airport (ex-Revolution Airport of the Popular Front) provided modern material to rearm the Royal Army. Thus Hussein receives

the reward from his imperialist masters, who thank him for his loyalty.

## The role and political consequences of the clashes

The elimination of the resistance in the towns—the direct result of the Cairo agreements—explains the nature of the recent clashes, which have taken place in outlying areas (Bakaa 20 kilometres from Amman) and the total lack of mass mobilisation. Today the army controls the towns. It does not tolerate the presence of the popular militia and it even intervenes against small demonstrations which take place in the refugee camps. Thus even inside the Palestinian camps the resistance is hunted down. Those



people who thought that they could make a provisional truce based on Hussein's word and control by the Arab states are now paying for their naivety and their total lack of political and military preparedness. A great part of the Palestinian resistance was blinded by the reactionary mythology of "brother Arab" through a lack of understanding of the international nature of imperialism in its different forms (Zionism, Arab reaction).

On the other hand, the intervention of the army in the heart of the camps tends to develop an attitude in favour of the unification of Transjordan and occupied Cisjordan (West Bank). Appeals launched by prominent Palestinians from the occupied territories has encouraged this situation.

Hussein seems more and more reticent towards the American imperialist plan to try to create a Palestinian state in the framework of a federation including Transjordan. While liquidating the Palestinian resistance, he wants to prove that he is a valuable intermediary in the framework of a global solution. The future of the Palestinian resistance also depends more



a weighty argument from the petit bourgeois regimes in their negotiations with imperialism.

On the other hand one can see beyond Hussein's initiatives the incapacity of the UAR-Libya-Syria bloc to bring effective pressure to bear on the Jordan regime. Nasser's death has released centrifugal tendencies from behind the united facade of the Arab chiefs.

In Cisjordan too, an attempt has been made to construct a neutral third force, not linked to Hussein ("the butcher of the people") or to the "terrorists" (the organisations of the resistance). This would be the social force capable of supporting the Palestinian state. The movement of refugees towards occupied Cisjordan reinforces such a perspective.

## The future of the resistance

The Left of the resistance alone can bring forward the political answers required, faced with local and international initiatives and with the deterioration of the political and military situation. After the failure of the CCRP (Coordinating Committee for the Palestinian Resistance)'s unity attempt, the left wing of the resistance has put forward a number of perspectives, notably the clandestine rebuilding of the resistance. Various executions by Jordanian or Lebanese torturers seem to indicate that a part of the Palestinian resistance has taken this road.

In a self critical text on the crisis of September 1970, the Democratic Front (FPDLP) has affirmed the necessity of consistent political work aimed at the Jordanian peasants (the slogan of agrarian reforms is put forward) and workers (unity at the level of the Unions and organisational links with the resistance). It is only by this mole-like work in Jordan and Lebanon and not by the old fantasies that the resistance linked with other new revolutionary forces, notably Lebanese, will succeed in breaking the stranglehold of Hussein's troops and in outwitting the manoeuvres of the petit bourgeois regimes.

At a time when throughout the world Zionist forces are feeding on Stalinism (the Leningrad trial) to consolidate their unity (quasi-fascist groups to "left" Zionists), revolutionary militants must intensify their support to the Palestinian people and to the resistance, its only spokesman.



than ever on the outcome of the plan leading to the creation of a Palestinian state.

This plan, with which the Arab petit bourgeois is in agreement, fits in well in its pan-Arab politics since it is trying to liquidate the results of the June 1967 war. When Sadat declares bluntly and more sharply than Nasser that he will not tolerate the total crushing of the Palestinian resistance, he means that the Palestinian resistance, or at least a part of it, must be integrated in an overall solution. If he feels free to make such statements, it is only because Hussein has deeply undermined the resistance and its total crushing would remove



A. Yaldachs  
B. Maillot

# TURKEY: democratic or socialist revolution?

For almost two years now Turkey has experienced a continuous agitation marked by numerous strikes with occupations, university struggles (teachers and students) putting forward demands and agitating on anti-imperialist themes. Turkey's participation in NATO, the economic and military implantation of the United States, and the sharpness of the Cypriot struggle have always been the mobilisation points of the Turkish masses.

