

Workers' fight

3p

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HOW THE
BROCKWELL
PARK 3
WERE
FRAMED

FIGHT TO BLACK CHILE JUNTA

A MAJORITY of the 650 AUEW members working at the Greenock shipyard of Scott-Lithgow have refused to carry out the union's instruction to black all work for the Chilean Junta.

There are, besides the two submarines at Scott-Lithgow, two frigates at Yarrow's yard further up the Clyde. At present no work is going on on these after engineers walked off following the Union's blacking call.

SET-BACK

Still, the Scott-Lithgow decision is a serious set-back for the movement of solidarity with those struggling against the Chilean terror regime — worst of all, it is a set-back to those fighters themselves.

Behind this very bad decision is, of course, the threat of immediate large scale redundancies if the ships are not completed. It is an example of the way that capitalism thrusts workers' hands into the blood of their fellow workers, making them

PAUL DEAN

the accomplices of its crimes.

This set-back will strengthen the Junta in Chile as it will be announced as a vote of approval for the Junta's policies. Workers in Chile will not know about the threat of redundancy — and if they do, they will rank it pretty low compared with what they have to suffer at the hands of the fascists there.

The men's decision to go against the Union's instruction has been supported both by the local District Organiser, John McKee, and Scottish Executive member John Boyd. Boyd's hypocrisy knows no bounds. He says "The decision of our policy-making body is clearly not supported by the workers concerned, and it is the workers who are the union." And this from a man who time and again has refused to listen to the demands of the rank and file and refused to fight for an acceptance by the men of the Union instruction!

It must be borne in mind, though, that issuing instructions in a situation where the Union itself has carried out no campaign in its press or meetings, is bound to draw a negative response from workers who are tired of being fed with orders.

BLACKING

Despite this vote, the drive to extend the blacking must continue. Successes have certainly been registered in the past. Last year TASS members working at Westland Helicopters at Yeovil blacked work on helicopters for the South African government, while in January and February, Mersey dockers' blacking of arms for Chile forced the Tories to export behind the workers' backs.

As more orders are placed with British firms (one was placed last week with Francis Shaw's of Oldham) a greater effort must be made by the labour movement to campaign for a total black on all exports to Chile.

PORTUGAL'S 'LEFTS' JOIN SPINOLA'S "RESTORE ORDER" CABINET

THE appointments to the Portuguese cabinet made this week will surprise no one. The same formula that served de Gaulle so well in his post-World War 2 French government is repeated in Portugal now: Dr. Mario Soares, the Socialist leader, gets the Foreign Ministry, and another Socialist the Department for Colonial Affairs (re-named "Inter-territorial Affairs"); Communist Party leader Alvaro Cunhal is one of three Ministers without portfolio; Avelino Pacheco Goncalves, another Communist, has been given the Ministry of Labour.

This marks the highest point of collusion between the Portuguese Communist Party and the right wing military junta: a collusion expressed a few days ago by CP Central Committee member, Jose Magro's statement: "We want no provocation. Vive the armed forces. Vive Spinola!"

Glaring

The mass feeling and mobilisation have been cynically used by the Portuguese Stalinist bureaucracy to push the junta into accepting "leftists" into the Provisional Government. Now that they are in that government, these same "leftists" will do their level best to keep the workers' and peasants' movement in check. The calling off of the planned steelworkers' strike last week is a glaring example. This and other militant actions are seen simply as "provocations".

Even on the African question, always thought to be a major bone of contention between the right and left, there seems to be growing unanimity. Spinola seems to have moved away from the federalist solution he outlined in the book he wrote before the coup, but there are indications that the C.P. is moving away from its "independence now" position.

The British C.P.'s paper Morning Star now says that the "main task of the civilian provisional government (of which the CP is a part) will be to find a peaceful way out of the 13-year war against the African liberation forces."

BELFAST'S SHOTGUN STRIKE GETS LITTLE SUPPORT

The strike in the north of Ireland by Loyalist workers under the "umbrella" of the Ulster Workers Council is the latest move by the Orange extreme right to show the Westminster Government the groundswell of anti-Sunningdale strength. They are demanding a Northern Ireland government election.

The reason for the strike was the rejection by the Northern Ireland Assembly of a Loyalist anti-Sunningdale resolution. The response to the strike call, however, will have disappointed Craig, Paisley and the Unionists of their ilk. About 90% of workers went to work in spite of their call, and it was necessary to call on the para-military organisations to intimidate their fellow workers to get any semblance of a show of strength.

Ultra-right

To this end barricades manned by Tartan Gangs were set up throughout Belfast, though with little effect, and shipyard workers were threatened that their cars would be burned unless they drove them home.

Buses were also hi-jacked to prevent workers reaching their employment. In the power industry, where a large scale walk out seemed possible, an agreement was reached with the electricity authority to keep power at 60% of normal output.

The north now sees the bizarre spectacle of the ultra-right anti-trade unionist Craig in the leadership of a political general strike. At the same time the extremely non-militant, arch conservative Protestant workers are being called upon to do what they least want — to strike, and, in their eyes, put in jeopardy the one thing that they most of all want: secure employment.

It is this last factor that probably accounts for the apparent refusal by both Protestant and Catholic workers to bring the sectarian question into the factories — certainly it is not that the unions or the workers themselves are very progressive! Indeed, productivity has risen

markedly in the recent period in the north of Ireland.

Through this pressure, the anti-Sunningdale Loyalists hope to reduce the already token Council of Ireland to the mere shadow of a shadow. It is this, much more than the "power-sharing" agreement, that is the issue they hope to affect.

If, however, they succeed in forcing the Northern Ireland elections they want, it would very probably lead to an anti-power sharing majority in Stormont. Which is why the British Government certainly will not concede their demand for an election.

The logic of the situation is such that the Orange forces will either go on a full offensive — necessarily including a military confrontation — or else rapidly retreat, including on the strike action. Armed clashes are by no means unlikely: a decision for a full scale centralised offensive certainly IS unlikely.

The Orange dog barks, but the relationship with Britain is such that it usually stops short of biting.

