

Socialist Worker

WEEKLY PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

STOP

THIS

RETREAT

THE BIG BATTALIONS of the trade union movement, representing millions of organised working people, are in full retreat before the onslaught of the Tory government and the employers. Hard on the heels of the TUC's surrender to the Industrial Relations Act comes the decision by the 1¼m-strong Transport Workers to pay the £55,000 fine imposed by the Industrial Relations Court over the blacking of container lorries by Liverpool dockers.

The union leaders have backed down from a confrontation with a government hell-bent on destroying the organisations and the living standards of working people in order to boost the profits of the Tories' political paymasters. If the TUC had called for industrial action in support of the TGWU and the dockers then the anti-union laws could have been swept aside and the future of the government itself brought into question.

Instead, the union leaders have now given the green light to the bosses to fine, bully and threaten every legitimate action taken by workers in defence of their rights and in pursuit of improved wages to keep abreast of soaring prices and rents.

Unless stopped, the retreat can lead to total rout. The logical outcome of paying fines will be full recognition of the Act, complete with registration and 'agency shop' agreements.

But one militant section of the movement is standing firm in its determination to fight the Tory anti-union legislation and to support what is still official TUC policy towards the Industrial Relations Act.

On Monday the conference of TASS, the technical and supervisory section of the amalgamated engineering union, voted unanimously to defy the NIRC and to refuse to pay any fines it may impose on the union.

Last Friday, the NIRC ruled that TASS was committing an 'unfair industrial practice' in the dispute at C A Parsons engineering works on Tyneside, where it is defending its closed shop agreement.

Following the TASS decision, President Mike Cooley, in an exclusive interview with Socialist Worker, said:—

It has taken years of painstaking work to build the democracy of this union. Central to it is that members decide the policies and the executive committee operates them.

It is better to be held in contempt of



COOLEY: We fight on

court than to be held in contempt of the members. We should not order the men back at Parsons and we should not abide by the NIRC injunction.

The policies we are pursuing at Parsons are the policies of our section of the amalgamated engineering union, of the AUEW itself and of the TUC. I now expect and demand that the TUC be recalled to mobilise support for us.

In the meantime we should ignore the

injunction, fight on and all the best elements of the trade union movement will support us.

The TASS declaration of war on the Tories and their laws shows the path that must be followed by all sections of the trade union movement. The leaders can be forced into action only if there is mass mobilisation at rank and file level.

The demands raised on this page for intensifying the fight against the Industrial Relations Act can be realised if workers in every union and every industry organise now in their branches and their workplaces, through mass action and resolutions, to put an end to the shabby retreat by the leaders of the unions.

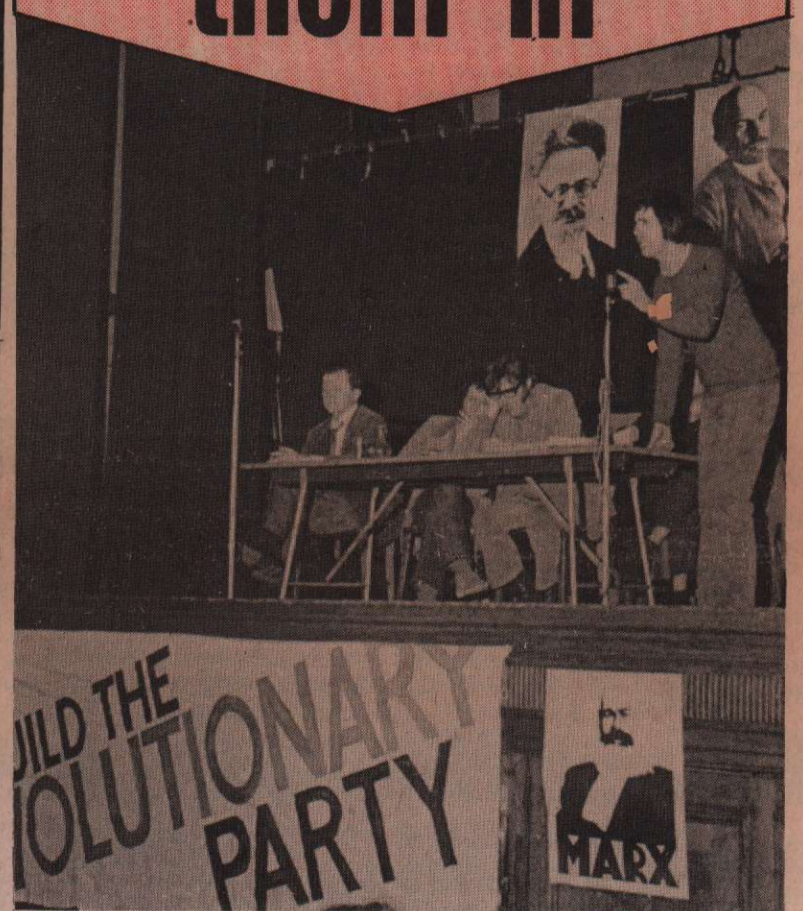
The time for talking is over. There must be a showdown with all those prepared to compromise with the most vicious and reactionary government for a lifetime. If the Tories are successful today then the door will open for even greater attacks on working-class rights and organisation tomorrow.

That is why, underlying the present upsurge of militancy, there must be a growing political awareness of the need to build a movement dedicated not just to defeating the Tories but the entire system they represent, a system based on legalised robbery and exploitation.

FORCE UNION LEADERS TO FIGHT TORIES

- Recall the TUC immediately.
- Expel all registered unions.
- Kick the right wing off the General Council.
- Boycott the NIRC and all government agencies.
- No talks with the Tories.
- Declare all strikes official—official support for blacking and all sympathy action. Make union leaders responsible for members' actions.
- Mobilise industrial action to support any unions fined by the NIRC. Hit the bosses where it hurts—£150m is produced every working day. Take away the bosses' slice by strike action and they will soon stop the fines.

May Day rally packs them in



More than 800 enthusiastic people packed Islington Town Hall on Monday for the International Socialists' May Day rally. Platform shows (left to right): Manchester power worker Wally Preston, Eamonn McCann, Jim Higgins and Paul Foot (speaking). 22 people applied to join IS.

Vietnam: US facing total defeat

THE MOST POWERFUL military power in the world is having to face the prospect of imminent defeat at the hands of the Vietnamese people. That is the significance of the series of towns that have fallen to the North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front forces over the last week.

It now seems certain that South Vietnam will be literally divided in two within a very short time and Saigon cut off from the main population and food producing areas.

Even the British press is now being forced to admit that Nixon's 'Vietnamisation' policy can not work. The fact is that the mass of conscripts who make up the South Vietnam army are not prepared to risk their lives fighting to defend the puppet government in Saigon. They prefer either to avoid battle or to go over to the liberation forces.

Reports indicate that at least one South Vietnamese regiment has shot its senior officer and surrendered to the liberation forces without fighting at all. Other sections of the army have disbanded the moment they had the opportunity. And it is not only the rank and file who are running away.

The South Vietnamese commanders in Quang Tri and the American 'advisors' who give them orders, fled the city to save their own lives, while leaving their men to 'work their own way out as best they can', as one of the American officers put it.

But the Americans are not giving up without a last ditch stand. In a desperate attempt to stem the flood of defeat, Nixon has now sent the biggest concentration of naval and air power to the area since the war began a decade ago.

