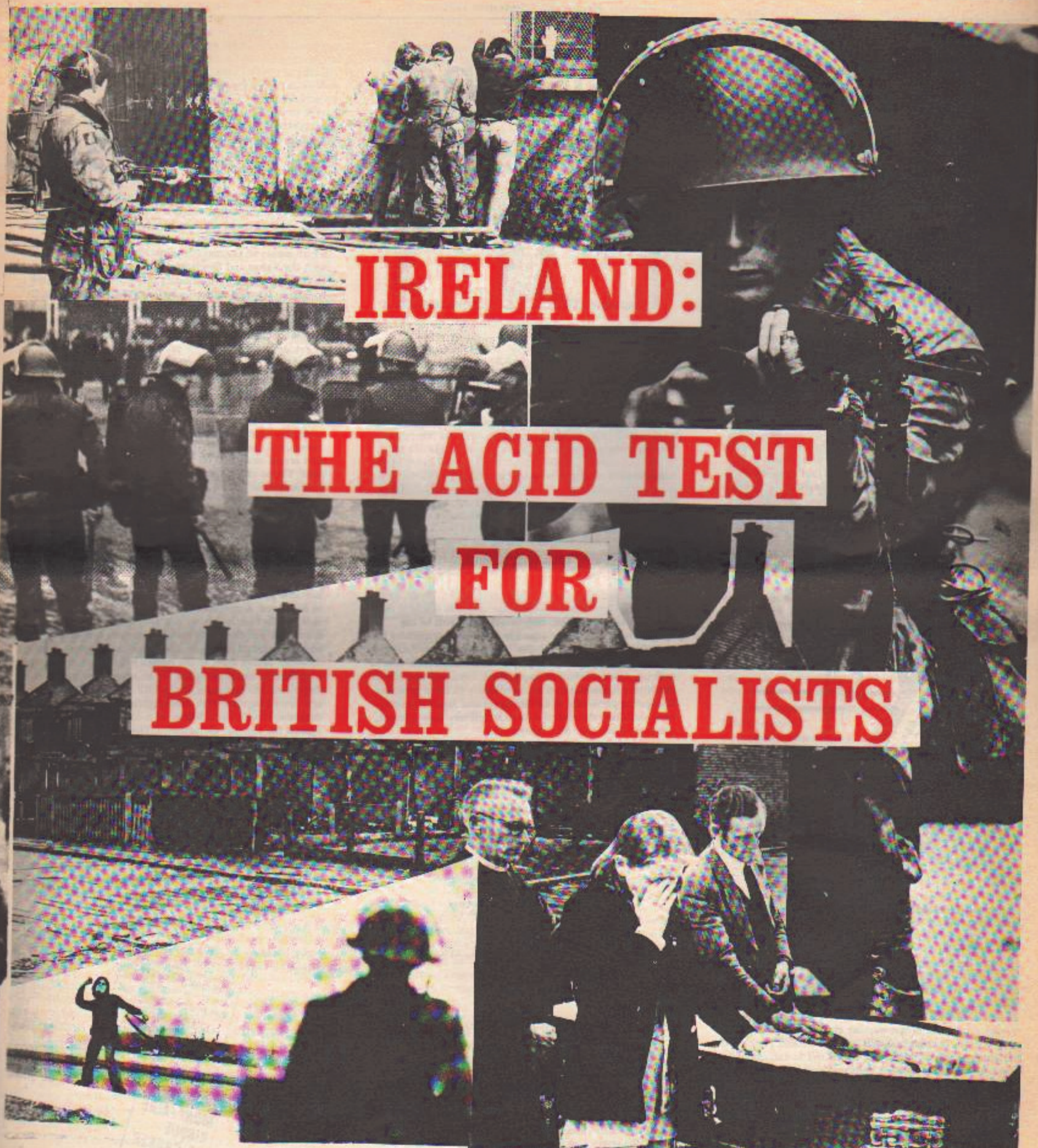


1st September 1971 Price: 75p

The Red Mole



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THE ACID TEST

FOR

BRITISH SOCIALISTS

FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT

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The Red Mole

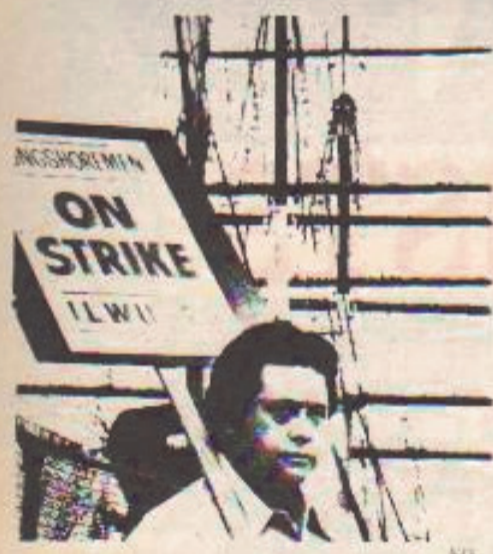
Number 27, 1 September 1971

The dollar crisis and the capitalist world

Nixon's decision to devalue the dollar has thrown the capitalist world into a panic the like of which has not been seen for many years. And yet the decision was inevitable. Over the last few years revolutionary Marxists had been noting the trends in the American economy and predicting the measures which an American President would be forced to take to try and right the situation. Most of these predictions have been confirmed. Two key factors have determined the economic situation of the United States: its role as the leading capitalist policeman against social change anywhere in the world (a role which it had largely to finance itself) and the deteriorating balance of payments situation caused by the rapid growth of European and Japanese competition on the world market since the last war.

THE AMERICAN WORKING-CLASS

But while the external effects of Nixon's economic policies are extremely important, and bound to have long-term repercussions, the result at home should not be underestimated. Even though the wage freeze is supposed to be restricted to three months, it is obvious that a more prolonged system of wage-controls is being worked out and even trade union leaders like George Meany (AFL-CIO), not particularly noted for holding radical views, have been forced to denounce the measures as "patently discriminatory against working men and women". He also pledged non-cooperation and immediately set the AFL-CIO lawyers working on ways and means to have Nixon legally defeated.

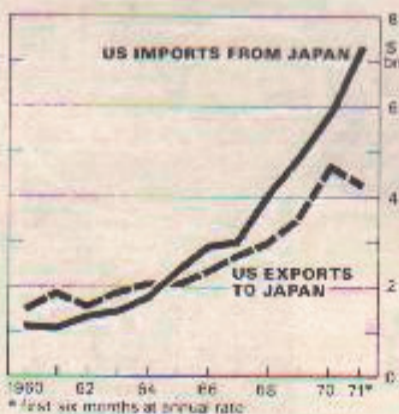


The car workers leader Leonard Woodcock threatened strike action if the freeze was extended beyond 90 days and stated publicly, "If they want war, they can have war." All these signs point to a factor which has been giving sleepless nights to the Nixon regime: a reawakening of militancy in the American working class, of which the postal workers' strike (1970) and the General Motors strike which ended early this year are only part of the symptoms. Given the present economic situation we can expect to see big struggles in the American working class and this factor coupled with the radicalisation which has taken place on the periphery of the working class, could lead to extremely powerful explosions. This is the spectre which is beginning to haunt the less complacent sections of American capital and pressures for both economic and political isolationism (i.e. a more insular foreign policy) are likely to increase as a result. But the latter is clearly out of the question. The situation in Latin America and Asia does not permit it.



WEST GERMANY AND JAPAN

The two capitalist countries most affected have been West Germany and Japan. While for the Germans Nixon's freeze means a cutdown in Volkswagen sales to the U.S. (before the import surcharge West Germany sold one quarter of its total output of Volkswagens to the States), for the Japanese the new measures amount to an economic Pearl Harbour. Of its total exports, Japan exports 30% to the United States and estimates of what the import surcharge would cost the Japanese economy range from \$700 million to \$2.5 billion for the remainder of this year. American capital is clearly trying to contain further Japanese encroachments on the American market. This was the second big shock for the Sato government coming as it did on the heels of Kissinger's visit to Chou en Lai and the announcement of Nixon's impending visit to Peking. The difference being that while the United States gave two minutes warning of the latter, it allowed ten minutes for the dollar devaluation. Apart from sharpening the contradictions between Japanese and American capital, a more immediate effect could well be the resignation of Sato from Japanese politics, thus marking the end of the "special relationship" between the two countries and forcing the Japanese to play a more independent role in policing Asia on behalf of imperialism. Certainly one aim of the Nixon administration is undoubtedly to force capitalist Europe (in particular, West Germany) and Japan to contribute and share the cost of American military bases abroad, which cost just over \$3 billion a year.



THE INDO-CHINESE REVOLUTION

For the present crisis hits the United States at a time when the world revolution is on an upswing. Only the most myopic of Eurocentric "Marxists" could today doubt the phenomenal impact which the Indo-Chinese revolution has had on the political life and economic structure of United States imperialism. The old image of the United States as an authoritative and stable force capable of restoring the capitalist status quo has today been completely reversed, largely because of the unprecedented heroism of the Vietnamese. And it would be futile to imagine that this heroism fell out of the sky. It is due not least to the leadership of the National Liberation Front and the absolute refusal of the North Vietnamese leaders to capitulate in the face of massive imperialist pressure. It has become clear that the United States will be forced to pull out of Indo-China. The old dilemma of whether a withdrawal would be more harmful than staying in, in the sense that it would damage the

today understands perfectly well that a continued demoralisation inside the Army, coupled with growing unemployment at home could prove to be a fatal combination. His approach to Peking is thus made at a time of weakness, which makes all the more criminal the Chinese collaboration with the Yahya and Bandaranaike regimes in Pakistan and Ceylon against the revolutionary movements of those two countries. It seems unlikely whether Peking will be able to aid Nixon in getting the Vietnamese to make more than purely tactical compromises. The latter are in a strong position and aware of it. Despite the cynical opportunism of Peking the revolutionary process in Asia will continue to unfold. The Indian sub-continent today becomes a new weak link in the imperialist chain.

THE STRUGGLE IN LATIN AMERICA

In Latin America, the overthrow of Torres in Bolivia only spells out what the Fourth International has vigorously maintained since its Ninth World Congress in 1969, namely, that armed struggle is on the agenda throughout the continent. The so-called military reformists have received their first answer in Bolivia, where all the left groups have united to create a clandestine military command to continue the struggle. Thus the struggle begun by Che Guevara is today resumed and its participants include many new recruits to the cause of armed struggle. It is clear that in Peru, the junta will be faced with similar alternatives and that some young Turks in the Chilean Army could well emulate the Bolivian army officers and attempt to put an end of the unstable political situation in their country. The situation in Brazil and Argentina also is not one that is likely to provide comfort to the United States. The brutal military dictatorship in Brazil, which only recently tortured one of our comrades to death (see elsewhere in this issue), leaves no other option open to the masses but that of clandestine organisation and preparation for an armed struggle. In Argentina, the comrades of the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army) together with other fighting organisations have demonstrated the possibilities of a coordinated struggle against the Lanusse dictatorship. The next period will see more mass explosions in Latin America, and the United States will find it difficult to rely on its janitors in Latin America alone. At some stage it will be forced to intervene directly.

The current dollar crisis thus marks the end of a period of comparative stability for United States capital and it coincides with a world situation where despite the setbacks recently suffered by the revolutionary movement (Palestine, Ceylon, etc.) the revolutionary upsurge still continues. This could well lead to a situation which would surprise all those who had written the American working class off and devised theories to prove how well it had been integrated into the structures of the bourgeois state.

-Tariq Ali



The following interview emerged after a lengthy discussion with a Yugoslav comrade sympathetic to the Fourth International, last July.

The problems in Yugoslav society today are very acute, and the trends away from socialism are developing rapidly, and on many levels. I shall try to outline some of them.

One question which has achieved prominence is the question of nationalism—this includes the problem of the growing inequalities between the six republics, the growth of nationalistic, chauvinistic feelings within the republics, and of the relation of federal to republican authority. That nationalism has become so important is not a matter of chance but a consequence of political policies, and, despite the repeated pleas for unity, is actually encouraged by the Party leadership. A small but indicative example is provided by the census which was carried out earlier this year. In this information was sought on the nationality of respondents who were asked to identify themselves as Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, etc., or even as Muslims (a capital M indicating nationality, a small m indicating religious affiliations), but *not* as Yugoslavs; the latter answer was not merely excluded in the census form, but was interpreted as making the entire census return invalid! Considerable prior publicity warned of this.

—Can you explain the significance of the present transfer of more power to the republics?

The current restructuring of relationships between federal and republican authorities which gives much greater autonomy to the republican governments has been cloaked in Marxist phraseology about the withering away of the state. However the strengthening of the bureaucracies in the six republics and of their power at the expense of the federal authorities clearly represents no such withering away. The amendments to the Constitution which permit these changes enable the republican governments to draw up independent agreements with foreign capital with regard to investment, and a guaranteed return on foreign investment is under discussion. The extent of the autonomy now permitted is not entirely clear, but it seems that if one of the republics wanted to withdraw from the federation and attach itself to another country (if Slovenia wanted to join Austria, for example) the Constitution does not explicitly exclude this. (The official argument is that as no republic would want to do this no explicit safeguards are necessary.)

—What is the immediate effect of these changes?

The decentralisation has the effect of reinforcing nationalistic sentiments in each republic, a trend which is directly counter to the aims of the revolution, and the slogans for unity and fraternity of the struggles of the war period. But nationalism has a long history in the area of modern Yugoslavia, having been promoted in the past by imperialist powers in support of the classic method of divide and rule. Today the bureaucratic elite is protected from criticism, and fundamental problems are obscured by the growing national rivalries. So, for example, there is more widespread argument about how Serbia exploits Croatia than about how the bureaucracy pursues policies which secure its interests at the expense of the workers and peasants of both Serbia and Croatia. And a discussion about the role of the political police could be diverted into a discussion of the relation of federal to republican police, so that questions of real importance could be evaded. The dangers in these trends are illustrated by the fact that in pro-nationalist demonstrations in Croatia, the badges and emblems of the Ustasa are re-appearing.

—Can you outline some of the present trends in social inequalities?

The growing inequalities between richer and poorer republics and between different social groups are reaching disastrous proportions; but these follow from the policies of economic de-centralisation and "market socialism" which have enabled all these aspects of nationalism to reassert themselves. I'll try to give some examples of these inequalities. The growing numbers of workers abroad are one indication of the problems within the country (between 1 and 1½ million). The situation for most peasants and workers is getting worse. Within the country about 60% of the employed population are at the level of minimum wages at which only bare subsistence is possible. Increasingly it's necessary to work for more than 8 hours a day, to find a second job if possible. So that not only with regard to pay but also with regard to spare time many workers are worse off than they were, there's less time or energy for any educational activity or for participation in political meetings, and voluntary collective work is out of the question. Half of the economically active are peasants but levels of agricultural development remain so low that more than 1 million of them are only partially employed—in fact if there were factories in which these people could work they could do so without any harm being done to their agricultural work.

A Tarjug Report in 1969 in South Serbia (not the poorest region) gives an idea of pay levels and differentials:—

20% of salaries* were at the minimum level, 35,000 dinars per month (about £10)

20% of salaries were 45,000–50,000 dinars per month (under £15)

50% of salaries were 60,000–70,000 dinars per month (around £20)

10% of salaries were 80,000–90,000 dinars per month (under £30)

*(i.e. salaries in industrial enterprises and work organisations)

Workers Struggles in Yugoslavia

In education things are deteriorating in many ways. The child of a manual worker has 9 times less chance of getting Higher Education than the child of an administrative workers and opportunities are decreasing. In many areas peasants keep their children at home to help with work in the fields and to avoid the necessary payments for books and equipment. Not more than 10% of students at University are the children of peasants and workers. The school and University population comes to look less like a pyramid and more like a square as so many children never get into school at all. A discussion has now opened about payment for education; one proposal is that only elementary education should be free, there should be fees for high school and University. Of course there's already a private medical service in one of the republics.

—And who is doing well in this situation?

The people who are getting most out of the present situation are the members of the bureaucratic elite whose privileges seem to become more secure, more extensive and more obvious. The extent to which this group is becoming identical with the League of Communists can be seen if we look at the composition of the Party in 1970:

2% of members were peasants
13.4% were workers
80.2% were high level administrators.

Power in the economic sector is becoming more closely interwoven with political power as successful directors, managers and administrators seek high positions in the



—And this discussion about strikes has been opened because of the increase in strikes in the recent period?

