

SMASH THE TALKS PREPARE THE FIGHT



Last Sunday's march passes through Trafalgar Square.

Immigration Act must go

Almost 8000 people demonstrated in London last Sunday against Britain's racist immigration laws. This action was sparked off by the recent ruling of the House of Lords, which allows the deportation provisions of the 1971 Immigration Act to be applied 'retroactively.'

The demonstration was organised by the 'Joint Action Committee Against Racialist Legislation,' which includes representatives from the major organisations in the immigrant communities. Black and white militants were present in about equal numbers.

Many practical steps will have to be taken if an effective fight against the Act is to be developed. But two important organisational moves must be made immediately.

Firstly, action committees must be set up in every locality, including representatives from all sections of the working class movement.

These action committees should prepare and distribute mass leaflets explaining the way in which the Immigration Act serves the interests of the ruling class. Public meetings should be held along the same lines. They should organise a campaign to convince all public service workers to take up the example of the CPSA, and refuse to cooperate in the collection of information from black people applying for social assistance at employment exchanges, schools, hospitals, social security offices, etc.

The action committees, in alliance with black militants, should organise mass actions against repressive police moves, employers guilty of using racist manoeuvres, and attempts by fascist or right-wing groups to peddle their racist propaganda.

The second move must be made within the black community itself. No faith can be placed in bodies set up by the capitalist state. The call of the Indian Workers' Association and

other immigrant groups who met in Southall, for a total boycott of the Community Relations Councils and similar bodies, should be taken up immediately.

Equally important is the other part of the Southall meeting's call: for the setting up of boycott committees to take up the necessary job of representing immigrants' interests. These committees should organise self-defence of the community against police harassment and fascist attacks, provide protection for 'illegal' immigrants, campaign against blackmailers, and organise the whole immigrant community for the joint campaign against the Act alongside white trade unionists and sympathisers.

STOP PRESS - Some members of a group of immigrants being held in Pentonville Prison started a 24-hour hunger strike last Sunday in solidarity with the demonstration. On Tuesday the Home Secretary decided to permit nine of this group to stay in Britain, and to deport 26.

The International Marxist Group is calling for a picket outside Pentonville Prison - one of the main detention centres for suspected 'illegal' immigrants and those being held for deportation - to demand an immediate halt on all deportations, release of all those in custody, and no further arrests. This will be held at Pentonville Prison on Saturday, 4 August at 2 p.m.

Talks between the TUC and the Government reopen this Friday, 27 July, just as the serious undermining of working class living standards by Tory pay policy is becoming evident.

This makes the talks all the more important to the Tories: they are the last fig-leaf covering the nakedly oppressive character of this Government.

by CHRIS BALFOUR

It is unlikely that the talks will produce any agreement, but they do give the Government an important propaganda weapon. For this reason the fight within the trade union movement to stop the talks must be greeted with a mountain of resolutions and a massive lobby against the talks.

But putting a stop to the talks is only a first step. Preparations must be made throughout the trade union movement for an all-out fight to smash the Government's policies.

The struggle of a key industrial section of the working class will provide the best focus for such a fight. Two such struggles are now on the agenda: one around the engineers' claim, the other around the miners'. A mass campaign of solidarity with whichever group of workers goes into struggle first must be prepared now.

The engineers are particularly important because of their great numbers, their presence throughout the whole country, and their ability to put a stranglehold on the most important British industries. A national engineering strike could immediately become the nucleus of a general strike.

Such a struggle could rapidly move towards the overthrow of the Tory Government itself, and would result in an immense strengthening of the rank-and-file of the working class movement against the bosses, the state machine, and the trade union bureaucrats.

Immediate steps must be taken to prepare for a national struggle, both within the engineering industry and throughout the whole working class. The first opportunity will come at the September conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. This body must

break with its past record of empty speeches and pious, general resolutions and take on the job of working out a strategy and plan of action for the rank-and-file in the next round of class struggle.

Within the engineering industry, special sessions of the quarterly shop stewards' meetings should be convened in every district, to discuss the claim and plan a campaign for its implementation. A national meeting of engineering shop stewards' delegates should coordinate local actions and plan the strategy for a national strike. This will place control firmly in the hands of the rank-and-file.

Trades councils and shop stewards committees should organise local meetings of delegates from all sections of the working class movement to plan solidarity with any group of workers that goes into struggle against the Government. Plans should be made for the effective defence of pickets, industrial solidarity actions, and a campaign to involve other groups hit hard by Tory policies (tenants, housewives, students, immigrants.)

But the mass of workers cannot be expected to take up the struggle against the Tories unless they are also fighting for their own demands. Trade union militants should immediately begin to popularise a set of demands to unite the entire working class in the coming struggles. These demands could be fought for within individual unions as part of a claim, could be pressed for in local bargaining, and could be part of the programme of demands of a united, national struggle of the rank-and-file - for example, in a general strike.

Central demands should be:

- * £35 minimum weekly basic wage for all;
- * 35 hour week without loss of pay;
- * No productivity deals or speed-up;
- * 4 weeks paid holiday each year;
- * Equal pay for women workers.

**LOBBY
AGAINST TUC-GOVERNMENT TALKS
called by Westminster Trades Council
ASSEMBLE 10.30 July 27th
Congress House Gt Russell Street**

Just five days before the end of the month we have received a total of £200 for the Red Weekly Fighting Fund. This is slightly better than at the same time last month, but is £20 less than we had by the end of last month.

The flow of funds has slowed to a trickle. What we need is a big push to bring in at least another £50 before the month ends. Then we will have beaten last month's total and be well on the way to meeting our full quota in August.

Major test of strength



Photo: Eric Nathan (Red Weekly)

The six-week old dispute at the Imperial London Contractors site in Bedford Way, London, where 13 scaffolders were sacked for alleged 'restriction of output,' has now become the focus for a major test of strength between employers and workers in the building trade.

Last Monday morning building workers from several other sites in central London came to support a mass picket outside the ILC site. Management reaction was immediate. At Laing's in Tottenham Court Road the convenor steward was not allowed back on to the site until after a three-hour strike. And at the Trollope and Coll's site in Leadenhall, management withdrew recognition of the convenor steward upon his return.

MORE AT STAKE?

The latter site has now been shut down by unanimous decision of the men. Moreover, convenor stewards at four other Trollope and Coll's sites in the area were due to join the Leadenhall picket line on Thursday. Either management are arbitrarily victimising one steward or, if they withdraw recognition of all the stewards, much more is at stake. This could only mean that an all-out offensive is being prepared both on the flying picket tactic and on site organisation.

The Trollope and Coll's sites are extremely well-organised, so the employers' confidence must obviously be riding high. One reason could

be that the dispute at the ILC site is still in the balance. The number of scabs is not decreasing, and with management help they have attempted to set up a self-proclaimed 'works committee.' It is obviously the organisation on the site that management want to break; by giving credibility to the scab 'works committee' they hope to undermine the position of the militants outside even if they are offered their jobs back.

NO EXCUSE

There is now less excuse than ever for the bureaucracy of the CEU (construction section of the AUEW) to refuse to make this strike official. A positive decision would certainly strengthen the efforts to get the scabs off the site. But whatever happens, this dispute has sufficiently weakened union organisation on the ILC site to give Trollope and Coll's management the cue to try their luck on their own sites.

With the failure to project a struggle against the 'lump' this summer, building workers everywhere are faced with a very real problem - how to 'hold the line' and build up and strengthen organisation site by site. Events this week in London are an ominous suggestion that the employers may be about to take advantage of this in launching an area by area offensive.

NICK ADAMS

Pious generalities at anti racist conference

Political charity and Fabian moralising were the order of the day at last Sunday's London conference of the Communist Party-promoted 'Trade Unionists to Combat Racism'.

Sixty delegates, mainly white and middle-aged, listened to speeches round a draft resolution overflowing with pious generalities. Platform speaker Bernard Dix, a 'left' NUPE official, set the tone by stressing the influence of 'bad ideas' put over in the primary schools. In a speech which did not mention the class role of the Tory Government (which broke his own members' strike earlier this year), he proposed resolutions to the TUC and campaigning within local government as the 'cures' for racism!

