

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

166 9 APRIL 1970 EVERY THURSDAY 4d



Troops firing CS gas in Ballymurphy

BRITISH TROOPS GAS AND CLUB N. IRELAND WORKERS

From
EAMONN O'KANE
in Belfast

THE BRITISH ARMY, true to tradition, has gone into action against working-class youth in the Ballymurphy Estate on the outskirts of Belfast.

Intense resentment was aroused last week on the largely Catholic estate at the antics of an Orange band parading up and down the main road.

Catholic youths attempted to attack the band but were beaten back by men from the Royal Scots regiment.

As a result there were three nights of rioting in which the army were twice beaten out of the estate. The troops retaliated by firing 200 canisters of CS gas, baton charging and arresting more than 60 people, many of whom had taken no part in the fighting.

'SHOT DEAD'

The army's panicky reaction was underlined by army overlord General Freeland's statement that petrol bombers would be shot dead and by the movement of 1500 extra troops into the area.

Ballymurphy has since been under virtual martial law. Groups of more than three people are broken up and many arrests have been made on totally perjured evidence.

An obvious and brutal attempt is being made to cow the Ballymurphy people by an intimidating display of armed military force.

The militant socialist organisation, People's Democracy, two of whose members have been arrested, organised a meeting of the Ballymurphy youth last Saturday and Sunday.

PRESS RUBBISH

The aim was to give the lads a chance to reply to the nauseating rubbish pumped out by the Catholic civil rights leaders, Unionist press and British army that the riots had been solely a religious rampage by non-political hooligans.

At the meeting, it was pointed out that the people involved in the fighting with the army were not among the sectarians who had attempted to intimidate Protestant families in an adjoining housing estate, New Barnsley.

The young workers fought against the British troops because they saw in the army their chief opponent to the creation of an Irish republic. Their fighting was motivated by a nationalist outlook.

As socialists we have no alternative but to change repub-

lican attitudes to a class consciousness. If the fight against British imperialism is to be successful, it must be seen as more than a military struggle.

It must be a working class struggle waged on the economic front as well.

As a result of the meeting, a committee composed completely of Ballymurphy youths was elected. They will launch a campaign for the release of the prisoners, publicise the jackboot tactics of the army and fight for recreational facilities in an area totally devoid of them.

It is true that there were religious sectarian elements present in the fighting. We would be fools not to recognise and attack it.

But it would be falling into a liberal trap not to recognise the undoubted revolutionary undertones to the conflict with the army.

Most of these young people are unemployed and have been so since they left school. The

civil rights campaign seemed like a reawakening.

But now as a result of weak, reformist leadership, their conditions are exactly the same as before the start of the civil rights campaign.

BRAVE ATTACKS

Their disillusion with the reformist tactics of the civil rights leaders has resulted in an increasing desire for militant, even foolhardy, action. Hence the brave but futile attacks on the military in both Belfast and Derry.

The task which faces revolutionaries now is to harness this bravery and capacity for self-sacrifice and give it a totally marxist, revolutionary direction. This means raising the slogan of an Irish workers' republic.

WHAT WE THINK

THE SHOOT TO KILL threat by General Freeland has shown the brutal cynicism of the latest turn in British policy in Northern Ireland.

In an unprecedented show of strength last week, British big business has served notice on civil rights militants and Catholic workers that it will stand no challenge to the police state in Northern Ireland.

The display of viciousness by British troops, who used CS gas and batons against young Catholic workers in Belfast, forms part of Westminster's policy of appeasement of the extreme Tory Unionist right wing.

Growing challenge

The Labour government and its Stormont lackeys are desperately anxious to buy off the growing challenge from the right wing led by the Rev Ian Paisley and William Craig MP. That is why the authorities allowed the deliberately provocative Belfast Orange march to bum republican flags as it marched past the Catholic district last week.

According to 'moderate' civil rights leaders, the young fighters of Ballymurphy are 'hooligans' although they were quick enough to describe the same action by young workers in Derry last year as 'heroic'.

Of course the young Catholic workers sometime express in a negative and even sectarian way the resentments and frustrations of belonging to a second-class ghetto. But the initial reaction of some

Catholic workers was to contrast the regiments engaged in the fighting last week with the behaviour of troops sent in last August.

General Freeland himself spoke about 'the complete change of attitude' to the troops on the part of the Catholic population. But this has little if anything to do with the different army units.

The fact is that British forces in Northern Ireland have always had two jobs to do. One was to muzzle the armed Paisleyites on the streets the other to smash the leftward movement of the civil rights rank and file.

At present Westminster has effectively abandoned the first policy in an attempt to buy time for the Chichester-Clark government. But the second policy is being enforced with increasing determination by the army authorities.

The enemy of the Catholic workers in this situation is certainly not the ordinary Protestant workers. They, too, are on the receiving end of unemployment and bad housing.

It is the Stormont regime and British big business which stands in the way of all workers leading a decent and dignified way of life.

In fighting to get rid of the troops the workers of Northern Ireland - Catholic and Protestant - will find themselves increasingly confronted by the armed might of British big business.

It is our duty in Britain to support those in Northern Ireland struggling to be free of British imperialism and its army of occupation.

Back to 1900 says Heath

TORY LEADER Edward Heath has outlined his party's proposals for attacking the trade unions if they win the General Election. Speaking last weekend to that ghost army, the Conservative Trade Unionists, he stressed that the Tories would change the law to make it possible for employers to sue unions for damages after strike action.

Heath wants to smash the safeguards of the 1906 Trades Disputes Act which allowed unions to picket during strikes and prevented them from being sued for damages. The Act was forced through by working-class anger when the railway workers' union paid £23,000 to the Taff Vale Railway Company after a strike in 1900. On page 3 this week there is a major feature on the Taff Vale strike and its aftermath.