Yes, they're one indication of the growing dissatisfaction and alarm which is felt in Yugoslavia today. (Some people are even looking to the USSR and expecting an intervention to save Yugoslav socialism from there!) But the growth in strikes is a more constructive, if less clear response. In the last two years more than 1,000 have been officially recorded—no one knows how many have actually taken place. These strikes have involved manual workers, students and some other groups such as teachers. Mostly the strikers have put forward economic demands and these are the ones which have been reported in the Press, but in addition many demands have reflected general criticisms of the present political situation, and of the failure to make self-management mean anything real.



Student solidarity in Belgrade

Probably the clearest criticism of the trends in Yugoslavia from a truly socialist point of view comes from some intellectuals who have had to take jobs below the level of their qualifications, and from some in jobs which carry few privileges. But the task of spreading these ideas is very difficult for the very language of Marxism and Socialism has been devalued. For instance, the *actual* development and operation of self-management in Yugoslavia has made the *idea* of self-management a joke to large numbers of workers.

—Can you explain how these distortions in self-management have developed?

To understand the distortions in our self-management system it's necessary to go back to its introduction. At the time of the break with the USSR in '48 the Party leadership had to reinforce its working class support (it had already lost much peasant support as a result of agricultural policies, and the left had already been eliminated by Stalin before the war). Self-management was set up to secure this. Thus it was imposed from above, and its form from the beginning was distorted for all institutions were given a legal equality—an equal right to self-management structure. Institutions of production were equal to those of distribution, to export-import organisations, banks, etc. Lacking other controls the basis for growing inequalities was built into this system:—In the name of self-management decisions, banks were in a position to manipulate, via investment policy, productive enterprises; large department stores, through investment and sales policy, could make large profits and hold considerable power over a small factory with which they placed orders, etc. Power and profit in such a system go to the largest and most favourably placed enterprises. The policy of "market socialism" has merely strengthened these trends. So we have a system of self-management at a horizontal level—in the factory, etc. Vertically we have only the political hierarchy, with power concentrated in the hands of the bureaucracy; before we can begin to make self-management real we have to break that.

—Daisy Warmchild

SPECIAL FROM RED BOOKS : TWO CLASSIC REPRINTS—

The Third International after Lenin:
Leon Trotsky. Price: £1.25.

The Jewish Question: by Abram
Leon (with an introduction by Ernest
Germain and Nathan Weinstock).
Price: £1.15.

The Burroughs Strike

After 16 weeks' strike, 1,500 workers at Burroughs Machines Ltd., in Cumbernauld, Dumbartonshire, returned to work last Monday. What happened at Burroughs has important lessons for future industrial struggles generally, and for the town of Cumbernauld in particular. The Burroughs strike has shown most clearly that industrial struggles can no longer be confined to pure trade union action, but to successfully fight the employer even on economic demands requires both political action and understanding.

Despite these attacks, despite the genuine hardship experienced by strikers and their families, solidarity remained high as was reflected in the atmosphere at the picket lines in the sixteenth week.

GREAT OPPORTUNITY FOR VICTORY

By their refusal to break ranks and by their determination to resist all the hardship and poverty that a sixteen weeks' strike entails, the workers laid the basis for a very conclusive



Dole queue in Glasgow

THE HISTORY

In 1968 the Shop Stewards Committee adopted a policy of not using strike action as a first step in negotiations with the management. This gave the company the longest strike-free period in its history. Profits zoomed during that time. In 1967 Burroughs declared a pre-tax profit of £2, in 1971 the profits had shot up to an astronomical £11.5 millions. During this time of incredible growth workers' wages remained pitifully low—a large section of the workers had an average take-home pay of £14 a week. In one year alone 1,000 jobs were lost, 600 of these through redundancy. It was against this background that the Union tried to negotiate a new wages contract.

THE STRIKE

After two months of haggling the company sent over its chief negotiator from America. The management's offer was no less than an insult consisting of a straight £1-a-week increase now, to be followed by a further £1 after nine months. The talks dragged on for two further months. Finally they broke down when the management made their "final" offer of £1.87½ for this year and the same amount for the following twelve months. Burroughs also insisted that these increases be offset against any national agreement reached between the Engineering Confederation and the Employers at the end of 1971.

SIXTEEN WEEKS OF GREAT SOLIDARITY

As soon as the strike started the management went onto the offensive. Using their usual policy of divide and rule they attempted to introduce separate negotiations between the two factories at Cumbernauld and Strathleven.

Shortly afterwards 400 workers were made redundant at Cumbernauld, aimed to pit the interests of one worker against those of another—the strike had to end before the redundant workers could receive their dole and social security money. Moreover, not only were the redundancies selective—it was not a coincidence that most of the militant works committee were sacked—but the workers were not given the usual payment in lieu of redundancy. This has been awarded to those made redundant before the strike, and failure to do so in the case of the second 400 inflicted further hardship and reinforced the divide and rule policy.

The third attack was a letter sent to the strikers by the management threatening more redundancies and referring to the possible total closure of the factory.

These attacks were supplemented by the actions of the Cumbernauld Development Council which pursued a policy of harassment. One started for instance was the

victory. No firm can go through sixteen weeks of strike without a serious weakening of the management's position. It also appears true that Burroughs had recently received some new orders which put them under pressure to get production underway again. Nixon's emergency economic measures also means that American firms will be doing all they can to combat the general lack of confidence expressed in them and this was another factor in the strikers' favour.

THE AGREEMENT

Ostensibly the final settlement represents a real victory. The workers have got an immediate increase of £3 plus nine weeks backdated increase with a further £1.50 to be paid next July. The offset clause has been abandoned entirely so the workers will automatically get the full national increase on top of the other awards.

But there is another side to this picture. There are still 1,000 redundant workers and the unemployment rate in Cumbernauld is already 10% of the working population. The prospects of these 1,000 men and women getting any job in the foreseeable future is almost nil. In a factory where in six months the labour force has been reduced from 2,500 to 1,500 the position about future redundancies still remains unsolved. All the management have done is promised that there will be no more redundancies, but that is a purely verbal promise, not one word of this appears in the new agreement.

That there was no insistence on a no redundancies clause appearing in the new agreement reflects on the political weakness of the official trade union leadership and the Communist Party dominated works committee.

The strike has had a number of important effects in Cumbernauld. Firstly it will be remembered by the men inside Burroughs as an example of how organisation and solidarity can defeat the management. The workers have reached a higher stage of militancy and understanding than at any time in the last two years. Already for instance a new factory bulletin, *The Burroughs Worker*, has made its first appearance. The management were undoubtedly surprised at the militancy of the men and will hesitate to take them on in future.

Secondly, there developed out of the strike the Cumbernauld Unemployed Action Committee which has attempted to take the struggle against unemployment and redundancy onto a new level. They organised two demonstrations in the town centre, arranged an occupation of the Social Security and Youth Employment Offices and have held public meetings on the subject of unemployment. This demonstrates the need to widen the fight against unemployment from the factory to the political arena—i.e. leading struggles against the social security, the rents policies of the local authorities and the Tory government.

SOLEDAD: There is one brother less....

George Jackson, black American militant, was murdered on the night of August 21st. Whatever the circumstances of his death, it was a murder. George Jackson was "an innocent", in his own phrase, killed by a racist system he was constantly exposing and challenging. He was imprisoned in 1960 at the age of eighteen for an indefinite period, one year to life, after being convicted of a small theft. The sentence was ostensibly a "reformist" measure with the aim of "rehabilitation". Correctly interpreted this means crushing the victim to the point of complete submission to the system. George refused to submit to this humiliating process and as a result was consistently denied parole. Because of his resistance he suffered the harshest of conditions and spent seven years in solitary confinement. George Jackson's name became internationally known last year. At the Soledad prison where he was held, three unarmed black prisoners were shot dead after a deliberately provoked racist incident. The guard's crime was designated "justifiable homicide" and shortly afterwards another guard was found dead. George Jackson, along with Fleeta Drumgo and John Clutchette, two other black militants, was charged with his murder, a charge carrying a mandatory death sentence. Any possible witnesses were hastily removed from Soledad to other prisons all over the country. The three "Soledad Brothers" as they came to be known, were denied constitutional rights. A daring attempt was made to gain their freedom in August last year by George's younger brother Jonathan, which ended in the death of Jonathan and two black prisoners. During the pre-trial hearings, the vicious racism of the American legal system and its lackeys has been exposed time and time again. The trial was due to begin the day after George Jackson's death.

All his life George Jackson fought the racist system which succeeded finally in his murder. His experiences and the lessons he drew from them are set out in his collected letters from prison, *Soledad Brother*, published earlier this year. Out of his revolutionary consciousness and through self-education while in prison, George reached a high level of political development:

"I met Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Engels and Mao when I entered prison, and they redeemed me," he wrote.

Out of his own experience and study of Marxism he urged black people to go beyond the initial struggle for identity and self-protection towards developed revolutionary analysis of their oppression. He explains in clear Marxist terms the new slavery of blacks in American society:

"Neo-slavery is an economic condition, a small knot of men exercising the property rights of their established economic order, organising and controlling the life style of the slave as if he were, in fact, property. Succinctly: an economic condition which manifests itself in the total loss or absence of self-determination. Only after this is understood and accepted can we go on to the dialectic that will help us in a remedy."

He understood that internationalism was essential to the destruction of capitalism:

"International coordination is the key to defeating this thing that must expand to live."

As George developed politically all traces of male chauvinism disappeared and last year he wrote to Angela Davis:

"I understand exactly what the woman's role should be [in the revolutionary struggle—ed.], the very same as the man's."

He totally rejected reformism, the bourgeois concept of family blood ties and individualism.

George realised that because he refused to be destroyed by the more covert methods of the system, he was in constant danger of physical destruction. In recent unpublished letters he includes vivid descriptions of the ever-increasing physical brutality he experienced during the pre-trial hearings.

In the last few weeks he was confident that, in spite of the odds, the political defence he and his lawyers were preparing would result in his freedom. But at the same time he was constantly aware that the system was out to destroy him and he frequently expressed the fear of being murdered.

Considering his confidence in the outcome of his trial it seems incredible that he would attempt a jailbreak the day before it began. It seems far more likely that the authorities decided to eliminate George Jackson before his trial could show up in the full glare of international publicity, the blatant racism and violent injustice of the American capitalist system.

Revolutionaries everywhere, who supported George Jackson's struggle, must continue to fight on behalf of the remaining two "Soledad

THE FIGHT AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

1. UNEMPLOYMENT GROWS

Unemployment continues to get rapidly worse. The figures for mid-August showed a total of 904,000 people out of work—an increase of no less than 136,000 in only two months. The average level of unemployment is now 3.7%, but for men it is already 5%. What is worse, these figures do not take into account the regional variations: male unemployment has reached 8.2% in Scotland, 9.2% in the Northern region and 10.4% in Northern Ireland. Of the men who are wholly unemployed, no less than 66% have been without work for two months or more.

In light of these figures, Vic Feather's statement after Barber's mini-Budget that unemployment was unlikely to rise above 900,000 can only be seen as a blatant attempt to deceive the working class. There is every indication that unemployment will continue to rise to well over the million mark. The number of forthcoming redundancies reported is still very large, even if slightly down on last month. And, what is most important, while the number of unemployed continues to rise, the number of unfilled vacancies continues to fall; this despite an increase in production in the second quarter of this year. Not only does growth not necessarily produce more jobs, in the present crisis of British capital it cannot.

There are two major reasons for this, both resulting from the urgent need of British capitalism to restore its profit margins after their disastrous decline in the late '60s. As *The Times* reported after the mini-Budget, the employers must aim to increase output not by expanding their work force but "by improving their productivity or by developing more capital-intensive processes." "Rationalisation" is the watchword now as it was in the '30s, and this explains why output can increase at the same time that there is a fall in job vacancies.

And of course the continued unemployment which results from this rationalisation and emphasis on productivity is a very welcome side-effect for the employers. The decline in their profit margins came about because of the militancy of the working class, who were able to win wage increases too large for the employers to be able to pass them on in full to the consumer through price increases. Now the employers see massive unemployment as their chance to change the balance of forces in their favour, to restore the level of profits at the expense of wages. They see unemployment very clearly as a weapon to smash the militancy of the working class. Their newspapers, the *Financial Times* and *The Times* expect a continuing high level of unemployment to "cause a further de-escalation of wages."

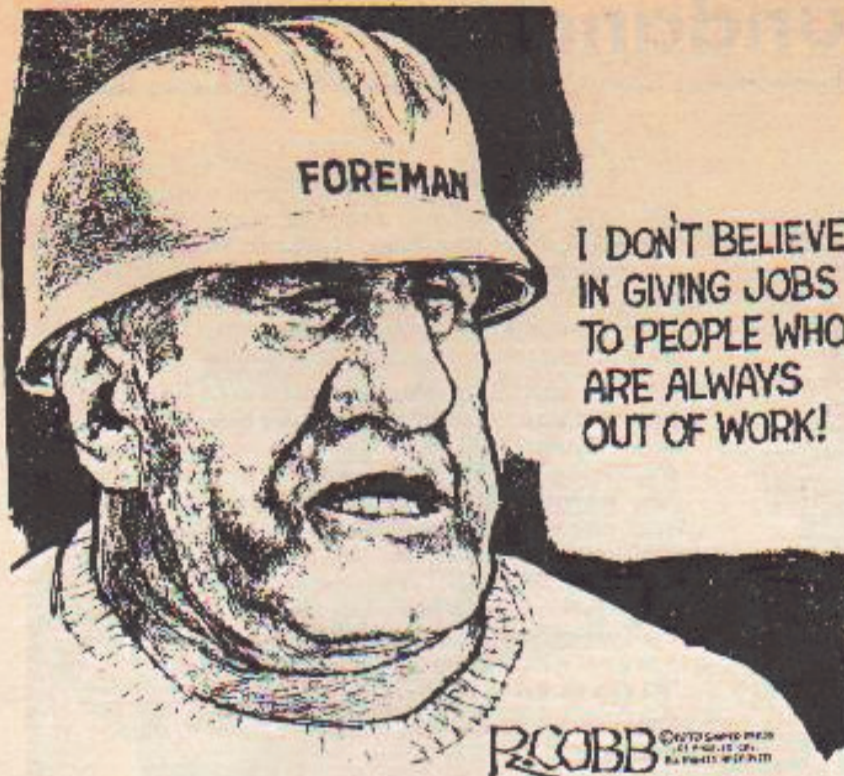
2. THE TRADE UNIONS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Sections of the trade union movement are now beginning to understand that they must organise to fight against unemployment. The same, however, cannot be said of the TUC leadership, which (still seeing the answer simply in terms of a 5% growth rate) has called for a series of demonstrations in October and November, culminating with a rally in London and a lobby of Parliament. Of course we welcome any action against unemployment, but demonstrations can only be effective if they are coupled with strong and determined action inside the factories. This was the fatal mistake made in the unemployed movement in the '30s—despite massive demonstrations throughout the country, only minor reforms and soon-broken promises were extracted from the Government, because the economic power of the working class was never brought into play. The re-election of the National Government in November 1935 can be traced directly to the disillusionment and demoralisation of the workers after the enormous but largely ineffective demonstrations against unemployment in January and February of that year.

Such "protest" actions as the TUC is now planning offer no way forward for unemployed workers or those faced with redundancies. The disastrous consequences of such a policy (or lack of it) have recently been seen at BSA in Birmingham, where the motor cycle workers agreed under pressure to accept a wage cut instead of redundancies. Unless a fighting policy is rapidly adopted by the trade union movement, there will be many more BSAs, and the workers' standard of living will go down so that the employers can increase their profits.

However, some sections of the movement are now beginning to see the need for a positive fight against unemployment. Glasgow AEUW and the Midlands Council of the T&GWU have banned productivity deals which include redundancies. Bolton AEUW has banned overtime in its fight against unemployment. Other sections of workers are taking even stronger action. At UCS the yards have now been occupied for a month. In Sheffield the Government's decision to hive off part of the British Steel Corporation's River Don works to the privately owned company of Firth Brown Ltd., which would make at least 4,500 workers redundant, has led to similar threats to occupy the factories. The same response has come from the GEC factory at Witham which is threatened with closure. Whatever the outcome of the struggle at UCS, it has been of great importance in introducing a new method of struggle into the fight against unemployment.

But these actions, although they mark a welcome step forward, do not yet form part of an overall policy to



for both inside the factory and throughout the labour movement. We believe that such a set of demands must include the following:

1. A guaranteed weekly wage—five days' work or five days' pay. This means work-sharing on full pay.
2. Banning of overtime and work-sharing under union control.
3. No sackings or redundancies through productivity deals.
4. A national minimum wage for all workers, employed or unemployed—such a wage to include automatic increases based on price rises.
5. A shorter working week with no loss of pay.