This strike — insofar as is a strike and not the result of intimidation — is entirely reactionary and anti-working class. The British labour movement should condemn it unequivocally.

Witchhunt

The real nature of the Protestant right wing has been largely obscured by the British press. In order to help the Government placate these reactionaries it has conducted a real witchhunt against the Provisional IRA. With the "revelation" of an IRA "scorched earth civil war" plan, the witchhunt acquired a new scare-monger in chief: Harold Wilson.

The Labour leader's contribution to British "black propaganda" is part of the real contribution to sectarian violence by the British parliament.

ALEX YOUNG

Orange strongarm men behind reactionary strike



But what is the problem? Why not renounce all claims to the colonies with **withdraw the troops now?** What is this talk of "finding a peaceful way out"?

It is reported that Moscow is putting pressure on the Frelimo (Mozambique's liberation forces) to negotiate with Portugal before any undertaking is given that the

basis of the talks will be the complete and unconditional independence of the colonies. This kind of rpressure — exerted also on the Algerian NLF — is designed to give credibility to the bourgeois elements in the guerilla movement and eventually counterpose these to the real fighters for independence and socialism.

We reprint below extracts from "MOVE AS A COMMUNITY", Race Today's comprehensive account and analysis of the Brockwell Park jailings. The complete article, which appears in the June 1974 issue of Race Today, can be obtained from 184 Kings Cross Road, London N.1. (15p)

The Fair

THE Brockwell Park fair is a major event in the local calendar. Lambeth local authority planned a spectacular finale for last year's fair: at 9.30 in the evening of Saturday, 9th June 1973, they laid on an enormous firework display.

Horace Parkinson, a 19 year old youth worker at the Saint Mathews' youth club, lives with his parents and his brother, Linton, in a small, neat terraced house in Haycroft Road in Brixton. As the firework display was getting under way at the fair, Horace Parkinson was setting off for his evening out with his friends, Hubert Simpson and Alec Carty. The plan was to drive round in the Humber Sceptre to meet some girls, and then go on to a party in North London. As the car drove past the fair, the boys and a couple of girl friends decided to stop and check it out.

Robin Sterling had left for the fair much earlier. The 14 year old from Tulse Hill School finished his paper round that morning and picked up his weekly wages with an eager



Robin Sterling

anticipation. He was a small, quiet boy, keen on running and skating; a boy who went to bed at 9 every night, except Saturdays when he might be allowed to go down into Brixton for a film.

That night he left the house in Norbury with his two younger sisters, Carol and Maureen. His father, working for British Rail, was originally to have come and collected his family after the fair, but someone fell ill at work and Mr. Sterling ended up working a 16-hour shift that night.

When the fireworks were over, the three joined the crush heading for the Dulwich Road exit.

A few yards up the road at a fish and chip shop, a shoving and jostling broke out... a knife was drawn... pandemonium broke out: the crowd pressed around, while the stabbed boy's mate ran over to the fair to fetch help. Police Constable Derek Castle, who was on duty that night at the fair, went into the crowd and saw the stabbed youth lying on the ground: he was immediately joined by Detective Harry Tucker and Temporary Detective Constable Harper, who had been assigned to cover the fair in plain clothes.

Lloyd James was also at the fair that night. Lloyd is 13 years old. He was born in Jamaica and came over to live with his mother when he was 9. At the local primary school his teacher reported that he wouldn't take in his lessons and that she couldn't deal with him. He was transferred to the ILEA special school in North Kent and for two years he only saw his mother every fortnight. Then he was transferred back to an ESN school in Dulwich. He left school at 15, and did a number of different jobs.

In the evenings, Lloyd would get around Brixton with his friends, and he was soon well-known to the police and constantly picked up by them. He would tell his mother about

it, asking: "What chance do I have if I can't even go out on the streets? I don't do anything and they pick me up" Lloyd had already done three months in a remand home. He didn't want to go inside again.

The arrests

As the curious crowd pressed around the scene of the tragedy, the police felt themselves losing their grip. Castles pulled out his radio and called for help. Within thirty seconds, over a hundred policemen were speeding excitedly towards Brockwell Park. Harper and Tucker drew their truncheons and attempted to force the crowd back. But the more they pushed the front, the more people joined the throng behind.

At the front of that crowd was Lloyd James. The press of the curious behind him forced him towards the body of the injured man. He felt a hand in his face, told its owner to take it out, and he was back face-to-face with his old adversary, temporary Detective Constable Harper (in plain clothes), who had arrested him before. "How would you like to be nicked for assaulting a policeman in the course of his duty?" asked Harper. "Leave it alone Lloydie" said his mate, who was standing next to him, "He's looking for trouble".

Harper heard this exchange, grabbed hold of Lloyd James by his lapels and kneed him in the genitals. Lloyd, knowing just what was at stake if he got pulled in again, banged Harper

(better paid workers receive £14 per month); a reduction in hours; direct food supply to rail workers families; and decasualisation of the industry (there are 350,000 casual workers earning as little as £2.50 to £5.50 per month); and higher bonuses.

Negotiations had been progressing very slowly, with the Government offering certain concessions. But it was revealed some time before the strike date that Mrs. Ghandi had given orders for mass scale arrests "when negotiations break down". These arrests in fact took place the moment the unions decided on the strike, although they had not refused to continue negotiations. On the contrary, it has been the Congress Party government that has refused to negotiate... unless the strikers return to work.

Strike breaking is occurring on a large scale. Certain trains carrying grain and coal are reported to be keeping a fairly normal service. This has been made possible by the mobilisation of the equivalent of the "home guard", a great number of whom are rail workers. Soldiers have also been mobilised to support the strike breaking. Worst of all, the Congress Party-associated on rail union, which began by supporting the demands and the strike, has backed out and is helping the strike breaking.

But the arrests have called forth a tremendous wave of demonstrations which, following on from the food riots in Gujarat state and the

student strikes there, have further undermined the popular support for Indira Ghandi.

With the recurrent failures of economic planning, failure to meet agricultural — in particular grain — output targets, and with rising import prices on both grain and other commodities, the government finds itself in a sharpening inflationary crisis. Government workers have been hit first.