Other platform speeches, from representatives of black workers and the European immigrants in London's International TGWU branch, dealt much more concretely with racism as it

is used by employers to split industrial unity. These, plus the amendments accepted from IMG delegates, did something to push the conference towards practical opposition to racism.

The amended resolution called for the initiatives of Birmingham, Liverpool and Bradford Trades Councils in setting up committees against racism to be followed, and for such bodies to take action to defend black and immigrant workers against racist and police attacks. It also applauded the decision of the CPSA not to collect passport information which could help police investigations of immigrants under the 1971 Act. In addition, the CP organisers of the conference were forced to retreat on the Party line by withdrawing a clause calling for 'a non-racist immigration policy'.

ALEX WYVERN

Equal pay strikers vote to stay out

Mass picket at S.E.I.



The seventy clerical workers on strike for a substantial reduction in the male/female differential at Salford Electrical Instruments voted by 68 votes to 2 to stay out at a mass meeting on Friday. Management at the two SEI factories in Eccles and Heywood, which are part of the GEC combine, had offered 95p to the lower paid and 78p to the higher paid.

An important factor in this decision was the growing support which is now being received from outside the factory. Last week German trade unionists at the firm of Bayer's near Dusseldorf agreed to black supplies of Nibren wax, an important element in the production process. Nearer home, a lorry returned to the factory last Friday full of loading coils (used in underwater cables), after trade unionists in the telecommunications division of GEC decided to black all components coming from SEI.

Such a campaign of blacking is doubly vital because of the attitude of the production workers at SEI. Led by their convenor, Harry Tonge, these workers have ignored AUEW instructions to black all goods and materials coming in, and are actively co-operating with management. The latter were obviously shaken when despite this the clerical workers voted to stay out by such a decisive margin.

JOE ROBERTS

Attitudes hardening in newspaper strike

Union agreements with the police mean that only eight pickets are now allowed at each of the three gates of T. Bailey Forman in Nottingham. This firm closed the *Guardian Journal* morning newspaper after printers and journalists were locked out six weeks ago for refusing to operate a new printing process before national negotiations on the issue had started.

While the pickets have been reasonably successful in turning back supplies of ink for the scab-operated *Evening Post*, newsprint is being brought in by 'cowboy' drivers. However attitudes are now hardening and it is likely that mass pickets of strikers and their supporters will be organised within a few days to prevent the continued production and distribution of the *Evening Post*.

The determination of the 300 printers and journalists to fight the declared redundancies has been strengthened by daily mass meetings, with invited speakers such as Bill Freeman of Briant Colour, and the support won by *The Press*, the 10-page newspaper which they are collectively producing. The five print unions involved in the dispute have now been officially joined by the AUEW, although eight of the nine engineering members are still inside, encouraged by the management's £100 hand-outs. Mass picketing will no doubt change their minds.

MIKE HAMLIN

CURRENT ACCOUNT

Workers control capitalist style

The worker-director is a hybrid which European capitalists have been trying to breed for some time as a means of incorporating and weakening the working class. EEC membership has now brought discussion of this genetic wonder to Britain: the last month has seen important statements on 'workers' participation in industry' from the Labour Party National Executive, the Liberal Party, the TUC, the CBI, the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) and other groups. The Tory Government has promised a Green Paper on the subject for September.

All this is in response to a proposal from the Common Market Commission (whose industrial relations director is Jack Peel, ex-head of the dyers' and bleachers' union) that all European companies should have two-tier boards of directors with workers' representatives on the 'supervisory boards'. The proposal is modelled on the West German system; and it is largely envy of the relatively low strike record of German industry which has persuaded other European capitalists that worker-directors might be an antidote to militancy.

CONSULTATION

So far British capitalists have rejected the proposal. The CBI says worker-directors would undermine the prerogatives of management. The EEF finds the EEC proposals inconsistent with the 'well-established principle that a Company's board acts in the interests of the Company as a whole'. And the far-right pressure group Aims of Industry fears the arrival in the boardroom of people who are 'politically motivated to destroy the market economy'. As an alternative the CBI proposes plant councils for consultation only, with a senior management representative as chairman. This is believed to be the Government's preference, too.

But where even most British capitalists still fear to tread, the TUC has rushed in. The recent report on Industrial Democracy produced by a TUC working party (including Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon) utterly reverses the traditional policy of the British labour movement. It accepts the principle of two-tier boards and worker-directors, but adds a demand for 50 per cent workers' representatives selected through the unions rather than by all employees, as the EEC and the CBI suggest in their plans. Their strongest demand is for a veto for the workers' representatives on major decisions about investment, mergers and relocation; significantly, the TUC calls for this only in the context of worker-directors (no doubt seen as a new arm of the trade union bureaucracies) and not more generally.

At least there were no capitalists on the TUC's committee. Other union leaders were more openly collaborationist: Sir Sid Greene (NUR) and Frank Chapple (EPTU) have actually produced a report with Sir Val Duncan (Rio Tinto Zinc), Lord Kearton (Courtaulds) and Derek Ezra (the Coal Board). This finds even worker-directors too radical, and makes some modest proposals for consultation.

PROFITS BY CONSENT

Neither selected workers in the boardrooms nor workers' share ownership (which the Labour Party links with worker-directors) can make one scrap of difference to the way in which capitalism is forced to satisfy hunger for profits in constant opposition to the workers' needs. Jack Jones characterises the TUC's plan as an 'extension of the shop steward system' to produce 'management by consent', that can only mean profits by consent.

There are only two ways for the working class to react to the actions of capital in pursuit of profit: one is class struggle, the other is class collaboration. All proposals for worker-directors fall in the second category. Jones, Scanlon and the TUC seem to think that worker-directors will carry on the class struggle over sherry in the boardroom. The capitalists know that if this happens they have only to take their important decisions somewhere else. The presence of workers on boards of directors is about as similar to real workers' control as a lock-out is similar to a strike.

Michael Prior.