3. THE ORGANISATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED

At the same time, however, it is necessary to organise the unemployed themselves. Far from being an attempt to divide the working class, "a deliberate strategy ... designed to separate the unemployed from their brothers in the factories" (*Workers Press*, 24 August), the organisation of the unemployed is based on the reality that the unemployed are already separated from their brothers in the factories by the very fact of their unemployment; the task is to unite them in struggle. It is simply not enough to make propagandistic demands that the trade unions take responsibility for the unemployed. We do not pose the organisation of the unemployed as a substitute for work inside the official trade unions; on the contrary it is the only way of ensuring that the maximum possible leverage is exerted inside the official movement. It is only through such demands as the right of organisations of the unemployed to be represented on Trades Councils that the trade unions can be forced to accept their responsibility for the unemployed.

The importance of organising the unemployed can further be seen in the experiences of the '20s and '30s. In the '30s the existence of the National Unemployed Workers Movement was of crucial importance in preventing the spread of fascist ideas, to which the unemployed section of the working class is particularly prone (viz. Germany in the same period). And the great fault of the NUWM in the '30s, its complete failure to establish any links with the organised labour movement, is shown by the experience of the '20s not to be an inevitable result of separate organisation of the unemployed. Thus in 1921 members of the newly-founded National Unemployed Workers Committee Movement took action which was successful in getting overtime abolished in a number of factories. In 1922 during the AEU lock-out it was the NUWCM which was able to prevent blacklegging by the unemployed—it is instructive to compare this with the blacklegging at Fine Tubes, which could take place precisely because of the absence of any organisation of the unemployed.

For all of these reasons we therefore stress the necessity of organising the unemployed, and work in Claimants Unions as the most effective way of achieving this. Claimants Unions play a vital role in defence of the immediate economic interests of the working class in their fight for maximum benefits for the unemployed (this aids the whole class, since the higher benefits are, the less able is the employer to use the threat of the dole to depress wage levels). And at the same time they are more amenable to revolutionary politics—both because the situation of the unemployed is more urgently oppressive and degrading, and because of the lack of any bureaucratic structure in most Claimants Unions. Provided that they do not restrict themselves to representing claimants at the Social Security but fight to organise the unemployed as a political force, and provided that they make every effort to establish class links with the organised labour movement, Claimants Unions offer a major step forward in the organisation of the unemployed working

—SOCIALIST WOMAN—

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LANCASTER: The Struggle Against Redundancies.

INTRODUCTION

On 5th July 1971, the management at Storey's of Lancaster dismissed the convenor of the engineering trade union allegedly for "arbitrarily" blacking a production line. The line was blacked, with the agreement of all the shop stewards concerned, after the management ignored demarcation lines. The convenor handled the affair in much the same way as shop stewards in most industries would handle it, but the incident provided the management with an excuse to launch an attack on the growing strength and unity of the shop floor in the factory. The time was favourable for them—they had low order books and large stockpiles. In addition, the unemployment rate in Lancaster is one of the highest in the North West. It has become increasingly clear that this is going to be a long strike.

Storey's, the oldest firm in Lancaster, and one of the largest employers, has a long history of paternalism, apart from being a major influence in the life of the town. The strike could therefore aid in the development of trade unionism in this area, which has no tradition of trade union or political militancy. The AUEW was the only union to strike against the IRB on March 18th—except for a small group of militants in Lansil's factory—and in other factories the AUEW did not respond to their National Executive's call for a one-day strike.

Since they lack a militant base, and are not kept alive by an interested and active membership, the traditional working class bodies are, for the most part, inactive. They are run by a handful of bureaucrats interested only in furthering their own careers. These bodies have been undermined nationally by the long period in which isolated shop floor activity paid off. They appeared to have little relevance to industrial struggles, and so declined. In Lancaster the tendencies which undermined these bodies nationally were compounded by the lack of shop floor militancy. Thus while workers benefited from the national trend of rising wages, they did so more slowly and less than others. Of course an important factor in the militancy of this period was the scarcity of labour, while in Lancaster, as in other depressed areas, there was a surplus of labour.

After a strike at a local factory—Lansil's—the TUDC¹ was set up by some IMG comrades and militants from Lansil's and other factories. The TUDC's main base in Lancaster is still Lansil's, and despite the leadership given by it in the struggle against the IRB², it has had difficulty in broadening its base. Its role in this strike has, however, brought it to the attention of many workers and it is likely to be in a better position to fight the implementation of the Bill.

For all these reasons, this strike is of major importance. Since it raises the question of shop floor power, and the rights of shop stewards, the sacking of the convenor is seen by many of the workers in the context of the general attack on the working class. The IRB has assumed a much greater significance, and the ineffectiveness of the trade union bureaucracies has been exposed.

The following is an interview given by four of the strikers: Mike Lewthwaite (the convenor who was sacked), Frank Martindale and Keith Theobald (both from the electricians' union) and Jack Peel (Heating & Domestic):

—In this strike there are eight unions involved, and they have shown a remarkable degree of unity. Have they always acted together in this way?

M.L. No. The unity has been established in the last two years. Previous to that the management followed a policy of divide and rule, and the unions did not cooperate very well with each other. About four years ago the electricians were on strike for nine weeks, and the lack of support from other unions was an important reason for the strike lasting so long.

F.M. There was support in the beginning but it dropped away after a fortnight. Some workers scabbed, and these people were promoted to foreman afterwards. They are now scabbing in this dispute. When challenged by the pickets, one of them replied that he was "trying to keep his job". It was the experience gained in struggles like this that made us aware of the importance of unity.

—You say that the management followed a policy of divide and rule. Could you explain that?

M.T. There were eight unions in Storeys, and every grade was on a different rate. As a result there was a lot of competition between the different trades, and a good deal of emphasis on differentials. This helped to keep the men competing with each other and reduced cooperation.

K.T. It was one of the reasons why the electricians did not get support from the others—people thought, "Why should I help them to fight a claim which will put them ahead of me?" The company paid a good deal of lip-service to achieving parity between trades, but in practice they refused to carry it out. They were well aware of the benefits to them of having the unions divided.

—How did you go about building up unity?

F.M. Well, as I've said, the electricians' dispute made us

months before the strike all trades had acted together to prevent the implementation of an AIC³ report which involved the use of time-sheets. This action was successful. At first we held meetings on an informal basis outside working hours, at which we discussed the problems we met in the different departments. The process workers participated in these early meetings, but they dropped out later.

M.L. Just over two years ago we decided to formally establish a joint shop stewards committee, and because of the harmful effects of the wage differentials, we decided that our first step would be to eliminate these differences. We therefore put in for a wage rise and parity between trades. After a work-to-rule we won the fight, and this action consolidated the relations between the unions. Unfortunately the T&GWU decided not to join the other unions in the joint committee, and have excluded us from their meetings. The T&G secretary has refused offers of help from us, even in cases of mass sackings such as the Rondex dispute, when 160 men were sacked.

—What has the management's reaction to these developments been?

M.L. They have been very worried by it all. Lancaster is a small town, with high unemployment. The firms have been in the town for generations, and have a very paternalistic attitude to "their" workers.

J.P. On one occasion when we were on strike they sent a letter to our wives and mothers telling them what naughty boys we were being! The organisation of the unions has improved considerably since we set up the joint committee, and the strength we have gained has been reflected in the confidence with which stewards have acted. If one of the unions put a department in dispute none of the others will work in it, and stewards know that they have the backing of their workmates.

M.L. Recently, we started a factory bulletin, and we think this is one of the reasons for the management's attempt to break the shop floor organisation in Storey's. Since we set up the joint committee we have been trying to find ways of keeping members fully informed about events. We were unable to get a bulletin going because we lacked the facilities; the TUDC has now let us have the use of a duplicator, and have assisted us in the production of the bulletin. On the day the strike began we put out a leaflet announcing the launching of the bulletin, and we have produced the first two issues whilst on strike.

F.M. Initially, we were going to cooperate with the stewards from another factory in the town, Nicholsons, to set up a single bulletin for the two factories, but they decided to abandon the effort at the last minute, and instead are considering a management offer to produce a joint bulletin, using management facilities. We believe this makes nonsense of the idea of an independent trade union voice, and think that Nicholsons management are concerned lest their workers build up the type of unity we have at Storeys.

—How helpful have union officers and official union bodies been?

M.L. I think that one of the men put it very well when he said that this was "an official strike which no official wants to know about". The district officials have had to be pushed into doing things; they have taken almost no initiative in the situation. The officials from different unions are all afraid of stepping on each other's toes, and there has been no cooperation at official level between the unions. The formal procedures hamstring us; the union leaders complain about unwieldy procedures in industry, but their own are as bad. Similarly with the Trades Council, it is smothered in rules and regulations and is incapable of acting promptly.

K.T. There is a great deal of buck-passing; for example, when we tried to get some T&G members who were working in Storeys to black the job, we got in touch with their district secretary in Manchester, who passed it to the T&G in Preston; they passed it to another official and he did nothing.

J.P. Within the unions there needs to be much more power placed in the hands of the shop floor. In my union, the H&D, the shop floor can make a strike official. None of the other unions made it official as quickly as ours.

F.M. That is the way it should be in all the unions. The district officials should be subject to elections every two years.

K.T. And to instant recall! It is wrong for them to be appointed by other officials. The members are the best judges of full-time officials; they not only pay their salaries, but suffer most when they do not do their jobs properly.

F.M. We know that the situation is fairly common, but in areas like Lancaster it is particularly bad. There is no tradition of militant action; Lancaster's tradition is one of paternalistic firms and high unemployment. Because of this, the present strike is very important for trade unionism in the area. Other workers are watching and if we win it will be a

—Has the TUDC helped?

M.L. The TUDC has been a big help in this strike. It acted very promptly to offer us facilities for the production of leaflets, etc. and it has put us in touch with local militants who have organised moral and financial support. It has helped us to break out of the strait-jacket of officialdom.

K.T. A good example of this was the way in which it put us in touch with the Preston Commercial branch of the T&G, to black tanker deliveries to Storeys. It has been able to get advice and help from militants in other areas.

J.P. The leafleting campaign has been very important in countering management propaganda, and in keeping members informed. The management has been alarmed by the way in which their letters to the workers have been dealt with, and have resorted to the old scare tactics of talking about "extreme left wing influences". The secretary of the TUDC has been attacked by name in one of their letters to workers. They have not succeeded in dividing the men, and people are becoming aware of the important part that can be played by bodies that have no red tape, and can act quickly and effectively.

M.L. They are particularly important now because of the attacks on trade unions and workers generally. At national level there is the anti-trade union legislation, and locally employers are trying to break the power of the shop floor. This is the reason for the high unemployment, the "unofficial" incomes policy, the cuts in the welfare services, and such measures as refusing social security to strikers' families. There is a need for bodies which can bring workers from different factories and different unions together, to discuss problems and to promote solidarity.

F.M. We are going to need effective organisation when the IRB becomes law, and they try to put it into effect. The trade unions need to be reformed from Branch level up. The only way to stop them destroying the trade union movement is for all trade unionists to act together.

M.L. Bodies like the TUDC could play a big part here, because they are not restricted by bureaucratic procedures. We are going to need more than skiffle groups and recordings of Vic Feather!⁴

Interviewers:
—Pat Hickey
—Peter Ageros

NOTES

- 1 Lancaster & Morecombe Trade Union Defence Committee
- 2 Industrial Relations Bill
- 3 A firm of business consultants who carry out work study. In Lancaster they have carried out a number of studies for private firms, and for the City Council, and have helped the Government to lengthen the dole queue.
- 4 A reference to the TUC's pathetic publicity campaign against the IRB, which included the distribution of a record featuring a skiffle group on one side, and a speech by Vic Feather on the other.

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REPRESSION

There are a few very simple points that have to be made about the Oz verdict.

Firstly that we all know perfectly well this is no isolated incident. We all now know, or should know, the whole series of acts of legal repression. We all know that although these incidents may reflect no master plan or plot that they all express the response of bourgeois society to anything which makes it feel uncomfortable and insecure. Any tampering with the domestication of children makes it feel just like that — that is why the School-kids issue or the Little Red Schoolbook have been in the front line. The same reaction, actually or imminently, faces the black population, the squatter, the demonstrator, the Irish, the industrial militant, police harassment, lengthy legal cases, fines, imprisonment, suppression of publication, deportation.

All this certainly goes some way to unmasking the realities of class rule. It forces our rulers to undermine their ideological power by using nakedly their material power. But legal repression too has its cargo of ideology: judicial impartiality, "the rule of law", innocent until proved guilty, the right to be tried by ones peers. In general the liberal outcry that follows legal repression does not challenge this ideology. Thus Judge Argyl is not really typical of the bench, we are told; just as we were told that Judge Stevenson was exceptionally severe over the Cambridge Garden House Affair; or those recent obituaries of Justice Goddard insisted that one relish he evinced in administering punishment was quite unusual. The simple truth is that the great majority of judges are, and have to be deeply reactionary custodians of the interests of the ruling class. Similarly, juries are overwhelmingly middle class and middle aged in composition. The antique practices of the law have been refined over the centuries to provide all necessary protection to property and public order. It is as urgent to attack and unmask this pillar of bourgeois power as it is to expose the workings of the capitalist economy. Indeed legal repression is a speciality of bourgeois democracy and is increasingly resorted to when the ruling class has to abandon all its preferred patterns of rule and openly use its monopoly of legitimate violence.

Fortunately much of this is common ground on the Left and among all those groups which are now the targets of legal assault. The time is already overdue for some kind of common front against repression which would not stop at protesting individual decisions but would expose the real workings of the system as a whole — paying attention to everyday harassment as much as to the more easily publicised episodes of judicial vengeance. We should seek to encourage the growth of a popular invigilation and investigation of the police, the courts, the judiciary and the prisons. Those immigrant communities "who took the law into their own hands" by forming self-defence groups, were showing the direction we should be moving. If even minimal surveillance could be instituted over the constitution and methods of the legal machinery we would be in a better position: both to expose it and, though this will rarely be possible, to check its more flagrantly arbitrary acts.

James Whitefire

COLLABORATORS FROM BANGLA DESH

It's like inmates of a concentration camp being ordered for the benefit of visiting dignitaries to hold a stage show extolling the virtues of being prisoners. Yahya Khan's military regime following its atrocious operations in Bangla Desh, which resulted in hundreds of thousands killed and several millions having to flee the country, is now trying to dredge up collaborators among the Bengalis who are ready to speak for their oppressors. But the army is finding it extremely difficult to get the help of many such Bengalis.

Last June Yahya Khan had sent Begum Sulaiman, the only daughter of the deceased Awami League chief and a former Prime Minister, Mr. Suhrawardy, to Dacca to mobilise political elements inside Bangla Desh to cooperate with the army clique. As no responsible Bengali politician responded to Begum Sulaiman's overture favourably, she had to return empty-handed. This undoubtedly went to the credit of even such right-wing politicians as Mr. Nurul Amin, the 73-year-old parliamentarian of pre-independence vintage and one of the only two non-Awami Leaguers who won last December's elections from East Bengal. It was reported that Mr. Amin had refused to have anything to do with Yahya Khan under the present set-up.

Faced with the bleak prospect of holding down Bangla Desh indefinitely by brute force, Yahya's next move was to enlist the services of a few known quislings who acted in the past as agents of West Pakistani feudal-bureaucratic-bourgeoisie clique. A motley

defending the army action in Bangla Desh.

Dr. Sajjad Hossain and Dr. Mohar Ali, Yahya's two itinerant educationists, were in London last July. They could not do much here publicly except to write a shoddy apologia to the letters' column of *The Times* on behalf of their military masters. Their efforts to justify the killings of Dacca University professors on the night of March 25th at the hands of Pakistani troops were received by the informed public everywhere with disdain.

Another of such collaborators is a political reject from East Bengal, Hamidul Huq Chowdhury. Huq, who is the owner of Dacca's largest group of newspapers, Pakistan Observer Publications, is one of the most hated Bengalis alive. He collaborated with the West Pakistani capitalist class all along. For a brief period in the '50s he rose to be a Foreign Minister of Pakistan. This man was flown over recently from Dacca, where he feared reprisals by Bangla Desh guerrillas, along with his family, at the cost of the Pakistan government to a safe haven in Switzerland.

Hamidul Huq had reportedly met the Swiss authorities in August accompanied by the Pakistan Ambassador in Berne to apprise them of Yahya's twisted version of the Bangla Desh crisis. But even the Swiss were not impressed.