The revolutionary upsurge in the Middle East marked by the appearance of the Palestinian resistance has inspired a movement of international solidarity which has transcended the Islamic framework. One of the factors has been the realisation that U.S. bases in Turkey can act at any time as the starting point for an intervention in the entire region against any development of the revolutionary movement, as the Jordan crisis in September 1970 showed quite clearly. In addition, through its common frontier with the USSR, Turkey has a strategic interest of fundamental importance for U.S. imperialism. The Ottoman Empire, known not so long ago as the "Sick Man of the Middle East", the object of a colonialist carve-up even before World War I, is today reduced to Turkey, one of the pawns of imperialism, gateway to the Arab world.

*From Kemalism to imperialist dependence*  
The rise of the Arab nationalist movement and the dismantling of the Ottoman Empire finished after the 1914-18 War, allowing the Army, which had been defeated on various fronts, to direct itself to the seizure of power at home. The Kemalist "Revolution" attained its ends in 1923 and started Turkey on the road of Westernisation, thus formalising imperialist penetration. By an anti-working class policy (prohibition of the Communist Party in 1923, abolition of the right to strike, etc.) and by oppression of national minorities, it sought to promote the mortgaged birth of a national bourgeoisie and to diminish the strength of religious conservatism. That was the real meaning of the "six point" programme of Kemalism: nationalism—populism—statism—secularism—republicanism—reformism. Power was concentrated into the hands of the Kemalist PRP (People's Republican Party), the only legal party.

After the Second World War, through its strategic position, Turkey attracted the designs of the Soviet bureaucracy to complete its surrounding banks.

This Stalinist policy allowed the bourgeoisie to "justify" to the masses its total involvement in the imperialist camp, as the sending of Turkish troops to Korea demonstrated (the last soldiers stationed there returned only a month ago).

The heterogeneity of the PRP which included soldiers of petit bourgeois origin, land owners and government bureaucrats, indicated the inevitability of a split. The Democratic Party founded by ex-leaders of the PRP took the pro-imperialist policy to its extreme when it came to power in 1950. Participation in the

NATO pact brought Turkey to play a direct part in the struggle against revolutionary movements. The leadership engaged in a policy of endless self-criticism and threw up the slogan of a "millionaire in each district".

The result of the Bandung Conference, the success of Nasserism after the nationalisation of the Suez Canal, and the Syrian-Egyptian Unity project, the coup d'etat of Kassem in Iraq in 1958 rekindled the ambitions of those elements in the army nostalgic for Kemalism. The army as the only alternative political force to the ultra-conservatism of the PRP took power away from it on May 27th 1960, and put in its place the Adnan Menderes dictatorship.

## THE SHARPENING STRUGGLE TODAY (1960-70)

### *Imperialist penetration*

Today Turkey is one of the most important imperialist positions in the region. Of course, U.S. imperialism is dominant, but it is associated with the economic presence of West Germany (pharmaceutical industry, Mercedes), and of Great Britain. The U.S. Army occupies bases in the Black Sea (Samsun, Trabzum), Aegean Sea and Mediterranean (Izmir, Adana and Karasmir near Istanbul).

The ruling party (Justice Party—AP) and all the right wing parties are in the pay of imperialism. The CIA is one of the mechanisms by which the state rules Turkey. The foreign debt of Turkey increased in September 1967 to 1.8 thousand million dollars while foreign capital in Turkey grew from 65 million Turkish pounds in 1958 to 500,000 million in 1966.

Cultural repression is one of the bases of power too. Out of a total of 40% illiterates, 90% are peasants, and 13,000 villages are still without schools. In addition, from 1963 to 1968, prices have increased 72%, thus sharply cutting down the living standards of the less favoured classes.

### *An explosive situation*

Thanks to the electoral farce in 1961, the Democratic Party came to power under the name of the Justice Party (Adalet Party); it is still in power today.

At the same time the Turkish Workers Party was founded by Ali Aybar and some social-democratic union leaders. It has a reformist and parliamentary line: it organises a union, DISK, to oppose the official unionism of the Union Confederation of Turkey (Turk IS) set up by American specialists and the ruling party (900,000 members as against 70,000 in DISK).

Since 1967 struggles have intensified. The student movement which gains nourishment from the workers struggles plays an important role in them, notably in anti-imperialist demonstrations linked to the daily class struggle.

—1968: mobilisations against the presence of American bases.

—June 1969: occupation of the University of Ankara and Istanbul, confrontations with the police, soon relieved by the Army.