And he is threatening still more vicious bombing of the North in an attempt to blackmail its leaders into urging peace on American terms in the South. He also hopes, by diplomatic manoeuvring, to get the Russians and the Chinese to help him out of his difficulties.

In the South the massive B52 bombers are being used to create murderous devastation in areas from which the pro-Saigon forces have retreated.

There is only one way in which this horror will be ended. That is through a rapid defeat of those responsible for it at the hands of the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front.

HOW TUC SOLD THE PASS: CENTRE PAGES

WORLD NEWS

BRIEFING

SHEIK MUJIB SHIFTS TOWARDS THE RIGHT

LAST WEEK I wrote of the poverty and corruption that marks the newly independent state of Bangladesh. Unfortunately the left is in no position to take advantage of the discontent.

Suspected leftists are being weeded out of the new armed forces. Anyone and everyone, including long loyal Awami League supporters, can be accused of being 'miscreants', collaborators with the West Pakistan military. Many private scores and petty jealousies are being settled with a judicious accusation.

To spike left-wing guns, the situation also demands some left-wing gestures, flamboyant and empty. On 16 April there was a major demonstration in the main square of Dacca against the Vietnam War, but that was for middle-class consumption.

NO CHANGE

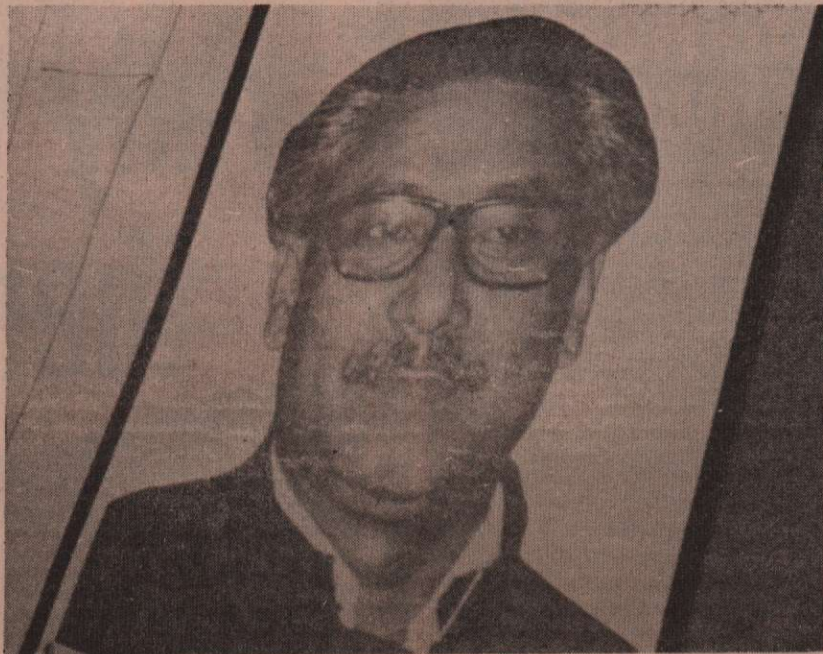
For the peasants there is a supposedly radical land reform. Each family may have no more than 67 acres of land.

No matter that 67 acres was laid down as the family limit by the Muslim League's anti-landlord Act of 1950. Then as now, the regime says nothing about the most crying abuse, share-cropping.

Sheik Mujib's land reform will change virtually nothing. The rural landlords who provide one of the main bases of support for the Awami League may rejoice and thank Allah for preserving their share-croppers.

All this adds up to something like a revolutionary situation, particularly since a significant section of the

John Ashdown reports from inside Bangladesh



A poster of Mujib: note the slant rightwards

people have just been through the scarring experience of civil war. They know they do not have to go back to the old regime, even if the mafia are now Bengali instead of Punjabi.

But a revolutionary situation demands a revolutionary party. This does not exist, and therefore there is no real alternative to the present situation.

The fragmentary left is unable, or unwilling, to exploit the weakness of the regime—and in a year's time the

regime will be much stronger. Mujibur Rahman may be a Kerensky—but there are no Bolsheviks waiting in the wings.

Indeed, the left has scarcely learnt the lessons of the past two years. It remains set on a perspective of rural guerrilla warfare—which is just the other side of the coin of orthodox parliamentary politics. It is not showing any urgency in trying to organise the angry workers of the cities.

Mujib will not be so doctrinaire.

His new trade union federation is working hard to use the reputation of the independence struggle to capture the labour movement. Meanwhile Mujib—while denouncing all paramilitary forces as criminal—has carefully retained a section of the old guerrilla force, the Mujib Bahini, in order to liquidate the left physically when it suits his purpose.

No doubt when that day comes, he will at the same time broaden his cabinet to include the pro-Moscow Communists, giving it a progressive flavour.

PETTY CROOKS

In fact he has only to follow the example of Mrs Gandhi across the border in India. The combination of the police truncheon and left-wing talk is now the favoured recipe in India, Ceylon and West Pakistan as well as Bangladesh.

But for the majority, the prospects remain no less grim. The petty crooks of East and West Bengal can now link up to exploit the Bengali poor together.

The great relative strength of India will inevitably overshadow Bangladesh, more and more subordinating it to India. Indian troops are always available to back up the Mujib regime if needed.

For revolutionaries the lessons of the need for a revolutionary party have rarely been so tragically obvious. To work towards building that party among the workers of West and East Bengal is now the most urgent priority.

MAY DAY GREETINGS FROM SPAIN

ON MAY DAY, the international workers' day, we wish to send a fraternal greeting to the British working class through Socialist Worker.

The struggles of the British working class and the defeats that it has imposed on the capitalists' Conservative government, are an example for us and demonstrate the falsity of the liquidators of marxist theory who, before the miners' strike, were declaring that it had no hope of success. These struggles teach us that the only reply to the capitalists is the united and uncompromising struggle of the workers.

The Spanish workers, who are struggling in difficult conditions under the terrible repression of the dictatorship, are thus participating in the fight of workers of the world against exploitation and for world socialist revolution. Revolutionary greetings, Accion Comunista.

Kwame Nkrumah: death of a myth

KWAME NKROMAH died in Rumania last Thursday. Six weeks previously, he had asked the new Ghanaian military government to be allowed home to die. They refused, fearing that homage paid to the dying man might revive the myth of Nkrumahism.

He spent six years in exile. The Ghanaian economy is more bankrupt, inflation greater, and the cocoa price lower than ever before. Among youngsters the myth is arising that—unlike the present government—Nkrumah did have direction and purpose.

It seemed so too to many Western socialists in the early sixties. Nkrumah promised the construction of a socialist state.

But the 1966 army coup, taking advantage of his absence on a peace mission to Hanoi, was bloodless, without enthusiasm or popular resistance. The illusion in Ghanaian socialism was shattered.

Nkrumah was a firm enemy of imperialism and the inspirer of the Organisation of African Unity. Yet he was typical of hundreds of emerging professional politicians in West Africa. Their motto—'Seek ye the political kingdom and all will be added.'

More work

After collecting several degrees he returned home as a young man to become general secretary of the moderate African party of the time. Finding them too cautious, he split in 1949, taking out a group of young men and setting up the Convention Peoples' Party (CPP).

Post-war Ghana was in uproar. Workers and ex-servicemen marched and rioted, demanding more pay and work. Two colonial policemen were killed. The TUC called a general strike. The CPP jumped on the band wagon.