Hamidul Huq has been chosen by Yahya to head an eight-man delegation to the U.N. to plead the Pakistani case. However, the Bengalis believe Pakistan has no case to plead. Yahya Khan, a usurper of power in Pakistan, himself has no rights to rule, let alone speak for Pakistan. The armed struggle in Bangla Desh together with



John Lennon and Yoko Ono on the Oz demonstration.
Photo: Captain Snaps

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The opening of concentration camps in the Six Counties has produced a mass popular uprising against the British Army. These confrontations between the nationalist minority, its armed vanguard and the State forces have been the most widespread and prolonged since the Civil Rights upsurge in October 1968. It is vital that we understand the nature and dynamics of the present struggle. This demands an analysis of the political background and repercussions to the recent events.

BACKGROUND

As we have outlined in previous articles on the Irish struggle, the upsurge over the past three years results from the uncompleted national democratic revolution. The creation of the Orange sectarian State in 1920 represented a defeat for that revolution. The maintenance of that State demanded the political oppression of the nationalist minority who consisted of one-third of the population. The Civil Rights movement arose in Autumn 1968 as a protest against this oppression. The particular conjuncture at which it arose found British imperialism undergoing an acute structural crisis. Britain was attempting an overhaul of the political superstructure of the whole of Ireland prior to both islands entering the Common Market as an integrated economic unit. This rationalisation demanded a dismantling of the sectarian superstructure of the Six Counties. Since the granting of Civil Rights was incompatible with the existence of an Orange sectarian colony, every step forward of the popular movement produced deep fissures within the Orange bloc. British imperialism and its Stormont clients found themselves the victims of the Frankenstein monster they had created and lovingly nurtured over the previous 150 years—the Orange mass movement. On the one hand it was faced by mass mobilisations of the Nationalist minority demanding social change, on the other by the Unionist right wing totally hostile to any interferences with the status quo. This intransigence found political expression in Paisleyism outside the Unionist Party and the Craig opposition within.

These acute contradictions first manifested themselves in August 1969. Then, exasperated by the Stormont government's "passivity" in dealing with the subversives, the Orange para-military B-Specials launched attacks on Catholic ghettos. Only the direct intervention of the British Army prevented the disintegration of the State. But their intervention only had the effect of freezing the situation.

The political consequences of August were that the national question was posed quite sharply—the denial of Civil Rights to the Catholic minority, the inability of Stormont to grant Civil Rights, were now clearly linked to the existence of the Orange State, to the partition of the country. The conflict had grown over into a struggle for national liberation. This found political expression in the resurgence of Irish Republicanism. No longer were the IRA the isolated hillside men of the '40s and '50s but the armed vanguard of the Catholic working class ghettos. A new stage of struggle was opening up—one of urban guerrilla warfare.

Each upsurge of the nationalist minority was answered with increasing repression by the British Army. These repressive activities deepened and extended the resistance in the ghettos. The growing nationalist opposition further accentuated the tensions within the Unionist bloc as the extreme right-wing demanded crackdowns on "IRA terrorist gunmen". It was against this background that concentration camps, euphemistically referred to as internment without trial, were introduced.

INTERMENT AND ITS AFTERMATH

The decision of Faulkner to opt for internment was motivated by his desire to preserve the Unionist bloc from final disintegration and by his desire to remain as head of the Unionist Party. Tusso, the British Military Commander in the Six Counties was against the use of internment because he was well aware of its ineffectiveness as a means of smashing the IRA. However, Faulkner, disregarding the consequences, adamantly pressed for internment. In order to gain the acquiescence of the Heath government, Faulkner waved the spectre of an Orange uprising, and the Tories, as in 1912, obligingly succumbed.

As expected, the internment has been a complete failure. *Resistance*, a broadsheet of the Officials, described it thus:

"Internment has failed in its attempt to wipe out the Republican movement. Very few members of the movement fell into enemy hands, and the IRA was able to defend the people with all its forces intact. The Republican Clubs have refused to be driven underground by this crude intimidation and repression and are continuing to organise the people in their defence as they did before.

"In the fury of their failure, the British retaliated against the people with a calculated brutality which shocked all: men were dragged half naked behind military vehicles with sand bags over their heads, others were whisked into the air in helicopters and told they were being thrown to their deaths and while blindfolded thrown out a few feet from the ground—a torture learnt from the Americans in Vietnam—all were severely beaten and one man was savaged by Alsatian dogs let loose on him by his sadistic captors; a girl of fifteen in the Markets area of Belfast had her arm pulled from its socket, and the IRA of that area took action against the thugs, fighting a nine-hour battle around Inglis' bakery and inflicting several fatalities on the British troops."

The accounts of the tortures and brutalities have been well documented. These have been completely ignored by the British press. *The Daily Telegraph* in fact has been

The response of the nationalist minority to the attempted mass internment can only be described as a popular uprising. Bitter experience has taught the people that the force they can trust to defend their areas against attack is not the British Army, not some Utopian trade union defence force, but their own defence militia—the Irish Republican Army. The attempt of the British Army to liquidate it met with widespread resistance. Up to recently the brunt of the active opposition to the British occupation has taken place in Belfast and Derry. Now other areas have come out in resistance ... Newry, Strabane, Lurgan, Coalisland and Crossmaglen.

ARMED STRUGGLE

The focus at present seems to be shifting from armed confrontation to civil disobedience campaigns; the organisation of one-day strikes, and the creation of free areas behind the barricades. However, with a perspective of prolonged social crisis, the issue of armed struggle will be posed very clearly in the coming period. Just as surely as the successful Civil Rights mobilisations in the early period of 1969 put armed defence of the Catholic ghettos on the agenda, so too will a civil disobedience campaign of any bite faced armed repression.

The revolutionary potential of the barricaded areas seems to be understood more clearly at this moment by the British Army than the revolutionary vanguard. Hence we see the speed at which they move in to dismantle them. Again a decision to maintain free areas will require an armed defence.

SMASH THE ORANGE STATE; ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY

If there is one lesson that can be drawn from the past two years' struggle, it is that the Orange State is unreformable. It was born out of religious bigotry; it institutionalised and perpetuated religious bigotry. Talk, therefore, of democratising it or of electing a "progressive" government in Stormont is completely utopian. The aim of the revolutionary forces must be to *smash* it. As we have emphasised previously, this will need a political strategy as well as a military one. It is therefore a very significant development that all sections of the anti-Unionist population are trying to institute a transitional form of political power—a People's Assembly. Again, as we emphasised before, it is vital that the SDLP does not gain control of this or of the civil disobedience campaign. The People's Assembly, the *Dail Uilaidh*, therefore should be based on local organs of People's Power: the military leadership of the "free areas"; tenants' associations and trade union bodies who support the anti-imperialist struggle, local government councils who give their allegiance to the new assembly.

THE SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTH

The indiscriminate and brutal imprisoning of all sections of the anti-Unionist population by the Stormont regime; the brutality of British soldiers towards the Catholic community and the active collaboration of the British Army and Protestant extremists in attempting to smash certain Catholic areas in Belfast have made it impossible for Union Jack Lynch to introduce internment in the South at this stage. Those who maintain that there is no difference between Orange and Green Tories will be completely unable to understand Lynch's present "Republican" rhetoric, and his backing of the civil disobedience campaign. The former political strength of the Fianna Fail Party, its populist nature is now becoming a source of weakness. We see Lynch caught between his long-term need to establish a closer political and economic relationship with Britain and his present need to maintain political control over a party in which he faces many defections to the Blancayites. It may well be that certain sections of the Southern bourgeoisie, fed up with the ineptitude of the Fianna Fail regime, will shift political support to the "safer" Fine Gael party in the near future.

In the period following the pogroms of August '69, there was a rapid build-up of the mass mobilisations in support of the struggle. These were quickly diffused as a result of the interventions of the British troops. This time the mobilisations have been gathering momentum more slowly but promise to be more sustained and deep-going. Already there have been mass meetings in such centres as Dublin, Cork, Waterford and Limerick. There have been many solidarity resolutions and calls for industrial action from all sections of the trade union movement and tenants' associations. All this makes the possibility of Lynch introducing internment in the South more remote.

OUR TASKS IN BRITAIN: NEED FOR A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN

The introduction of internment has again produced a climate in Britain where it will be possible to gain widespread support for the struggle in Ireland. Already there have been pickets, sit-ins and demonstrations in several areas. There has also been some limited industrial action. The tragedy is that other political tendencies have not seen the need to do consistent work on the Irish issue over the past two years. We are likely to see such umbrella organisations as the Anti-Internment League springing up over the coming period. These organisations can play a useful coordinating role but what is really needed is a *political* campaign. Revolutionaries should not merely be waging a campaign against internment, but be availing of the heightened interest in the Irish situation created by the introduction of internment to explain the *total* role of British imperialism in

IRELAND AFTERMATH



AND OF INTERMENT



ACCOUNT OF 'BAG TREATMENT' USED AGAINST NORTH DETAINEES SMUGGLED OUT OF JAIL

From Michael Honey in Belfast

A Graphic account of the "bag treatment" allegedly given by the British security forces to several detainees in the North has reached *The Irish Times* from Seamus O Tuathail, detained in Crumlin Road Prison in Belfast.

O Tuathail, the former editor of the *United Irishman*, describes in his third report from behind bars how Patrick Shivers, a plasterer of Toomebridge, Co. Antrim, had a blue bag held over his head for many days while being beaten and interrogated.

The "bag treatment" is also the subject of a further statement released through the Association for Legal Justice regarding 11 other detainees, through a spokesman, P. J. McClean, of Beragh, Co. Tyrone. O Tuathail's report is headed "Cell 28, C. Wing, Crumlin Road Jail".

It describes how Patrick Shivers (interviewed by O Tuathail in prison) and described by him as "the worst case I have heard of date") was arrested on Monday, August 9th, in his home, taken to Rallykelly, and later to Magilligan Army Camp. There, he was in the company, according to O Tuathail's account, of P. J. McClean.

"At daybreak on August 10th", O Tuathail's account continued, I heard Scots accent saying 'Right now, bastards, I'm up. Get up there' All got up and dressed. Door opened and taken to canteen. Beans, sausages and bread. Taken back to hut. Heard helicopter coming overhead. Landed in field nearby.

"Handcuffed to one another and marched out to office. Could see helicopter and about six plain clothes men in distance. Plain clothes man also beside us.

"Four blue bags produced and put over our heads. Short of breath because of bag. Then released from handcuffs, which connected one to other, and hands handcuffed individually. Then run across field to helicopter and strapped into seat. Helicopter took off. About one hour in helicopter. Landed.

"Did not know where. Larry backed up to helicopter. Taken out and thrown into back of Lorry like sack of potatoes. Larry smelt of cow dung. Driven in lorry for about 100 yards.

"Pulled out of lorry (bag still over head). Marched into building of some sort. Stripped naked in room. Examined by doctor. Bag still over head. Put lying in bed and examined. Army overalls (I discovered later) put on me. Taken into room. Noise like compressed air engine in room. Very loud. Defenceing.

"Hands put against wall. Legs spread apart. Head pulled back by cord on bag and backside shot in. Stayed there approximately four hours. Could no longer hold up arms. Fell down. Arms put up again. Hands hammered until circulation restored. This happened continually for 12 to 14 hours until I collapsed.

"I was thinking now that Paisley had seized power in some way and that I would be executed or tortured to death. Started to pray very hard.

"Mouth dried up. Couldn't get moisture in mouth. Pulse taken. I thought of youngster who had died at six months old. Started to pray that God would give strength that I would not go insane. Fell down several times more. Slapped back up again.

"This must have gone on for two to three days. I lost track of

time. No sleep. No food. Knew I had gone unconscious several times, but did not know for how long. One time I thought or imagined I had died. Could not see youngster's face, but felt reconciled to death. Felt happy.

"During this time no words spoken at all. No words had been spoken since I left Magilligan. Bag still over my head. I did not speak, but prayed out loud. Noise going all the time.

"After having collapsed on final occasion, I felt somebody working my body up and down as if to revive me and restore circulation. Seemed to rise again and go to wall again and put up hands. I was dragged into room by bag on head and a voice at my ear asked me had I anything to say. This was first word since I left Magilligan—I reckoned about two to three days previous.

"I asked for my wife and a priest. At this, I was dragged again into noisy room. Hands put up against wall again until I collapsed again. Fell with face against wall. Fell against pipe at floor level. Pulled up again and face thrown against wall until my body sore. Then arms out again, head well back and someone like rubber stuck into my back to force it straight.

"Shoes slipped on at this stage. Taken out and thrown into back of lorry. Half carried, half pulled (by bag) out. Heard noise of helicopter again. Boarded again. Do not know how long helicopter stayed in air. Cannot recall. Could hear someone moaning beside me. Taken off helicopter onto back of lorry. Very roughly handled.

"Taken off lorry by two or three men. Punched and run over something like corrugated iron. Head beaten against wall.

"Brought into building. Sat on chair. Bag taken off head. First thing I saw was R.U.C. officer—head constable I thought from two stars on shoulder. Might be able to recognise him again. Seemed to be plain clothes secretary sitting beside him. Looked horrified when he saw me. Scream on my lips from lack of water and thirst. Must have looked terrible.

"Read out paper. I knew later it was detention document. I tried to speak. Could only whisper. 'Why did you do this to me?' Man behind me held bag nuller me. Said, 'Speak up, I can't hear you.' I reached over for document to look at it. Eyes blurred. Could not read it properly. Taken from me by man behind. Shoved in my breast pocket. Bag put over my head again. I was pulled out at running pace. Run about 50 yards. Thrown in back of lorry once again. Seemed to be police or military in back of lorry. All punching me in face and ribs and kneecaps. I could feel with my hands what seemed to be Army or police boots by teecaps. Got heavy crack at side of face. Passed out.

"When I came to I was in helicopter again, heading I know not where. Lorry backed in again. Taken to noisy room again. Same room where I had been before. Same treatment. Hands up, legs apart. Getting weaker. Did not feel hungry now, but had had nothing to eat for many days. I had lost count of days. Hands hammered until blood came back into them. Collapsed again. Hands taken up loosely as I lay on floor and let fall again to rest if I was out.

"I sat on backside in upright position with protruding pipe at floor level cutting into base of spine. Arms, legs and knees now numb and stiff.

"Taken into room. Bag taken off head for second time. Detective of Special Branch there before me with cup of water sitting on desk.

Men who had taken bags off my head slipped out door behind.

"I looked at detective and asked him how they could do this horrible thing. He told me to speak up, that he could not hear me, that my voice was nearly gone. Asked me to take drink of water. Drank mouthful. First in about four to five days.

"Started asking me questions. Could not answer. No voice and half hysterical. Lips sticking together with snot. Got angry and told me to speak up. Started asking about I.R.A. activity and arms dumps around Toome. Did not know what he was talking about. I had no knowledge of anything. After about a half hour he said, 'I am going to send you back in there again,' which he did.

"By this time I was end of tether. Whole body, legs, arms started to tremble uncontrollably. I passed out again. After this, doctor wrapped me in blankets. Carried me out into what might be small surgery. I lay there shivering and shaking.



Seamus O Tuathail

"Took noise. Felt behind ankles. Got excited. Took blood pressure twice by tourniquet method (belt around arm, inflated with air). Put something into my mouth. Thought it was drug. Spit it out. Second time, he said, 'Keep that in your mouth. I am taking your temperature.' Spoke with English accent. Bag still half over my head. Down to bridge of nose. Could not see him. Now gave me mug of hot liquid. Held to my mouth and poured in.

"Taken into another room. Lying on mattress on floor. Lay there. Started to sweat heavily. Dungarees got sticky. Couldn't sleep. Body very sore all over. Bag still over my head.

"Lay there long time. Cannot recall. Then taken out. Marched around room a few times and up hallway. Taken into interrogation officer. I discovered later. A different Special Branch man interrogated me. Asking me now about Civil Rights, Reddy McCrory Memorial Fund, Credit Union and my views about politics. Asked me who I voted for in last Stormont election. Insisted I was connected with one of two I.R.A. groups.

"Taken out again. Bag over my head. Put in cell. Bag taken off my head as I went into cell. Sat there on ground. No furniture. No blankets. New appearance. Half slept, half shivered with cold for some hours. Cannot recall exactly.

"Detective came in again. Put bag over my head. Interrogated again. Same questions again. My religion. Took ages of all my children. My wife's name and

address. Where she was born. Where I was born, etc. Names and addresses of all my friends. Offered me cigarette. Took it. Put back into cell with mattress on floor. Lay there for a while. Taken out again and interrogated. Lost count of interrogations. Happened four/five times. Same question. According to Branch, all my friends in I.R.A."

Shiver's account, as recorded by O Tuathail, goes on to describe how he was shaved next morning and has his feet washed. Later in the day, he was weighed.