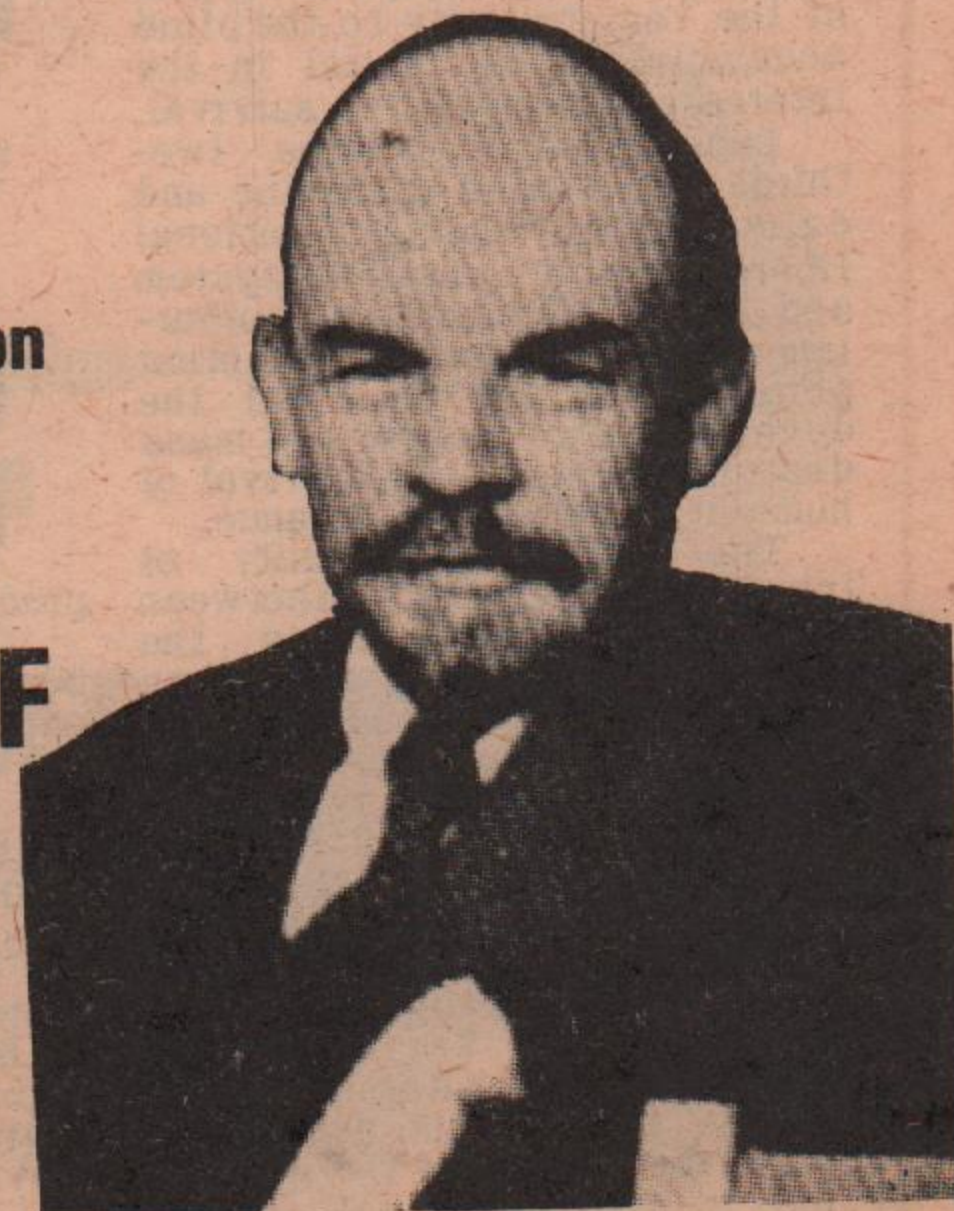
STRIKE THAT LAUNCHED THE LABOUR PARTY

International Socialists Public Meeting

LENIN

Founder of the
Bolshevik Party
Leader of the
Russian Revolution
Born April 1870

hear
TONY CLIFF
Conway Hall,
Red Lion Square,
London WC1
(Holborn Tube)



SATURDAY 18 APRIL 2-5pm

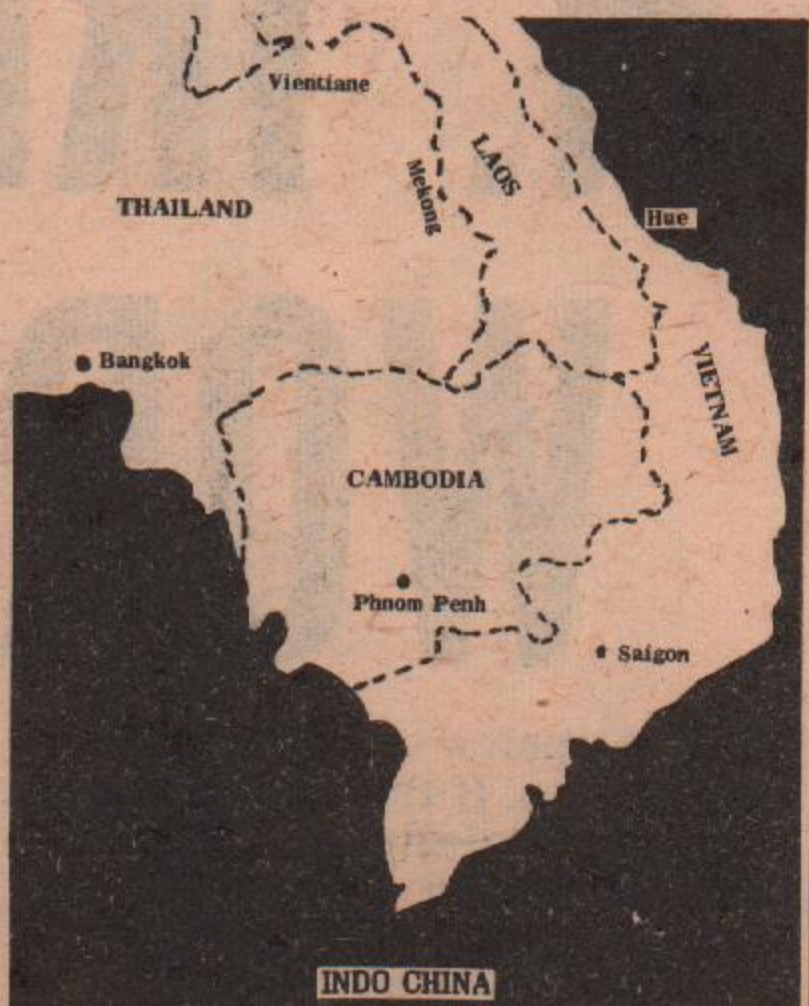
Nixon promises 'peace' but steps up US involvement in Indochina

by Ian Birchall

ON 3 NOVEMBER last year, President Nixon, referring to the United States war in Vietnam, said: 'We are not going to withdraw from that effort. In my opinion, for us to withdraw from that effort would mean a collapse not only of South Vietnam, but Southeast Asia. So we're going to stay there.'

In the light of this remark, the events of the last few weeks in Laos and Cambodia become clear. For it shows the real motives of the US in fighting the Vietnam war.