As well as university struggles, more than 200 important strikes have taken place: in the American bases (1967), in the Zonguldak mines (1968). Often violent strikes with occupations, clashes with the police or the Army. Even though the right to strike only dates back to 1963, the working class has demonstrated great

maturity, a very advanced class consciousness and has linked itself with the student movement.

In June 1970 the Government wanted to pass through an anti-working class law banning DISK. The response was overwhelming: 100,000 workers demonstrated and clashed violently against the forces of bourgeois order. The workers' leaders were outflanked in the face of initiatives from the base (setting up of defence committees) which transcended their legalistic practice. The continuing deterioration of buying power (66.6% devaluation of the Turkish pound in August 1970), the banning of strikes by state employees, the reactionary policy aimed at creating fascist groups, in assassinating workers and students' leaders, raises up an opposition today even inside the Army. Sixty-nine Turkish officers sent a statement to the newspapers in which they complain about the immunity which the fascists enjoy, condemning in severe terms the acts of terrorism of the extreme right and openly defending the progressive student elements.

The countryside where three-quarters of the Turkish population lives (35 million) is not free from struggles. Some of the land of the latifundists has been occupied and clashes have taken place with the police and army.

### *The deepness of the crisis and the absence of a vanguard party*

The reformism of the Turkish Workers Party, the weakness of the Turkish Communist Party

(TCP) explains the absence of a revolutionary solution to a crisis which has lasted for nearly 10 years. Outside of this opposition there exist in Turkey some vanguard nuclei, some of whom snatch at the theory of the "bloc of four classes". Today, faced with the constant rise of class struggles, the construction of the revolutionary party is the task of prime importance for Turkish revolutionaries. Some comrades are engaged in this process.

The sharpness of the crisis and the inability of the government to deal with it increases the danger of a military coup d'etat which would be a brake on the radicalisation of the masses. The strategic importance of the region may lead imperialism to intervene directly or indirectly to halt the revolutionary upsurge in Turkey, which through its particularity has suffered little from the setback to the revolutionary struggle in the region brought about by the defeat suffered by the Palestinian resistance in September 1970. But the present setback of the revolutionary forces in the Middle East could have serious consequences in Turkey as well. After the crisis of September 1970, U.S. imperialism has restarted its arms supplies to Turkey. Thus faced by the internationalisation of the struggle, revolutionaries must work at the junction of the centres of struggle in the region.

*Down with imperialism and its lackeys*

*For the joining up of the different fronts of struggles in the Middle East!*  
Mayol-Erika

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# the great betrayal?



Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay MacDonald?

One of the myths that helps to keep the Labour left going is the belief that at some time in the past the Labour Party was a party which really stood for the interests of the working class. What is needed, we are told, is to "recapture" the Labour Party from the right wing. The truth is completely different. The Labour Party has never been a party representing the interests of the working class. We can see this very clearly if we consider what we are always told was the greatest "betrayal" of the Labour Party leaders, that of 1931. In that year the main leaders of the Party entered into a coalition with the Tories with the aim of cutting unemployment pay. The Labour "lefts" tell us that this was a betrayal, but in fact it was completely in line with the traditional policies of the Labour Party, and it is in fact today not merely consistent with the policies of the Labour leadership, but also with the policies of the "left" wing. The Tribunitaries and their supporters are merely less realistic than the right wing in that they do not see the consequences of the policies they advocate.

## The early Labour Party

Right at the Labour Party's beginning, at the 1900 conference of the Labour Representation Committee, it was made clear that the Labour Party was not going to be made a party of real struggle. A motion that "the representatives of the working class movement in the House of Commons would form a distinct party based on the recognition of the class war and having for its ultimate object the socialisation of the means of production" was defeated. Not until 1918 was the famous Clause 4 adopted which committed the party to a policy of nationalisation, and then it was only adopted because of the huge impetus to working class development given by the Russian Revolution.