"To my amazement, I weighed only 115 lb.," says the account. "I knew I was 9 st. 2 lb. when I was arrested from scales in house."

"Went to put clothes on. Detective said I had to go through another procedure. Took me naked into another room with photographer. To my surprise this man took my photograph with detective standing beside me. Told me to turn around. Taken again. Clothes put on. Back to cell.

"Bag over head again. Lorry. Helicopter. Over one hour in helicopter. Taken out into police keep. Taken to hole in wall. Taken to reception in Crumlin Road Jail. Weighed again. Doctor saw me that night. I asked what day it was. Tuesday. I was eight days in custody. I am now detained in C Wing, Crumlin Road Jail.

"N.B.—I could recognise and identify two of the Branch-men who interrogated me. I had never seen them prior to my interrogation and do not know their names."

Shiver's wife, Betty, was interviewed by *The Irish Times* last week, an hour after she had visited her husband. She said then he had lost one stone in weight. Her account of the treatment alleged to have been given to her husband coincides closely with that recorded here by Seamus O Tuathail.

In a covering note accompanying this account, O Tuathail says: "This story typical of four/five cases from Magilligan brought here. P. J. McClean and Michael Montgomery similar stories."

A detailed statement from P. J. McClean, on behalf of himself and 10 other prisoners, was released last night by the Association for Legal Justice. McClean's statement coincides with the above account in substantial detail. The 11 men had a hood pulled over their head for lengthy periods, during which time they were batoned and interrogated.

A section of McClean's statement reads: "Fists, boots and batons crashed into my numbed body. It wasn't my body. Somebody else's. Not mine. Hands behind my back. Handcuffs biting into wrists. Pain. Someone pulling and jerking my arms. Thrown headlong into a vehicle. Soft seats. Beating continued—boots, batons, fists. Then the noise, that dreaded helicopter again. Dragged out of the vehicle by the hair. Thrown on the floor of the 'copter. Blacked out."

"Consciousness again. Hands mangled in front of me. Pushed against a wall legs wide apart. I dug my finger nails into the wall. Pain all over me."

McClean's statement is given on behalf of Frank McGuigan, Belfast; Kevin Hanway, Belfast; Joe Clark, Belfast; Jim Auld, Belfast; Michael Montgomery, Derry; Michael Donnelly, Derry; Gerry McKerr, Lurgan; Brian Turley, Armagh; Patrick McNally, Armagh, and John McKenna Newry.

SUDAN:

The massive repression unleashed by the regime of General Nemeiry against thousands of communists and trade union militants is by any standards an enormous blow to the revolutionary struggle in the whole Arab world. We are in fact witnessing an unprecedented onslaught on the largest C.P. in the region and the cream of the Sudanese working class. The hanging of Abdel Khalek Mahjoub, the General Secretary of the C.P. and Chafei El Sheikh, the leader of the trade union federation, is only the tip of an iceberg of white terror which has by no means come to a halt.

"Unite internally, or at least sort out your differences and your contradictions, we'll see then ..." had been Nasser's consistent advice to Nemeiry, the representative of the Sudanese petty-bourgeoisie, anxious to join the Arab Federation.

Nemeiry's answer was quite unambiguous. On February 11th, he declared: "The Communists have no place in our revolution ... They will be crushed and exterminated." What then had transpired between the Sudanese C.P. and Nemeiry's military government?

THE SUDANESE C.P.'S POPULAR FRONT

Since its constitution as an organisation independent of the former Egyptian C.P., the Sudanese Party, in spite of its internal divisions, proved to be the only organised force in Sudan capable of advancing a revolutionary alternative to dictator Abboud's regime. The petty-bourgeoisie therefore sought an alliance with this "vertebral column of the Sudanese left" in order to take power and get rid of the right-wing opposition. Holding that "the C.P. was not yet in a position to seize power, and that the revolutionary crisis had not yet ripened", one wing of the C.P. leadership imposed a political line based upon democratic illusions, urged on by Moscow which ceaselessly counselled moderation; other elements in the leadership became trapped in the perspective of a Popular Front and the collaboration of all anti-imperialist classes, a traditional aspect of Stalinist policy, and considered that power had already been captured, whereas it had yet to be taken. Consequently, the Sudanese C.P. hesitated for a long time between legalism and revolution. It formed with the officers (representatives of the petty bourgeoisie) a national democratic front which, after the euphoria of the first few months, broke up under the weight of its inner contradictions: the interests of its two components were absolutely incompatible.

TWO TENDENCIES

Since 1966, the Sudanese C.P. has consisted of two tendencies: one right-wing and liquidationist, which sought a compromise with the regime and which looked to the example of the ex-Egyptian C.P. which finally buried itself in Nasser's Arab Socialist Union, and the other semi-revolutionary, which rejected all attempts to shackle it for the sake of some sort of anti-imperialist unity insisted on by the Russian bureaucrats, and stubbornly preserved its autonomy.

But over and above these divergences lay the determination of the Sudanese petty-bourgeoisie to exterminate its erstwhile ally. In fact, indoctrinated and educated by Nasser, the Sudanese officers absorbed the ABC of Nasserism = anti-communism, the nervous system of their ideological apparatus; distrust of mass organisations, which escaped their control, appeal to confused national and religious sentiments, liquidation of any and every left-wing formation and ... even a friendly wink for the Kremlin.

This classic Nasserite behaviour confirms with increasing brutality the right-wing turn of the so-called progressive regimes and the end of all illusions about the historical anti-imperialist role of the Arab petty bourgeoisie. The Sudanese C.P. being an obstacle to the integration of the country into the Arab Federation, Nemeiry determined to sweep it away. A pale image of his master, he took over his methods, verbal demagoguery accompanied by swift blows. But Sudan today is not like the Egypt of the '60s. Nasser

Defend the Communists



IMG MILITANTS (TOP) WHO CARRIED OUT A TOKEN OCCUPATION OF THE SUDANESE EMBASSY ON THE DAY OF MAHJOU'S EXECUTION WERE EJECTED BY THE POLICE (BELOW) WHO PLACED A 24-HOUR GUARD ON THE EMBASSY. NO ARRESTS WERE MADE.

was then at his zenith, and the Soviet bureaucracy could still sow illusions about his revolutionary role in the Middle East, whereas today, throughout the Arab world, the petty-bourgeoisie flounders in its contradictions and its "agonising reappraisals". The events of September 1970 in Anaman brought out what united Nasser and Hussein and not what differentiated them, as well as proving the incapacity of the petty bourgeoisie to supply a revolutionary solution to the problems of the Arab world.

How then did the C.P. respond to Nemeiry's bloody witch-hunt? After the butcher's February speech, the regime began to round up Communist militants, aided by an ignoble creature named Moawya Ibrahim, who had previously been head of the C.P.'s clandestine apparatus, and who supplied the regime with long lists of C.P. members and sympathisers. The top cadres were imprisoned; those Party activists despatched to the South to organise a separatist movement were either arrested or deported to the North; a vast purge of the police force, the army, and the state apparatus was likewise undertaken.

THE PURGE IS PREPARED

Then, on May 25th, Nemeiry announced the dissolution of the CGT and of all trade unions, peasant leagues, women's organisations, professional, cultural, tribal, and even charitable federations in which the C.P. had influence. Ibrahim was to set up a new trade union organisation, run on corporate lines and henceforth there was to be only one party—the Sudanese Socialist Union.

THE COUP AND COUNTER-COUP

The C.P. leadership, out of sheer desperation, instructed its members in the Army hierarchy to launch the now famous coup of July 19th. But the new regime, which came to power without resistance, although it decreed the legalisation of the C.P., the C.G.T. and the Party's other front organisations, renewed the time-worn call for an alliance of all "national democrats, patriotic intellectuals, national capitalists" etc. and vigorously denied all allegations of a "communist Sudan". Notwithstanding its limitations, the new ruling group was an advance on Nemeiry's regime in many respects: it would have served the C.P. from destruction and thus helped to stimulate left-wing opposition to the other Arab regimes, as well as provoking crises within the Arab C.P.s, particularly those under liquidationist "leadership"; it would perhaps have entailed a drive against the widespread corruption in the Sudan and a marginal improvement in workers' living standards; and it would undoubtedly have accentuated the contradictions of the Egyptian, Syrian, and Libyan regimes, which helps to explain their hysterical reaction and their frenetic scheming, culminating in the restoration of Nemeiry on July 22nd. The success of Hachem El Atta and his colleagues proved thus to be short-lived, despite the widespread support which they enjoyed. Disaster could in fact have been averted had the insurgents taken the necessary repressive measures against their enemies, had they, instead of limiting themselves to organising a few symbolic demonstrations, made a serious effort to mobilise the masses to smash the bourgeois state and, finally, had they not fatally ignored the dangers of a foreign intervention and thus failed to arm their supporters against such an eventuality. They mistakenly believed that a little Soviet pressure on Egypt and Libya would avert that particular menace, whereas we know from bitter experience that when it comes to choosing between its

"fraternal Parties", Moscow has no hesitation in plumping for the former.* For these gentlemen, Arab Stalinism is strictly expendable and certainly not a matter which merits a quarrel with their good friends in Cairo. That is why the Soviet bureaucracy maintained a criminal silence for the first week after Nemeiry's return to power, even though their own "comrades" were being shot down in cold blood; that is why they invited Iraqi fascists, personally responsible for the murder and torture of Communist militants, to the last Congress of the CPSU; that is why they have succeeded admirably in "overcoming the temporary difficulties" and re-establishing amicable relations with Nemeiry; and that is why their mild verbal titterings are, to say the least, rather unconvincing.

Those other staunch defenders of the cause of socialism and revolution, Peking's "new Mandarins", have lost no time in expressing their support for ... Nemeiry. The Chinese bureaucracy, grown respectable and responsible, has once again shown the extent of its commitment to the "status quo". Unfortunately for them, Russian tanks have till now pulled more weight in the eyes of the Arab ruling class than sycophantic articles in *Peking Review*, but the Maoists have been quick to take advantage of the Kremlin's difficulties to step into the breach. Just as in Ceylon a few months back, an unholy alliance of reactionary forces, stretching from Kadhafi, the "revolutionary nationalist", through Haile Selassie, the well-known "anti-imperialist" Emperor, to the Zionist leaders of Israel now rejoices at the defeat of the C.P. coup and the consolidation of Nemeiry's Bonapartist regime. Hassan and Hussein can breathe once more—their demise is postponed a little longer—while Sadat now has a free hand to begin his own purge against "crypto-Communists" or "pro-Soviet" elements of the state capitalist ruling clique in Egypt.

But their joy will turn to tears, for new revolutionary organisations will spring up in Sudan and throughout the Arab world which, having learnt the lessons of past defeats, will refuse to subordinate the class struggle to the zigzags of Soviet foreign policy, will reject the Stalinist nonsense about "national fronts" and "non-capitalist roads of development" which can lead only to disaster, and will liberate the Arab world from the three-pronged hydra of Zionism, imperialism and Arab reaction.

Meanwhile it is urgently necessary to campaign for the release of those Communists languishing in Nemeiry's dungeons, and for an end to the repression in Sudan, whilst continuing to expose Moscow's treacherous double-dealing and pointing out the tragic consequences of Stalinist Popular Frontism.

Hands off the Sudanese Communists!

Long live the Arab Socialist Revolution!

—R. Slansky

*In this respect it is interesting to note the declaration of Osman Hashim—Sudanese Ambassador to France—at a press conference he gave in Paris on July 23rd:

"We have excellent relations with the USSR, and these will remain just as close as in the past."

"We do not think that the Soviets have intervened in the Sudan's domestic affairs."

"The question of friendly relations between the Arab countries and the Soviet Union is one thing, but the question of Communists inside the Arab countries is quite another, which is of exclusive



NOTES FROM BENGAL

As international pressure is mounting day by day for the release of Bangla Desh's militant peasant leader, 92-year-old Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani, who has been held in the custody of the Indian authorities since last April (reported in *Red Mole*, August 1971) when he crossed into India following the army crackdown in Bangla Desh, Indira Ghandi's government is finding it difficult to suppress the news of Bhashani's arrest any longer.

Maulana Bhasani, who is reportedly kept in a secluded house at a place 60 miles north of Calcutta, has not been allowed to see any of his party officials or relations who have travelled to Calcutta in search of the Bangla Desh leader. Masibur Rahman, the general secretary of the Maulana's party, the National Awami Party, had followed him to India some time ago. Rahman wanted to have consultations regarding the conduct of struggle inside Bangla Desh. Not only was Rahman unable to see his chief, but it is now strongly feared that the NAP secretary himself was put under arrest by the Indian police for illegally entering India.

Calcutta's popular left-wing Bengali language weekly *Darpan* in its recent issue alleged that a sinister plot had been jointly hatched by the Indira government and a section of Calcutta's rightwing press to suppress all news concerning Maulana Bhashani's whereabouts. No independent correspondent or foreign observer has so far succeeded in meeting Maulana Bhashani.

Darpan says in its report, "The left-wing leaders of West Bengal have now openly accused the Indira government of holding the aged popular leader of Bangla Desh, Maulana Bhashani, under arrest."

"As soon as this accusation is made public," the Bengali weekly states, "the two reactionary West Bengal dailies—*Ananda Bazar Patrika* and *Hindusthan Standard*—jointly published reports of an exclusive interview with the Maulana."

Darpan further points out, "The type of information one logically expects from such an interview was not in the least available in those two reports."

The Calcutta weekly goes on to say, "It is widely believed the whole interview has been faked in collaboration with the police to deny the charge brought against the Indira government."

According to this paper, "To add an aura of truthfulness these reports were published under bogus by-lines as if the interview had taken place somewhere in Bangla Desh."

Darpan concluded by writing, "The day after the publication of the mock interview, Maulana Bhashani's son, Abu Naser, arrives in Calcutta in search of his father. Abu Naser has told our reporter that despite his repeated efforts he has so far failed to meet his father."

The Indira government has adopted yet another tactic to create confusion among Maulana Bhashani's followers who are now fighting inside Bangla Desh. When all major leftwing parties of Bangla Desh have successfully formed a broad-based leadership to direct the present independence struggle unitedly, Akashbani, the government-controlled Indian radio, took to broadcasting statements purporting to have been from Maulana Bhashani, deprecating any move towards collective leadership in the conduct of the present struggle. This stratagem of deception reflects the Indian bourgeoisie's desperation to maintain the Awami League's single party hold, which is today visibly slipping away as the war assumes the nature of a protracted struggle.

THE RIFT IN THE AWAMI LEAGUE

In Calcutta's informed political circles rumour is rife that a split may occur soon between the East Bengal Regiment High Command, the hard core of the Liberation guerrillas, who have set before them the goal of complete independence at whatever cost, and the Provisional Government of Awami League politicians who have been uneasy over the trends of the protracted war. The barefooted guerrillas who are bravely facing the well-equipped Pakistani troops in bitter battles are gradually becoming sceptical of the efficiency of the Awami League government.

As charges of corruption against some important Awami League leaders are publicly spoken about in Calcutta, the growing resentment against them is becoming common. It is alleged that last April a large sum of Pakistani money to the tune of some 750 million rupees was brought by the Awami Leaguers across the border into India. In many cases a sizeable portion of this money, instead of being deposited with a central coffer, is still held by individuals who have visibly acquired a taste for the many luxuries that Calcutta offers to its princely residents.

One less lucky refugee from Dacca remarked, "We know money talks. But in Calcutta it does not talk, it's screaming." The alleged culprits have chosen for themselves expensive abodes in Calcutta's fashionable quarters and are seen moving about in style. Obviously these elements are causing a great deal of embarrassment to the sincerest and determined in the camp, who are already hard put justifying their role in the face of mounting criticism. The left-wing weekly *Frontier*, in one of its recent attacks on the Calcutta-based Awami League leadership, said, "This being the situation, it is clear which direction the political leadership of the movement will take in future ... As for the gentlemen in Calcutta and Mujibnagar, for all practical purposes they seem to have done their bit."

The possible split between the fighting section and the Awami League leadership is likely to occur over the Awami League's reluctance to broaden the present liberation struggle to include other parties forming a united front, whereas the need for expanding is felt more and more by the East Bengal Regiment sector commanders in the battlefields who are beginning to rely heavily on coordinated

of things. The Liberation Force Field Command sees the recent guerrilla swoops on Dacca and Chittagong as necessary concomitants for bringing Yahya's army to its knees. This shift in thinking by the military leaders of Bangla Desh, whose allegiance to Awami League aspirations so far was taken for granted by the gentlemen of the Provisional Government, toward a firm cooperation with all units fighting inside Bangla Desh is bound to add a third dimension to the struggle for liberation.