The Government's main response has been the resort to further repression. It is not only the 1,700,000 railway workers that are facing this. Students in Gujarat have been victimised, and the rising Dalit Panther movement, opposing the vicious discrimination against the caste of "untouchables" has been the victim of repeated police attacks.

There has been widespread criticism of the police. And in a recent statement the Union Home Minister referred to the changing role of the police and cited "maintenance of peace to ensure uninterrupted industrial and agricultural production" as their "new responsibilities". Not surprising, then, that the Indian right wing press has been gearing up to a "who rules?" campaign.

In this country, the Indian Workers Association has written an open letter to the National Union of Railwaymen, demanding that they protest at the treatment of their Indian brothers. British rail workers should put pressure on their unions to do this.

JACK PRICE

HOW THE BROCKWELL PARK JAILINGS WERE FRAMED

a good one and turned to run. But the crowd hemmed him in.

Harper had hold of him and was kicking him in the groin. Castles joined the fight. Together, they pushed him against the wall, punched him in the face, threw him to the ground, ruined his clothes. By now there were two officers sitting on his legs and body, while the other one banged his head repeatedly on the pavement. He was well and truly subdued.

Horace Parkinson didn't want any trouble. Leaving the fair, he walked towards the car, noticed the scuffling round the door, and saw Lloyd James, whom he knew, being punched and choked. Parkinson too was carried by the crowd, unable to get into the car. He had managed to get around to the back of the car when Castles waved his truncheon and lunged at him. Parkinson, who did weight lifting and judo in his spare time, did not retaliate. Instead, he walked around the other side of the car, opened the door and tried to get in. "Hold that one. Hold that one" shouted Castles. Parkinson felt himself dragged by his white jacket back through the crowd and face-to-face with Constable Castle. "If you struggle, you'll get it" he said, crashing down on his left arm with the truncheon.

Within minutes of Horace Parkinson's arrest, word had spread through the crowd. He was well known and popular locally. Some of the youths started fighting back: bottles began to fly through the air, stones, pennies and clods of earth were hurled in the general direction of the police. A small group ran back into Brockwell Park and onto the flat roofs of the toilets, and it was from here that a bottle felled Detective Harry Tucker with a blow to his head.

Robin Sterling, his sisters and three friends came out of the fair as the fight was getting under way. Bottles flew over their heads from the toilet roof. Carol and Maureen wanted to leave and go home. But before Robin could join them, two police officers came over. "That's one of them" said the younger of the two. "No it isn't" said the other, "But he'll do". By the minute, more police arrived. Some drew truncheons and pitched in with a will: eye witnesses recall parents shielding their youngsters from the sticks, boys dodging blows, at least three girls receiving hits on the arms and shoulders.

When the police van arrived at Brixton police station, the door opened and Sterling was dragged out by his hair. He fell to the ground and was kicked and dragged into the police station. Parkinson was hit forcefully on the head with a truncheon. They were all taken into the general office. Harper started to punch Lloyd James who fell to the ground. He continued to kick him.

Sterling was sobbing. "I never did anything, I never did anything". Castles shouted: "Nigger, did you throw bottles?" Sterling replied: "No" and Castles hit him with a truncheon until Sterling sobbed: "Yes, he had done it". Parkinson, who was semi-conscious, was kicked and beaten on the floor. Later he was visited in his cell by the police doctor who stitched the wound in his head. He didn't

administer a local anaesthetic or shave the wound.

When Horace's mother got there at about 11.30, she could hear a screaming coming from the corridor. With a shock of horror, she realised it was her boy. "No one's being beaten" an officer assured her. But she had recognised Horace's screams and it was a sound she will remember until she dies.



Horace Parkinson

Mrs. Sterling was told "There's no point in waiting" but was eventually allowed to see Robin. He was in a terrible state.

It was the next day before Lloyd James' mother heard of his arrest. She went to the police station and was told she would have to wait until Monday morning. "When I finally saw him his mouth was swollen, I could see dried blood in his nose and he was holding a hanky that was covered in blood. I asked him why he looked like that. He said he had been beaten both at the Park and at the station, and my heart was too full to say anything."

The three youths appeared at Camberwell Magistrates Court on Monday June 11 1973, represented by Rudy Narayan. The charges were as follows:

Horace Parkinson — Grievous bodily harm to Derek Castles and assaulting a police officer in the execution of his duty. Having in a public place an offensive weapon (a car jack).

Lloyd James — Grievous bodily harm on Christopher Harper and assault on a police officer in the execution of his duty.

Robin Sterling — Unlawful wounding of Christopher Harper. Unlawful wounding of Derek Castles. Assault causing grievous bodily harm to Tucker. Assault causing grievous bodily harm to Castles. Possessing an offensive weapon (a milk bottle). (The charge of the unlawful wounding of Harper was later dropped.)

The Trial

Life returned to a semblance of normality for all three defendants. All of them were content to leave the handling of their case to the solicitors. Each set of parents put absolute faith

in their son's innocence, and in the ability of Rudy Narayan and Zac Harazi, barrister and solicitor respectively, to handle the case.

Robin and Horace were easy going about their defence witnesses were being interviewed at the Brixton Neighbourhood Association with Courtney Laws and Zac Harazi, but most of them refused to come forward and sign their statements for fear of being victimised by the police. Many of the statements were confused.

The police, however, were better prepared. Much press office effort was put into publicising the police attempt at remodelling their community relations programmes, with remarkable cooperation from the local black elite. In November Rudy Narayan hosted Commander Marshall, Scotland Yard's new Community Relations chief, to a welcome party at the Coach and Horses in Brixton, while West Indian World greeted with pleasure the acceptance of half a dozen black police cadets into the force.

On March 4th 1974 the trial began at the Old Bailey before an all-white jury. It lasted for nine days. On the first day Horace Parkinson's barrister failed to appear and a substitute took over who was not briefed on the case. (This happened again on another day of the trial.)