It did not organise the workers, but was seen to support them against the British. Nkrumah and some other CPP men were promptly jailed, thus ensuring the party's popularity.

The British knew that Nkrumah had outmanoeuvred the old men in the

by W Enda

moderate party and began cultivating him as their heir. For 10 years he played the game of accommodation. He expelled the left-wingers in the party for extremism, replacing the TUC general secretary, Ocran, with the more pliable Tettegah.

At independence in 1957, the CPP resembled little more than a vote-gathering machine, providing government jobs for the boys. It was incapable of enthusing and mobilising the people.

Loans were given to small farmers to pay off mortgages, but there were no CPP cadres to help the farmers organise.

Strikes were banned in 1958, and the TUC exhorted the workers to produce more and consume less. The bright boys of the CPP grew visibly fat on the pickings.

In 1961 Nkrumah decided on a new course. Capital had been leaving the

country. He surrounded himself with new men, who mouthed socialist slogans but were quick to put down the 1961 strike of rank-and-file railway workers, calling them 'counter-revolutionaries' and 'Western rats'.

The contradictions between his denouncing the US and at the same time begging them for capital came to a head when he began looking East.

Plans were made to sell a third of the cocoa crop to Russia. This put the wind up both the US and the CPP embezzlers, who feared the Russians might be less forthcoming with commission.

The army—which hated Nkrumah's pan-Africanism and feared he would order them to invade Rhodesia—moved, and Nkrumah fell.

On his lips when he died last week were the words: 'You can't build socialism without socialists'. Someone should have told him you can't do it without workers either.

Police bullets sharpen the struggle

IN SPAIN the class struggle is getting sharper. Proof of this are the events at El Ferrol and the violent reactions within the Spanish working class which followed.

At the same time the strengths and weaknesses of the Spanish labour movement are revealing themselves more clearly. The bloody outcome of the demonstration in El Ferrol is in no way exceptional. In Franco's Spain it is normal practice for the police to open fire on striking or demonstrating workers.

The only new thing is that this time the workers did not yield in face of the massive contingent of police. They went right on marching, even though 30 of their comrades had been hit by police bullets, and two died of their wounds.

At the same time the movement of protest and solidarity has been much more extensive than it was after the events in Granada or at the Seat factory.

The struggles and strikes in the Basque country are continuing. They are now reaching the more backward areas of the country, such as Valladolid in Castille. The whole of Spain is now involved.

Awareness and solidarity within the working class are growing, despite the brutal police repression. This shows that the talk by the Stalinist Spanish Communist Party (PCE) about an alliance of workers, police and army is pure illusion.

The shots fired at El Ferrol have once again proved that there can be no talk of 'democratising' the police, which the Communist Party continues to plead for. Workers have learnt this lesson.

The working class movement against

the Franco dictatorship has grown. But the movement lacks co-ordination, a unified strategy and a national programme of demands.

The committees and factory commissions formed by the workers—which does not mean the bureaucratic organisations set up by the Communist Party—scarcely go beyond the factory limits.

The movement is spontaneous by force of circumstance and not because it opposes a revolutionary organisation in principle, as the anarchists do. The terrible repression has so far always nipped such organisations in the bud.

So today the Spanish working class is unable to base itself on political ex-

ACCORDING to official reports more than 200 Ovambos have been detained without trial in Namibia. The South African government, which is illegally occupying Namibia against the feeble protestations of the United Nations, is determined to destroy the resistance of militant Ovambo workers who went on strike last December.

A proclamation which gives the South African police arbitrary powers of arrest was passed at the beginning of February. A block on news has prevented reports of continued resistance in Ovamboland from reaching the outside world.

THE REIGN of terror of the Greek ruling junta is beginning to break. 21 April was the fifth anniversary of the colonels' coup—it was also marked by the first open explicit anti-junta demonstration.

200 students marched out of Athens University singing political songs and chanting anti-junta slogans. A police column arrived, headed by the Athens chief of police, but the students held their ground singing.

Then the special plain-clothes political police arrived and attacked the demonstrators, trying to disperse them. There were 15 arrests, though some were later released.

DURING the recent American tour by Chinese table-tennis players the party visited the White House. Four of the six interpreters with the party refused to shake hands with Nixon in protest at the bombing of North Vietnam. The Chinese, however, were models of cordiality.

THE APRIL national committee meeting of the International Socialists of the United States heard reports on the group's industrial activity in developing rank-and-file movements.

The United National Caucus of car-workers, which has a programme of opposition to racism, rejection of the wage controls and calls for an independent labour party, is beginning to build a base among production workers but remains small. The Teamsters United Rank and File, working in the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, has enrolled thousands of members in a few months, but its programme is still sketchy. The United Action group of telephone workers was able to focus rank-and-file militancy during the six-month strike which ended this winter.

THE EGYPTIAN government is making another gesture to popular discontent. 400 luxury shops in Cairo and Alexandria are to be closed, and there is to be a ban on the import of luxury goods—including clothing, radio and television sets, washing-machines, and cigarettes. The main effect will almost certainly be to raise prices on the black market.

THERE IS still time to arrange to go to the Lutte Ouvriere fete, to be held near Paris on 20-22 May. Although this year the French Whitsuntide comes a week earlier than the British, it is hoped there will be a large party of IS supporters attending.

The fete offers an unparalleled opportunity to meet French revolutionary socialists (many of whom speak English), as well as good food and music. Anyone interested should write immediately to International Sub-committee, Dept K, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

EIGHT Bombay workers were killed last week when police opened fire on about 600 steel workers who were protesting at a delay in payment of their wages. They blockaded the management in the factory and pelted police with steel rods and stones.

periences and traditions. The organisation which could co-ordinate nationally, the Communist Party, continually stabs the workers in the back. Apart from the ruling party it was the only organisation which supported the call for elections in the fascist so-called 'trade unions' last year. All other revolutionary organisations had called for the boycott of this fake election.

The absence of a national revolutionary organisation rooted in the working class and able to give the struggle a real socialist perspective is at present the decisive weakness that the Spanish working class has to overcome.

Despite the enormous growth of the class struggle in Spain, a revolutionary change is at the moment still not on the cards. Despite everything the middle class is still on top and able to deal with working-class resistance, though not always without some difficulty.

Workers must fight after TUC treachery

THE ROT has set in with a vengeance. As we predicted last week—and is shown in detail in this week's centre pages—the dominant wing of the TUC leadership has thrown in its hand and abandoned any serious opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

By dropping the total boycott of the National Industrial Relations Court, the General Council has opened up the road for the next retreat—registration. The Shop Workers' Union conference last weekend decided to register in the confident expectation that no action would be taken against the union.

They have good grounds for that expectation. For example, they know that, though the National Union of Seaman is officially suspended from the TUC for its pro-registration policy, NUS boss Bill Hogarth has continued to sit on the General Council and, it is reliably reported, continued to cast his vote against the policies decided at Croydon and Blackpool.

Add to that the advice to the Transport Workers to pay the £55,000 fine imposed on it by the court, the meeting with Heath, the scheme for a 'National Conciliation and Arbitration Service' and above all the permission for unions to appear before the NIRC and the right wing have the green light to register and to co-operate with the law.

What can be done now? Naturally the fight to hold unions to the policy of non-co-operation must continue. We place no confidence whatsoever in the ability or willingness of the official 'left wingers', if left to their own devices, to carry on this struggle.