THE IRISH STRUGGLE — WIELDING THE CLUB

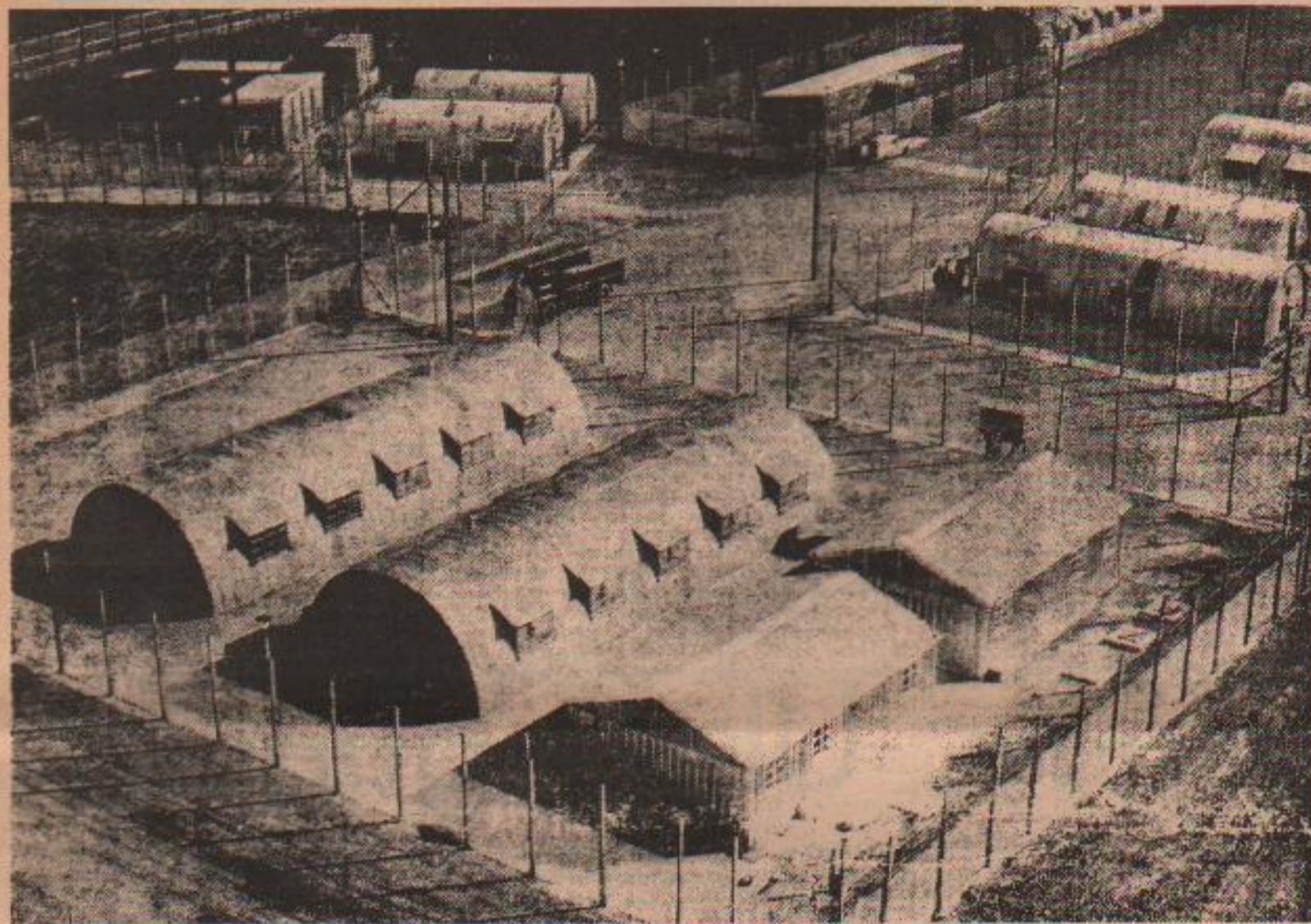
Protests mount against internment

Three major rallies and a series of public meetings are to be the highlights of a week of activity in Britain to draw attention to the continued existence of internment in the North of Ireland.

From GERY LAWLESS

As Whitelaw attempts to gather the first harvest of his carrot and big stick policy, with the first meeting of the Assembly, and attempts

Long Kesh Concentration Camp



generally to convey the impression of the return to normality being just around the corner, it is becoming more imperative than ever that demonstrations, public meetings etc. be used to hammer home the fact that a year and a half after Direct Rule, Long Kesh Concentration Camp is full.

In London, twelve organisations representing the whole spectrum of Irish political activity have established an ad hoc Anti-Internment Committee which is organising a demonstration on 12 August beginning at Speakers Corner, Hyde Park at 2.30 p.m.

In Glasgow, a public meeting will be held on the anniversary of internment, 9 August.

In Coventry, the Coventry Prisoners Defence Committee is the main organiser of a rally against internment and against the repression of Irish militants in Britain.

In Birmingham, a rally and demonstration on Sunday, 5 August, will be the main focus of a week of activity on the Irish question.

In Newport, Wales, in South Shields, and in numerous other areas, plans are being laid for a whole series of pickets of Army Recruiting offices.

Meanwhile, one of the Irish militants arrested in the Coventry area in the nationwide police raids in April, Tim Canty, has been acquitted of a charge of illegal possession of one hundred rounds of .22 ammunition. The jury at Worcester Assize Court were obviously unimpressed by the antics of the prosecution counsel, who, lifting up the banner of the Burnes and McCormack Branch of Sinn Fein (Kevin Street), tore into the jury and told them how 'violence is written all over this banner'; or the evidence of the police who informed the court that when the pack of ammunition was allegedly found, Canty 'shuddered and his mouth dried up'. Asked by defence counsel to describe how they knew that someone's mouth had 'dried up', police said they knew this from 'experience'.

Despite these ploys, the hysteria surrounding the case, and the judge's praise of the police evidence, a middle-aged, middle-class, High Tory jury in Worcester found the defendant not guilty.

For details of the London demonstration, contact Anti-Internment Ad Hoc Committee, c/o Bob Purdie, 01-348-3752.

COVENTRY 7: letter from PDC

Dear Comrades,

As your readers are undoubtedly aware, the next few weeks have two very important dates in the continuing Irish struggle. July 31st is the anniversary of Operation Motorman when the British tanks crushed the no-go enclaves in Belfast and Derry. A year later the schools and sports grounds remain occupied. August 9th marks the beginning of the third year of internment. Although the name has been changed to 'detention' the numbers involved are reaching pre-direct rule levels.

Internment might appear to be no longer an issue judging by the press. The internees are the forgotten men. The only time Long Kesh (the Maze) is mentioned is when another tunnel is discovered - what other exercise is available as yet another 'riot' is quelled. Even the recent death by suicide of an internee was hardly mentioned. The second anniversary of internment must not be allowed to pass without the maximum amount of protest by socialists, republicans and trade-unionists throughout Britain and Ireland.

We in the Coventry 7 Prisoners Defence Committee

have been very active in attempting to secure the unconditional release of our own political prisoners here in Coventry. Indeed this struggle is only just beginning - the trial is not until October at the earliest. But we do not distinguish between political prisoners in Long Kesh, in the Curragh or in Winson Green. We call for the unconditional release of all Irish political prisoners, the ending of internment and an amnesty for all those involved in the struggle as an essential part of any acceptable settlement to the Irish situation.

To further these ends, we in the Coventry Prisoners Defence Committee have called a march and rally in Coventry on Sunday August 12th. We will assemble at Hearsall Common, next to All Souls Church (Father Fell's church), Earlsdon, Coventry, at 2.30 before marching to the Precinct in Coventry for

a rally with national speakers. All organisations who actively support the march and rally are invited to send a speaker along too. We hope for an enthusiastic response to this from the people in Coventry. However, we urge all socialists, republicans and trade-unionists throughout the Midlands areas to participate in these activities. We must combat the increased repression in Britain (the use of conspiracy laws), and show those struggling in Ireland for self-determination that we have not forgotten them.

Further details about coaches leaving from towns in the Midlands, speakers, etc. please contact the Coventry Prisoners Defence Committee at 27, Paynes Lane, Hillfields, Coventry.

Fraternally William Thompson (for CPDC)

Canavan collapses on hunger strike

Tony Canavan, one of the two People's Democracy comrades on hunger strike in Crumlin Road Jail, Belfast, collapsed on Monday during a visit from his mother.

Doctors are being called in and it is probable that by the time *Red Weekly* appears both Tony and Mike Farrell will have been hospitalised. They are determined to continue their hunger strike until their demand for political status is granted.

On Thursday, 19 July, the case was raised in the House of Commons by Stan Orme, Jock

Stallard and Bernadette McAliskey. Whitelaw's reply was direct and unyielding - they were not entitled to political status because they did not have a minimum nine month sentence.

Whitelaw therefore ignores the real basis of their case - that their offence was purely political, that the sentences were imposed by a vicious and sectarian judicial system, to ensure that they would not get political status, and that to keep them in 'D' Wing of Crumlin Road Jail implies either a constant threat from loyalist criminal prisoners, or virtual solitary confinement.

ment.

As if to underline the determination of the Northern Irish Courts and the British Government to continue to victimise and discriminate against anti-imperialist fighters, two loyalists convicted of the most revolting single crime during the recent spate of sectarian murders have been given political status. They raped a catholic woman in front of her mentally retarded son, and then shot both of them. In contrast Farrell and Canavan were found guilty of a breach of the peace for organising a demon-

stration to protest against the failure of the British Army to stop these murders. So they must continue to waste away on hunger strike, or capitulate and face a monstrously unjust prison sentence; while these sectarian murderers enjoy precisely the privileges denied to Farrell and Canavan.

DEMONSTRATE!
to demand political status for MICHAEL FARRELL and TONY CANAVAN

Speakers Corner
2.30 Sunday 29 July

Jerry Harte: third arrest

A Liverpool member of the Irish emigre organisation, Clann na h'Eireann, was arrested early on Tuesday morning by Special Branch men for the third time in four months.

Jerry Harte, who worked as a plumber until he lost his job because of the arrests, was first picked up after a dawn raid on 13 April which had been carried out under an explosives

warrant. He was held in custody until 18 April when the charges against him of possessing £3,500 of postal orders were dropped. However he was then handed over to the Royal Ulster Constabulary and taken to Belfast on a charge of armed robbery. Held in custody for a week there, he was then released on bail of £3,000. He remained in Ireland, where he was

joined by his wife, until last Friday when all charges were dropped against him. He then returned to England, speaking on Sunday at a public meeting against extradition for political offences, organised by Clann na h'Eireann in Kilburn.