In the present situation India will be unwilling to release Maulana Bhashani who with his dynamic personality and militant background could provide the rallying point for the militants ready to forsake a moribund leadership for a better one.

—Khaled Yousof, writing from Calcutta, 15.8.71.

INTRODUCTION

The attitude of The Workers Press towards the struggle in Bengal has been quite clear: they have on the whole concentrated on supporting the Awami League and projecting its leaders in Britain to the extent of totally ignoring the revolutionary left groupings, their evolution and the development of an NLF. So when they boost right-wing Awami Leaguers one is not surprised. It is in the good old tradition of supporting the reactionary Mesali Hadj in the Algerian war and opposing the FNL.

However, when the I.S. group does something similar one attributes this more to ignorance than ill-will or consciously formulated policy. The interview by Stephen Marks with Abdul Mannan (Socialist Worker, 31 July 1971) is an excellent example of this. Mannan is a notorious right-wing Awami Leaguer, and to boost him as a working class militant interested in building "armed workers' militias" is extremely irresponsible, to put it mildly. We would not normally raise these matters in our columns, but when we wrote in a brief letter to Socialist Worker pointing out these facts, so that I.S. comrades in touch with Bengali workers would not confuse them, our letter was not published. As a result we publish the piece below in order to demystify the myths built by the Workers Press and also, sadly, Socialist Worker.

One day during the week before the Pakistan army's crackdown on Bangla Desh on 25th March 1971, the workers of a match factory near Dacca were as usual busy at their work benches in the late afternoon. These factory workers were active members of a left-wing labour front, Sramik Federation. By nightfall returning villagers spotted a dozen bodies floating among the flotsams in the muddy water of the Buriganga, the river that flowed past the factory shed. A gang of thugs, believed to be members of the rival Sramik League, Awami League's shock-brigade, had gained entry into the factory in daylight and set upon the unarmed workers with knives and iron rods.

This was presumably the part of Sramik League's tactic to cope with the unwilling industrial workers and curb the influence of the country's important trade union. When the thugs left the bloody scene, already 23 men were dead and another half a dozen kidnapped as hostages. The whole incident occurred when Bangla Desh was passing through the much-heralded "non-violent" movement launched by the Awami League to protest against Yahya's machinations.

Except for a brief mention in the local press, the news of the murders was carefully suppressed.

At that time the Awami League's industrial front, Sramik League, was led by Abdul Mannan and his cronies, who believed in the gospel of the big stick to keep the restive workers in order. Mannan's men were particularly active at Adamjee Nagar, the world's biggest centre of jute industry, and at Tejgaon on the outskirts of Dacca, where exhortation mixed with warning of dire consequences was skilfully used to persuade the workers to join the League. Mr. Mannan's ascendancy to his party hierarchy was largely due to his mastery in the role of a "Communist-baiter". His anti-Communist activities made him extremely popular with the employers of Dacca and Narayanganj. To them he was the genuine defender of free enterprise. In 1970, over a hundred Bengali workers were shot down by the Bengali police and in retaliation a Bengali police superintendent was killed at the hands of the enraged workers at Shyampur, on Dacca-Narayanganj highway. This was the result of a dispute when its Bengali owners tried unlawfully to remove some machine-parts from a factory which was under lockout for some time. Mannan's sympathy went with the Bengali mill-owner, who was reportedly a stalwart of the Awami League. But, for the workers who died at Shyampur, the lesson came too late that the Bengali-capitalist "brother" was no better than the hated West Pakistani mill-owner.

By early 1970 Awami League, with its avowed petty-bourgeois ideology, found itself incapable of leading Bangla Desh's 750,000 industrial workers in the forthcoming general elections. Its Achilles heel was its labour front. East Bengal's comparatively small labour force was already dissatisfied with the Pakistan Government for its repressive laws and police actions. Up and down the country, bad working conditions in the factories, subsistence level wages, denial of fundamental rights of trade unions, wide and arbitrary powers of the employers, made the angry workers ready for radical actions. Class antagonism of workers of Khulna and Chittagong jute mills led to the violent labour unrest of 1969-70, brutally put down by the police.

But one fact in the whole industrial panorama which was taken advantage of by the Awami League was that over 90% of Bangla Desh's private enterprises were controlled by West Pakistan capital. Awami League used this to defuse the class struggle by stressing that once the non-Bengali capitalists were uprooted, all the workers' problems would be over—the implication being that Bengali capitalists would not be as oppressive. The issue whether the Bengali bourgeoisie will be a bunch of good boys may be settled later, the workers were told at pre-election mass rallies organised by Awami League. Awami League's electoral victory indicated the weakness of the left-wing labour fronts who failed to offer any viable alternatives in order to channelise militancy of the industrial proletariat into a revolutionary course.

However, the subsequent events leading to the Pakistan army attack on Bangla Desh proved the inadequacy of Awami League leadership. Mr. Mannan and his lieutenants promptly forsook the workers inside Bangla Desh to flee to India where his old patrons were willing and ready to promote him to the rank of "emissary" and send him off to Europe to build up Awami League's image as "the saviour of the proletariat of Bangla Desh".

Mr. Mannan is reportedly now visiting Britain, conveniently passing himself off as a "left leaning revolutionary activist".

ABDUL MANNAN



CEYLON: The repression is continuing

The repression in Ceylon is by no means over, despite the lack of publicity in the unfree press. The Ceylonese press itself has been totally silenced by the tight press censorship; the opposition parties, the UNP and the Federal Party¹ are in full agreement with government policy which is today decided by Madame "Butcher" Bandaranaike, her nephew² and the heads of the Armed Forces. In fact the situation today is even more dangerous than the first wave of repression that was unleashed in the first week of March and which led the JVP to launch a counteroffensive. Today the repression is slow, systematic and coldly brutal. Efforts are made to widen the net. Not only JVP members and sympathisers, but also all political and trade union militants are being arrested and intimidated. It was not very long ago that a leading revolutionary from the plantation sector was arrested and tortured; the police unsuccessfully tried to obtain a false confession from him³. The emergency regulations preclude any form of trade-union or political activity. Any working class struggle has to be extremely carefully organised because it is illegal from the very beginning.

REPRESSION HAS BEEN COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE

The repression has been extremely counter-productive. The atrocities committed by the Army and the police - murder of JVP suspects, rape and other sexual attacks on hundreds of women JVP members, burning of houses, indiscriminate assault on villagers, etc - has been on a scale unknown and unheard of in Ceylon since the brutal massacre in Kandy in 1848 by the British. The government is well aware of the fact that today the masses hate Mrs Bandaranaike and her government. That is why the June elections have been postponed.

Our analyses of events in Ceylon (*The Red Mole*, Vol 2 No 8, 24 April-8 May '71) except for a few details⁴, has been confirmed. It is unlikely that the bourgeoisie would restore democratic rights in the foreseeable future. There are today in 14,500 political prisoners in specially constructed concentration camps. When this correspondent interviewed those who had been released, all of them referred to the appalling conditions - bad sanitation, overcrowding, bad food, police terror, etc. The government continues to refuse to release the names of the prisoners and thus the danger of many of them being executed is a real one. And yet all 14,500 cannot be liquidated.

Their morale has not been broken. Confirmation of this came in a recent hunger strike at one of the camps and the heckling of a visiting Minister. The government knows full well that these militants cannot be "rehabilitated" (i.e. bought out). If emergency regulations are revoked the regime will be forced to release them. But "Butcher" Bandaranaike also knows that any let-up in the emergency would inevitably lead to a movement that will ultimately topple her government. But in any case the bourgeoisie has not achieved its goal. The repression of the JVP was a means to an end, the end being the imposition of certain economic burdens of the working class. This has not yet been achieved⁵. They are debating whether to cut the rice ration or remove subsidies on one measure⁶ of rice etc. This is why the bourgeoisie cannot afford to restore democratic rights.

THE ARMY/POLICE AMBITIONS

There is another very significant development. The police and the Army have tasted unbridled power; they have enjoyed special privileges. The Chiefs of the Armed Forces know that at least for four weeks the political leaders were solely dependent on the Army. As the mass discontent begins to express itself a further rightward drift cannot be ruled out, particularly when the atrocities and bestial behaviour of the Army and police comes to light and legal officers come under pressure to institute legal proceedings. One incident will suffice to explain this.

One of the leading JVP comrades, a woman in her twenties, was raped by an Army colonel, paraded naked in the main street and subsequently shot. This incident created unrest even amongst the army and the Colonel was arrested. Other such incidents⁷ have led to a conflict between sections of the state bureaucracy and judiciary and the heads of the Armed Forces, who wish to get rid of the inconvenient legal regulations which make the armed forces liable to prosecution. The possibility of some sort of military take-over cannot totally be ruled out in the future.

RESTORE DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS

In these conditions the demand for the restoration of democratic rights becomes an important transitional demand because the bourgeoisie cannot accede to it without endangering its own stability. The only means of ensuring the restoration of democratic rights and forestalling a further rightward drift would be the development of the mass movement, although it remains an extremely difficult task given the present conditions.

In our previous article we did not raise many criticisms of the JVP because the main emphasis at that stage

was a total solidarity with the JVP comrades under attack. Today, however, it is necessary to draw attention to some serious political errors. In the first place their failure to mobilise the masses. When they were under attack they resisted militarily without any political campaign directed at the masses. This was suicidal as it gave the bourgeoisie the initiative. They had no concept of mass mobilisation. Secondly a considerable number were influenced by Maoism and were misled by Maoist rhetoric into visualising social transformations purely as a military question. (A crude interpretation of "Power grows out of the barrel of a Gun" led them to underestimate the role of the masses). Of course the support given to the Bandaranaike regime by the Chinese bureaucracy has made many JVP militants understand its counter-revolutionary nature and the process of differentiation continues to take place. Will later make a more detailed critique and balance-sheet of the JVP, but no one should underestimate the tremendous impact of their heroic resistance. By their bravery they have demonstrated to the masses the hypocrisy of the Stalinists and the reformists; they have unmasked the mystifying force of bourgeois democracy and above all, they have demonstrated that the struggle for socialism is a struggle for state power.

As internationalists we must call for the release of political prisoners, publicise the plight of the JVP comrades, call for the immediate restoration of democratic rights and a public enquiry into Army and police atrocities. We should also keep open an eye for any representatives of the Ceylon regime visiting Western Europe.

NOTES

1. Federal party is the party of the Tamil bourgeoisie.
2. The nephew is Felix "Hangman" Bandaranaike who is personally directing the repression.
3. The police wanted the comrade to confess that the LSSP (R), the Ceylon Section of the Fourth International and his organisation was involved in the uprising.
4. The Red Mole article referred to the United Front between the JVP, LSSP (R) and YSF. There was no permanent United Front. They came together on specific issues.
5. The number of prisoners was confirmed by Bandaranaike in parliament.
6. The government has so far raised bus fares, but the major proposals for cutting the rice subsidy, pruning social service expenditure has not yet been implemented.
7. One measure is equivalent to 2 lbs.



PUBLIC MEETING

The Common Market: What it is and how to fight it

SPEAKER Ernest Mandel

Friday Sep. 17th, 1971 Conway Hall 7.30 p.m.

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

OBITUARIES:

Saghir Ahmad-pakistani militant

Following Yahya Khan's invasion of East Pakistan on March 25th, a small number of West Pakistani intellectuals living in North America publicly condemned the brutal massacres. Prominent among them were Saghir and Eqbal Ahmad (brothers), Feroz Ahmed, and Aijaz Ahmad, all university teachers and writers. These men wrote an open letter to their government and articles on Bangla Desh, braving possible reprisals. Together with socialist friends from East Pakistan, they tried to inform North Americans about the conditions of the people and the character of the contending forces in Bangla Desh.

Saghir Ahmad's accidental death by drowning in North Vancouver, British Columbia, on July 7th, is a serious loss to the Pakistani and Canadian socialist movements and the anti-war movement in North America. At 36, he was nearing the height of his intellectual powers and his capacity for political work. A sociologist and anthropologist, he wrote on class structure and class struggle in West Pakistan, on the Thuggee (guerrilla rebel) movement in North India in the nineteenth century, and on imperialism, underdevelopment and revolutionary struggle in South and South-East Asia. At the time of his death he was a co-editor of *Pakistan Forum* and was about to visit refugee camps in India and to co-author a book on Bangla Desh.

Saghir's intellectual work is the work of a man at war with a part of himself and with his colonial environment, yet a man who, kindly, tolerant and truthful, is trying to distort nothing and to give each fellow-human his due. As a doctoral student in America in the early 1960s, and for a short time in London, he necessarily became steeped in the various social science theories and methods being taught in the imperialist nations. Diligently, he tried to apply and test these concepts and some of his earlier work has a kind of dogged aridity. Yet his data, his earlier Marxist insights, his knowledge of his own society and his concern for human beings, tell him that the received doctrines are inadequate and that some of them are pernicious.

The values that Saghir found among the peasants and received from his own family, guided him in the many settings through which he moved or into which he was hounded. Wherever he lived Saghir moved people by his passionate

humanity. When happy among friends or engaged in collective struggle, he shed a joyous radiance; when provoked, a fiery anger. Although his main loyalty was always to Pakistan, he rooted himself in each local situation, making the sufferings of its people his suffering, and their struggles for justice his own.

Two recent examples illustrate conflicts induced in Saghir by struggles going on in his environment, and the honour with which he surmounted them. In September 1969, after being compelled to leave the United States and after researching for a year in Canada without an teaching appointment, Saghir came to teach at the Simon Fraser University. On the way, he heard that a second elder brother had died suddenly in Pakistan, leaving to Saghir and Eqbal the maintenance of a number of relatives. When he reached Simon Fraser, Saghir found a majority of students and faculty in his department about to go on strike against a purge of radical teachers and the abolition of a democratic department concerned with critical and experimental teaching. Some of his acquaintances were on both sides of the conflict and "compromise paths" were being talked of. After a brief inner struggle and consultation with his brother, Saghir chose to strike, risking his salary and the chance to teach that he so much wanted. In the event, he was suspended from teaching along with seven of his colleagues, and went through two years of harassment and delayed dismissal proceedings. He was finally arbitrarily fired, without due process, on June 23rd, and looked forward to a new appointment at Trent University in Peterborough.

Although forbidden to teach, Saghir spent the last two years guiding and befriending students, researching on Pakistan, and busying himself with the struggles of British Columbia workers, unemployed people, Quebecois, the anti-war movement in Canada, and most recently, of Bangla Desh. His last "research" trip was to Quesnel, a small town in British Columbia where a race-fight occurred between white and Sikh workers. Along with friends, Saghir investigated the dispute for the *Georgia Straight*, the Vancouver underground newspaper, together with Anne Roberts, who shared his work and companionship for the past five years.

Yet "investigate" is not the word, for Saghir entered at once into the joys and fears of the Sikh community, revelled in their affection, and with difficulty tore himself away. In every city where he lived, he is mourned by dozens who loved him.

A second and graver test of Saghir's integrity was Bangla Desh. Saghir was a West Pakistani who had grown up in a period of intense nationalism, and he was living precariously in North America. Many of his kin had moved from Bihar to East Pakistan. As Urdu speakers of high status, they served the government in Islamabad. Saghir believed some of them to have been killed in disturbances that followed Yahya Khan's refusal to implement the election results in East Pakistan. Saghir also deeply admired the government of China, which, however, was continuing its support of Islamabad. Yet when the invasion came, he immediately disregarded these complications, recognised fascism, and opposed it. Instead of abdicating into passive observation from a distance, he exerted himself in the midst of his own troubles, leafletting, speaking, writing, fund-raising, and travelling, for the people of Bangla Desh.

Saghir's life was closely linked with that of his elder brother, Eqbal, who, with seven other defendants in the Harrisburg Conspiracy Case, faces trial on inane charges of conspiracy against the government of the United States. It is obvious to all who know him that these charges are persecution for Eqbal's legitimate but forthright opposition to the war in Vietnam. From their corrupting, co-optational situations in North American universities, both these brothers came forth and fulfilled the responsibilities of revolutionary intellectuals. Their conduct recalls a statement by a North Vietnamese delegate to a Vancouver conference which Saghir had recently helped sponsor. "Cadres must make the people love them. They must be the first to sacrifice, and the last to get rewards."

Now Saghir has departed. Others must take his place.

— Kathleen Gough,
Vancouver, B.C.
July 1971

Comrade Luiz Eduardo Merlino Murdered

Military dictatorship, the tool that defends capitalist exploitation and imperialist domination in Brazil, has just committed another crime: the murder of Luiz Eduardo Merlino, comrade "Nicolau", a journalist and revolutionary militant, who was a member of the Fourth International. This crime adds to the long list of murders and tortures that are the common fate of anyone who raises their voice against the policies of the dictatorship.