Rank and file pressure on them must be intensified. The job is important. Disgust at the sell out will lead many to turn their backs on the official union machines. To the extent that this trend becomes widespread it will make the work of the right wing easier. It must be resisted.

Of course, paper resolutions alone will never beat the Tories. Grass roots resistance is the key factor. The whole importance of the fight inside the unions is to make it easier to rally this resistance.

The government, aided by the cowardice and treachery of the TUC bosses, has gained important successes. But it has yet to face the crunch—the enforcement of the law against open defiance. The containerisation dispute on Merseyside is critical here.

Face-saving formula

The government cannot win by simple use of the law. It cannot hope to fine and imprison enough dockers to break a united and determined workforce. That is why Employment Secretary Macmillan is willing to talk of 'solutions' with Jack Jones. Indeed, provided resistance is sufficiently widespread, the government may well back down on this issue and find a face-saving formula which will concede the substance of the dockers' demands.

Needless to say, any weakening on the part of the dockers, any concessions to the TGWU leaders' call to stop blacking, will encourage the government to go all out for victory. And even if the government is forced to retreat on the docks dispute it will in any case press forward elsewhere.

The technical staff at C A Parsons in Newcastle are right in the firing line and other groups will be attacked one by one.

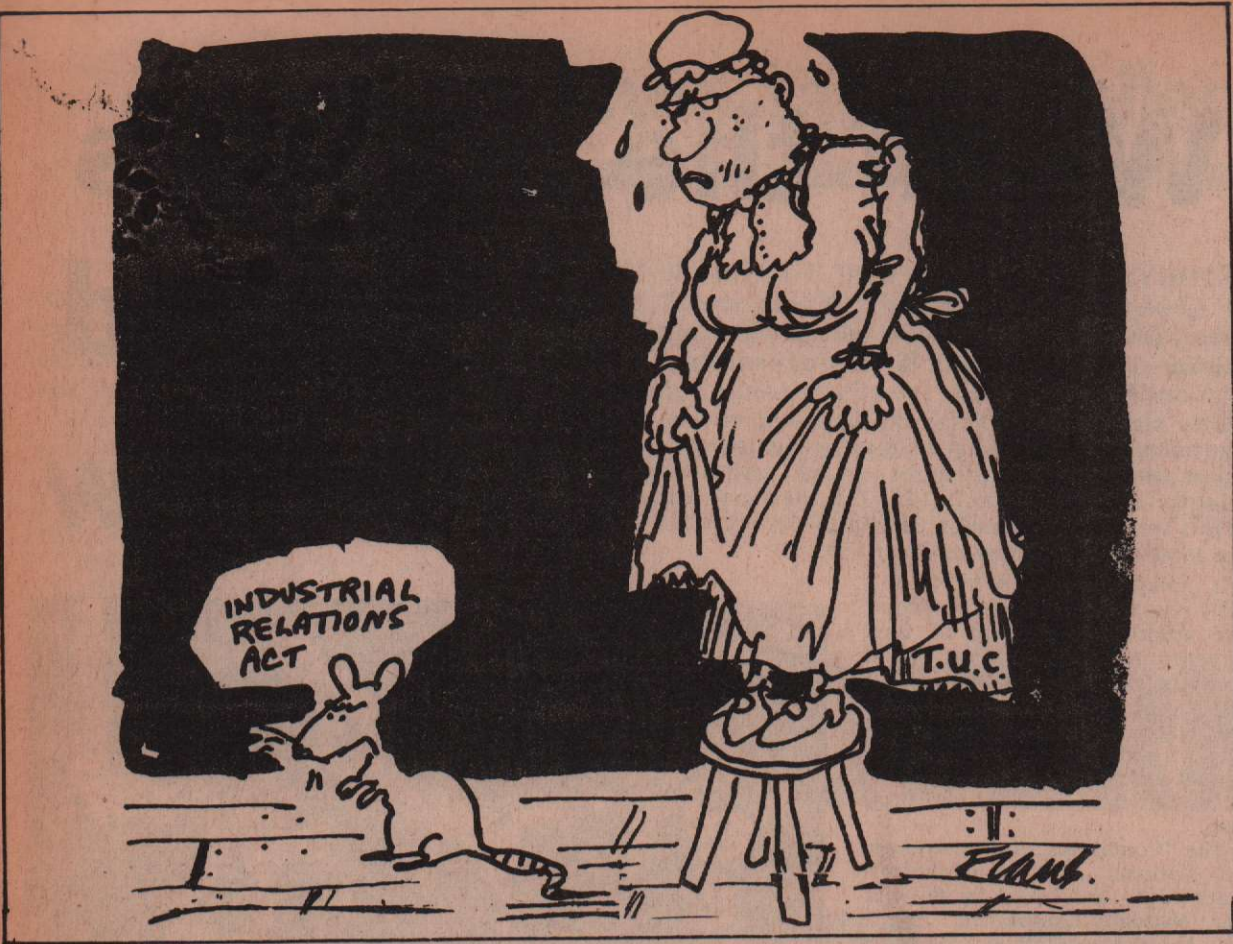
Co-ordinated resistance is essential. Support by other sections to each group of workers singled out for attack is absolutely vital if we are not to be defeated piecemeal. There will be no co-ordinated resistance from the top. Quite the contrary. Large sections of the official leadership will actively assist the Tories. Co-ordination depends on a rank and file movement cutting across trade and industrial barriers.

To date there has been one serious attempt at such a movement—the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions. Its record does not inspire confidence. Largely dependent on the Communist Party for political guidance, it has concentrated its efforts on putting pressure on the trade union leadership.

In itself this is correct but it is only a part and not the greater part of the task. The question now is whether the Liaison Committee can become a force to organise industrial support for the dockers now, for the Parsons' staff now.

A good many Communist Party and other militants unquestionably want it to do just this. They must be given every support in an attempt to push its leadership into paying less attention to union electoral considerations and to giving a fighting lead.

The 10 June conference of the LCDTU is the place to do it. If this fails, as we believe is unfortunately all too likely, the job will be to build an alternative centre that will really try to lead the fight.



COURT CASES

No joyride

ON 17 March, Joy Gordon, 21, a West Indian girl who has lived in Britain for 14 years, went out with a friend late at night to get some cigarettes. She was chatting outside Burtons Club in Cricklewood Lane, North London, when a police car drew up.

A policeman rushed up to Joy, caught her by the arm and barked: 'I am arresting you for theft'. Joy refused to go with the man, pointing out that she had not stolen anything and she had to get back to her little boy, aged 2½. The policeman called for help on the walkie talkie and several other cars arrived.

Joy and her friend were pushed and dragged to the police cars. Both girls were badly beaten, scratched and punched.

At the station both girls were deliberately tripped up by police officers. Amid general abuse and insults, the girls gathered that they were 'wanted' for not paying for a taxi. A taxi driver had complained that night about two girls who had not paid their fare.

After a few minutes, the police realised that these were not the girls concerned. Nevertheless, Joy and her friend were kept in Golders Green police station all night, and released the following morning after being charged with assault on the police.

At Hendon court on 10 April, Joy pleaded guilty to technical assault after admitting that she had hit the policeman first. Even the Hendon magistrates must have been disturbed by the facts of the case. Joy was given a conditional discharge for 12 months. So light a sentence is almost unheard of in assault cases.