On Tuesday he was again arrested as he met his wife off the boat from Ireland. Appearing in court on the theft charge, he was required to raise bail of £1,500 including two independent sureties by 2.00 p.m., which he was unable to do since police objected to one of his sureties.

It is clear from this latest action that the Special Branch are determined to pursue this protracted harassment, which has already cost Jerry Harte his job as well as causing his wife and baby a great deal of upset. The Prisoners Aid Committee has already taken up his case again, calling in a statement 'for an end to this intimidation thinly disguised as a judicial procedure, and for the release of Jerry Harte from police custody and victimisation'.

At the time of writing he is once more in custody in the Bridewell jail in Liverpool.

TRUE CONFESSIONS OF THE PRICE COMMISSION

Inflation has got worse, not better, since the imposition of Tory 'controls'. This is one of the dramatic facts that emerges from the first Report of the Price Commission, released last week.

During the seven months of the Tories' 'counter-inflation programme', prices in the shops have been going up at the rate of about 7% during the preceding year and a half, when the Confederation of British Industries was operating 'voluntary controls', and just under 10% for the period before that when no restrictions at all were in existence.

Food prices have suffered the most. They have been rising at the rate of 21.5% a year under Tory 'controls', compared with 7.5% and 12% in the preceding periods. The biggest cause both of the rise in food prices, and shop prices in general, has been the phenomenal increases in the price of fresh foodstuffs.

The increases in the prices of just two items in the household budget — food and housing — account for 60% of the increases in all prices under the Tory controls. These are, of course, the most important items in the working class budget.

By putting the figures on rising prices together with those on wage rises, we can see what effect Tories' policies have had on working class living standards. Under the Tory controls so far, average earnings have risen by 5%, while prices have gone up by more than 6%: in other words the real purchasing power of the average paypacket has dropped a full percentage point.

The direction in which things are heading is even more worrying. Up until the freeze, wages were going up by more than 13% a year on average. This was well ahead of shop prices, and actually meant that the average paypacket was worth about 5% more each year. But since the freeze, wage increases have fallen below 8% a year. This means that the average paypacket is now dropping in value by almost 3% a year.

The Price Commission in the first two months of its existence approved rises in the prices of 82 different items, worth over £3,500 million in sales each year. It has permitted the prices of these products to be put up by more than 6% on average.

By the end of May another 213 applications for price rises were still in the pipeline. These concerned another £4,000 million of sales a year.

The effect of all these price rises will be to take several hundred million pounds out of the pockets of working people in order to protect the profits of the capitalist class. The Price Commission and the policies on which it rests are simply tools of capitalist exploitation. They do nothing to serve the interests of the working class.

The Tories may have failed to control prices, but they have succeeded in their most important aim: to protect the profits of the capitalist class at the expense of the living standards of working people.

In the next big round of working class struggles the aim must be to sweep away such ruling class weapons as the Prices Commission, the Tory 'counter-inflation programme' etc. This will mean attacking the lynchpin of this whole set-up — it must become a struggle to kick out the Tory Government.

The Tories' much-touted prices policy is coming apart at the seams. This is the only conclusion that can be drawn from all the facts and figures emerging from various Government offices and agencies, including the one at the centre of Tory price strategy — the Price Commission.

In 1969, Joseph Godber, the present Tory Minister of Agriculture, said that, 'Food prices will rise over a 3 year period by some 5-6% (that is less than 2% a year)'. Yet within one year of this speech, food prices had risen by over 7%. By the end of his three years, they were up by almost 30%. Food prices have now risen by almost 50% since then. Clearly, Godber has been forced to eat his words many times over the past few years.

First phase

This crisis situation first forced the Tory Government to take drastic action in 1972. As the first phase of a 'counter inflation programme' they slapped a total freeze on wages and on many prices. The wages side of the programme since the freeze is only too well known: the infamous £1 + 4% of Phase II, and undoubtedly more of the same for Phase III. But the prices policy is of equal importance, and requires close and serious study.

The Tory scheme for prices has been to place a series of restrictions on the power of companies to raise their prices, under the control and supervision of the Price Commission. Firms are allowed to pass on certain of their costs to the consumer in the form of higher prices. These 'allowable costs' include almost all those essential to the production process: raw materials, fuel, rent, rates, interest charges, transport charges, maintenance expenses, etc. Increased labour costs, however, can only be passed on in higher prices if they are due to wage rises awarded within the limits of Government pay policy. Even then, only half the increased wage bill can be passed on — the other half is supposed to be met out of increased productivity.

The purposes of this system are quite straightforward: to force capitalist businesses to take a tough line with their workers and apply the government pay norms; to encourage the steps required to ensure growing productivity.

to prevent gross profiteering through jacking up prices. In exchange the capitalists are allowed to pass on any problems they encounter from rising costs to the consumer.

This would still leave open to the capitalists the chance to increase profits out of increased productivity once they have covered the 50% share of any increased wage costs that cannot be passed on by raising prices. However, the profit margins of any firm are to be restricted to the average of the best two of its last five years. For firms making a loss, virtually all cost increases can be passed on, including 100% of any increased wage bill. Price rises may also be permitted for firms who can prove that increased profit margins are necessary to finance new capital investment.

World prices

The overall effect of these measures is to exempt the capitalist class from the burden of the rise in world commodity prices. But at the same time, by restraining the prices and profit margins of the most profitable sectors, whilst allowing those firms which are doing badly to come up to certain minimum levels of profit-making, the policy brings about some redistribution of potential growth within the capitalist class.

In theory, when all of British capitalism is back on a firm footing, when profits are ticking over nicely, and when businesses have completed all their new investment programmes, rising productivity should be sufficient to offset rising raw material and labour costs. Then prices are supposed to settle down and inflation end. But all this is actually pie in the sky.

British capitalism is part of a world system, a system that is in crisis. Over the past year the world prices of basic raw materials have risen by 85%. No national capitalist state can control international prices, and the Price Commission allows firms to pass on rises in the costs of imported fuels and raw materials as 'allowable costs'.

While the prices of industrial raw materials have been soaring, so have the prices of fresh foods: vegetables, dairy products, meat etc. The world producers' prices of these items have risen by approximately 75% over the past year. Although Britain is one of the most

British money, Ulster gunmen

This week marks the second anniversary of internment. In the past two years the record of the British left in relation to the struggle in Ireland has suffered from serious weaknesses.

In particular, there has been a great deal of confusion about the nature of the struggle in the North and the role of the Protestant working class. Many sections of the left seem to think that the Protestant working class is little different from the British working class — only a little more 'backward'.

The whole struggle in Ireland is thus reduced to a devilish trick by the ruling class, which has managed to split the Irish working class along 'religious' and 'sectarian' lines. The task for revolutionaries, then, is to bring enlightenment to these poor benighted souls and free them of their illusions and prejudices. In the meantime, the nationalist population should not 'aggravate' the situation by doing anything foolish such as taking up arms.

A few days before the northern Ireland assembly elections former Stormont Prime Minister Lord O'Neill said on British television that the failure of the assembly would throw northern Ireland into a situation like that of 1912.

Clearly the Orange ruling class and their supporters remember the experiences of 1912. Unfortunately the left and the working class movement in Britain does not have such a good memory, and has never properly learned the lesson of this crucial period.

CIVIL WAR

In 1912 the Orange lodges throughout Ulster began to prepare themselves for civil war, under the leadership of Sir Edward Carson, a Westminster MP and former Cabinet Minister. As one ruling class historian has said, those years brought Britain 'nearer to civil war than at any time since the seventeenth century ... Had there been no European war in the summer of 1914, Britain might well have relapsed into an anarchy from which the only rescue would have been a dictatorship either of the left or the right. Britain might have produced her own Lenin or Mussolini some years before either emerged on the mainland of Europe.' The years leading up to 1912 were marked by a great social upheaval: massive strike waves, the growth of a mass movement for women's rights, a series of Parliamentary crises that split the ruling class and weakened the power of the House of Lords. All these were capped

by the Irish crisis, which was rapidly moving to a head during the same period.