The prosecution case was put effectively. Eighteen policemen gave evidence to the effect that a riot had broken out; that Lloyd James had attacked Harper and had to be forcefully restrained; that Horace Parkinson, in going to James' assistance, had hit Castles with a car jack, and that Robin Sterling was on the wall throwing bottles, two of which wounded Castles and Tucker. Vivid colour photographs of the wounds inflicted at the incident were exhibited.

Castles told the jury that the incident was the most terrifying he had ever been involved in during his 25 years service and that he had had to be prematurely retired from the police force because of his injuries. In fact, he was due for retirement anyway. He now works as a security officer.

The defence for Lloyd James was that he was acting in self-defence; that he had been attacked first, and that the police were lying. He gave details of his beating at the police station. His barrister accused the police of inciting the whole incident.

Sterling and Parkinson's defence was a denial of all charges. But the treatment they received at police hands was never brought up. Parkinson had a photograph of his wounded head which was never submitted — on the advice of the solicitor, presumably because it would 'tarnish his image'. They did not attack the policing. Emphasis was laid on the character of the boys. Unlike earlier trials of the Magrove Nine, the Metro Four and the Oval Four, the defence was played at a low key.

It took the jury just over two hours to find the three guilty. Judge Abdela then pronounced sentence of three years each upon them.

The defendants, their families and friends were stunned.

WELL PARK 3



Schools action

On March 20th, the first community meeting took place. Seventy people attended and a fund was launched to raise the £1,000 needed for an appeal. (£338 was raised from the meeting). Horace Parkinson's father told the meeting "I know my son is innocent. He is only 19, but he is taking it like a man. We are going to get him free, no matter what it costs or how long it takes."

On Wednesday 27th March the school population came onto the stage. A meeting called by the Tulse Hill Students' Collective was held. Over 70 school children from all schools in the area, aged from 9 to 17 years, came. They were told that Tulse Hill school had so far raised £100 in their school for the three and other school children were urged to do the same, to inform all pupils and friends of the facts of the case. From that meeting was formed the Black Students Action Collective.

Three days later, some 500 people, approximately half of them white, marched from Brockwell Park down Raiton Road and round Brixton. And on April 3rd, nearly 1,000 school pupils came out on strike. The majority were black, from schools in South London. But the National Union of School Students mobilised pupils from schools throughout London.

Questions

Robin Sterling is now in Ashford Remand Home, taking old telephones to pieces for the Post Office when he should be studying for 'O' Levels. Horace Parkinson is in Wormwood Scrubs, unable to study for the two exams he needs to become a youth worker. Lloyd James is in Wormwood Scrubs too, - worrying about the child he won't see for three years.

On the streets of Brixton, the students and the social organisers issue leaflets, appeal for witnesses, call demonstrations and put in the work leading up to the appeal. The Black Peoples' Defence Committee has been resuscitated. The police sit in the station, keeping a wary eye on the situation and study catalogues of riot control equipment. And the same people who run the community relations set-up are busy organising the campaign to get Rudy Narayan into the local council and from there to Parliament.

Some fundamental questions have been posed.

Firstly, there can be no doubt that the three people convicted from the Brockwell Park outburst are not guilty as charged. That night's activities represented a strong and collective response to the years of police activity and harassment that was a part of everybody's day-to-day experience. For each such incident that reaches the open air, there are a hundred private experiences with the police that are never publicised.

Secondly, the whole conduct of the defence has to be examined. We understand that barristers were changed several times during the actual course of the trial. That Arnold Rosen (Parkinson's defending barrister) did not appear at all on two days. That barristers were not briefed until the very last moment; that the defence solicitor himself was not present during most of the trial and was instead represented — at an Old Bailey trial of national importance — by three different people, among them a 19-year-old of undoubted competence but limited experience, and a 16-year-old boy fresh from school. That the defence produced a total of five witnesses while the police had more than eighteen.

The defence refused to challenge the police handling of the incident and did not produce their own photographic evidence of Horace Parkinson's head wound inflicted by a police truncheon; nor of Robin or Lloyd's injuries received at the hands of the police. The state emphasised the political aspects of the trial by banning observers from the public gallery, by referring to the state of black youth in Brixton, by playing on the hidden fears in the minds of the jury about black youth and what they would get up to if not firmly dealt with. The defence ignored the political aspects of the trial altogether and concentrated on the good character of two of the boys.

Good boys they may be, but that has never been a source of power with which to fight the state. That could only be drawn from the collective power that manifested itself at the fair.

Thus, while the legal aspects of the trial were half dealt with, the political aspect, the mobilisation in the community, was ignored. By not mentioning that Parkinson and Sterling were beaten up, the defence hoped to represent them as a junior part of the middle class community relations network and to exclude Lloyd James — a sacrifice who both sides felt was a badd'un — from this social

compact. It took a right wing judge to act as a leveller to this compact in giving each of the boys a three-year sentence. A social democratic judge would have recognised the scheme of things and given both the 'good' boys a sentence of work in the community and Lloyd James a prison sentence.



Lloyd James

Thirdly, the political activity of the established activists has to be examined. The social work activists, the youth club leaders and community liaison pleaders, were informed from the very first of the actual facts of the case. Yet when the day came to put forward the defence case a full nine months later, it was hardly there at all. Since then, the community relations network has been able to use the energy of the youth to recharge not only the campaign around the three, but also to put steam into the campaign to get Rudy Narayan onto the council. And around that has pinged any number of alliances, patronage and Tammany Hall politics and ticketing.

On the other hand, the results of the court hearing have brought thousands of youths into political activity for the first time in their lives, and the emergence of this force is a fruitful and positive sign. Certain of the youth workers have let the cat out of the bag by admitting that Lloyd, the street boy and hustler, is a block to the release of their friends. But the Black Students' Action Collective have mobilised around all three, aware of the dangers of excluding Lloyd James.

These student activists have reached whole new areas of political potential and stood by their brothers. To them goes the main credit for the pressure that has been put on.

AMBIGUITY AT CENTRE OF 'TROOPS OUT' CONFERENCE

The TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT conference on the role of the British Army in Ireland and its projected role in Britain was one of the first real tests of the potential of building a broad based mass campaign on the issue of calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

This makes it especially necessary to assess it critically.