The first of many manoeuvres entered into by the Party came in 1903 when the Party leaders MacDonald and Hardie entered into a secret electoral agreement with the Liberal Party. This resulted in the Labour Party supporting in Parliament a government which used troops against the South Wales miners and which threatened to use gunships to shell strikers in Liverpool. After this stirring episode came the flag waving of the First World War in which the Labour Party supported the use of armies to defend the colonies of the British Empire. This habit of defending the Empire was continued by the first Labour government in 1924 which appointed as Minister for the Colonies J. H. Thomas, the railwaymen's leader, whose main enjoyments were dressing

up in evening suits and carrying out campaigns against the militants inside his own union. Needless to say, it was never even suggested by this government that the British Empire, which exploited and crushed a quarter of humanity, should be given up. This government was also notable for a superb scandal in which it was revealed that the Prime Minister MacDonald had received a Daimler and 30,000 £1 shares from the head of the McVitie and Price company. This government was so ineffectual it could not even enact a bill giving a minimum wage to agricultural workers. Totally unsurprisingly, when this government fell, the working class did not bother to elect it a second time.

The General Strike naturally had the Labour Party terrified. The darling of the Labour Party, Beatrice Webb, summed up their feelings when she said, "The failure of the General Strike of 1926 will be one of the most significant landmarks in the history of the British working class. Future historians will, I think, regard it as the death gasp of that pernicious doctrine of 'workers' control' of public affairs... This absurd doctrine was introduced into British working class life by Tom Mann and the guild socialists... On the whole, I think, it was a proletarian distemper which had to run its course and like other distempers it is well to have it over and done with at the cost of a lengthy convalescence." J. H. Thomas was even more open in his fear that the working class might actually do something which really threatened capitalism. He stated in the House of Commons, "What I feared most about this strike more than anything else was this—if by chance it should have got out of the hands of those who would be able to exercise some control, every sane man knows what would have happened. I thank God it never did." These are the true ideas of the Labourite. Whenever they enter a fight they are more scared of the working class actually doing something than they are concerned about fighting the employing class.

## The 1929 Labour government

The sell-out of the General Strike in 1926 led to the demoralisation of the mass of the working class. This demoralisation lasted for nearly 20 years. This was not completely apparent at first, however. The ruling class pushed home their complete triumph a little too openly. The most hated of their measures was the extremely repressive 1927 Trade Disputes and Trade Union Act, which declared illegal sympathy strikes, forbade civil servants to belong to trade unions affiliated to the TUC, and placed the political levy to the Labour Party on a contracting in and not a contracting out basis. As a

result of resentment against these and similar measures, in the 1929 General Election Labour was elected as the largest single party in Parliament. It was, however, still not a party with an overall majority.

The key problem facing the Party was unemployment, which stood at over a million. This represented nearly 10% of the insured working forces. The test by which any Labour government would be judged was by how it attempted to solve the problem of unemployment. But here the reformist nature of the Labour Party was to be fatal.

In 1929 the entire capitalist system was in a state of economic collapse. In all countries unemployment was increasing at a tremendous rate. In the United States the stock market had collapsed. In Germany raging unemployment was leading millions of the German working class to support Hitler's Nazi Party. In a period of collapse of the capitalist economic system, it was impossible to solve the problem of unemployment by capitalist methods. Only the establishment of a totally nationalised economy and a break with the world market could do so. This would have involved using the full strength of the working class against the capitalist system, and this of course the Labour Party refused to do. It set out to solve the problem of unemployment in capitalist terms and from that moment on it was doomed.

By 1931 the economic situation was completely out of hand. Unemployment had reached the staggering total of 2,707,000. Trade union membership had fallen to half its size in 1920. The answer of the committee set up by the Labour Party to investigate the problem? It recommended a cut in unemployment benefit of 20%. Initially the government hesitated, but its hand was forced when in the summer of 1931 a series of European banks collapsed, leading to massive panic amongst all financiers and the withdrawal of investments from Britain.

In response to this the *entire* Labour Cabinet agreed to savings of £56 million including the introduction of a means test for the transitional benefit paid before unemployment benefit proper was paid, and the raising of insurance contributions thus making the employed workers pay for supporting the unemployed ones.

It is only at this point that the members of the Labour "left" start taking up the story. The betrayal for this consists of the fact that in order to get through a cut in unemployment pay MacDonald then led the leading members of his Labour Cabinet into a coalition with the Tories. But this was merely the straw which broke the

camel's back. The entire Labour Cabinet had agreed to the majority of welfare cuts and MacDonald was only carrying the policy of accepting the dictates of the capitalist economy to its logical conclusion. He was in fact far more realistic than the members of the Cabinet who opposed the cuts in unemployment benefit. They accepted the policy of supporting capitalism and then refused to accept the consequences—MacDonald supported the policy and was prepared to accept the consequences. Having accepted the policy, the opponents of MacDonald had no alternative to offer, and became a historical irrelevance. What happened in 1931 was not the betrayal of the Labour Party but the fulfilment of its historical role—that of the last line of defence for capitalism.