WORKERS ARM

In Ireland the working class was under arms, organised in the Irish Citizen Army of Larkin and Connolly, described by Lenin as 'the first Red Army in Europe.' Moreover, the revolutionary layers of the nationalist petty-bourgeoisie armed themselves in the Irish Volunteers led by Padraic Pearse.

Among the Protestants of the north-east, imperialism also armed itself. This produced the Ulster Volunteer Force, a mass movement of all classes, including workers, organised as an open weapon of counter-revolution.

As Lenin put it, the UVF was organised by 'revolutionaries of the right.' It was thus a forerunner of the fascist movements of the post-war period.

CAPITALIST BACKERS

The UVF was backed by the most powerful finance capitalists in Britain, indeed in the world. Lord Rothschild was one of its main contributors. Waldorf Astor, the American millionaire who later bought *The Times*, and whose family was to be at the centre of the pro-Hitler 'Cliveden Set,' was another. The entire City of London stood behind Carson. Through the Rhodes Trust and Sir Leander Starr Jameson (a notorious imperialist adventurer, who had led the 'Jameson Raid' which led up to the Boer War in South Africa), the British slave-masters who ran the South

As the brief historical study below shows, this picture is nonsense. The Protestant working class has been an active agent in the imperialist domination of Ireland throughout most of the last century. It has served as the mass, armed striking force both of its own ruling class and of British imperialism. At various points in time it has served as a veritable counter revolutionary threat, not only in Ireland but in Britain as well.

All this cannot be explained away by the passing confusion of Protestant workers. It results from a long-term political coalition forged by British imperialism in Ireland and used to establish a separate state apparatus in the Six Counties in 1922.

Paper sales, pamphlets, pretty speeches, Parliamentary lobbies and peaceful demonstrations cannot split apart such deeply rooted class collaborationism. It can only be smashed through the militant, concerted and armed opposition of the nationalist population. The task of the British left is not to prattle historical nonsense, or to moralise, it is to *solidarise*.

African gold mines put their millions behind the UVF as well.

The money-power of the City of London financiers had been brought behind the UVF through the work of Lord Milner, the real power behind the throne in the UVF. Milner was one of the most powerful imperialists in British history. It was he who had organised the biggest imperialist war Britain had ever been involved in before the First World War — the South African Boer War. The British capitalist class had armed half a million men for that war, in order to seize complete control of the biggest gold mines in the world. Milner had then laid the foundations of the modern South African state, basing it upon the thorough and highly regulated exploitation of the black population.

THE KINDERGARTEN

Milner had his own political 'high command' in Britain, called 'the kindergarten.' These were Oxford University types who he had recruited for the work of setting up the South African state, and who remained an organised and influential pro-imperialist force for a long time afterwards. His second-in-command was a Tory MP, Leo Amery.

Amery was a rapacious imperialist gangster. One of his sons became a Nazi in the 1930s and organised the British-manned Legion of St. George, which fought for Hitler on the Russian front. He met his end on the Wandsworth Prison gallows, hanged for treason in 1945. Another son followed a

slightly different career, and is now Tory Housing Minister.

Milner brought Carson together with the leading finance capitalists, and top ruling class politicians, editors, and administrators, — and with the imperialist military chiefs. Lord Roberts, the 'conqueror' of the Boers, was a patron of the UVF, and its main military commander was the British general responsible for the massacre of the 'Boxers' in Peking. Through Milner, Carson was in touch with Sir Henry Wilson, Director of Military Operations on the Imperial General Staff. Wilson was himself an Orangeman, and later helped to set-up the infamous 'B-special' police.

CLASS COLLABORATION

Beneath these hangmen of finance came a rank-and-file of 100,000 Orangemen, the bulk of them Protestant workers. The Larne section of the UVF, which was responsible for landing guns, shows up the type of class collaboration that was at the basis of this movement.

The Commander of the Central Antrim UVF was chairman of the company that owned the harbour, his second-in-command worked for the Shamrock Shipping Company and commanded the Larne group of the UVF. The rank-and-file were men who worked at the harbour.

The UVF was made up of sections of the Protestant working class plus the small farmers, was financed, organised, and directed by London-based imperialists, and officered by the

TORY POLICY: PAYING THE PRICE

by Chris Balfour

efficient agricultural producers in the world, much of our foodstuff still has to be imported. But rises in the price of food have been aggravated by the Government's policy of encouraging the export of foodstuffs so as to take advantage of high world market prices. Earnings of foreign exchange gained in this way help to alleviate the balance of payments problem which flows from the uncompetitive nature of British industrial exports. Consequently, British capitalism, rather than the working class, benefits from the high productivity of British agriculture.

Success and failure

The failure of the Tory controls are at the same time a 'success' story. They have failed to restrict prices, but succeeded in maintaining capitalist profits. The profits of the big corporations rose by about 20% over their last accounting year and are expected to do even better in the current year. They are being helped out by the wage controls, which are designed to prevent workers from meeting rising prices through higher wages. But the Price Commission has been a political failure, for it has lost any credibility in the eyes of the workers.

by Fiona McGuinness

Ulster capitalists and gentry. By July 1914, everything was ready for Carson and his supporters to declare the independence of Ulster, and set up a Provisional Government hostile to both Dublin and Westminster.

COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARY FORCE

If the UVF had been let loose in Ireland at this time, one of its main aims would have been to crush the Dublin trade union movement from

1973: UDA unit with batons and radios

The working class has been, and of necessity will be, the loser under the Tory prices and wage policy. Any form of wage restraint under capitalism is against the interests of the working class and must be rejected. But what policy should the working class adopt towards prices?

Working class policy

A working class policy would have to centre its attention on the area in which the Tories gave the capitalist class the greatest leeway - the necessities of life, especially food. It would have to impose, as an initial measure, a total freeze on all essential items: food, clothing, fuel, rent on property below a certain value, interest rates on loans and mortgages below a certain amount, public transport etc.

Such a step would obviously impose crushing burdens on some capitalist firms, especially in a period when world market prices are shooting up. Any firm unable to carry out its economic functions because of imminent bankruptcy or refusal to accept low profits should immediately be nationalised. This step would not be some idyllic way of 'introducing socialism', but simply a means of forcing the capitalist class as a whole to underwrite their

which Connolly's Citizen Army had sprung. Its imperialist masters would probably then have set it loose on the British working class movement. Certain English Peers were openly lusting for Civil War in England. Even a pro-imperialist rat like the Railwaymen's Union bureaucrat Jimmy Thomas was forced to say that if Carson was allowed to arm the UVF, why shouldn't the railwaymen do the same to win their claim.

Lenin followed these developments closely. He wrote: 'Smillie, the Chairman of the Miners' Union, stated that the Dublin methods

weaker members and guarantee the working class an adequate living standard. In other words, this price scheme should operate in precisely the opposite way to the present one: the workers get the guarantees, the capitalists carry whatever burden is necessary to provide such guarantees.

Administration

The operation of such a scheme would pose big administrative problems. Quite aside from the fact that the Tories have no intention of controlling prices in the interests of the working class, the machinery of the Price Commission with its 400 staff is totally inadequate. The *Economist* pointed out that many companies do not collect information in the form required by the Price Commission (quite apart from deliberate concealment of information). As the *Economist* said: 'Some office administrators regard the rules about reporting sales, profits etc. to the prices board within three weeks of the end of every quarter as a nightmare. In practice they will soon be regarded as a joke.'

Effective economic planning is almost impossible for a capitalist government. It would require either a total co-operation of individual capitalists to an extent that would be out of the question given the rule of the market, or the creation of a vast bureaucracy with a range of powers so great that the capitalist class would vigorously resist it. If this is true of a basically pro-capitalist planning scheme, how much more true it would be of a pro-working class plan. To impose this on the capitalists would require the organisation of the entire working class for the purpose of compelling capitalists to divulge their secrets and information, gather information not collected, and at the same time ensure that capitalists did not violate the policy measures laid down by a workers government.

This would require the establishment of a 'price commission' of a different sort - one based on the working class organisations, rather than the civil service. In each factory, a commission of rank and file workers would have to be created, a commission having all the necessary authority and resources to gather

would compel all British workers to resort to revolution and that they would be able to learn the use of arms.' The capitalists who armed 'Carson's Black-Hundred gangs,' as Lenin called them, would never have tolerated that.