Although the conference must be counted a success in that it attracted around 600 people,

some representing trades councils, trade union branches etc., no clear plans were laid for building a movement in Britain on the Irish question, though a further conference is planned which is supposed to do just that.

This is not to say that none of the contributions were of any value in outlining the Army's role and methods. Fred Halliday drew attention to the fact that British imperialism has been involved in 30 to 35 counter insurgency campaigns since 1945, and is still

fighting a war against guerillas in the Persian Gulf state of Oman. Despite claims in Parliament that British troops have left this region, the British Army has been involved since 1965 in what it calls 're-settling' large sections of the mountain population by destroying their crops, animals and water supplies. In Oman, ex-SAS men are working as mercenaries under the control of British officers, liaising with the local troops they have trained.

Eamonn McCann gave a clear description of the role of the media in moulding working class views of the Irish situation, not simply by distorting events but also by maintaining a wall of silence on those issues and events which they feel might embarrass the government or Army.

He cited as an example the fact that two London newspapers had sworn affidavits to the effect that an SDLP member of the present Northern Ireland Executive had tried to persuade the Official Republicans in 1972 to join in the Provisionals' bombing campaign, and had offered to provide the necessary equipment. The papers were withholding the story because the man, Ivan Cooper, now spends much of his time denouncing the Republican Army.

VIVID

There were two sessions on the Army's methods and technology, in which the speakers showed how these methods were determined by the political situation. Rubber bullets and CS gas are two techniques chosen for their ability to control crowds without doing sufficient physical damage to cause a wave of outrage as occurred after the Bloody Sunday shootings.

There was also a report by Bridie Dodds, a housewife from Andersonstown, who presented a vivid picture of what it means to live under the British Army, and the everyday forms of resistance of the Catholic population.

All these contributions were valuable in giving information on the past, present and future likely role of the British Army. However, given the present size and influence of the Troops Out Movement it is unlikely that most of the audience would have attended had they not already known most of this. What was needed, above all, was a political perspective for work in Britain and an analysis of the struggle in Ireland.

But while there was agreement in general on what the troops were doing, it was — as was to be expected — the campaign of the IRA that divided the audience.

This was bound to happen, since the Troops Out Movement takes no position on the anti-imperialist struggle — a fact which emasculates it politically from the outset and reduces it to the ridiculous when faced with the question "which side are you on?"

SECRETS

This conference was most to blame where it did its level best to evade political issues. In the workshops, for instance, which followed the main speeches, there was not one devoted to political appraisal of the struggle here or in Ireland.

The only contribution by a main speaker at a full session which attempted a political analysis was that of Gery Lawless of the IMG National Committee. An utterly absurd analysis. Obviously taking Vietnam as a model, he claimed that Britain was now embarking on a campaign of "Ulsterisation". This could only mean that Britain is now prepared to throw its full weight behind a renewed Protestant supremacist dictatorship, which is the only "Ulsterisation" open to it apart from that version of "Ulsterisation" expressed in power sharing and Sunningdale. And, since he presented it all as a "state secret", one can only conclude he meant the former, the latter being new to nobody!

Only the last contribution, by Mike Cooley of the AUEW (TASS) could be said to be the speech of a revolutionary, openly siding with the enemies of the British ruling class in Ireland.

Bruce Robinson

Workers Fight Statement on the Troops Out Movement

THERE ARE only two possible alternatives in Northern Ireland now.

Either the Republicans will win, and Ireland be reunited according to the wishes of the vast majority of her people, with as much autonomy for the Orange people as is compatible with the rights of the majority.

Or the British Government will be allowed to bludgeon the Northern Ireland Catholics into submission to Westminster and the new 'Stormont'.

The first is the only conceivable solution. The other would be a reactionary holding operation. It would be followed in due time, after a period of recuperation, by another rising of the republican people. Ireland's centuries-long struggle for freedom is a series of wars of revolt, each one being crushed by 'force and fraud', but only for a while. East defeat has been followed by a new beginning — and a new revolt. "We shall rise again" became the way in which Republicanism summed up its history and asserted its determination that (in the words of the great Republican Patrick Pearse) "Ireland unfree shall never be at peace".

Let no-one be under any illusions about that. Let no-one, horror-stricken, mumble about peace. Those who would bring real peace to Ireland must aid the Republicans to victory.

There can be neither peace nor freedom while the puppet Northern Ireland state exists. That state imprisons against their will a Catholic minority bigger as a proportion of the 6-County population than would be all the Protestants in a united Ireland. The Northern Ireland state is totally artificial, the result of manipulation by Britain of divisions amongst the Irish people, for her own ends. The argument that Northern Ireland must remain in existence until a majority of its people want otherwise is sham democracy. It is preposterous because the state is artificial and the majority completely arbitrary.

Ireland, 32 counties, is the unit for majorities and minorities, not an artificially chosen 6 counties set up and protected as a British puppet state.

Any movement based solely on a simple 'Troops Out' call is hampered by ambiguity. Logically it must take sides. What happens when the troops are withdrawn? The bourgeois press says there will be a bloodbath of crazy sectarian killing. Either we explain that there is some purpose in the struggle now going on, and urge people to take sides. Or else we are left to say "let there be a bloodbath".

To call for the withdrawal of troops is either 'advice' to the Government to oblige and pull them out, or an understanding that they will have to be driven out — and therefore that the job of solidarity demands an explicit endorsement of those who are fighting to get them out — that is, the IRA.

To oppose internment and force feeding also demands more than mere liberal and pacifist protest. Most workers know that there is an IRA 'campaign of violence', that is, a military campaign. They know that it is impossible, given its support in the Catholic community, to suppress the IRA according to normal peacetime laws (even those of Northern Ireland). Such workers will only be won against internment, and against the British Army, if they are convinced of the justice of the IRA case. They will only be convinced by an argument that unambiguously takes sides.

There is a mass 'troops out' feeling in Britain. But the Troops Out Movement is not anywhere near being a mass movement. Why the gap between the mass feeling and the organised movement?