At the start of the Vietnam war, direct US investment in Indochina (Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) was less than \$50 million (out of a world total of \$30 thousand million).



Threat

But Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon were all well aware that victory for the national liberation forces in Vietnam would be a direct threat to the whole of Southeast Asia - Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia and the Philippines and eventually Japan. Such actions would also be an enormous encouragement for revolutionary movements in Latin America.

It is possible that the US may make concessions to cool down or even stop the war in Vietnam (recent official assurances that the troop withdrawals are going according to schedule are meaningless since the schedules are kept secret). What it

cannot and will not do is abandon its political influence over the whole of Southeast Asia.

The US has a willing ally in Britain. Roy Mason, President of the Board of Trade, visiting Singapore in January, said that Southeast Asia was 'a thriving, fast-developing market which I mean to see Britain does not neglect.'

However, the area is getting increasingly difficult to hold. Communist guerrillas are more active in Malaysia. The Indonesian government is facing hostile demonstrations.

While strikes and demonstrations continue in the Philippines, the Marcos government there has withdrawn all its troops from Vietnam. In this situation, the US is com-

elled, despite its occasional promises of peace, to increase its involvement in Southeast Asia, especially in Indochina.

Indochina was originally colonised by the French in the late 19th century. Following its defeat in 1954, France withdrew militarily, though it maintains many investments.

The Geneva agreements which carved up Vietnam gave 'independence' to Laos and Cambodia. In fact, with the creation of the South East Asia Treaty Organisation, the United States took a direct responsibility for the area.

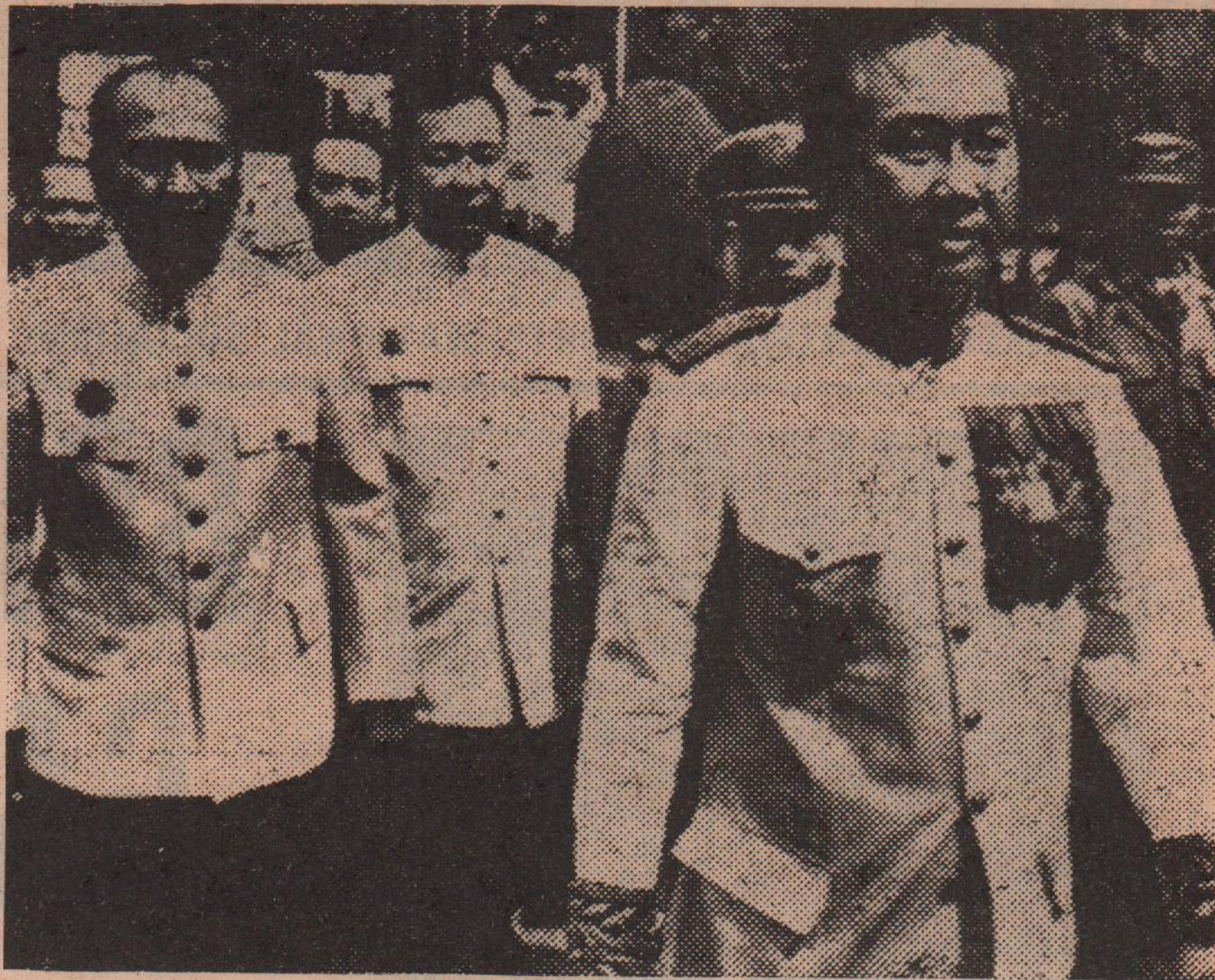
The frontiers in Southeast Asia are largely the product of colonialism. The US has complained at North Vietnamese infringement of these frontiers but it showed its own contempt for national independence by coming to Vietnam in the first place.

Evidence to the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal showed that the US was using the excuse of North Vietnamese troop movements to mercilessly bomb civilians in Laos and Cambodia.

On 19 December 1967, Congressman Resnick, an associate of President Johnson, said in Saigon: 'The overwhelming majority of American people and the Congress are in favour of invading Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam, and dropping the bomb on anyone who tries to stop us. . . I think they want us to get in there and wipe them all out.'

The Tet offensive about a month later may have changed US plans. But the US concern to dominate the region continues.

A secret debate on Laos was held in the US Senate last December.



General Lon Nol [right] the new Cambodian Prime Minister, after the coup that ousted Sihanouk

A so-called 'sanitised' version of the debate was published some five weeks later, containing such revealing passages as:

Mr Fulbright: This is escalating into a major operation (Deleted).