A DIFFERENT ROLE

As it was, the UVF played a different role in the history of British imperialism. With the outbreak of the war, the UVF was converted into the 36th (Ulster) Division of the British army. It fought on the Somme in 1916, and, despite enormous losses, managed to keep to-

and check whatever facts they considered necessary. They would have full access to company records, the right to interview technical and managerial staff (who would be obliged to answer all their questions) and the right to carry out their own inquiries into such matters as costs, production, pricing, etc.

These on-the-spot bodies would be co-ordinated across the entire economy. They would provide the Government with any information required, and at the same time act as an enforcement agency to ensure that decrees were obeyed.

Seizure of power

Here is the crux of the question. Such a system of workers control over the capitalists in relation to prices, would take the working class movement a long way along the road to the seizure of state power and the destruction of the political and economic power of the capitalist class.

Yet such a scheme would be eminently practical and effective. Even the Labour Party and TUC are in favour of workers' representatives having access to a certain amount of company information, providing of course it is in the context of 'participation' schemes. But precisely because of its revolutionary implications, no Labour government is likely to support such a scheme for controlling prices in the interests of the working class.

Nevertheless, what is put forward here is not some abstract wish for the working class to take power, but a concrete example of how the working class movement would inevitably be propelled along the road to state power in order to do something as simple as control prices in its own interests. There is no other road.

Such a scheme presupposes a high level of organisation and political determination by the working class. At the present time, the trade union movement is discussing how to respond to Phase III and drive forward the wage offensive. In our next issue we will look in more detail at the type of struggle against prices which the mass of workers are more likely to be engaging in at the present time.

gether, continuing its mission - the defence of British imperialist interests - throughout the war.

After the War it continued this work, now reorganised into the part-time sectarian police force, the 'B-Specials.'

Today the inheritors of the traditions of the UVF - the Ulster Defence Association, the Loyalist Association of Workers, and similar groups - remain an important political factor in northern Ireland. It is important that we study the experiences of these past struggles and learn the lessons for those to come.



Billie's Blues

The film: *Lady Sings the Blues*, directed by Sidney J. Furie and starring Diana Ross as Billie Holiday

The book: *Lady Sings the Blues*, co-written by Billie Holiday (Sphere - 30p)

The great jazz singer, Billie Holiday, suffered in her short life almost every form of oppression and exploitation that American capitalist society has to offer - from the illegitimacy of her birth, the poverty and insecurity of her 'childhood' and the humiliation of her early life as a prostitute and domestic servant, through the racism and commercial exploitation of the music business, to her slow death of heroin addiction.

The film, *Lady Sings the Blues*, despite its sympathetic pose adds to all this oppression, posthumously. Billie is presented as a talented artiste who happens also to be black. Her fight to 'the top' is shown as a long fight against racial discrimination over which she and her talent triumph. She and her faithful supporters make it to the Carnegie Hall in the end.

But racial discrimination and the more bizarre forms of southern racist extremism (as shown in the scene where she is nearly lynched by the Ku Klux Klan) are topics which any contemporary American film can treat with absolute safety. In so far as racism is an obstacle to 'talent' it is an irrational waste of human, exploitable capital. The ideological representatives of US capital in the film industry have every reason to moralise about these more obvious aspects of racism.

What is totally ignored in the film is the way in which not just Billie Holiday's *career* but her whole *artistic production* - like that of any other black artist - suffered from the poisonous combination of cultural racism and capitalist exploitation. Fortunately we have other evidence on this - not least in Billie's autobiography which, although partly written by a 'ghost-writer,' tells us a thousand times more than the film.

For example, in a comment on the origins of 'modern' jazz, Billie gives us an insight into the way black music has been persistently plagiarised and diluted by the entertainment industry in the USA, real musical innovations getting some kind of recognition only after



Diana Ross and Billy De Williams in *Lady Sings the Blues*.

their assimilation by whites: 'By the time the offays got round to copping 'swing' a new-style music was already breaking out all over uptown. Ten years later that became the newest thing when the white boys downtown figured how to cop it.'

Billie's remark is equally true of the earliest period in jazz-history; the first jazz-band to record - 'original (sic) Dixieland Jazz Band' - was of course a group of white imitators. It's also true of the most recent period, when virtually all the ideas of any interest in so-called 'progressive' rock and pop music are borrowings - watered-down, deprived of their original significance and rendered acceptable to the requirements of the market - from the great advances made by black musicians in the last decade.

What is the explanation of this persistent cultural oppression? For an answer to this question it's necessary to look at the whole cultural history of blacks in America. From the days of slavery blacks have again and again produced cultural forms - political ideologies, religious ideas, ways of speaking and thinking, life-

styles, art-forms, modes of organisation and so on - which have always been distinctive, always in tension with the dominant (European bourgeois) culture, and sometimes in open antagonism to it. If you take note of this fact, and combine it with the virtual absence of any independent ideological and political threat from the white working class in recent American history, it becomes obvious why the suppression and/or inoculation of independent black culture is a major priority for the American ruling class. It seriously threatens their ideological monopoly.

As if the combination of racial oppression and capitalist exploitation were not enough, Billie was also a victim of sexual oppression - her early years were spent as a maid and as a prostitute, whilst later on she was exploited sexually and financially by a swarm of parasites. Particularly revealing on this is Billie's description of her relationship with promoter John Levy. In stark contrast to the reality is the film's treatment of Billie's relationships with men. Her film-life is domination by the standard Hollywood tear-jerker: the strong,

handsome, loyal husband whose sole aim in life is to save her from herself and from a ravenous outside world.

In short, Billie's *actual* life was a microcosm of all the conflicts and oppressions of American society. In dealing with only one aspect of one of those conflicts the film gives the clue to the secret of its silence on all the others: its class position.

Diana Ross as Billie struggles bravely with some bad material, and musically surpasses all reasonable expectations. She manages to suggest something of a Billie Holiday performance without ever falling into the trap of imitating the inimitable. Significantly, though, we are given no clue as to her real musical achievements - not a word about her association with the Basie band, with the great Lester Young, Teddy Wilson, and the rest.

The *book*, at least, is well worth a read!

George Turner

Alinsky's elixir

RULES FOR RADICALS by Saul D. Alinsky (Vintage Books 90p)/Alan Walker

'In this book we are concerned with how to create mass organisations to seize power and give it to the people; to realise the democratic dream of justice and peace.'

With these words Alinsky proudly announces his desire for revolutionary social change, the rest of the book being an attempt to elaborate a method for realising his goal. Alinsky is well known in the States as the originator of 'direct action community politics' aimed at giving 'power to the people.'

Whilst not wishing to question the sincerity of his motives Alinsky's solutions are a mixture of utopianism, anti-communism, dogmatism and myth, liberally sprinkled with petty-bourgeois nationalism.

Alinsky as a self-confessed 'pragmatist and realist' aims to avoid 'dogma' which creates an all-embracing 'ideology' to which free thought becomes 'subservient.' However in trying

desperately to replace dogma by relativism he erects relativism as a ... dogma! Thus he writes on the one hand, 'truth is relative and changing' and activists should be 'political relativists,' whilst in the next paragraph he argues 'one has a conviction that people will ... reach the right conclusion' and that they will move ahead in

their eternal search(?) for those values propounded by Judeo-Christianity.'

Another consequence of this vacillation between dogmatism and relativism is an understanding of capitalism as only *authority relations* (i.e. the 'Haves' boss around the 'Have-nots.') Seen this way the 'Have-nots' only impetus to the revolution is what Alinsky calls the 'Great law of change.' This 'law' is so obvious that he does not think it necessary to elaborate on it!

After such confusion it is not surprising that he concludes, 'organisation for action will now rest upon America's *white middle class*. That's where the power is.' (My emphasis).

For revolutionary marxists to reject community based struggles would be completely sectarian and incorrect. However, what at least Alinsky's book does show is that without placing such intervention within the context of a scientific total understanding of society the resulting impressionism leads to serious errors.

Central to such an understanding is the view of revolution in which the working class leads other-exploited and oppressed layers to liberation.