## The lessons

1931 did not finish the Labour Party. On the contrary, after a period the Labour Party emerged with a stronger hold over the working class. It was to play the role of saving capitalism once again in 1945-51. What lessons can we draw from this?

Firstly it is quite clear that the capitalist class sees the Labour Party as a weapon for attacking and dealing with the working class. Lord Samuel pointed out in 1931 that, "In view of the fact that the necessary economies would prove most unpalatable to working classes, it would be in the general interest if they were imposed by a Labour government." What he meant by this was of course that if a Labour government introduced measures attacking the working class, sections of the working class would be confused by this and would not fight the Labour government. This was the same argument as was used by, for example, the *Economist* magazine in 1964. They believed that the trade unions would not fight an incomes policy introduced by the Labour Party.

Secondly, it is clear that the policy of the Labour Party, including its "lefts", of trying to find solutions to problems affecting the working class within the framework of capitalism, and that the frequent open onslaughts of the Labour Party against the working class—for example, the 1931 unemployment cuts, the attempted imprisoning of strikers during the post-war Labour government, the *In Place of Strife* anti-union proposals—are not "betrayals" of the Labour Party, but on the contrary result inevitably from its refusal to mobilise the full strength of the working class against capitalism.

Most revolutionaries have learned these lessons, but some at least have not understood a third lesson, and that is that it does not at all follow that because the Labour Party openly attacks the working class, the working class will turn to a revolutionary solution to its problems. To believe that is to fall prey to the "passive, fatalistic attitude to the fundamental tasks of the revolution" which Trotsky condemns so bitterly. On the contrary, if the working class enters a period of social crisis without its illusions in the Labour Party being challenged, the most likely outcome of a Labour government, which attacks the working class will be a mass disillusionment with politics on the part of the majority of the working class. This means that revolutionaries should not advance slogans such as "Labour to power with a socialist programme" but on the contrary the main thrust of their argument must be with slogans which make it clear that workers have nothing to expect at all from the Labour Party. The lesson of 1931 is not simply that the role of the Labour Party is to defend capitalism, but also that even when does so openly, workers will not automatically turn from the Labour Party towards revolutionary alternatives.

Alan Jones

# molehills

## FASCISTS IN THE SQUARE AGAIN!!

The National Democratic Party intends to hold a rally at Trafalgar Square on the afternoon of Sunday 28th March. This is the first Fascist rally to be held in London since Mosley's in 1962, which was stopped by anti-fascists.

**THE NDP CAN BE STOPPED TOO!!**  
What is the NDP?

The NDP was founded in 1964 by Dr. David Brown, who was also a founder member of the Racial Preservation Society.

The policies of the NDP are similar to those of the National Front—they are both FASCIST. The NDP is also neo-Nazi, and is in contact with foreign Nazis.

The NDP has strong links with the East Anglia Forum, led by the neo-Nazi Baron brothers. Kevin Baron was described by John Tyndall of the NF as "a staunch devotee of National Socialism."

Carty Renford of Forest Hill, South London, is now in hospital suffering from multiple burns received when four petrol bombs were thrown into a house on January 3rd. Two youths, both members of Fascist organisations, have been charged.

The growing climate of repression and racialism is encouraging fascists like the NDP and the NF.

**STOP THE NDP RALLY, MARCH 28.**

Issued by the Anti-Fascist Committee of Great Britain, S.E.3.

## ECONOMIC STAGNATION

A recent "expert" review of the economy, signed by the country's leading academic economists, states "To turn to aggregate demand, the gross domestic product has shown little growth over the past 12 months. Output was flat in the first half of 1970 and in the second half seems to have been a mere 1½% higher than in the second half of 1969"—from the "London and Cambridge Economic Bulletin" for the last quarter of 1970, published February 1971.