Mr Ellender: (Deleted)

Mr Fulbright: (Deleted)

Mr Ellender: (Deleted)

Mr Fulbright: (Deleted)

Mr Ellender: (Deleted)

And so on. No detailed information on the military operation was allowed to pass through, though some sources estimate that the US is making up to 20,000 bombing raids a month over Laos.

more preferable to bomb them than to send our men in there.'

In other words, smash the Indochinese people into the ground, but don't risk defeat in confrontations like the Plain of Jars, where revolutionary forces have gained substantial victories.

There is even less information as to the real course of events in Cambodia. It is impossible to know yet whether Prince Sihanouk was removed by a CIA plot, or by rivals at home.

What is clear is that for Cambodia the days of neutralism and 'royal socialism' are coming to an end. It will take more than a playboy prince with friends in Moscow and Peking to smash the US threat to the lives and happiness of the people of Indochina.

What it will take is revolutionary action, following the example, though not the political command, of the Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao. Such a revolution can drive the US out of Southeast Asia once and for all.

Smash

What does come out of the debate is the cynicism of the so-called 'doves'. Senator Stephen Young, who has called for withdrawal of US troops from Vietnam, said: 'It was to our interest to bomb those (North Vietnamese) troops. It also is much

'Law and Order'

French Left faces severe repression from government

From a correspondent

THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT in France is facing a serious challenge less than two years after the great general strike of May 1968.

Pompidou's government is not in immediate danger but it has a lot of problems on its hands. Peasants and shopkeepers are in open revolt.

The whole education system is suffering the effects of economy measures, which will mean larger classes and lower quality teaching.

The lower middle class - a vital part of the support of any right-wing government - is deeply discontented.

Pompidou's visit to the US was clearly designed as a public relations job to restore confidence in the government. It was a total failure. This played into the hands of the hawks in Pompidou's cabinet, in particular Marcellin, the Minister of the Interior.

'Bash the left'

Their solution is to 'bash the left'. This will improve the 'law and order' image of the government and it will weaken the only forces capable of offering a united front to the rebellious simmering in different quarters.

As a result, the militants of the left have been the victims of severe police attacks. Most dramatic were the police invasions of Nanterre and other universities.

The conduct of the police at Nanterre was not surprising to those familiar with French police methods, but it was nonetheless scandalous. Police charged students with clubs, shouting Kill kill and obstructed the arrival of ambulances, chanting a demand for bears to be brought instead.

Two days of police 'order' at Nanterre caused more damage than three months of student disturbances.

At Bordeaux students were charged with storing Molotov

cocktails, until it was discovered that the ominous bottles contained colouring material for making posters.

Repression has spread to students and staff in secondary schools. Among teachers suspended for misconduct, one faces the allegation of wearing a leather jacket and pale blue socks.

In the army, several soldiers have been imprisoned for circulating revolutionary literature. A protest meeting featuring Alain Krivine Michel Rocard and Jean-Paul Sartre was banned.

Constant persecution

Revolutionaries selling papers and leafletting suffer constant police persecution. This means arrest on technical charges such as obstruction - usually followed by a beating-up - and in some cases by savage sentences. One militant recently got four months' jail for leafletting.

But the biggest danger to the revolutionary movement is its own divisions and isolation. Some sections - notably the Maoists - risk degenerating into terrorism.

While it is quite justifiable to respond to police violence, terrorist acts cannot weaken the state politically and merely risk increasing public hostility. Students are much less popular among the general public than in May 1968. Fortunately for the revolutionary left, the police have not gained in popularity.

More encouraging have been the moves towards unity in the face of repression. A public meeting held in Paris on 18 March to protest at the repression attracted 4000 people.

It brought together on the same platform, for the first time in recent times, all three of the main Trotskyist groupings in France - Lutte Ouvriere, Ligue Communiste and AJS - as well as the left United Socialist Party and other tendencies.

Socialist Worker

6 Cottons Gardens London E2

Tel: 01-739 1878 (editorial) 1870 (business)

CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world - a tiny minority - subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns two-thirds of mankind to famine and calls forth movements of national liberation which shake the system and expose its essential barbarism. The constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass destruction place the survival of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power - the democratic collective control of the working class over industry and society through a state of workers' councils and workers' control of

WHERE WE STAND

production.

Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes.

The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by constant

struggle against the ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois. International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper.



John Setters (AEF) on Mrs Castle's productivity alliance with the bosses Struggle on the shop floor: Communist Party offers no lead

NO ACTIVE trade unionist today can afford to be unaware of the dangers of productivity bargaining. Both the employers and the government have made clear repeatedly their support for such methods.

This can be seen by studying the speeches made by Barbara Castle and the President of the Engineering Employers' Federation when they spoke at the Federation's recent annual dinner.

After proposing a toast to the Federation, Mrs Castle said: 'I believe that the EEF has recognised both its responsibility and its opportunity in the changed circumstances of the 1970s. The evidence that it has done so is to be found in a variety of initiatives.'

'It is to be found in its efforts to stimulate productivity bargaining... the introduction of rational pay systems and output measurement.'

Replying, the President of the EEF spoke about the 1968 Engineering Agreement and said that the Federation attached 'great importance' to its 'productivity provisions'. He went on to boast of the establishment of a special Advisory Services Department with a high degree of expertise in productivity bargaining (EEF News, March 1970).

For any worker faced with management proposals for a productivity deal or a new wages structure the most essential knowledge required are details of other workers' experiences and the vital suggestions of what to do and how to fight.

The recent pamphlet published by the Communist Party and written by Bert Ramelson, its National Industrial Organiser, *Productivity Agreements - An Exposure of the Latest and Greatest Swindle on the Wages Front* (16 King Street, London WC2, 2s) regrettably but inevitably achieves none of these requirements.

According to the PIB Report No 123 *Productivity Agreements*, the number of productivity deals registered at the Department of Employment and Productivity in June 1969 numbered 3000 and covered some six million workers. Although this means that some 25 per cent of the entire working population are affected by this 'Latest and Greatest Swindle', Ramelson's pamphlet is only 24 pages in length.

It is so short that, for example, it never once mentions job evaluation. The vital importance of this technique to the employers can be seen from reading the evidence of the Pressed Steel Fisher management to a Court of Inquiry into a dispute at their Cowley plant in 1968. In this, the company claimed that job



RAMELSON: coat-tailing policy

evaluation would be beneficial because it would increase mobility and flexibility of labour and lead to more work study.

Nowhere in the pamphlet are the dangers of sending shop stewards on courses properly explained.

In 1968, for instance, the Coventry Engineering Employers published a report called 'Wage Drift, Work Measurement and Systems of Payment'. On page 40 the report described how, after sending its shop stewards on a course, one Coventry firm had easily introduced work study.