Comrade Luiz Eduardo Merlino was arrested in Sao Paulo last 15th July by army men of Operation Bandit (OBAN: specialists in "hunting" revolutionaries). On the 21st his corpse was returned to his family. He had refused to give information to the regime and so had been savagely tortured until he died.

Luiz Eduardo da Rocha Merlino was 23 years old. He was born on 18th October 1947 in Santos (Sao Paulo state). Before the military coup of 1964, he had taken part in the activities of the Popular Centre for Culture (CPC) at Santos; this was an organisation led by the National Union of Students (UNE), which was one of the channels through which the revolutionaries worked to politicise sectors of the population. From 1965 he went to Sao Paulo and worked in journalism. First of all on *Jornal da Tarde* (O Estado de Sao Paulo) from 1965-66, then on *Folha da Tarde* from 1967-68 and finally on *Jornal do Barrio* from 1969-70. Luiz Eduardo Merlino took an active part in all the assemblies and struggles of his profession, such as the demonstration against the arrest of journalists which took place in front of the military tribunal of Sao Paulo in April 1968, or the protest movements against the passing of the Institutional Act No. 5 of December 1968. In this last action he led the strike of the *Folha da Tarde* journalists. In 1967 he was the inspirer of the weekly paper *Amanha*, which was published by the strong student association of the Sao Paulo University Arts Faculty. This paper, which was suppressed after a few issues, was not a student paper but a newsheet orientated to workers. Parallel to his journalism, Luiz Eduardo Merlino spent a lot of time working in the student movement, especially in the student stronghold of the Arts Faculty of Sao Paulo University, where he led the occupation during the rise in the mass student movement in 1968. As a member of the

Executive Committee of the Sao Paulo State Students Union (the clandestine UEE) led by Jose Dirceu, he attended the Ibiuna Conference of the National Union of Students (UNE) in 1968. He also worked on *Opiniao Informa*, the organ of the student association at the Arts Faculty of Sao Paulo University.

In 1968 he joined the Communist Workers Party (POC), where he was known by the pseudonym of "Nicolau". He first worked in the student sector of this organisation where he played an important role during the actions against Rockefeller's visit in 1969. From the second term of that year he was in the Sao Paulo regional leadership of the POC. After December 1969 he organised and led one of the industrial bases of the organisation, in the industrial zone of Sao Paulo state known as ABC (a triangle formed by the towns of S. Andre, S. Bernardo and S. Caetano).

Comrade Nicolau was to be one of the leaders of the opposition to the traditional leadership of the POC in the internal struggle of 1969-70. He fought against the heritage of propagandism and opportunistic centrism that was characteristic of the POC and the POLOP which it had originated from. It was during this fight that he joined the Fourth International. His experience in the mass student movement and the workers' movement enabled him to contribute in an important way to the elaboration of a policy in the field of tactics and organisation that faced the Brazilian workers' movement, a field in which the POC had failed. Along with comrades of the F.I. he centred the debate that he led within the POC around five theses concerning revolutionary war, the Brazilian workers' movement, the question of the vanguard organisation in the present conditions in Brazil, an analysis of the revolutionary left and the tactic of alliances that flowed from it and lastly on the analysis of the international communist movement and the building of the Revolutionary International. These theses changed considerably the concepts that were accepted till then in the POC.

He recently spent a few months in France and was present as an observer at the second Congress of the French section of the Fourth International, held in Rouen in May 1971.

The Brazilian dictatorship devoted great efforts to capturing comrade Nicolau and savagely murdered him after his arrest in Sao Paulo. Mercenary scum have killed a political cadre whose qualities of courage, combativity, devotion to the national and social liberation of his country and the socialist cause, they were right to fear. All those who knew of him, even his political opponents, recognised these qualities, so essential in order to carry out revolutionary struggle in the difficult conditions of Brazil today. He clearly saw the enormous problems that had to be overcome. They caused him to say that the struggle of revolutionary Marxist militants in the present conjuncture in Brazil went against the current. However, this made him even more determined and firm in the views he held.

The Brazilian revolution has lost an irreplaceable fighter. The Fourth International has lost a militant who symbolises all that is best in the new generation of militants who have come to Trotskyism during the time of the international upsurge in revolution opened up by the victories of the Cuban and Indo-Chinese revolutions.

However, the gorillas of the Brazilian military dictatorship would be wiser not to rejoice about this latest exploit of Fascist-type repression that they have set up in the country. Even if reaction has gained a few points in its favour for the moment in Brazil, the ruling class and imperialism are faced with a threat that reaches beyond the present borders and whose extent covers the continent. This threat of the Latin American revolution, the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle, of all the people of Latin America poses a serious challenge to Latin American reaction. Today a courageous fighter has fallen, but he will become the banner for his successor and those who follow his example.

We will show our faith in Comrade Luiz Eduardo Merlino by continuing his struggle until victory.

LONG LIVE THE LATIN AMERICAN REVOLUTION!
LONG LIVE THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL!

August 1971

E. Pinheiro

UCS: Transform the Work-in into a Sit-in.

70,000 WORKERS DEMONSTRATE

The most important recent event was the massive demonstration in Glasgow on Wednesday August 18th, involving at least 70,000 workers. Once again, as with the June 23rd demo, the organisation lay essentially with the shop stewards, and it was the network of contacts established by the UCS stewards with rank and file leaders in other sections of industry which enabled them to build a demonstration nearly twice the size of the previous one.

A very noticeable feature of the second demonstration was the large increase in the number of banners from areas outside the West of Scotland: Edinburgh, the Fife and Lothian coalfields, Dundee and from numerous areas of England stretching down as far as Newhaven. For some time it has been clear that wide layers of the working class in this area have regarded the UCS struggle as a crucial test of the Tory government's ability to impose their anti-working class policies, and therefore also of the ability of the class itself to fight back. Every worker in the Clyde Valley has felt the potential draught of redundancy as he has observed events in the yards. The wide support for Wednesday's demonstration and the donations to the fighting fund flooding in from all over the country, show that this lesson is now percolating to the consciousness of the most advanced workers all over Britain.

Further evidence for this is provided by what has been one of the most important repercussions of events in UCS. Namely, that sections of the working class in other parts of the country are beginning to take up the methods of struggle used in UCS. The idea of factory occupation as a tactic in opposition to redundancies has been put forward in such widely spread places as the River Don Steelworks, Rotherham, GEC-EE, Witham, Essex and Plessey, Alexandria. In the future it is clear that the example of UCS will serve as an inspiration for more attempts of this kind. In this way a long-forgotten tactic of the working class has been rehabilitated through the example of action.

A dangerous feature of Wednesday's demonstration was the presence of a large number of leaders of the Labour and Trade Union movement, opportunistically jumping on the bandwagon. Having seen the dimensions of this struggle and the extent to which it has caught the imagination of the working class, they realise that to fail to identify with it, in however token a fashion, would be to considerably dim their own career prospects. The dangers inherent in such people being allowed to take over leadership of the movement are most clearly shown by the TUC plan, produced by Feather on the eve of the demonstration, to set up a Clyde-side Development Authority. Such plans for founding yet another commission of trade union bureaucrats and industrialists have a familiar ring for the Scottish working class who have seen numerous such "high-powered" outfits over the years totally fail to halt the rise in unemployment to its present overall level of 6.3% or the steady emigration rate of more than 30,000 annually. The real implications of the exercise are to be seen in Feather's statement that pay-offs in UCS should be held up *while consideration is given to the TUC plan*. In other words the TUC leaders are prepared to see the rundown of the yards proceed after a decent interval during which it would be hoped to dampen down the dynamic of the struggle.

REID/AIRLIE AND THE ROLE OF MR. KELLY

Yet another diversion has been created by a Mr. Kelly, self-made millionaire and owner of a reputedly highly successful small shipyard in Dublin. For a few days now the papers have been full of stories, including one of a dramatic flight by stewards' leaders, Reid and Airlie, to the Isle of Islay where Kelly is on holiday. The precise outcome of these negotiations is likely to be known by the time this appears, but this much can be said at present:

1. Kelly has indicated that he is opposed to the "work in" and he would demand full control of the labour force. Although this has not been spelt out it is absolutely clear that this includes the right to sack workers.
2. While he has indicated his interest in taking over the Govan yard and the Linthouse fabrication division and is prepared to discuss plans for Clydebank, Kelly has made no mention of the Scotstoun division (scheduled to close by the end of the year under the Liquidator's plans).
3. Kelly has mentioned the sum of £1 million as being the kind of money he could pump into the yards. This would only pay the wages for four weeks! As pointed out in previous articles in *The Red Mole*, the cost of bringing the Clydebank yard alone up to the standards of its most advanced competitors could easily be 40 or 50 times that figure.
4. Kelly is insistent that he cannot proceed without government financial backing. Yet urgent talks held in Glasgow immediately after the demonstration by Sir John Eden Minister for Industry, broke down on precisely the point of the government's unwillingness to supply any more money

all 8,500 UCS workers should be dismissed. It is necessary to be absolutely clear that any such compromise would represent a complete sell-out of the shipyard workers and the effective end to their present stand. Unfortunately, the pressures for the stewards to make such an accommodation will inevitably increase the longer the struggle continues.

The Red Mole has already analysed the implications of the present tactics in some detail in its Clydeside broadsheets. As this article is being written the first of the workers made redundant by order of the Liquidator will be reporting for work as usual at the Clydebank Division. Out of the 160 sacked only a few have volunteered to accept the position: the vast majority will continue to work and be paid out of the fighting fund. What these workers and the hundreds more due to receive their books in the next few weeks will in fact be doing, is donating their labour to the bosses free of charge while themselves being supported by other sections of the working class. This admirable arrangement from the point of view of the yard owners and their creditors is made even more attractive by the professed aim of the stewards to ensure the most rapid possible production of the remaining ships on the stocks and combat any signs of "slacking" amongst the workers. Thus what has evolved out of the present tactics being followed is that the work force of UCS is being partially supported by other workers in a frantic effort to work themselves out of a job. This is the grim result of the tactics of the C.P. throughout the struggle.

The contradictions in this situation are already being exploited by the bourgeois press. An article has appeared on the subject of a husband and wife working at Clydebank who will receive a total of £50 weekly out of the fighting fund if their current wages are paid when they are declared redundant. Quite clearly this was not printed out of some abstract concern for injustice. Its purpose is to divide the working class and particularly to raise questions in the minds of those like the £12 a week labourers in the Glasgow Corporation Direct Labour Department who have, in common with all their work mates, agreed to pay 50p per week to the UCS fund.

C.P.'S OBSESSION WITH "RESPECTABILITY" PAVES THE WAY TO DEFEAT

The strategy of Reid, Airlie and the other stewards' leaders is based upon the theory that the UCS workers will win a "respectable" image through their continued hard, disciplined work, and that this will convince the government of the justice of their case. Such a policy is fundamentally mistaken and can only lead in the long term to defeat. For the strategy which is clearly evolving on the part of the govern-

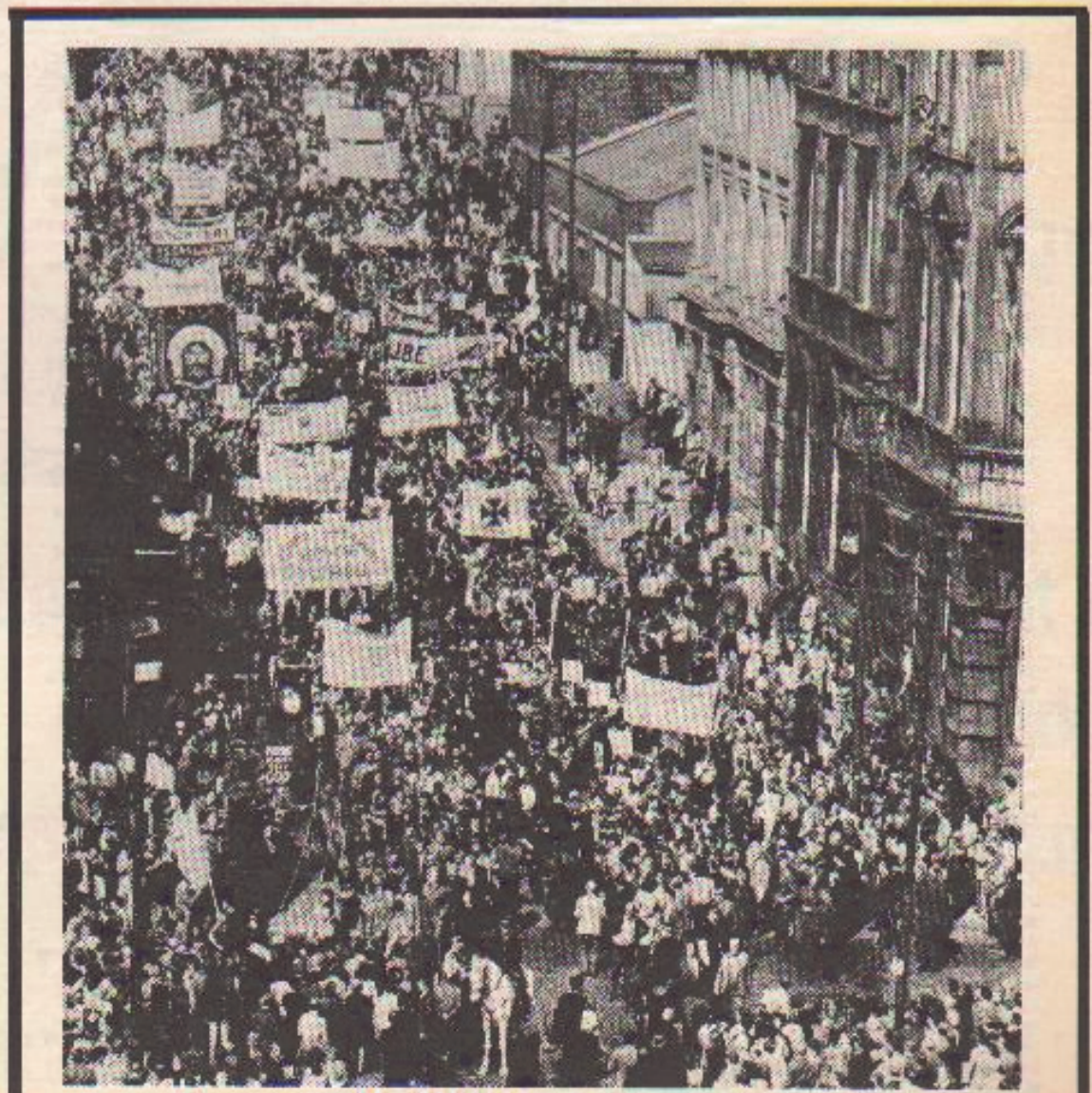


ment and their collaborators is becoming clear. They will continue to attempt to buy off the stewards with compromise plans of one kind or another, but for the time being they will not be over-worried if these are successful or not; for they realise very clearly that the longer the struggle goes on, the weaker will be the position of the UCS workers, both in terms of their own morale and, quite possibly, of outside support. For these reasons it is the duty of every militant to try to counteract this strategy by campaigning for:

1. Maintenance and extension of support for the UCS workers
2. An extension of this support beyond finance and demonstrations into militant action which hits against their own employers also - token or preferably more prolonged strikes culminating if possible in a general strike - occupations in solidarity with the UCS workers etc.

Since the government are quite prepared to see the work-in continue for the foreseeable future, on condition it remains on its present basis, it is clear that the UCS workers themselves are confronted with the task of bringing the struggle to a head. What is demanded in the yards themselves is a reversal of the present passive policies of co-operation with the management - the transformation of the "work-in" into a "sit-in" involving the continued occupation of the yards along with a refusal to proceed with work in hand until they are fully nationalised under work control with the guarantee of employment for the entire labour force.

-Tony Southall,
writing from Glasgow, 23.8.71



molehills

"I'm no longer a Socialist"
—LORD ROBENS

The former chairman of the National Coal Board—now chairman of Vickers—made this truly startling revelation in a TV interview to be broadcast on September 13th.

He also gave us his definition of a Socialist: "A Socialist is a person who believes that the State should own the whole of the means of production, distribution and exchange." Robens is of course referring to the capitalist state.

And the working class...? This wretched errand-boy for the bourgeoisie has no capacity to see beyond the confines of the capitalist mode of production. Hence his utopian dream of bureaucratic ownership of the means of production.

What he calls "socialism" is nothing more than state management of capitalism—or "Great Britain Ltd."

For him the class struggle was some kind of gigantic misunderstanding which "socialism" would somehow smooth over.