## WHY ACCEPT CAPITALISM?

The Tory Party pressure group called the Bow Group has just published a "memorandum on pay, inflation and incomes policy". They call it "The Wages of Fear". Poorly produced, it calls for a statutory incomes policy, and could be totally ignored except for one interesting admission—"Unfortunately, for reasons which we shall discuss shortly, it is impracticable to operate a capitalist system without such large-scale inequalities. Thus we have a dilemma. People want capitalism, at least in the negative sense of not wanting the only feasible alternative, but they are unwilling to accept one of its essential features" (our emphasis). The document is dated January 1971. It helps to explain how prominent Tory politicians view the popularity of the system they operate.

## ISRAELI BLACK PANTHERS

A group of Black Jews in Israel who see themselves as a Black Panther group and have been extremely active against racism in Israel are exciting all the Jasers of the Zionists. 25 Black Panther leaders were recently arrested in Jerusalem for the intention of holding a public demo. together with Matzpen. Several Matzpen comrades were also arrested. In the next Mole we will report on this new movement in some detail.

Nowhere are middle-class politics more pathetic than in the North of Ireland. The *Irish Times* on February 23rd reports that the Alliance Party (a huddling together of middle-class Protestants and Catholics), in Queens University Belfast, had condemned the displaying of the Irish Tricolour and Starry Plough Flag by members of the Queens Republican Club, who were wearing combat jackets and black berets. They say:

"Black berets and combat jackets are now universally seen as symbols of Republican militarism. A public display of the same can do nothing but perpetuate Protestant fears of an IRA bloodbath, while encouraging the Unionist establishment in a further swing to the right." They are also quoted as saying that the right of the Republican Club to organise should not be a cover for "the activities of fascist gangsters fomenting sectarian warfare."

All the craven fear of liberalism for revolutionary action is expressed here. The Queens Republican Club, although technically illegal, is the spearhead of the left within the University; they have succeeded in getting the Students Union committed to the policy of an "Irish Workers Republic", and have been in the forefront of struggles for student democracy and against the University's links with South Africa. They display the flag of the heroic 1916 Dublin Rising, and the flag of the world's first workers' militia. For this they are called "fascist."

The North of Ireland is now under permanent military occupation. The Catholic national minority in its ghettos is fighting back against the British Army. More and more young people will be donning the black beret and green combat jacket of the IRA, "Official" as in Queens, or "Provisional" as in Ballymurphy and the Ardoyne. It is the uniform of the armed vanguard of the oppressed minority.

The Red Mole hails the Queens Republican Club as the vanguard of a new generation of Irish men and women who are now opening up another stage in the struggle for national liberation. We express our solidarity with them, and know that they will not stop until the Tricolour and Starry Plough fly over, not just Queens University Belfast, but a Workers Republic of Ireland.

They will be remembered when irrelevancies like the Alliance Party are forgotten forever.

## PRICES AND TAXES TO GO UP?

The capitalist press often turns to forecasting the economic future. On 22nd February 1971, *The Times* carried an article by Wynne Godley—"until last summer, he was deputy director of the Treasury economic section, where his special interests were economic forecasting..." Now an academic at Cambridge, this ex-government adviser states "... on the most favourable assumptions about the initial cost of EEC membership, the growth of consumption between 1969 and 1974 will have to be constrained to an average of about 2½% a year... personal consumption will, on our assumptions, have to be reduced by at least £550 million... it seems clear that a substantial proportion of the reduction in personal consumption below trend will be brought about by the increase in food prices which is partly the result of higher import prices, partly of import levies and partly lower subsidies. Nevertheless, we conclude that even allowing for this, the net burden of taxation will have to become heavier rather than lighter taking the period as a whole." (our emphases)

## MORE AND MORE MILITANCY

A capitalist nightmare is turning into reality. A year ago, Prime Minister Harold Wilson said, "We see all over the industrial world an increasing degree of industrial militancy of international proportions... the strike problem is going to be for all of us one of the big problems... as we enter the 1970s"—speech to New York audience (*Times*, 2nd February, 1970). Today, those fears are proved to be correct, as more and more workers take action in the struggle for better conditions and wages. The "Department of Employment Gazette" in Britain, for January 1971, shows:

"Number of Working Days Lost in Strikes and Stoppages"	
1968	4,690,000
1969	6,846,000
1970	10,970,000
Number of Strikes	
1968	2,378
1969	3,021
1970	3,888

And abroad, the workers' struggle also grows, as *The Times* reports to bosses in Britain: "Danger Signs in Holland and Belgium—Docile Workers turning to militancy" (11th February 1971). "France—may, 1968, still casts its shadow over workers... it is one of the fundamentals of modern France that this sort of explosion could happen again" (9th February 1971).