Alinsky and many other radicals see community struggles as quite separate from those on the industrial front, but the insularity and narrow-mindedness of the traditional left has undoubtedly reinforced this. This makes the task of revolutionaries especially important in giving a lead to these activities.

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The recent strikes in the Republic of South Africa by Black workers have been followed by a dramatic change of policy by the government. They have now made it legal for the black trade unions to strike and negotiate on behalf of their members.

However, even this is severely restricted. Government employees may not strike and any other group of workers can be put into this category. In addition there can only be a strike after a thirty day period of notice. It must be remembered that even 'white' unions have restrictions, and claims are settled by government wage boards.

What does the ruling class in South Africa hope to achieve by this volte face?

NATURE OF COUNTRY

South Africa is a large and underpopulated country. A large part of the land is infertile, and rainfall is low. The country produces cash crops for export only by using cheap black labour and minimising home consumption, in other words by allowing mass malnutrition among the black population.

The gold mines which produce the major exports of the country are the deepest mines in the world and have low grade ore. Wages to black miners are so low that most South African blacks will not work on the mines. Workers are imported from neighbouring black states, in particular the Portuguese territories where there is a system of compulsory labour. These migrants form about 80% of the black workers on the mines.

The white mine workers are paid relatively high wages, but like many other groups of white workers are continually faced with the threat of being replaced by black workers. They main-

tain their high standard of living by militant trade unionism and through the political power of the Nationalist government.

This system with its low productivity and starvation wages is maintained through a complex system of migrant labour. Blacks can only work in 'white' areas if they have a pass. By not giving workers passes and enabling them to work in the towns, they are forced to work on the farms and mines. Certain jobs are reserved for whites only so that unskilled white workers are assured of getting jobs with higher pay. Job reservation divides the working class into group groups depending on their shade of black, and weakens them all in their wage struggles.

Behind 'job reservation' and the 'pass system' lies the armed police, and the apparatus of the police state. It is supported by, and reinforces the ideology of apartheid, the god given separation of the races, which leads to absurdities like separate entrances to the same building for blacks and whites. Combined with the spirit of McCarthyism, this has led to the violent suppression of the black labour movement. Why should black workers now be given the legal right to strike?

THE NEW ECONOMY

Since the second world war, and partly as a result of it, the South African economy has become more industrialised. Other factors contributing to this growth in industry include the protectionist policies of the Nationalist government, diversification by the mining companies like the Anglo-American Corporation, and the need to build a military fortress which does not rely solely on exporting primary products like minerals and crops.

The new industry requires a skilled work force which is more stable than the changing migrant workers, and a large market to pur-

chase its products. The few whites cannot provide enough skilled workers, and they demand higher pay than the industrialists are willing to give. Job reservation and the migrant labour system, with its low productivity and low pay for blacks, are becoming a hindrance to industrialisation.

The new needs are reflected in the integrationist Progressive party, backed by Anglo-America's Harry Oppenheimer. In the ruling Nationalist party there has been a split. The 'verligtes'

of the ruling class in South Africa. It is because of this that every step towards industrial liberalisation is coupled with further repressive legislation, strengthening of the army and police force, and increased propaganda. The dismantling of apartheid will never be allowed by the white workers and farmers. If ever it were achieved, it would unleash forces which would topple the ruling class. But allowed to continue, it will increasingly strangle industry. Vorster has chosen to balance between industrial liberalisa-

Part 2 South Africa

John Sutton

AFRICA IN STRUGGLE

represent those Afrikaaners with a stake in industry, and are pushing for a more 'moderate' policy. The 'verkramptes' represent the farmers and the poor white workers who need apartheid. Vorster's non-intervention in the recent strikes, and now his new law to legalise strikes by black workers, reflect the needs of industry, but he cannot ignore the 'verkrampte' right wing.

Apartheid is holding back industrial growth, but it is this system which maintains the power

and armed repression.

CONCLUSION

The South African bourgeoisie are trying to loosen the fetters on their black labour force in order to promote the growth of industry. But they are trapped between the racist ideology of apartheid and the growing strength of the black working class. The contradictions are too great, and every day only strengthens the conditions for their overthrow by the very black labour which they depend upon to survive.

Death of a militant

JOE BAXTER 1940-1973



A leading Argentinian revolutionary militant and supporter of the Fourth International, Joe Baxter (known as 'El Gordo'), was among those killed when a Brazilian Boeing airliner crashed near Orly airport on 10 July.

Born on 24 May, 1940, in the town of Marcos Paz near Buenos Aires, Joe Baxter first became actively involved in politics at the age of 16 when he joined the Tacuara Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (a right-wing nationalist group). He soon became prominent in the Peronist resistance, and was one of the founders of a left-wing grouping within it. In 1959 he was arrested and jailed for several months before being released under an amnesty granted by President Frondizi.

In 1963 Baxter took part in the first major bank raid organised by the Peronist resistance. As a result he was forced to flee the country, going to Uruguay where together with Raul Sendic and others he played a leading role in the development of the Tupamaros. During this period also he travelled to North Vietnam and China, which broadened his political horizons, and in 1967 he went to Cuba. It was there that he came into contact for the first time with Trotskyism through members of the leadership of the PRT (Revolutionary Workers' Party), Argentinian section of the Fourth International.

Establishing particularly close links with two of the PRT's leading militants, Luis Pujals and Tito Bonnet, Baxter returned to Argentina where he joined the PRT in 1970. He played an active part in the preparation of its Fifth Congress in July of that year, and also in the building of its armed wing, the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army).

With Pujals and Bonnet, Baxter was one of the fiercest defenders of the PRT's affiliation to the Fourth International. He recognised that the populist tendencies and ideological confusion inside the PRT were a serious threat to its ability to build a real working class party, and regarded the struggle for ideological clarification as a life-and-death question. But in September 1971 Pujals was kidnapped and assassinated, and in August 1972 Bonnet was among those who died in the massacre of revolutionaries at Trelew. Baxter now found himself almost alone in this struggle. Shortly after Bonnet's death he left the PRT and formed the Leninist Tendency, although he maintained close links with the Fourth International and the former Communist League in France.

CONSISTENT FIGHTER

In a statement issued on 16 July, the Leninist Tendency declare that: 'The world revolution has lost one of its most consistent fighters. He was a living expression of the rising tide of class struggle in Latin America, the deepening radicalisation, and the conversion of wide layers of the

revolutionary vanguard and the world proletariat from bourgeois nationalism to revolutionary Marxism.

'We shall not forget that it was he who taught us the necessity of a World Revolutionary Party — and convinced us that the basis for this party lies in the Fourth International, founded by Leon Trotsky in 1938. It was he who educated us in Leninist methods of political struggle and ideological discussion. Above all, he showed us by his own militant example what it means to be a revolutionary Marxist.

'We, militants of the organisation which he founded and which he led until his death, publicly pledge ourselves to continue the struggle for the world socialist revolution.'

Wave of repression in Uruguay

Two weeks ago in Uruguay the Communist Party-led trade union federation, the CNT, called off the general strike against the military coup, claiming that 'considerable progress' had been made against the regime.

Today CP leaders, including the general secretary, Arismendi, are in jail, together with hundreds more trade unionists and political prisoners. General Seregni, last year's presidential candidate for the Frente Amplio, the electoral coalition in which the CP participates, has not been seen or heard of since his arrest early in July. The regime has also announced its intention of purging the CNT of communists as a condition of removing last month's ban on it.

The labour movement internationally must of course demand the release of Arismendi and all other political prisoners. That goes almost without saying.

But at the same time it must learn the reasons for this situation, understand how it is that the General Strike of yesterday has been transformed into the vicious repression of today. The answer lies to a major extent in the policy of the Communist Party, which was unquestionably the main leadership in the strike movement. It was the Communist Party which by its peddling of illusions in the possibility of a 'left shift' in the regime laid the whole working class movement open to the attack which Bordaberry is now able to carry out. It is not enough to demand the release of political prisoners, essential as it is. It is also more than ever necessary now to understand how their imprisonment in the first place could have been and in future can be prevented.