In his notorious 'intervention' speech after the railmen's union had turned down the 11 per cent offer, Anthony Barber, Chancellor of the Exchequer, spoke about 'small groups who used



Barber: enough rope?

their crude monopoly power against the interests of the community'.

One example he didn't mention was that of British Ropes Ltd, which controls more than half the rope and wire-making industry in Britain. British Ropes was recently referred to the Monopolies Commission.

Until the last general election, Barber was a director of British Ropes.

Star turn

LAST WEEK marked the abject and miserable surrender by the TUC to the Tories' anti-union laws—discussed at length on the centre pages. Opposition to the Industrial Relations Act was breached by the decision to ignore last year's Congress decision and to allow unions to appear before the Industrial Relations Court.

This savage set back was of such monumental importance that any socialist paper would have made this its main lead the following day. Strange, then, that the Communist Party's Morning Star on 25 April led the paper in such a way that it appeared the TUC was determined to fight the Act all the way.

A banner headline proclaimed TUC BACKS UNION IN REJECTING FINE and industrial reporter Mick Costello related that the TUC finance and general purposes committee gave 'full backing' to the Transport Workers in the fight on the Liverpool docks. This full backing turned out to be an 'assurance' that the TUC would 'assist' the TGWU if it refused to pay the fine and its funds were seized.

You had to get well into the body of the report before discovering that the TUC had jettisoned its ban on unions appearing before the NIRC. This snivelling cover-up for the TUC surrender must have been too much even for the Communist Party chiefs. Next day, a front page editorial was couched in rather different terms:

'The fighting lead against the Industrial Relations Act from the engineers' conference yesterday is in sharp contrast to the policy of retreat and surrender adopted by the majority of the Trades Union Con-

gress leaders who met the previous day.'

Harold Wilson once said that a week in politics is a long time, but the Morning Star proves that it's possible to turn a somersault in just 24 hours.

FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE is the dynamic, progressive slogan of that radical newspaper the Sun, which has just chosen its 'Supergirl' of the year, 20-years-old model Amanda Bibby. How does she fit in with the paper's image? Miss Bibby told the Sunday Times: 'If I voted I'd vote Conservative because that's Heath, isn't it? And he is the one who says that if you work hard you get the rewards. And Labour means, I think, that you have to share everything with everybody. And I wouldn't like to have to support copy typists and people.'

What the Sun would call making a clean breast of it.

Miracle Humph

TEARS, sweat, promises and pledges by the bucketful pour from the would-be candidates for the US presidential election. One pertinent problem that isn't mentioned is the astonishing level of poverty in America itself, the citadel of free enterprise.

Yet an official government report shows that malnutrition and even starvation are not uncommon in parts of the country. An examination of 12,000 Americans selected at random in low income areas of Texas, Louisiana, New York and Kentucky show 'an alarming prevalence' of diseases associated with undernourishment.

In fact, says the report, malnutrition is as bad in the US as in Central American countries such as Guatemala and Costa Rica. The investigating team found diseases thought to exist only in underdeveloped countries.

X-rays showed an alarming degree of physical stunting among poor children. In Chicago, the richest city in America, the infant mortality rate is 27.7 per 1000 births. The US average is 20, compared to 14.7 in Holland. In the ghetto areas the rate rises as high as in countries like Ceylon and Hong Kong.

Millions of black people sink further into desperate poverty every year. From 1960 to 1970 the number of blacks living below the poverty line in fatherless families (the poorest of the poor) increased from 2¼m to 3¼m.

What do the candidates plan to do about this? Nothing that we know of, though we understand Hubert Humphrey has ordered three loaves and five fishes if he is elected.



LIVELIEST LETTERS ON THE LEFT

On trial for politics

THE RECENT RAIDS against members of the International Socialists are part of an increasing pattern of police activity. The seizure of personal effects, police surveillance, intimidation and harassment, illegal detention and arrest, are experiences continually endured by women and men forced to live in poverty, the black communities and workers, especially those, like the miners, engaged in active struggle.

This can only be seen as a political tactic of the ruling class to attack and intimidate a movement which is clearly beginning to threaten their power.

In early June eight people will be tried at the Old Bailey for being part of the alleged bombing conspiracy which the state says has been in existence since 1968. The prosecution will claim that the alleged 27 bombing and shooting incidents stem from a common source, even though these actions have been claimed by a number of diverse groups.

The eight themselves come from diverse political backgrounds, having been involved in Claimants Unions, squatters, tenants campaigns, community politics, womens lib and GLF. The prosecution case relies heavily on the politics of the defendants as a basis for the motivation for being involved in this alleged conspiracy. Thus their politics, and the movement to which they belong will automatically be on trial.

Our solidarity with them stems from the accusatory position which they will take in the court. They intend to attack the whole nature of the police investigation, the legitimacy of the court as an appendage of the state and the anti-working class offensive of the Tory government.

To take an offensive position in the court means they will be articulating politics which are broadly based. Isolated and alone they will become easy victims. With the support and solidarity of socialists this will happen neither to them nor to those who will in time follow. -Stoke Newington 8 Defence Group, Box 359, 240 Camden High Street, London NW1.

IRA: what we mean by support

IT WOULD be a pity if IS members, with the correct desire to argue support for the struggle in Ireland among British workers, were to adapt their position to the chauvinist and nationalist prejudices they will inevitably encounter.

What do we mean by unconditional but critical support to the IRA and all those fighting British imperialism in Ireland? Mary Crampse and Jenny Davison (22 April) suggest this means support for the IRA's defence of the Catholic community but no support for terrorism.

They have misunderstood the point. We must support the IRA's fight against British imperialism irrespective of whether we approve their tactics. This is exactly what unconditional support means. Whether the actions be offensive, defensive, terrorist or mass based, the duty of revolutionaries is to argue to British workers that the Irish people have the right to use any means they see fit to fight British imperialism.

It is also misleading to imply that all non-defensive actions are terrorist. Would comrades Crampse and Davison suggest that to attack the army and the Tory Unionist regime outside the ghettos does not deserve the support of revolutionaries?

Nor can we insist that every tactic in the military struggle relates directly to the need to build political consciousness among the working class. The military struggle has to be viewed as a whole with an awareness that, for all its limitations, it provides the precondition for socialist, class conscious organisation in the Six Counties and its defeat would set the struggle back for years.

Our right and duty to criticise the politics and tactics of the IRA stems directly from our unconditional support for their struggle. The mistaken ideas in both IRAs—the stages theory, the illusion of an independent capitalist Ireland or a sectarian nationalist approach to the Protestant working class, and the wrong political and military tactics flowing from these ideas—must be vigorously and consistently opposed by revolutionaries.

We criticise them not in order to make our job of convincing British workers easier but to help them in ridding Ireland of British imperialism. —MIKE HEYM, London N16.

Kennedy

IT IS DEPRESSING to see Socialist Worker falling for the carefully cultivated CIA myth that 'the "liberal" hero Jack Kennedy was forced to authorise large-scale US intervention in Vietnam'—a myth warmly embraced by such devout socialists as Robert Pitman, Bernard Levin, Woodrow Wyatt, etc.

On the contrary, in October 1963, Kennedy overruled the Pentagon 'advice' he had hitherto been following and gave orders to start pulling US 'advisers' out of Vietnam, beginning with an immediate withdrawal of 1000 men. At that time, there were 16,000 US troops in Vietnam; when Johnson left office, there were nearly 600,000.