For us socialism in advanced capitalist countries is the kind of society which will emerge only after capitalism has been overthrown by the working class seizing state power and taking over the ownership of all the means of production and distribution in order to run them themselves in their own interests.

This necessitates a thorough struggle against the capitalist class to destroy the last vestige of their political power, and will involve the destruction of the entire bourgeois state machine and its replacement by workers' councils and other forms of real workers' democracy.

The result of this struggle for power by the working class—a struggle which inevitably has international proportions—will be a new society in which there will be no "owners", no bosses, and no state apparatus lordling it over the working people. The means of production will be collectively owned, managed and worked by the people themselves, and all the fruits of production collectively reaped.

With such ideas, Lord Robens and his ilk have never had anything in common.

REFORM OR REVOLUTION IN THE SOVIET UNION?

The recent "revelations" in the bourgeois press about the existence of a "Political Diary" produced by a tiny group of top Party bureaucrats in the Soviet Union, should come as no surprise to anyone who recognises the process of disintegration of Stalinist monolithism that is taking place.

The journal has apparently appeared since Khrushchev's downfall in 1964, in some 82 monthly issues; it circulates secretly and only within the uppermost ruling circles of the bureaucracy that it should "liberalise" its policies with regard to a whole range of problems: economic management, national and religious minorities, foreign policy, etc.

In fact, the "Political Diary" represents yet a further breach in the ranks of the bureaucracy, and may be compared to the Dubcek-Novotny split in the Czechoslovak Communist Party in 1967-68, though at a much more restrained level. On all the crucial questions that remain to be solved in the USSR, which centre around the necessity of political revolution to restore socialist democracy in the workers' state, the "Political Diary" and its like remain silent. This is simply because the political tendency they represent is very much within the bureaucracy, and is in no real sense an opposition to it.

THE SPARTACUS LEAGUE

I am interested in getting more information about the Spartacus League.

NAME

ADDRESS

OCCUPATION

CANTERBURY TALES FROM THE UNFREE PRESS

On 3rd August 1971, the *Kent Herald*, a rag of no fixed repute printed an attack on the Canterbury Spartacus League by a hack who preferred to remain unknown and signed himself Diogenes. To give an impression of the brilliant reporting skills of trainee hack journalists we print a few sentences from the article:

"Parents of schoolchildren living in Canterbury would be well advised to look out for the activities of an organisation called the Spartacus Society." Apart from the fact that the SL is not a "Society" it is neither "an anarchist body" as our ill-informed hack seems to imply. To quote him again: "I would seriously warn parents not to allow their children of this age to mix with such self-confessed anarchists and self-styled Fourth Revolutionaries."

Needless to say no SL member has ever confessed to being an anarchist (I hope so—Ed.) but what the hack does not explain is what precisely a Fourth Revolutionary is meant to be. What this small incident reveals, of course, is the abysmal level of lumpen-bourgeois journalism in the provinces. The fact that journalists have to earn their keep by writing bullshit of this sort is in itself a terrible indictment of the system that employs them.

As repression mounts in Britain, one of the areas which the bourgeoisie will be keen to protect from "alien" ideologies is the schools and any revolutionary activity connected with schools will be dealt with severely. This implies that we should, at least, be prepared for what the bourgeoisie and its agencies mete out

SAN FRANCISCO (LNS)—A four-day "summit" policy meeting of U.S. ambassadors to East Asian and Pacific countries took place without fanfare 17th-21st May 1971, at the Philippine resort town of Baguio. They were greeted by a top-level delegation from Washington headed by John N. Irwin, veteran spokesman and lawyer for Rockefeller oil interests, trustee of the CIA-funded Asia Foundation and Nixon's Under-Secretary of State.

A communique issued at the end of the meeting said merely that they had discussed "implementation of the Nixon Doctrine in East Asia, and the status of U.S. relations with the countries of the area." But in view of the boom in offshore oil exploration under way in the region, it is likely that oil was high on the agenda at the ambassadors' conference.

Irwin has a reputation as Nixon's "oil envoy". He was Nixon's special representative in talks with the Peruvian government following nationalisation of the Rockefeller-controlled International Petroleum Co., a Standard Oil of New Jersey subsidiary. And he was Nixon's personal envoy to the recent Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) conference in Iran.

Irwin has been, at different times, partner in Patterson, Belknap & Webb, Rockefeller oil lawyers; associate counsel to the Rockefeller Foundation (a major stockholder in Standard Oil of New Jersey); former board chairman of

WHOSE ARSE...?

When the Twelfth Congress of the Russian Communist Party opened, the rumour campaign about Trotsky's "Bonapartism" was in full swing. The numerous public attributes to Trotsky that marked the beginning of the Congress added fuel to the fire. Early in the meetings, an altercation between Radek and Klimenty Voroshilov (a Stalin supporter, who as a military man may have felt particularly imperilled by Bonapartism) revealed how strained relations had become.

Voroshilov was in the chairman's seat, presiding over a session, when Trotsky walked into the chamber, followed by Radek. Voroshilov certainly ought to have known better than to trade verbal barbs with Radek, an acknowledged master of the art. Attempting a pun on Trotsky's first name, Lev, the Russian word for lion, Voroshilov called out: "Well, here comes the lion—followed by his tail!" Radek retaliated with a torrent of abuse, and ended: "In the final analysis, I would much prefer to be the lion's tail than Stalin's arse!"

—Extracted from Karl Radek: *The Last Internationalist*—Warren Lerner, pub. Stanford University Press.

MOLE SELLERS HARASSED

The last issue of *The Red Mole* declaring its support for the IRA against British imperialism has annoyed sundry fuzz and Orangemen up and down the country. In Edinburgh comrades selling the paper were physically attacked by the Orange thugs and in Leeds, Sheffield, Oxford and London the police have been been warning *Mole* sellers that unless they stop selling the paper they will be charged with "obstruction". One fuzz told a comrade: "Lots of people have been ringing up the Yard and complaining about that provocation on the cover. You better watch it as the Public Prosecutor might be on to you after the OZ lot." Needless to add we are not going to be intimidated by these threats. Nor are we going to stop street selling. Every prosecution will be contested and fought. As far as the Orangemen are concerned, all comrades are advised to take precautions.



Rockefeller-endowed Union Theological Seminary; and director of Rockefeller-dominated United States Trust Co. As such he was the logical choice to attend the top level discussion of U.S. oil interests in South-East Asia.

Two of Asia's three most promising offshore oil basins—in the South China Sea off Vietnam, and in the East China Sea off China—are areas of dispute between U.S. oil companies on the one hand, and the National Liberation Front (NLF) and the People's Republic of China, on the other.

The Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam announced in February that it would not recognise any offshore oil leases granted by the Saigon regime, and that it would consider such arrangements illegal. Yet Saigon still intends to auction off oil concessions with at least 32 foreign companies (most of them U.S.) in the bidding. The political motive of shoring up the Saigon regime and providing it with a stronger economic base is explicit in statements of Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker and other U.S. officials urging more U.S. investment in oil and other industries in South Vietnam.

In similar manner, the People's Republic of China announced that it would consider "null and void" and illegal any offshore oil leases in the Tiao-yu Tai (Senkaku) Island chain or elsewhere on the Chinese continental shelf, whether by Japan, South Korea, or the Chiang Kai-shek

regime on Taiwan. Yet at last word, American oil companies were still conducting exploration work in concessions granted by these three U.S. allies. This was despite official warnings from Washington that it would not protect U.S.-owned exploration vessels should they be seized by the Chinese.

The different positions of the PRG and the People's Republic of China and the U.S. oil companies regarding oil interests raise several questions.

—Are the oil companies likely to pass up control of the vast pools of low sulphur, lower-pollution oil so close to the big Japanese market? (David Rockefeller, chairman of New York's Chase Manhattan Bank—the main Rockefeller oil bank—last year predicted the oil companies would spend \$35 billion by 1980 in East Asia and the western Pacific, most of it offshore.)

In view of the PRG's and China's position on oil exploration by foreign companies on the continental shelf off Vietnam and China respectively, how far is Washington prepared to go to protect the interests of these companies?

—Are the escalation of the air war in Indo-China and the increase in U.S. shipments of military equipment to Taiwan and particularly to South Korea, related in any way to the prospects of large-scale oil development in the region?

—How does Japan fit into any U.S. military plans in the region?

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REPRESSION IN BOLIVIA: DEFENCE COMMITTEE ORGANISED

The latest wave of repression which has been unleashed in Bolivia by the CIA-supported regime makes the defence of all the victims of repression an essential task for all socialists. A defence committee is being organised. All interested should write to:

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IRELAND:

ARMED STRUGGLE AND THE BRITISH LEFT

IRELAND AND THE BRITISH LEFT

It is very easy to be revolutionary about struggles taking place thousands of miles away. It is easier to be for the defeat of a foreign capitalist class than it is to call for the defeat of one's own "bourgeoisie". These truisms, which have until recently been rather abstract, now acquire concrete meaning. The armed struggle of the Irish people against British imperialism now puts all tendencies in the socialist movement to the test.

One is unlikely to get beaten up for carrying the slogan "Victory to the NLF" for the simple reason that British troops are not fighting and dying in Vietnam. However, Ireland presents a different state of affairs as some Scottish comrades selling *The Red Mole* have recently discovered. Yet it is a hundred times more important to take a clear stand against the oppression which is being carried out by one's "own" capitalist class. The watchword of Leninism has always been "the main enemy is at home"—indeed, the "21 Conditions of Affiliation to the Third International" embodied this concept in a most emphatic manner.

It is also much easier to find "left" arguments for not taking such a stand: after all, doesn't the armed struggle of the Irish people alienate the British working class? And can't it be demonstrated in oh-so-Marxist terms that the main task in this struggle is to form a united front between the British working class and the Irish people?

Should we not, therefore, join in the chorus condemning the "ultra-left", "adventuristic" and, according to the *Workers Press*, "middle class"¹ snipers and bomb-throwers in Ireland? As well as clearing our orthodox consciences, this would have the additional advantage of avoiding trouble from Orangemen.

Of course, all these arguments can be answered in a very simplistic manner: it is the responsibility of all socialists to support all the struggles of all the oppressed. However, a blanket formula like this can cover a multitude of sins (although it is infinitely preferable to those arguments which cover capitulation to capitalist "public opinion" with Marxist phraseology). What this formula does not do is to explain how we relate to differing tactics by those engaged in struggle—should we, for instance, have the same attitude towards the present armed struggle of the Catholics as we should towards the military actions of the IRA in the 1950s or late 1930s? Its too general application could lead us into very strange positions—how would it be applied to the case of the Angry Brigade, for instance?

There are no blanket and absolute formulas—the analysis must be concrete.

THE CHARACTER OF THE IRISH STRUGGLE

Our starting point must be the character of the struggle itself and the attitude of the mass of the Irish people towards that struggle. Then we have to clearly distinguish between our tasks and those of militants in Ireland (some organisations have got into endless confusion by not doing this).

It is easy to establish that the character of the struggle in the North of Ireland is a defensive one waged as a response to attacks by the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), British Army, RUC, etc. on Catholics; and simultaneously an offensive one, designed to complete the Irish people's endeavours to achieve self-determination. As such, British socialists are obliged to give it unconditional support. It is, furthermore, easily demonstrable that the violence of the IRA is a response to the violence of the UVF, British Army, RUC, etc. and that the mass of the Catholic population support it actively or passively. This being the case there is no doubt that British socialists are obliged not merely to support the right of the Catholics to use the methods they see fit, but also to actively assist that struggle.

The Catholics of the North (and the militants of the South) have arrived at this point by a process of losing their illusions in other forms of struggle and, in particular, losing every vestige of confidence they ever had in the British Army (which many thought was a barrier to their physical liquidation at the hands of the UVF in 1969) and British institutions in general.

The tactical differences between the Officials and the Provisionals are no excuse for failing to make a stand; and we should note well the well-substantiated reports that the timing of the internment orders was determined by a desire to prevent political agreement between the two wings of the IRA (cf. *Sunday Times*, 15.8.71).

But objections come readily—doesn't the theory of permanent revolution teach us that only a combined national liberation and social struggle in the whole of Ireland promises success? Isn't the only hope of immediate success the building of unity between the Irish people and the British working class? Doesn't the armed struggle of the Irish people undermine the potentiality of that unity? How can we expect English workers to unite with people killing "our lads"? Won't the Provisionals, because of their links with a section of the Southern bourgeoisie, refuse to fight the Green Tories?

Our first answer to these objections is to make it very clear that the major task of British socialists is not to tell

"THESE OPERATIONS ARE A NECESSARY PRELUDE TO THE RESTORATION OF GREATER HARMONY BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND."



ours), but, on the contrary, it is to end the position where the British working class, and especially the leadership of its organisations, are direct accomplices in the oppression of the Irish people. This means coming to grips with the rampant racism of the British working class towards the Irish.

EXPLOITATION OF THE IRISH

For centuries the British ruling class has "justified" and rationalised the exploitation of the Irish people in racist ideological terms. "The Irish are stupid, strange (at best whimsical) and ignorant people"; "they have pigs in their living rooms"; "the Irish like fighting (especially after a few drinks)"; "the Irish are lazy and good for only labouring jobs" — such filth has been drummed into the heads of the British people for hundreds of years. The prejudices engendered are so deep that they have entered the English language. We would be highly mistaken if we thought that even revolutionary marxists were free of such ideas. To tell the Irish people that militant struggle alienates the British worker is like telling a striker that his militant picketing upsets the scabs. One can only deal with bourgeois ideology by an unremitting struggle. Revolutionaries, in particular, must break down these prejudices by first of all taking a very clear stand themselves. Half-measures only reinforce bourgeois ideology. "Sophisticated" arguments emanating from offices like those on Clapham High Street — so far away from the whistle of the UVF sniper's bullet, where the soldiers never come at to rip the house apart, and which has never experienced the organised burning out of hundreds of homes by protestant fanatics — have all the hallmarks of an unconscious feeling of superiority that obliges one to tell the poor Irish, who don't know any better, what to do. Of course, the chance of success for winning British working class support for the struggle in Ireland will be much greater if the struggle is waged in such a way that the identity of class interests between the working classes of both countries is made clear. But this will not be achieved by telling the Irish people to tone down their struggle because the British workers are not yet ready to understand the situation. Any influence that British marxists have on the policies of Irish militants will be in direct proportion to the extent to which they are seen to be making a fight in Britain on a clear basis. Only on that basis can they assist Irish marxists to develop a revolutionary marxist current in Ireland.

But none of this means that we are obliged to keep quiet about our possible criticisms of the tactics of Irish revolutionaries. On the contrary to do so would be to indulge in a kind of cowardly, self-serving

means they see fit, we are also obliged to contribute to the debate about the best method of defeating British imperialism. But again there is no simple formula for doing this. It is perfectly possible, for instance, to publish articles on a national liberation struggle which consist of 99% fierce criticism and 1% pledge of support (the *Workers Press* is a specialist in this). Such propaganda will seem to the average British reader as being a "left" version of the capitalist propaganda against that struggle. In the case of Ireland, Irish militants can be forgiven if they interpret much of what appears in the "socialist" press in this manner.

The balance of one's propaganda, the audience to which one directs one's criticisms and the style of that criticisms are all political acts. Let us be very clear on this point: the overwhelming thrust of our propaganda on Ireland today must be to expose the vicious role of British imperialism and its various agencies. Criticisms related to the tactics of the Irish militants must be expressed in a fraternal manner and largely confined to analytical material designed to influence their thinking. To be concrete: should a section of the IRA decide to indulge in an urban guerilla campaign in selected parts of Britain, the thrust of argumentation should be to explain why they have been forced along this road. We should not hesitate to express our support for their right to use these methods and we should oppose the hypocrisy of those who are "shocked" by this development (explaining very clearly the implicit racism inherent in this "shock"). When we express our doubts about such a tactic, it should be on the basis that we do not think it is the best method to defeat British imperialism (in general, urban guerilla warfare should only be waged where the mass of the local population at least acquiesce in its use).

Any other course is to weaken and confuse our solidarity with the Irish people in their struggle against the British ruling class. But it is not just a question of duty—our task is to build a revolutionary cadre force in Britain. This means building a body of opinion which is prepared to use revolutionary violence in Britain to overthrow the British ruling class. It goes without saying that it is not conceivable that we can create a force which is prepared for revolutionary struggle in Britain if it is not prepared to support the armed struggle of others against that same ruling class. Weakness and vacillation on this question will in the long run express itself (especially in time of crisis) as opportunism in relation to the class struggle in Britain itself. The whole history of the international labour movement testifies to this fact.

—Pat Jordan