More support for Communist League

Last Saturday one hundred militants marched through central Liverpool to protest against the banning of the French section of the Fourth International, the Communist League, and the jailing of its leading members Alain Krivine and Pierre Rousset. This demonstration was the latest action in the IMG's national campaign in defence of the Communist League.

Represented on the demonstration were all Lancashire IMG branches, Blackburn Gay Liberation Front, Blackburn International Socialists, Southport Communist Party, the Liverpool branches of Workers' Fight and the Communist Federation of Britain, and Liverpool supporters of 'Militant.' This unity was marred by the absence of the Liverpool International Socialists and Communist Party.

Other developments in the IMG's campaign to mobilise solidarity in this country with the Communist League include a motion of support from the Central London branch of TASS (the engineering white collar workers' union). Latest signatories to the open letter to President Pompidou protesting the ban in-

clude world-renowned Cambridge economist Joan Robinson.

In Italy, the national conference of the major far-left group, *Il Manifesto*, voted solidarity with the former members of the Communist League in their fight against government repression.

In Spain, supporters of the Fourth International demonstrated their solidarity with the Communist League by painting slogans on the wall of the French Embassy and bombarding it with molotov cocktails.

In France itself, Francois Mitterrand, First Secretary of the Socialist Party, and Edmond Maire, National Secretary of the second-largest trade union federation (the CFDT), have signed an appeal being circulated by former members of the League, which condemns the Government ban and calls for the creation of a national defence committee to fight the repression.

Alain Krivine and Pierre Rousset remain in prison, the former pending decision on the Government's appeal against a judge's ruling that he should be freed until his trial. Messages and telegrams of solidarity



Five years ago: Rousset and Krivine are released from jail after the May events

are important to keep up their morale, and should be sent to:

Alain Krivine, Prevenu 1697 81, 1ere Division, Cellule 33, 42, rue de la Santé, 75674 Paris, CEDEX 14.	Pierre Rousset, Prevenu 1696 69, 2eme Division, Cellule 116, 42, rue de la Santé, 75674 Paris, CEDEX 14.
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Mold trials end - no convictions

Another four building workers have been acquitted of intimidation in the trials of pickets at Mold Crown Court. This brings to twelve the number who have appeared and been cleared on major charges arising out of picketing during last year's strike.

What was intended as a 'softening up' process for the Shrewsbury 24 trial due to start in October, has therefore turned into something of a disaster for the ruling class. Seven of those acquitted will also be appearing in the Shrewsbury trial.

However the struggle in defence of picketing is by no means over. As one of those tried at Mold, shop steward George Murray, said after his acquittal, 'I consider these trials a witch-hunt against picketing in gene-

ral. They have started with the hamlets and villages of North Wales, but the real attack will be on the big battalions like the dockers and miners.'

In particular, there is still an urgent need to build for a major national response to coincide with the opening of the trial of the Shrewsbury 24. Encouraging reports are coming in about the setting up of local defence committees to fight the case. Liverpool Trades Council has decided to set one up, as has Stirling & District Trades Council following a circular on the case sent to all trade union branches by local members of the International Marxist Group. In a letter announcing a meeting on 14 August to set up a defence committee, Trades Council secretary Harry McGhie says that, 'We would ask

all branches to be represented by as many people as they wish as the defence committee will attempt to be as broadly based as possible.'

The question was also raised at a TUC summer school of 100 trade unionists in York last week after a group of them had attended a meeting on the case addressed by an IMG speaker.

One of them, a member of the construction union UCATT, told the meeting how a defence committee had been set up in Portsmouth, and following discussion all those present asked to be put in touch with the main defence committee. They also asked local IMG members to produce a short leaflet on the case which could be distributed to the other workers on the course, and next day raised the issue with Len

Murray, Assistant General Secretary of the TUC, when he visited the school. He told them that the TUC could not constitutionally do anything until approached by one of the unions involved, UCATT or the T&GWU. Needless to say, this has yet to happen.

Major activities now being planned include a mass meeting of trade unionists in London's Conway Hall on Friday, 17 August, organised by the London Joint Sites Committee. This will act as one of the major mobilising focuses for the planned 10-day march from London to Shrewsbury for the opening of the trial. It should also provide a big boost to the fund-raising campaign - with the trial likely to go on for five months, with the 24 accused unable to work for that period, and with none of them actually living in Shrewsbury, the need in this respect is likely to be very great indeed. All contributions should be sent to: Building Workers Social Fund, c/o M.R. Williams, 1 Pford Pentre, Ocean View, Carmel, Holywell, Flintshire.

Martin Meteyard

RED NOTES

Herne Hill squat

Squatters occupying 11 empty flats in Herne Hill, South London, have so far defeated 'legal' attempts to evict them. The landlords, Berger Properties, have failed to discover the names of the families involved, or satisfied the court that it has made reasonable attempts to do so, and 'authorised' eviction has been delayed by at least six weeks. This is despite the recent Denning ruling offering landlords almost immediate possession of squatted property.

But behind the Herne Hill squat is the solidarity of the tenants on the estate, local trade unionists, and political groups, determined to prevent Berger adding to its empire. The action of the squatters has already resulted in Lambeth council issuing compulsory purchase orders on over 200 Berger flats. By carefully selecting their target, the squatters have shown that it is possible to develop a campaign capable of offering mass resistance to the plans of the property companies.

New threat in Birmingham trial

Birmingham magistrates decided on Wednesday to send five building workers and three TV cameramen to the Crown Court for trial on charges arising out of the occupation of the SOS lump labour agency in February. The trial, in which the eight face charges of 'unlawful assembly' and 'conspiracy to trespass', is not expected to begin before October.

The latter charge is particularly important. Trespass by itself is not a criminal offence. Conspiracy is being used to make into a criminal offence an action which by itself would be nothing more than a civil wrong, which would have to be dealt with by a private court action for damages.

By invoking the conspiracy laws, the state authorities have been able to step into the case and threaten these workers with imprisonment. This type of move could be used in future against occupations or similar actions.

Brian Stocock

CORRECTION

In *Red Weekly* 11 we carried a report on the setting up of a Shrewsbury Defence Committee in Preston in which various references were made to the 'BAC Shop Stewards Committee.' This should have read 'Preston BAC Shop Stewards Committee,' to avoid confusion with other BAC plants in the immediate area.

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WHAT'S ON

JOHN MACLEAN - His Role and Relevance Today. Joint forum organised by Central London AIL and John MacLean Commemoration Committee with panel of speakers, Friday, 10 August, at 8.00 p.m. in General Picton pub, Caledonian Road 15 minutes Kings X tube). Further details, leaflet etc. from Alestair Renwick, 28 Lammas Park Road, London W.5.

MERSEYSIDE IMG PUBLIC MEETING: Robin Blackburn on 'The Politics of the Fourth International', Thursday 2 August, 8.00 p.m. in the Strand Hotel, Brunswick Street (near Pier Head).

WORKERS FIGHT PUBLIC MEETING: 'What is happening in Northern Ireland?' - Report from Belfast. Sunday, 29 July, 8.00 p.m. in 'Golden Lion', King's Cross Road, London, N.1.

IMG RED FORUM: Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. New series starts this Tuesday 17 July, at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (5 minutes walk from Kings X tube).

CENTRAL LONDON AIL FORUM: Robin Blackburn on 'Cuba and the Logic of Permanent Revolution.' Friday, 27 July, at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London, N.1. (5 minutes, Kings X tube.)

REQUIRED URGENTLY: Fast accurate typist - 35 hour week. Flexible hours, wages negotiable. Write to Carl at F.J. Litho, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1, or phone 01-837 9987.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO PICKET! Defend the Shrewsbury 24! Midway Towns IMG public meeting, Thursday 2 August, speaker Lawrence White. Army and Navy Public House, The Brook, opposite Chatham Town Hall, at 8.00 p.m.

LIFT WANTED: to Rome at end of July. Any comrade driving to Italy at that time and willing to give lift (share expenses) ring Wimmerie: 01-459 0659.

BIRMINGHAM IMG STUDY CLASSES: Introductory series of lectures on the politics of the IMG. Every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m. at the Wellington pub, Bristol Road.

GLASGOW IMG PUBLIC MEETING to mark second anniversary of intervention. Thursday 9 August, 7.30 p.m., at Dixon Hall (Orchard Road).