It is because much of the 'Troops Out' feeling is not anti-imperialist even in a confused way — but pro-imperialist, even racist: "Get the troops out and drop an atom bomb on Ireland". That is why analogies with the 'Troops out of Vietnam' movement in the USA are superficial. (For instance, the level of casualties is totally different, and there is not a conscript army.) That is why most of the people at present favouring 'Troops Out' cannot be brought into struggle against the government to get those troops out unless and until the basis on which they favour 'troops out' is changed.

A mass Troops Out Movement in Britain would certainly be a tremendous aid to the Irish revolt. (Within such a movement, of course, it would still be the duty of revolutionaries to fight for a solidarity position.) But at present, what are the facts? The forces organised by the T.O.M. are not qualitatively bigger than those organised by the old Anti Internment League. In essence, the T.O.M. at present is a propaganda grouping of people who mainly, in private, favour a solidarity position, but who publicly pretend to be a 'broad' movement.

That is the fact. Of course, while recognising it, we will fight to change it. We will work — and have worked — to build Troops Out groups in areas where any mass Troops Out Movement, if it does emerge, will have the most favourable conditions for growth. We do not counterpose solidarity to 'Troops Out'. But we still argue that the T.O.M. must find its way forward along a solidarity position.

If the T.O.M. is to do its job properly, it must take up every case of imperialist brutality and use it to reinforce the arguments for Britain getting out of Ireland.

A proposal at a London T.O.M. meeting that T.O.M. should take up the question of the Republican hunger strikers was opposed on the grounds that the question of the political prisoners could not be separated from the question of solidarity — and that the T.O.M. had to remain a 'broad' movement, not tied to a solidarity position. There was no T.O.M. representation on the large London demonstration for the hunger strikers on the International Day of Solidarity, April 28th. The contradictions involved in rejecting a solidarity position could scarcely be more clearly — and grimly — manifested.

The proposal to take up the Lennon affair and work for an inquiry is an excellent proposal. A campaign must be launched throughout the labour movement for sponsorships for this inquiry. However, here again, the line of avoiding the central question leaves its mark. To expose 'agent provocateur' activity is useful. But the key question is the question of what the British Army as a whole is doing.

Most people recognise that corruption and malpractice exist in the British police force. At the same time, most people consider that the fundamental role of the police force is to keep the peace. Likewise, people may very well recognise 'dirty tricks' accompanying British Army activity in Ireland without ceasing to see that activity as fundamentally 'peace-keeping'. The task of T.O.M. should be to go forward from the level of exposing 'dirty tricks' to the level of exposing the whole activity of the British Army in Ireland.

LOOP LINE STEWARDS FIGHT FOR RIGHTS

NUTTALLS, the firm employed by Merseyside Transport Passenger Executive to build the Loop Line under Liverpool, are refusing to recognise the stewards on the job. The men, members of the T&GWU, have retaliated by going on strike.

The stoppage began on 23rd April and now all 300 men are involved. The company is still refusing to negotiate.

Nuttalls can well afford to hold out in this their second attempt to smash union organisation on the Loop Line. Profits in 1973 were trebled and current assets stand at £3,400,000. Last December in the first attempt to smash the union, 20 men were sacked (see WF35).

The issue was taken to a conciliation board and the men

lost. Since then, another confrontation has been building up. The tribunal recommended 'better industrial relations'. The result was, as one man now sees it, "This conciliation board put the pistol in their hands". The 'pistol' has two barrels — increased harassment and worsening conditions.

Tunnel foreman Ken Trice, referring to strike committee chairman Terry O'Neill, has commented "Sending him up (to negotiate) is just like holding a red rag to a bull." Trice has refused to negotiate with O'Neill, a practice repeated by management with stewards on the other four Loop Line sites.

What is more, the stewards have been subjected to constant

abuse and harassment, like having two and a half hours stopped off their pay (in one day!) for time spent on union business.

'Normal' harassment for everyone is being put above ground on less pay if you are a "half-timer", that is, anyone who can't come in on a Sunday or who misses time during the week — including anyone who chooses to stick by the 5am to 6pm site agreement.

The fight for the recognition of

the stewards and against such harassment is all the more important because of the appalling conditions on the Loop Line. The success of management in sacking 20 men in December led to the worsening of already bad conditions. Before, there'd been breaks above ground — some respite from working nearly 100 feet underground in a wet, dangerous tunnel; wearing a mask to keep out the concrete dust and plastered with drying

concrete. Now the men are expected to have all their breaks underground. There is no canteen and, as one man put it, "the tunnel is the toilet." And this is when the men are working often over 12 hours a day.

Even above ground, the canteen is poor and rat-infested. One wash-basin works on the Central Station site. For all this, a man might earn the princely sum of £45 for a 52-hour week.

So, in addition to recognition of stewards and the ending of harassment, the men are demanding better conditions including breaks above ground, a decent canteen, toilet and showers, and improved bonus of £1 an hour.

PUBLICITY

So far, the struggle has had little publicity, the local Daily Post and Echo simply refusing to print the men's case, though they've been along 6 times to inform them of this case.

The T&GWU District Committee is in favour of making it official, but the men have been told that it must be confirmed by the EC in London. Support from other workers is beginning to come in, but is so far confined to Merseyside. Wider support is needed for this fight for the recognition of stewards. Messages of support and donations to: Nuttalls Shop Stewards Committee, T&GWU, 37 Islington, Liverpool L3 8EQ.

CYNTHIA BALDRY



Picket duty at Central Station site

Teesside steelmen put in big claim

AT a meeting at Lackenby (Teesside) Steel works Shops and Services Allied Crafts, workers voted by an over two-thirds majority to put in a claim for a £10 wage rise. They have threatened to walk out in two weeks if management do not meet this offer.

This is in answer to management's suggestion that all North East craftsmen should be on a consolidated rate that would have included a Phase 2 scale productivity deal that various sections of the North East have been rejecting for over three years. The decision at this shops and services meeting, the most 'conservative' shops in Lackenby, will certainly be endorsed by the other sections, the mills, BOSS plant, and Concast.