Failure

At the present time the Coventry Employers are running courses for trade unionists. They are held at their own Training Centre in Leamington and they supply the lecturers.

The AEF, the TGWU and ASTMS are among the 'left wing' trade unions taking 'advantage' of this kind of facility.

One could continually refer to the pamphlet's omissions but assuming that this serious lack of information and detail could be excused, the total failure to supply any details of a counter-offensive policy is unforgivable and makes it of little value to any militant. On page 8 Ramelson claims to have read 'several hundred' productivity deals and yet nowhere does a militant policy of how to fight them ever once appear.

Ramelson's inability to produce such a strategy is not only due to the Communist Party's deliberate turning away from the building of factory branches to more and more electoral 'politics', but is also a product of their unity policy with the 'left' trade union leaders.

An example of this disastrous 'turn' can be seen on page 23 where Ramelson praises the role of the

'left' trade union leaders in helping to defeat the government's White Paper In Place of Strife by their activity on the TUC General Council.

What Ramelson does not say and what the Morning Star has continually omitted to say is that the TUC's alternative Programme for Action said on pages 4 and 5 that the 'General Council accept that every effort should be made to reduce the number of stoppages of work... (and)... that unions and employers have in fact been getting down to the job is evidenced by the development in many industries of new bargaining machinery, procedures and methods (notably productivity bargaining)'

Ramelson's pamphlet also praises a rather weak statement from Jack Jones of the TGWU warning against trading away rest facilities without ever mentioning the general enthusiasm of the TGWU for the concept of productivity bargaining.

The refusal of the Communist Party to fight or even criticise the 'left' trade union leaders means that they are incapable of constructing a real policy of opposing productivity bargaining. To do so could only result in their offending the very leaders whom they give support to and this they could not face.

The product of this miserable coat-tailing policy is Ramelson's pamphlet.

Cottons Column

THE BOSSES are jumping on the law and order bandwagon - not surprising, considering that their bosom pals, the Tories, started it moving.

They're getting very upset about what they call 'industrial thefts'. For example, the secretary of the Enfield District Manufacturers' Association in North London complained last week to the Confederation of British Industries about 'the inadequacy of sentences' imposed by magistrates on persons convicted of industrial theft.

It is interesting that the Enfield money-grubbers expect the CBI to put pressure on magistrates. Perhaps it's one of those democratic rights that only extends to 5 per cent of the population?

The Enfield Association is up in arms that one of its member firms loses more than £100,000 worth of copper a year through theft by employees.

It lists several other thefts and rails against the 'light' sentences for first offenders, who usually receive fines or suspended sentences.

It would be too much to expect these property-conscious gentlemen to think logically, to understand that 'industrial theft' (or 'perks', depending on your side of the barricades) is an attempt to supplement workers' grossly inadequate wages. And this small-time theft can never make up for the big-time theft of workers' labour that takes place day in and day out in every work place.

Out of every five working days, three and a third are spent by workers in producing surplus for the bosses while only two and two-thirds are spent in creating wages for their own subsistence. That is real industrial theft by the bosses to which magistrates might turn their attention.

PS - The name of the secretary of the Enfield Manufacturers' Association is Mr John Stingemore.

GLASGOW branch of the Union of Post Office Workers held a meeting recently to discuss a new pay deal. A union spokesman outlined the miserable pittance involved and was halted by an old worker at the back who got to his feet and said: 'Mr Chairman, I move Quo Vadis.'

The chairman was bemused by this. He quickly flipped through Walter Citrine on Chairmanship and said: 'Don't you mean, Status Quo?'

'No,' said the elderly brother, 'I mean Quo Vadis. You bastards have thrown us to the lions again.'

Freeze a jolly good fellow

SURPRISED at the generosity of the employers in the latest round of pay awards? These few simple sums to find out the real meaning of pay freeze might interest you.

Say a worker earning £1000 a year gets a 4 per cent increase each year. His earnings after four years and four increases will be £1169 18s - about 17 per cent increase.

Suppose instead of this gradual increase he were awarded a 17 per cent increase after four years of freeze, would he be worse off?

yr	pay in year with		* interest	
	4% p.a.	Freeze	difference	on dif.
	£	£	£	£
1	1000 0	1000	0 0	0 0
2	1040 0	1000	40 0	2 0
3	1081 12	1000	81 12	8 3
4	1124 18	1000	124 18	19 8
5	1169 18	1170	0 0	27 12

The boss's total increased profit over the four years would be £246 10s or £276 1s with interest - a rate of about 7 per cent saving on his pay bill! In other words in order to recoup the loss over the next four years the worker should be demanding something more like 24 per cent.

In addition, there is the continuing interest on the profit (£27 12s in year 5 alone) and an allowance for the decline in the value of the money due to inflation. Another 3 per cent or so could be added, making 27 per cent in all.

So with pay freeze you have to run more than half as fast again just to stay where you are. Do those generous pay deals still look so good?

* Calculated as 5 per cent on current year and 10 per cent on past years.

The final shift

ONE WORKER got so enthused about his freedom to sell his labour that he worked 102 hours straight off. Then he collapsed from exhaustion and died from his fall.

The coroner at the inquest recorded his belief that slavery had long been abolished in this country and his dismay at the facts of this case. The forces of darkness - not actually represented in the case - suggested that what the coroner actually meant was that he hadn't heard of wage slavery.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