## LESS HOUSEBUILDING

"During 1970, 319,000 permanent houses and flats were started and 351,800 completed in Great Britain, compared with 343,500 and 366,800 in 1969"—quote from "Housing Report for 1970", Department of the Environment. The statistics in this report show a steady decline in housebuilding since 1967-68. Also, the same report states—

## LESS SLUM-CLEARANCE

"The total number of houses demolished or closed in England and Wales as a result of slum clearance action in 1970 was 67,800, compared with 69,200 in 1969."

## BRITISH IMPERIALISM

"... overseas investment is the seed-corn of our future prosperity... and private investment overseas is at present running at about £600 to £700 million a year. This is investment for the future, and it is good for the future of our country"—from speech by Chancellor of the Exchequer Anthony Barber to the Overseas Bankers Club Banquet of 1st February 1971.

## Why Europe?

However, in the very same speech, the Chancellor had to confess that British capitalism alone could not survive in the face of imperialist competition of modern dimensions—"I turn now to the single most important event of 1971—the outcome of the negotiations for British membership of the European Communities... none of us acting alone could gain the things which we desired for our own people in terms of physical security or economic or social advance... economic growth and technological development today require that we integrate our economies and our markets." A clear admission of the decline of British capitalism as an independent force.

# 5th. column

A number of rumours are circulating about the fate of *Tribune*, whose financial problems are more than usually acute. One plan to salvage the paper envisages a more or less formal merger or tie-up between *Tribune* and the *Morning Star*, as part of a more ambitious alliance between the C.P. and the Labour Party. The pitiable problems of the Labour Left during the last government discredited it even in the eyes of reformist trade union leaders. Now that the C.P. has so thoroughly accommodated itself to social democracy, what could be more natural than a C.P. attempt to lend some semblance of reality to the fast-disappearing fake Left of the Labour Party, and what could be a better instrument for this strategy than a *Morning Star-Tribune* merger? The hopeful result would of course be a formal application by the C.P. to affiliate to the Labour Party. Marriage-broker for the alliance of decrepit reformism and senile Stalinism is reputed to be none other than *The Spokesman* magazine which we believe has some connection with a Mr. Ken Coates of Nottingham.

*Fleet Street* gave page one coverage to the death of two RUC men in Belfast on February 27th. It needed a search of the inside pages of the same papers to reveal the reason for the deaths—the arrest by the RUC of almost 40 Belfast Republican women.

Nowhere will you find a report of how these women were treated by the gallant boys in bottle green.

Nowhere does it mention that the two poor innocent policemen who were shot were members of the Special Branch. One, Detective Inspector Patterson, whom the unfree press played up as a sort of Irish Dixon of Dock Green, has in the past been the bodyguard of such illustrious parasites as Jacqueline Kennedy-Onassis, racist Jim Callaghan and his wife, Tony Armstrong-Jones and his wife, etc.

The American invasion of Laos has hardly lived up to the hopes of the Pentagon. Possibly because of that, sections of the liberal press have been willing to admit that it is in fact an American invasion, despite the fact that the bulk of the forces involved are Vietnamese.

There has been surprisingly little comment on the fact that in spite of the 1962 Geneva Accord, which decreed that all foreign forces were to leave Laos, America has maintained a 40,000 strong mercenary force in the country since that time. Known as "armee clandestine", this force of mercenaries is recruited mainly from the Meo community, and is headed by a "Major General" Vang Pao, known to his American advisers as VP—he is an ex-sergeant in the French army. The "armee clandestine", run by the CIA, is based at Long Ting, just South West of the Plain of Jars, where it has a 3,000-foot-long all-weather airfield, complete with T28 single-engine bombers, reconnaissance helicopters and transport plains.

"If I could devise a split in society which assured me of the support of the majority of the working people and by far the greater part of the professional and administrative classes, and also some of the traditional leaders of the community with the success with which the government of Ulster has accidentally been blessed, then our Empire would stretch towards eternity."

—Mussolini, 1929.