At present right-wing AUEW leader Boyd and his henchmen who preside over the steelworkers' craftsmen's negotiations are prepared to concede to management that the men should just get what British

Steel are offering.

If the whole of the North East get together on this claim and tell Boyd where to get off, victory will be easily in their grasp. If this unity is not achieved it will be a long and bitter fight.

Tony Duffy

NUT stall on ballot

SUNDAY 12th May was the day the National Union of Teachers Executive Committee should have announced the result of the London teachers strike ballot.

There was one problem. They did not. Under the guise of "insufficient time to analyse the results", they have effectively halted any action on the claim for an increased London allowance.

The ballot itself was organised to confuse. The Executive gave teachers a choice of strike action for one day, for two weeks, or indefinitely, and recommended a 'yes' vote on all three. Thus, the Executive could avoid a clear outcome to the ballot, and at best it could get away with only token action.

Distribution and collection of voting slips was also chaotic.

The Executive has its next meeting on Thursday May 23rd. The deadline the Executive put on strike action is May 31st (the last day for resignations to be in). Between these two dates many London schools are on half term holiday. It will not take a maths teacher to work out how many striking days left.

The strike action must go ahead, deadline or no deadline. Resentment among teachers over the London allowance has been building up for two years now, and the full £350 claim must be won.

Wandsworth NUT has said that "if a strike is not called, they will start a campaign to totally boycott exams in London". Haringey NUT, at a Special General Meeting on Tuesday 14th May, decided unanimously to lobby the Executive meeting on the 23rd.

Clive Bane

GRANTS UP BUT SYSTEM STAYS

Reg Prentice's announcement that student grants will go up nearly 25 will be welcome news to the thousands of students whose real standard of living has declined dramatically over the last few years.

The new levels are: London students' grants will rise from £520 maximum to £665; for those living at home £290 to £375; for students elsewhere, £585 maximum to £605. The biggest increase is in the married students' grant, from £295 to £475. This corrects a long-standing anomaly.

The amounts scarcely cover the rate prices are rising; but the most important shortcoming is the fact that the discretionary awards system remains, as does the means test basis for all awards.

J.P.

ASTMS stifled by bureaucracy

AT the annual conference of the Association of Scientific, Technical, and Managerial Staffs (12th/14th May), the slogan over the platform read "Free collective bargaining is a democratic must".

What about Phase 3, then? What about the National Industrial Relations Court? What about the Shrewsbury 24? No strategy was decided. Clive Jenkins said he "did not think the social compact meant wage restraint". Michael Foot, speaking on the first afternoon,

said that he wanted as much as anyone to get rid of Phase 3, but it could not be done yet because of the explosion which would follow; he wanted as much as anyone to get rid of the Industrial Relations Act, but first there had to be machinery to replace it. The conference applauded.

The slogan itself is evasive; one may fight the government for higher wages, or one may give in to it, but to hope for "free" bargaining is to dream.

Yet the ASTMS National Executive is not particularly right-wing. Seven members of the Communist Party sit on the Executive, and it puts out many left wing statements; it opposes incomes policy, it de-registered under the Industrial Relations Act, it gave money to the miners,

HEALEY WOOS C.B.I.

IN a calculated snub to the whole of the labour movement, Chancellor of the Exchequer Denis Healey, not content with disregard of Conference decisions, met the Confederation of British Industry in the plush surroundings of the Hilton Hotel to assure them that Labour meant no harm.

At the beginning of the meeting, CBI president Sir Michael Clapham whined "We hope that you can assure that Her Majesty's Government has no intention of destroying the private sector or encouraging its decay".

To this, Healey, the 'socialist' spaniel at Clapham's side, leapt up and declared "we want a private sector which is vigorous, alert, imaginative — and profitable. I am certain that this is your purpose too. Provided we remain united by this objective, I believe we can work together".

No talk of nationalisation! None of the election phrases about soaking the rich! Only this: "The investor must be satisfied that he will receive an adequate return on the capital he invests, and this return must be judged against the prospects for inflation."

"I know we may not always agree on what constitutes a sufficient return but at least no-one now believes that profit is a dirty word (!), if profit is honestly earned and put to proper social use." He then went on to define what this "proper social use" is: "I am sure that you will not complain if we do what we can to ensure that profits are ploughed back into industry, which produced them, in order to maximise our possibilities for growth. Too much industrial profit has found its way instead into financial and property speculation."

NURSES READY TO STRIKE

NURSES have already staged short walkouts and strikes of one or two hours' length in Huddersfield, Liverpool, and Scotland. Further walkouts and demonstrations are planned in all areas. At the moment skeleton staff are left behind to cover for those nurses on strike, but even this could change if nurses see the need for further strike action.

FRAGILE

The staff side of the Nurses' Whitley Council have rejected the offer of £18million from Foot, seeing that it was designed to split the nurses and cut back on the militancy. This rejection created a fragile unity between the different union delegates. But now the various unions — RCN, NALGO, COHSE, NUPE, T&G, and G&M — all have different ideas on the way forward. RCN has put forward the idea of a mass resignation, with the nurses then joining 'agencies' and forcing the National Health Service to pay a higher wage to the nurses. NUPE has proposed a joint campaign, while COHSE have a motion from their Scottish area calling for a national ballot on strike action.

it is usually quick to make disputes official.

The gap between the living and work conditions of the union officials and those of the people they represent is less in ASTMS than in other unions, though it still exists.