- ABERDEEN Pete Drummond
19 High Street Aberdeen
- ACTON Bob Cartwright
27 Bath Road W4
- ANGEL Barry Huggill
154 Downham Road N1
- ASHFORD Roger Crossley
The Schoolhouse, Hamstreet
nr Ashford Kent
- BARNLEY Joe Kenyon
120 Standhill Crescent
- BATH Richard Newby
17 Burlington Street Bath
- BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster
128 Yardley Wood Rd B'ham 18
- BRADFORD Neil Patterson
25 Fernhill Grove off Park Rd
- BRIGHTON Andrew Moir
29 College Road
- BRISTOL B R Horlock
26 Elmdale Road Bristol 8
- CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham
12a Metcalfe Road
- CAMDEN EAST Richard Kuper
45 Falkland Rd NW5
- CAMDEN WEST Robert MacGibbon
22 Estell Rd NW8
- CARDIFF Nigel Walby
35 de Burgh Street
- CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell
The Flat St Thomas' School
Eastworth Rd Chertsey Surrey
- CLYDEBANK Eric Duncan
1221 Dumbarton Rd Glasgow W4
- COVENTRY Dave Edwards
53 Palmerston Rd Earlston
- CRAWLEY T K O'Halloran
42 Haroldale Drive Horley Surrey
- CROYDON Jenny Woodhams
26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon
- DEPTFORD John Ure
172a Deptford High Rd SE8
- DERBY Trevor Cate
80 Prospect St Alfreton Derbyshire
- DONCASTER Vaughan Harrington
28 Rockingham Rd Wheatley Doncaster
- DURHAM Jane Mackay
15 Wanless Toe Durham City
- EAST LONDON Bob Light
2 Oster Toe Southcoote Rd E17
- EDINBURGH Brian Lavery
41 East London Street
- ENFIELD Ian Birchall
109 Croyland Rd N9
- ERITH Paul Wildish
30 Poplar Mount Belvedere Kent
- EXETER Granville Williams
Town Tenement Farm
Clyst Hydon Cullompton Devon
- FOLKESTONE Helen McConnell
Flat 3 54 Radnor Park Road
- FULHAM Brian Rose
49 Schubert Road SW15
- GLASGOW North - Ian Mooney
4 Dalroos Passage W1
- South - S Morris 4 Elphinstone
Street Glasgow SW1
- GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters
1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex
- HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker
36 Gilden Road NW5
- HARLOW Hugh Kerr
70 Joiners Field Harlow Essex
- HARROW Kevin Simms
56 Salisbury Road
- HAVERING Terry Ward
91 Heath Park Rd Gidea Pk
- HEMEL HEMPSTEAD
John Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane
- HORNSEY Chris Russell
131 Alexandra Park Rd N22
- HULL Dave Gate 90 Bristol Rd
- ILFORD Roger Richards
181 Richmond Road Ilford
- IPSWICH Brian Mulvey
104 Westbourne Road
- KILBURN John Sullivan
270 Elgin Avenue W9
- KINGSTON John Owen
4 Sandown Court Esher
- LAMBETH Dick North
85 Downton Avenue SW2
- LANCASTER Don Milligan
56 Norfolk Street
- LEICESTER Barry Thomas
39 Lower Hastings Street
- LEEDS Vince Hall
Flat 3 25 Bagby Rd Leeds 2
- LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss
82 Blackheath Road
- MANCHESTER - J Sutton
11a Rowan Ave Wallely Range M16
- Brian White 49b Crescent Park
Heaton Norris Stockport
- MERSEYSIDE Janice Humphrey
96 Princes Rd Liverpool 8
- MERTON Pam Kelsey
47 Richmond Avenue SW20
- NEWCASTLE Tony Corcoran
26 Lesbury Rd Newcastle 6
- NORTHAMPTON Mick Bunting
25 Witton Rd Duston
- NORWICH Miss J Clarke
81 Drayton Rd
- OXFORD Steve Bolchover
181 Ifley Road
- PORTSMOUTH Alan Sandham
48 Marmion Rd Southsea Hants
- POTTERIES Dave Stocking
5 Grosvenor Road Newcastle Staffs
- PRESTON Pauline Hill
Black-a-Marr Hotel Lancaster Rd
Preston Lancs
- READING Alan Wild
Windsor House Upper Redlands Rd
Reading RG1 5JL Bucks
- RICHMOND Nicky Landau
Flat 3 44 Church Rd
- SELBY John Charlton
12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks
- SHEFFIELD Rick Osborn
159a Rustlings Rd Sheffield S11 7AD
- SOUTHAMPTON Nigel Curry
31 Heatherdene Road
- STOCKPORT Geoff Hodgson
78a Forest Range M/C 19
- STOKE NEWINGTON
Mike McGrath 28 Manor Road N16
- SWANSEA Rose Bussey
11 Alexandra Terrace Brynhill
- TEESSIDE Phil Semp
72 Mersey Rd Redcar
- Rob Clay 33 Pasture Lane
Lazenby Teesside
- TOTTENHAM Mel Norris
80 Buller Road N17
- WANDSWORTH Mark Hutton
87 Broderick Road
Wandsworth Common SW17
- WATFORD Paul Russell
61 Carpenders Avenue
Carpenders Park
- WIGAN Ray Challinor
84 Whiteside Ave Hindley
- YORK Bill Kaye
20 Newton Terrace York
- VICTORIA Tony Dunne
14 Carlisle Mansions
Carlisle Place SW1

Centrax: help still needed

WE ARE pleased to inform you that a settlement of the outstanding issues at the Centrax factory was reached on Friday, 20 March, resulting in a general return to work taking place on Monday 23 March.

Over the past five months, our dispute has received continuous support on a nation-wide basis. Without such support it is unlikely that our efforts would have been successful.

I WAS SHOCKED and surprised to hear the Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers was giving £60,000 to the Labour Party's election fund. The best they can do for a shop worker is a basic of £13 5s 6d.

As they are being so free with their money I suggest they channel some of their generosity in another direction, where it belongs.

Other unions make contributions but most of them make sure their members get a decent basic and keep fighting for them. - B SCALES, Yorkshire.



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

Name _____

Address _____

Send to IS, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

Socialist Worker

GLASS WORKERS REVOLT OVER HOURS AND WAGES

SW Reporter

ST HELENS, Lancs.:- 9000 glass-workers — male and female — at Pilkington Brothers' factories are on strike for a £25 a week minimum wage for a 40 hour week.

It is the biggest strike in the firm's 144 years of business. The dispute includes workers from the sheet works, roll plate factory, Cowley Hill 'flat' plants, City Road and Ravenhead works and the Fibreglass and Triplex sectors.

Pilkington's factories at Pontypool, Doncaster and other towns have followed the St Helens' lead by coming out in support of the equal pay, hours and wages demand.

The glass industry has been one of the most profitable sectors of big business. In 1967, 'socialist' Lord Pilkington was the wealthiest shareholding director in Britain. He held £24m worth of shares apart from his other assets.

Since the war, wages at Pilkington's have lagged behind the rest of industry. Until recently, the firm refused to pay a shift allowance for weekend working.

Hailed

The ending of this anti-social behaviour was hailed as a great step forward by union leaders who have never backed any strike action until the present dispute flared up.

The strike was sparked off not by 'young hot-headed militants', as the local press claims, but by men of 50 years and more.

They have given 30 to 40 years of their lives working for Pilkington's. Their health has been ruined in bad conditions, breathing sulphur that burns out their lungs.

Many of them think they will be lucky to see their pensions. This makes them even more determined to fight for a decent wage now.