Though no socialist, Kennedy was concerned to curb the burgeoning power of the Pentagon and the CIA, and the record shows that as a senator he had been strongly opposed to US adventures in S E Asia.

The military establishment never liked Kennedy. He refused to commit US forces

GIVE TROOPS A 'ROYAL' WELCOME...

WHEN Northern Irish housewives bang their dustbin lids to warn of the British Army's approach, all barricades should be manned by volunteers ready to give the invaders a right royal welcome, with buckets full of the filthiest germ-ridden household slops that can be come by.

Washing up water that usually goes down the plug hole, old tea leaves and other kitchen waste, old unwashed socks and other clothing that's past mending, all used bath water that can be baled out into buckets.

This might help to stop the bastards turning the small children out of their beds as reported in Socialist Worker of 15 April.—John Ormsby, Chard, Somerset.

to support the insurgents during the Bay of Pigs fiasco; he refused Pentagon advice to invade or at least bomb Cuba during the 'missiles crisis'; he signed the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty against the unanimous advice of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

How convenient that Kennedy's murder in November 1963 prevented the implementation of Kennedy's orders to withdraw men from Vietnam given just over a month earlier.—B J BURDEN, Braintree, Essex.

Letters to the editor must arrive first post Monday. They should be typed or written on one side of the paper only and should be not more than 150 words in length. Letters may be cut for space reasons.



TROTSKY'S HISTORY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

VOLUME ONE

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When the dockers smashed union law

HISTORY sometimes repeats itself. Today, while the labour statesmen of the TUC are in full retreat, dockers in Merseyside and elsewhere are in open confrontation with the Tories' Industrial Relations Act.

They are taking the TUC's official policy of non-co-operation seriously, and in doing so it is the country's dockers who are spearheading the real fight against the anti-strike laws. Yet it was in 1951 that the Merseyside dockers sparked off a struggle that finally destroyed the then anti-strike law, known as Order 1305.

If today is not like 1951, it is partly because not all working people have absorbed the lesson of what happened in that fateful year: that if the ruling class has laws, the working class has the numbers and the industrial might to destroy those laws. Once it is united behind a determined militant lead, nothing can stand in the way of the force of the working class.

The 'Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Order'—Order 1305—was issued by the war-time National Government on 18 July 1940. It set up a compulsory National Arbitration Tribunal, the decisions of which were binding on any side involved in a dispute.

Strikes—and, theoretically, lock-outs—were thereby prohibited and illegal. By a twist of fate the architect of Order 1305 was the war-time Labour Minister, Ernie Bevin—the man who during the 1920s was known as 'the dockers' KC'.

Brotherhood

Later, dockers were to have other names for him. At the time, the Labour Party committed itself to repeal 1305 immediately the emergency created by the war had passed. In fact the post-war Attlee government not only kept 1305, it used it against strikes.

The Labour government was swept to power on 27 June 1945. At a victory celebration in the Central Hall, Westminster, Prime Minister Attlee said: 'The principles of our policy are based on the brotherhood of man'.

Five days later, in pursuit of these ideals, the government sent 600 'brothers' in army uniforms into London's Surrey Docks to break a go-slow. This cast the die for the Labour government's policy over the next six years.

Order 1305 was not once invoked against the employers, yet there were many times when it could have been. Dockers in London were effectively locked-out during the 1945 go-slow, and later, dockers in Bristol, London and Merseyside were locked out during their sympathy strike with the Canadian seamen in 1949.

But not once did the government hesitate to use the trade union bureaucracies, the police or even the army to prevent men and women striking for a better standard of life. No fewer than seven times, troops



Victorious dockers being chaired from the court



Bevin: drew up Order 1305

were sent in to break strikes in the docks. And as a last resort, Labour turned to Order 1305.

But the government made a fatal mistake when it chose to use 1305 on the dockers. The dispute began in Birkenhead on 2 February 1951.

The main dockland trade union, the Transport Workers Union, had just negotiated a new wage agreement. It gave dockers an increase of 1s 6d a day. And for this splendid sum, the union had agreed to mechanisation, new manning scales, a purge on 'absenteeism' and measures to abolish well-established protective practices.

The agreement was put to and accepted by the TGWU's National Docks Delegates Conference—but on Merseyside the dockers were up in arms and wanted nothing to do with it.

Birkenhead's 2000 dockers stopped work. It spread rapidly, and within days, 12,000 dockers were out in Liverpool, Manchester and Hull.

Denounced

By the end of the week 77 ships were idle. Meanwhile in London the Portworkers Liaison Committee called a meeting to organise sympathy action—but despite their best efforts only 500 men came out.

Arthur Deakin, who as TGWU General Secretary had negotiated the deal and, a fanatical anti-communist, denounced the strike as part of a conspiracy by international communism 'to strike at countries which do not have the communist outlook'.

The following day, the unofficial London strike committee was meeting in the White Hart public house in Stepney. Five officers of the law broke in and arrested seven members of the committee on the spot.

While they were taken away in a Black Maria, their homes were illegally searched without a warrant. The 'Seven', as they became known, were: Ted Dickens, A Crosby, Joe Cowley, Albert Timothy, F Johnson, J Harrison and Harry Constable.

They were taken to Bow Street and charged under Order 1305 that they had 'conspired to induce dockworkers to take part in strikes in connection with trade disputes in

contravention of the Conditions of Employment and National Arbitration Act'.

But if the government was trying to intimidate dockworkers with the force of law and order, the attempt blew up in its face. What the 'Seven' hadn't been able to achieve, the order did.

The following Monday the entire Port of London was out in protest. 19,000 dockers stopped work to a man. Within 48 hours all the major ports were solid.

The case was moved to the Old Bailey. The judge was Lord Justice Goddard, one of the most reactionary judges in the annals of British legal history.

Meanwhile support for the 'Seven' was building up. The slogan was coined: 'When They're in the Dock, We're Out the Dock'.

With each appearance of the 'Seven' in Court, the whole ports of London, Liverpool, Hull, Manchester and others remained still and silent.

A Defence of the Seven Campaign was set up: money and support poured in from mines, from building sites, from factories, from depots, from shipyards through the country. Thousands of trade unionists donated 2s 6d each to the Defence of the Seven. The call went out: 'Defend the Seven', '1305 Must Go'.

Victory

Still with every appearance of the Seven throughout March and April, out came the dockers.

On 18 April 1951, the case was finally heard. Sir Hartley Shawcross, the Attorney General, prosecuted the 'Seven' on behalf of the 'socialist' government.

TGWU officials gave evidence against their own members. Meanwhile, outside the court, thousands of working men and women demonstrated 'in deference to the brothers in the courts'. Tempers were running high.

Finally, the jury returned a verdict of 'Not Guilty' on the major charge. Discredited, Sir Hartley Shawcross had little choice but to drop the other charges on the grounds of the jury's 'illogical findings'. The 'Seven' were carried from the court as free men.

It was plainly a victory for the whole working class, but the victory didn't end there. Under this crushing defeat, the government was forced to withdraw Order 1305, and replace it with the much milder Industrial Disputes and Compulsory Arbitration Order. After 11 years, mass action by the working class had smashed the shackles of anti-strike laws.

So today, all those who talk of the 'rule of law' and who say that the law of the land must be obeyed or else, should be told to remember what the dockers did in 1951. And let that be a guide and an inspiration today.