But doing things for the members, instead of them rather than by their mandate, becomes a way of life — officials make decisions among themselves and send advice from the members. Many wage settlements beyond Phase 3 limits have been achieved

This division reflects the recent campaigns carried out by the different unions to boost their respective memberships among nurses.

workers' fight

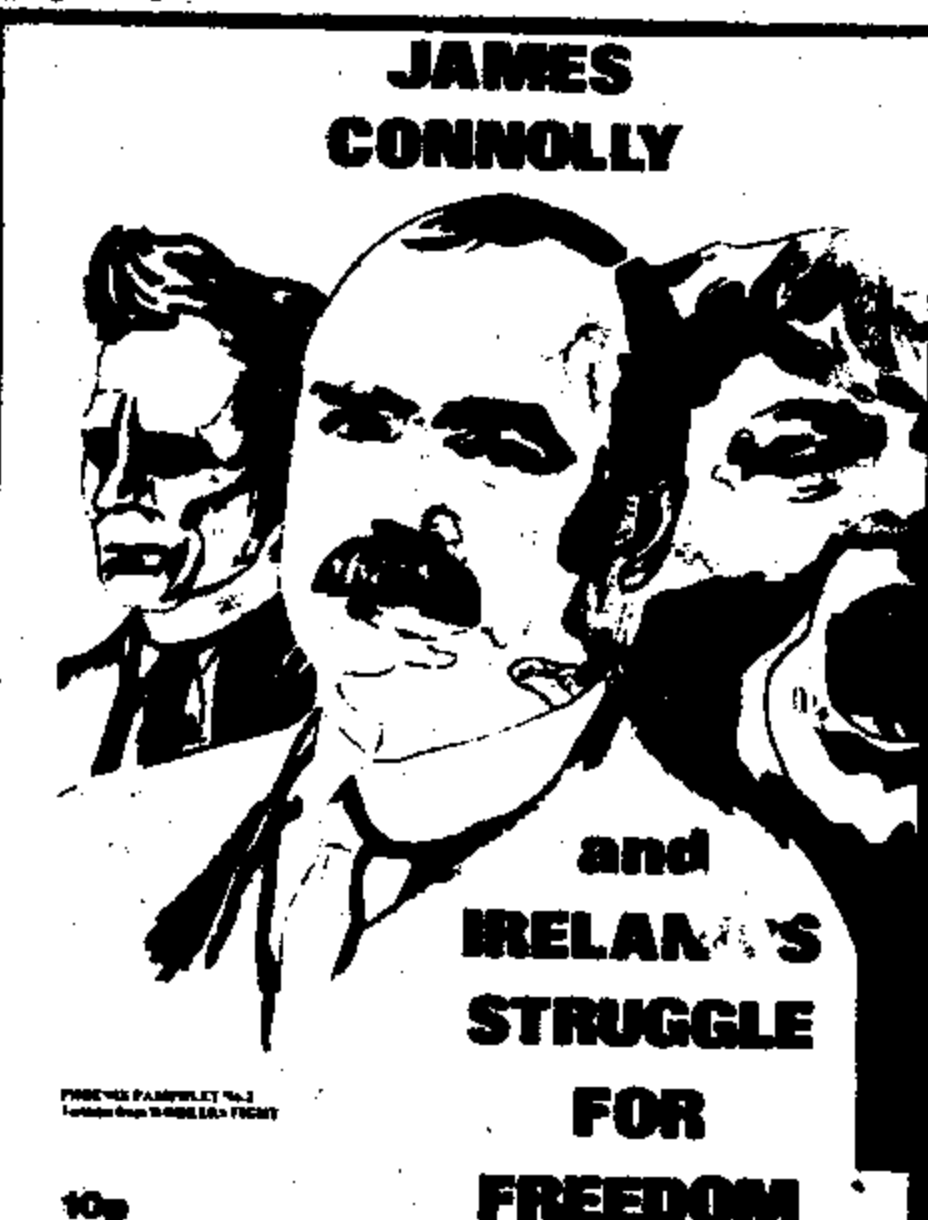
Public Meeting

"Why Socialists should support Ireland's struggle for freedom"

Speakers
Finbar O'Doherty
Fran Brodie

8pm Thurs 23rd May

CONWAY HALL
RED LION SQ.
Nearest tube Holborn



10p plus 5p postage, from 98 Gifford Street, London N.1

Liverpool W.F. forum: Paul Barker on The Labour Party. 8pm Wed. May 29th (not 22nd as stated last week). Stanley House, Upper Parliament St.

RELEASE

PAT

ARROWSMITH!

ON Sunday 12th May, a small demonstration left Finsbury Park and marched to Holloway Prison.

The demonstration demanded the release of pacifist anti-war activist Pat Arrowsmith, who had been arrested on two charges under the Incitement to Disaffection Act, 1934. One charge was that on September 22 last year she had "maliciously and advisedly endeavoured to seduce from the allegiance of the Queen a serving member of HM Forces". The second was that she had possessed a document, the dissemination of which would constitute an offence under the above charge.

The document in question advises soldiers thinking of deserting how best to go about it.

On the first day of her trial, Monday 13th, fellow members of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign distributed a leaflet pleading Pat's case outside the court.

For this one of the demonstrators was arrested, and fined £25 for contempt of court — although the judge's argument that the jury might have been influenced by the leaflets was shown to be nonsense when it was pointed out that the leaflets had been distributed only after the jury had entered the court.

The judge in this case and the main case against Pat Arrowsmith is the same vampire as sentenced the Brockwell Three (see middle pages), Judge Abdala.

NALGO: step by step... backwards

IN a surprising move the leaders of the National Association of Local Government Workers seem to have reactivated the campaign for a higher London weighting.

The open failure of the talks between the NALGO leadership and the TUC, acting on behalf of Michael Foot, plus the growing militancy of rank and file, forced the NEC of NALGO to reconsider the campaign.

The strategy however, does not seem one for victory. Faced with an expenditure of almost £40,000 on strike pay for the Islington and London Borough Joint Computers Committee strikers, the NALGO leadership feel they must cut back on money flowing out. It may not be a good investment now!

The immediate moves are to: one, withdraw some sections of Islington NALGO from action; two, increase selective action in another eight boroughs including Wandsworth, Newnham, and Redbridge; and, three, to prevent the militant areas like Tower Hamlets from coming out.

Abused

Even with this tremendous step backwards, NALGO will still be involved in struggle. There is an overtime ban, and a ban on agency staff still in force. Many members are sick at the way the union has been abused by the leadership and this Labour government.

They feel that NALGO could well have become a real union over the London weighting fight. Certainly the militant action of sections like Islington have inspired support from other areas — Liverpool, for example — for the London struggle and for the national pay claim.

T.R.