Recent massive council rent rises helped spark off the workers' revolt. Only 12 boroughs in Britain have worse social conditions than St Helens. 12½ per cent of its housing is defined as slums by the Labour Party.

The strength of the rank and file's feeling has convinced the shop stewards that they can win. With more and more factories supporting them, they could be right.

AEF men strike for union rights

IN A SECOND dispute in St Helens, AEF members at Crosby Springs have been fighting for trade union rights since the end of February.

The firm supplies springs to leading car manufacturers, including Ford, Vauxhall, Roots and BMC.

The strikers have received their cards through the post. The firm only recognised the union six months ago and it is determined to crush it by 'selective re-engagement' and slashing wages through re-timing of jobs without union agreement.

The strikers staged a march through St Helens last Saturday. Local Labour MP Leslie Spriggs was 'indisposed' and unable to see them.

Crosby are now employing scab labour, but the major car firms have blacked supplies of springs.

Donations are badly needed. Send to: G Gray, Convenor, 29 Raglan Street, St Helens, Lancs.

Popular Front?

THE POPULAR FRONT is alive and well and living in St Martin's Parish Church, Birmingham. On Sunday the church had a guest preacher, Mr Frank Watters, secretary of Birmingham Communist Party.

Comrade (or perhaps Reverend?) Watters called for unity between 'marxist' and Christians to fight racialism and the Springbok cricket tour. He also outlined the recent discussions on the continent between the earthly representatives of God and J V Stalin.



Metal Box engineers locked out for month

by Pete Branston

NEATH, South Wales.:- Victimisation of the shop stewards' committee at the local Metal Box factory has entered its fourth week.

The management has failed so far to blast its way through the workers' solidarity.

Over the years the company has been steadily turning the screw on the work force. While productivity and profits have risen sharply (Metal Box cleaned up a cool £11m last year) wages have crept up on average by a miserly 1s 9d an hour since 1964.

Labour relations in the plant are so bad that in September last year the company asked the Department of Employment and Productivity to investigate.

But it does not need Barbara Castle's experts to see what is wrong when, in typically high-handed fashion, the management deprived factory convenor Sam Jones of his office and all union facilities.

The shop floor immediately stopped work when they saw their representative chopped in this way. Management responded by removing the men's clocking-in cards and therefore locked them out.

Behind the apparent pettiness of the company's action is a much more dangerous motive — the rail-roading of a productivity deal which is worth thousands to the shareholders. In return, the shop floor have been offered a paltry 9d an hour

All the stops are being pulled out by the company. They are threatening redundancy and using smear tactics at specially called meetings of management and staff where only the company's point of view is allowed. And they are sending letters to workers in an attempt to weaken their solidarity.

The locked-out men are anxious to know whether the management will honour statutory holidays. The dispute has covered the Easter holiday and the workers want an assurance that, as the victims of a lock-out, they will receive holiday pay

A four-point plan for a return to work put by the stewards to the management and agreed to by the Engineering Union calls for:

1. Union recognition by management at all times.
2. Plant bargaining by shop stewards on behalf of members.
3. A wage increase without strings to maintain a falling standard of living.
4. Joint Industry Councils and statutory holidays to be honoured by management.

Workers at the 20 other Metal Box plants in Britain should support their brothers in South Wales by blacking components from Neath.

Metal Box, the third biggest manufacturer in the world and at present under investigation by the Monopolies Commission, must be shown that there is a price to be paid for this blatant disregard of basic trade union rights.

Donations and messages of support to: Sam Jones, 29 Walter Road, Neath.

NOTICES

KILBURN IS: Tues 14 April Spm Priory Tavern, Belsize Rd NW6, Ambuj Mukhurji; Coloured Workers in Britain.

How to Fight the Employers' Offensive: debate between Norman Atkinson, Labour MP for Tottenham and Roger Rosewell IS. Monday 20 April 7.30 pm. Devonshire Hill Library, Compton Crescent N17. Organised by Tottenham IS.

THE SPOKESMAN. Founded by Bertrand Russell. No 2, April, includes Russell on Lenin, My Lai and the Middle East; Sartre on Brazil; Topham on Wages; Smythe on Civil Liberties; Worsley on North Vietnam; Caldwell on American Foreign Policy; other articles, book reviews, news. Available from BRPF Publications, 45 Gentle Street, Nottingham. Price 4/3d post free.

Published by the International Socialists 6 Cottons Gdns London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd. (TU all departments) Registered with the Post Office. Annual subscription £2 10s.

Jenkins' Budget will not change workers' tax burden

by Lionel Sims

NEXT TUESDAY, Roy Jenkins will step out from no 11 Downing Street, hold that black box aloft and, after a tight-lipped smile to the cameramen, make his way to parliament to present the Budget.

The best he is likely to offer if you will excuse the word 'best' — will be to raise the limit at which incomes are exempt from paying taxes.

At present the limits are £4 18s a week for a single person and £7 4s a week for a married couple.

There are so many people living on miserably low incomes that if these limits are raised by only 16s, a further one million people will come in for tax exemption.

And that is all the Treasury boys will fork out to the many millions of people living at the lowest subsistence level in this country.

They do not receive the paltry benefits allowed because they do not know of them or because they will not put up with the sneering dispenser of charity at the labour exchange, or because of the 'wages stop'.

If you go sick or redundant (the modern word for unemployed, and previously earned less than the supplementary benefit level, the total amount of assistance is reduced so that it is not above the previous wage level.

One study of how the wages stop worked gave an example of a family with six children who had one quarter of the minimum National Assistance scale deducted for this reason.

The excuse is that no one will have an incentive to work if out of work benefits are bigger than wages at work.

The government prefers to blame workers for wanting to better their living conditions than employers for paying low wages.

Justice

But to the treasury, politicians and captains of industry, justice has a different colour. It is likely that under the guise of technical adjustments to the tax system in preparation for going decimal, the standard rates will be reduced a little for all incomes.

That sounds all right until you work out how both direct and indirect taxation work against wage earners and in favour of top-salary earners.

It may be true that income tax rises as incomes rise, but purchase tax and taxes on tobacco, drink and petrol apply equally to all income ranges. It is these indirect taxes that weigh so heavily on workers' budgets.

In 1968 a person who earned over £60 a week lost 36 per cent of it in taxes — exactly the same proportion as a family receiving £20 a week.

To see how it works, take as an example a one per cent reduction in

real taxation for all income ranges. The £60 a week man saves 12 shillings, while the £20 a week man gets only four shillings back. The higher income groups receive a greater concession for a round-the-board reduction in taxation than the lower income groups.