Jules Townsend

Democrats' two-faced challenger to Nixon



SENATOR GEORGE MCGOVERN, victor in the Massachusetts 'primary election' last week, is now the firm favourite to win the Democratic Party's nomination for the presidential election this autumn. He is being busily promoted as a 'left-wing' candidate who opposes the Vietnam war. He hopes to win the nomination by picking up the support of the old Kennedy-McCarthy forces from 1968.

His anti-war reputation has won him the backing of many students and anti-war activists who have provided the backbone of his campaign in many states. He has helped once more to convince them to give the Democratic Party another chance. But McGovern represents nothing new in the Democratic Party, nor are his politics significantly to the left of any of the other major candidates, except the extreme right-wing racist, George Wallace.

McGovern claims he is the only candidate who has been consistently opposed to the war, not merely since 1968, but since the early days. There is a wide gap, however, between what McGovern has said about the war and what his voting record has been.

In 1966, McGovern voted against repeal of the Tonkin Gulf resolution which had provided the 'legal' cover for President Johnson's escalation of the war. In 1967 he voted to allocate extra finances for Vietnam and he has consistently voted in favour of defence budgets which included allocations to pay for the war.

McGovern's position on immediate withdrawal from Vietnam has been at best vague. He has at various times been for negotiations, setting a date for withdrawal, conditional on the release of all prisoners of war.

Now he claims that if elected he would withdraw all troops within 90 days. Perhaps he would—but campaign promises are cheap and his record does not instill confidence.

Bases

More important, however, McGovern's policies do not represent any significant break with America's foreign policy as a whole, with the imperialist foreign policy which is responsible for the war in Vietnam.

He is not in favour of dismantling the US foreign military bases nor of cutting off military aid to the various reactionary dictatorships the US supports.

McGovern promises to cut back the defence budget to around 50 million dollars from the current 83 million and of course any reduction would be welcome. But the cutback he proposes is not based on opposition to the policy of US imperialist adventures abroad. He just disagrees about how much it should cost to maintain American imperialism.

And even here his campaign policies dwarf his past performance. In 1967 he voted for budget cuts in everything but defence. In spite of this, it is still widely believed that McGovern is an anti-war candidate.

His position on other issues is equally weak. For example, while he vigorously criticises Nixon's economic programme now, McGovern voted for a Bill giving the president authority to impose a wage-price freeze and has consistently spoken in favour of 'selective' wage and price controls.

Fiction

He also favours controls on profits, calling for an 'excess' profits tax. But he voted against a freeze on profits and it is difficult to tell what he means by 'excess' profits.

In truth, McGovern's controls would work no differently than Nixon's because they accept the same analysis upon which Nixon's controls are based. That is, the idea that working people, especially those in large unions, are the ones responsible for inflation.

McGovern's selective price controls would be just as fictitious as Nixon's while wages would continue to be rigidly controlled.

Any doubt of this was removed when McGovern voted for a Bill to enforce compulsory arbitration to end the dock strike. Presumably, he too feels that dock workers are being paid too much.

This Bill concerned more than

The Power Game

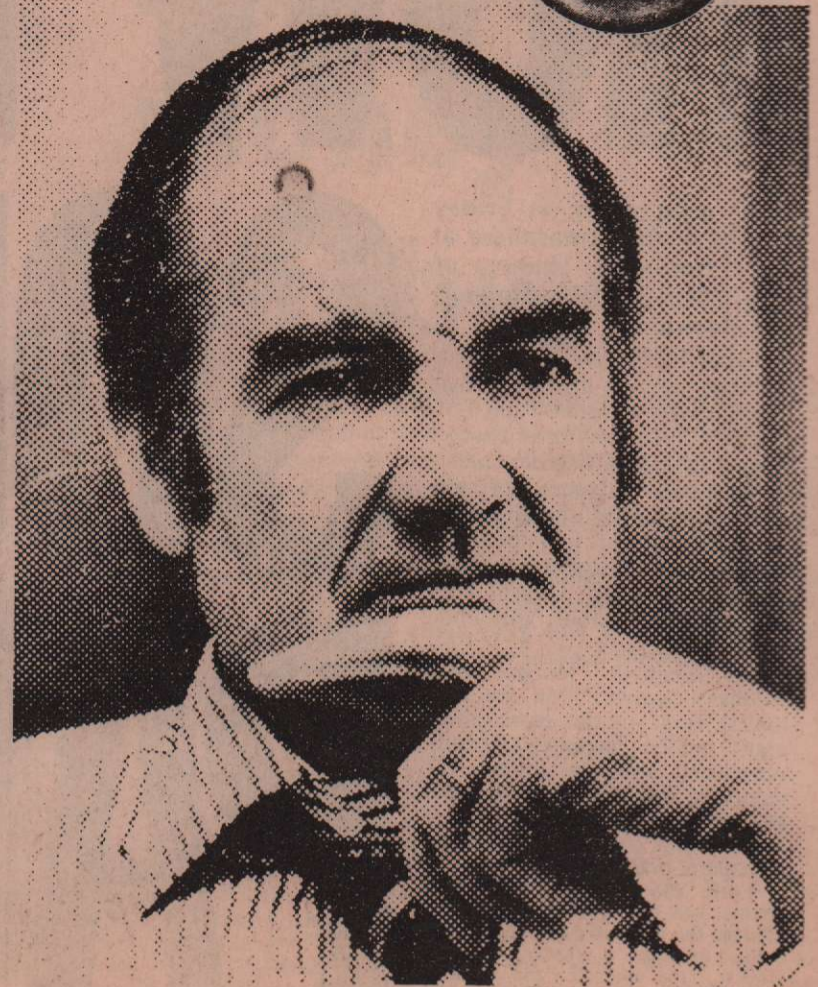
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MCGOVERN -MAN OF 'PEACE'

WHO BACKS THE WAR



by MICHAEL
STEWART

International Socialists, USA

dock workers' modest wages, however. It was an attack on the entire labour movement's right to strike.

Nor was this vote an isolated mistake on McGovern's part. In 1967 he twice voted to extend the ban on strikes by the rail unions.

His most famous anti-labour vote came in 1966 when he voted against stopping a right-wing move in the Senate aimed at preventing repeal of a section of the Taft-Hartley Act that enabled states to outlaw the union closed shop.

McGovern has been a strong supporter of Equal Rights legislation for women and this has won him the

support of some women's groups. But many women recognise that this legislation would be a mixed blessing.

It would be used to abolish all protective legislation, much of which is beneficial to women workers and should be extended to cover all workers, not simply abolished.

McGovern has supported all major

civil rights legislation and believes that this qualifies him as a friend of the blacks. But most blacks realise how shallow such legislation is.

Firmly rooted in the racist framework of the Democratic Party, McGovern has no real programme for significantly improving the conditions of black people in this country nor for ending racism.

The first step towards the liberation of the black community—like the first step towards any real change in the US—must be a break from the Democratic Party, the most important single prop of the American system.

McGovern's programme is as bankrupt as all the others' and offers no real change. Real change cannot be won using campaigns like his.

On the contrary, they have the effect of helping to shore up the system by preserving the illusion that change can be won through the Democratic Party.

McGovern's real problem in this campaign is convincing people that he can beat Nixon in November. That is the only real election 'issue'.

That is why the campaign is so dull. It is also why, no matter who wins, the workers will lose.

Race setback for bosses

by a special correspondent

A BATTLE has been won against capitalist control in the Institute of Race Relations. *Race Today*, the Institute's monthly magazine, has not been axed and 13 of the 14 council members who had tried to suppress it have resigned.