# INDO CHINA: After Laos, North Vietnam?

Obviously it was not enough to bomb the liberated areas of Laos for seven years; it was not enough to make its land the most ravaged in the whole of human history; it was not enough to drop more bombs on Laos than were ever dropped on even Southern Vietnam. Today the imperialist war machine has directly invaded Laos in the hope that by doing so they will be able to defeat the Indo-Chinese revolution.

A week after the formal invasion of Laos, the American Commander announces that 20,000 Saigon troops and 9,000 Americans are involved just below the 17th parallel. We cannot therefore totally rule out a land invasion of the southern tip of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

### The Whole of Indo-China...

The new American offensive foreshadows the next stages of escalation: intensified struggle in Cambodia, particularly the areas which the U.S. April '70 offensive was not able to touch. The construction of an immense base at Khe Sanh could well signify the multiplication of systematic operations against all the liberated areas in Indo-China. U.S. imperialism is trying desperately to break the backbone of the Indo-Chinese resistance and thus has arrogated to itself the right to strike whenever and in whatever way it chooses anywhere in Indo-China. Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia are all one under attack by imperialism.

The fiction of American "disengagement" has petered out. Since the retreat of U.S. troops from Cambodia, the Nixon administration issues numbers of American troops withdrawn from Vietnam, but contrary to the impression it creates, the reduction of the number of G.I.s is not accompanied by a reduction of aggression against the people of Indo-China. What Nixon's advisers advise today is "sudden and brutal initiatives" concealed under a mask of withdrawal. The sudden nature of the "new type" escalations allows the fooling of public opinion to be elaborated into a system. For days the operations are covered up. When it's no longer possible to do so any longer and the news leaks out, the offensive is already at an advanced stage. In April 1970 Nixon lied for several days main-

taining that American troops were not going more than 30 kilometres into Cambodia. In May 1970 Nixon lied when he stated that the South Vietnamese troops would be withdrawn after the Americans had left. A similar situation occurred in October '70 when the American Command pretended that no military operation was taking place against North Vietnam. The campaign on the fate of U.S. prisoners in North Vietnam was only a pretext to cover up for the massive bombing raids against the North. This continued escalation of the war is hidden by a smokescreen of lies and cant from the American administration.

The imperialists have been using chemical warfare against the Vietnamese people since 1966, but today it is used on a scale quite different from that in 1967-68. The use of defoliants, herbicides, toxic gases, has made uncultivable whole areas of Vietnam and have transformed the Vietnamese countryside into a lunar landscape. The massacre of civilian populations is integrated into American war strategy and genocide is formalised.

This strategy of escalation and destruction expresses the impasse in which the U.S. troops have found themselves and their inability to win a military victory. Having failed to break the strength of the revolutionary militants, it's necessary to break the Vietnamese people. Having

failed to control the people, one must then submit them to terror and exterminate them when necessary.

During the Korean War and as early as 1951, O'Donnell the Chief of Bomber Command declared that "all or nearly all of the whole Korean peninsula is a terrible mess. Everything is destroyed, there's nothing left standing." However until 1953 the twenty irrigation dams vital for the harvesting of rice for the civilian population of the North had not been attacked. It was only in May 1953 that five of these dams were destroyed, bringing about in one instance a lightning flood which ravaged the greater part of the valley. In 1953 the United States was further from victory than ever before. It knew this, but it did not prevent it from escalating the policy of the generalised destruction of the Korean people. It seems that an analogous situation is developing in Indo-China today. The Pathet Lao armies are playing havoc with

the South Vietnamese puppet troops, the Red Khmers are gaining in Cambodia, the NLF holds its own in Southern Vietnam, the fighting will of the North has not been sapped or impaired. Today the Indo-Chinese militants issue a call for solidarity action in the West. In Paris the Communist League (French section of the Fourth International) and Lutte Ouvriere respond by a massive mobilisation. Some days later the Cambodians, Laotians and Vietnamese speak at a public meeting organised by the Communist League (only the French C.P. newspaper fails to mark this historic event) and thank the comrades for their solidarity.

**We repeat: it is vital for the revolutionary movement in Britain to respond to this appeal and to mobilise itself to participate in the demonstration called by the Vietnam Solidarity Committee for April 24th 1970.**

**Victory to the Indo-Chinese Revolution.**



South Vietnamese casualties in Laos are mounting daily.....



An American marine who can't take any more, breaks down