And they always will with the present set-up, where a family receiving £5 a week can pay 23 per cent of it in tax and a family receiving over £60 a week pays 36 per cent in tax. A 13 per cent rise in taxation for an 1100 per cent rise in income!

Only the property owners and the largest salary earners benefit from this double-barrelled set-up. The taxation system is on the side of these people alone.

One mistake we should not make is in complimenting the rich loafers with the cunning to construct this massive system of tax fiddles out of their own heads.

Instead of them shaping the economy, they react to the pressures of market competition. They are the robots of high finance. This can be seen from the graph.

Fell

It shows very clearly how taxation on profits and dividends fell from 46 per cent in 1950 to 30 per cent in 1968, while taxation on incomes rose from 20 per cent in 1950 to 35 per cent in 1968. The dotted line is based on statistics applying between 1961-8.

The total pre-tax profits of private and public corporations in 1968 was £10,000 million. If the tax on profits now was the same as in 1950 (instead, it is 16 per cent less), there would be a further £1,602 million in taxes raised from industry.

In the same way, the total income from wages and salaries in 1968 was £25,267 million. If the tax on incomes now was the same as in 1950 (instead it is 15 per cent more), there would be £3,790 million less for workers to pay in taxes.

That is a total 'saving' of almost £5,400 million.

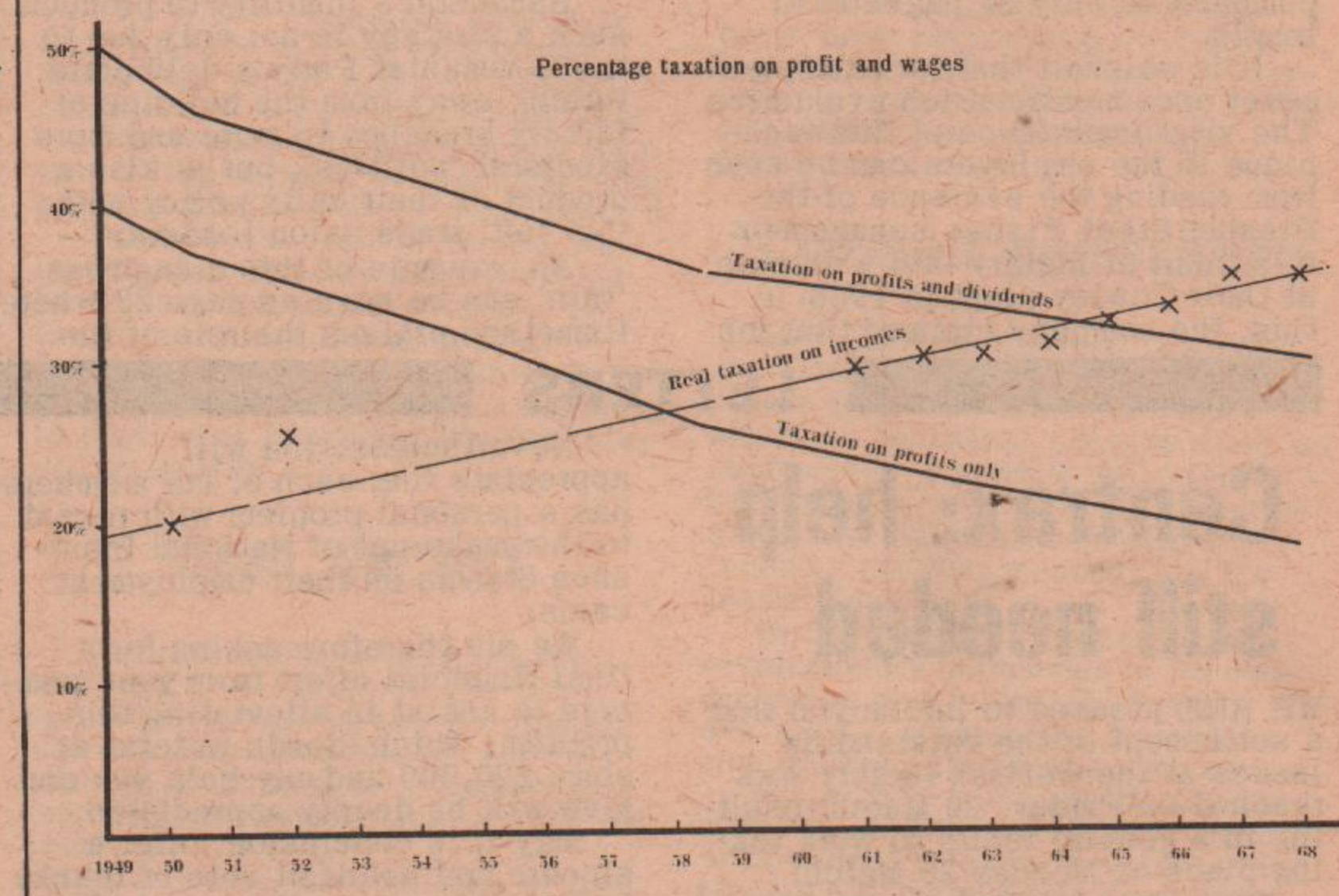
For those 10 million families living at the barest subsistence level, that would mean an extra £540 a year for every man, woman and child.

The overall conclusion to be drawn from the graph is quite clear. No matter which political party is in office it is profits which get the benefits and wages which pay the way.

This is the logic of market competition. While a small number of property owners own all the major industrial concerns, production is directed for profits.

All the hypocritical nonsense about 'wage explosions' and the 'national interest' fade into insignificance compared to what the graph reveals.

The moral is clear. While the government is pinned down in this pre-election period, get as much as you can.



Hull trawlermen out for 8 weeks — vote to fight on

HULL.:- 700 trawlermen voted unanimously last week to carry their strike into its eighth week.

The men are determined to fight to the end in spite of efforts by the owners to break their solidarity. The strikers are demanding a £20 a week basic wage and a closed shop.

The owners offered the ships'

engineers a £7 a week rise in an attempt to divide them from the deckhands. This was more than the strikers are demanding.

But the engineers unanimously rejected the offer, while the union, the Transport Workers, gave notice that it would bear the offer in mind in future negotiations.

The police have been giving the

owners every assistance on the picket line. So far, 20 men have been arrested and one man has been jailed for three months.

The union is calling for a government enquiry into the dispute. The owners, among the most backward and reactionary in the country, are understandably reluctant to accept such an enquiry.