These include the chairman, Michael Caine (a director of Booker McConnell, the Caribbean exploiters), Sir Frederic Seeborn (of Barclays DCO fame), David Sieff (Marks and Spencers), Sir Ronald Prain (Roan Selection Trusts, with interests in Southern Africa), and their 'radical' front men, Lord Boyle, Joan Lester, Anthony Lester (Labour's immigration control expert), Mark Bonham Carter (head of the government's community relations outfit) and E J B Rose (Westminster Press).

At a council meeting in March they had decided to send institute director Professor Hugh Tinker 'on study leave' (for supporting *Race Today* and the staff) and to stop publishing *Race Today* because its 'style and tone' were not in keeping with their view of the institute's objectivity and reliability.

The staff of the institute have been united in their opposition to the closure of *Race Today* and all 25 of them 'occupied' the council meeting to register their total rejection of the policy made by people who could at best be described

as absentee landlords.

They also demonstrated their support for the six council members who voted against the policy, five of whom were elected at the first contested elections ever held for the council, and who include the Rev W Wood (a black Anglican vicar working in Shepherds Bush), Gus John (a black community worker), and Stella Gokkett (assistant community relations officer in Lambeth).

The chairman called an emergency meeting of the institute's members to ratify the policy decisions, but instead, both in the weeks before and at the meeting, he was met by a storm of protest. He failed to get his vote of confidence.

'Spying'

The situation that led to this confrontation dates back to more than a year ago when several of the staff rejected approaches from government bodies which wanted the institute to do their research for them.

They were also concerned about the type of research the institute itself was concentrating on, with its emphasis on numbers and head-counting geared to policy recommendations—described by

one researcher, Robin Jenkins, as 'spying on blacks'.

The biggest example of this was E J B Rose's five-year survey resulting in *Colour and Citizenship*, which the majority of the council saw as an objective fact-finding exercise and academically reliable. Yet Rose pushed the book through to aid Labour's integrationist policies and he told Professor John Rex that no one was to 'be put over a barrel'.

The institute's staff, who see the race scene in Britain worsening, refused to see their work as limited to the safe areas of community relations or to treat black people as the problem. Instead they turned to the institutions in society which cause social inequalities and accept discrimination against black people.

Race Today was threatened because it was beginning to monitor this situation, often drawing parallels between the black community and the white working class. It also challenged the way other race relations agencies—the Race Relations Board, the Community Relations Commission and the Runnymede Trust, (whose director, Dipak Nandy, was one of the 14 who wanted *Race Today* closed) hid the increasing tensions and reality of racism in society today.

Another of *Race Today's* crimes was

to GIVE more space to black people instead of just writing about them—again not 'objective', according to the 14 who complained that the magazine lacked balance.

In a letter to institute members the staff wrote: 'No definition of objectivity should exclude certain views from being put forward, and when there are views which are not allowed expression elsewhere we have an added responsibility to let them be heard.'

Alternative

The institute has now got both the businessmen and the race relations industrialists off its back.

Immediately this must affect its financial situation and alternative funds are already being sought. At the same time there are plans to reduce the cost of *Race Today*, increasing its circulation and its contacts with the communities it wants to serve.

The task of the staff now is to make their work increasingly relevant to the real problems, and with the support they have attracted in the past few months from black groups, trade unionists, students and community workers, to continue to expose and fight against racism and oppression—not just to dabble in academic backchat and community relations' tea parties.

HOW THE TUC

SOLD THE PASS

JUST after noon on Friday 21 April, the atmosphere at the National Union of Journalists' annual conference was electric.

Kenneth Morgan, NUJ general secretary, was on his feet to read out a priority telegram from TUC general secretary Victor Feather congratulating the NUJ conference on deciding to come off the register set up by the Industrial Relations Act and join the mainstream of a trade union movement actively fighting the Tory government's vicious anti-union laws.

As Kenneth Morgan read Feather's words: 'You are now joining trade unions representing nine million members already supporting congress policy', the delegates rose to their feet and gave him, the telegram, Victor Feather and trade unionism itself a standing ovation.

Little did anybody know that Feather had been spelling out another message the previous night and all that day: a message to those same nine million trade unionists, and on their behalf to government and employers, that the TUC had abandoned its opposition to the Industrial Relations Act.

BOYCOTT

The imposition of a 14-day cooling off period on the railway unions on Wednesday and the £50,000 fine on the Transport and General Workers Union the next day caused the TUC general secretary to say: 'We now know what this court can do.' Two years of the best legal advice, an endless stream of comment and pamphlets, had apparently taught him nothing of the powers the government had taken to itself under the Industrial Relations Act.

After consultation with the TUC, unions would now be allowed to defend themselves in the very same courts they had resolutely been boycotting earlier that day.

'This is not a change of policy. We will still not be co-operating,' said Feather. 'If you get into bed with someone willingly that is co-operation, but if you are dragged in unwillingly that is non-co-operation,' he added.

Within days it was clear that the TUC decision to allow member unions to attend the National Industrial Relations Court was every bit as progressive a collapse as Ronan Point.

Soon the trade union movement's general staff will allow some union to go into court on its own initiative to seek recognition from an anti-union employer like Kodak. Soon trade union representatives will be on the tribunals with TUC consent. Soon the pressure to register will mount and complete collaboration will be the order of the day.

How and why did it happen? Where does the trade union movement go from here and what policies can take it down a different road?

To get the beginnings of an answer we must go back to 11 April. On that day, the British Railways Board—under direct government instruction—refused to raise its wage offer.

After the miners' strike the government had talked of new and better relations with the TUC. But this was only bait. Outside, in distant reality, the line was still the same. Wages had to be held down and the burden of Britain's acute version of world economic problems shifted progressively on to the backs of organised labour.

The following day the railway unions met to consider their position. In important ways they were not in such a strong position as the miners. There had been no ballot on industrial action. The claim had no money figure on it and had not been prepared from

Laurie Flynn writes a blow-by-blow account of the union leaders' surrender to the Tories' anti-union law.

the bottom up—or for that matter from the top down. At this time the leadership expected to achieve a negotiating improvement with a bit of muscle.

The locomen's union executive (ASLEF) voted five to four for an overtime ban and work to rule.

The NUR came in unanimously for similar action—covering railways and workshops alone. It carefully resolved not to involve members on London Transport, National Carriers or Freightliners. Formal wage talks had only just started there, though with the same employer. To include them, reasoned Sir Sidney Greene with TUC advice, would have infringed the provisions of the Industrial Relations Act forbidding sympathetic action.

TACTICS

That same day (Wednesday 12 April) Heaton's—the transport firm blacked by the Liverpool dockers in defence of their jobs—went once again to the National Industrial Relations Court. But under direct instructions from the Confederation of British Industry, the firm decided to suspend serving a new affidavit against the TGWU.

Big business was giving Jack Jones and the TUC another chance to settle the matter without recourse to the law. Payment of the first £5000 fine was suspended for 14 days (until 26 April).

Soon the tactics would change. Meanwhile, at its executive committee meeting that Wednesday the Cabinet considered emergency arrangements for the movement of supplies during a railway dispute. The government had finally resolved to take the railwaymen and (as it transpired) the official trade union movement on.

Next day the rail union leaders met Employment Secretary Maurice Macmillan and declined to budge from their 15 per cent claim and work to rule threat. The Cabinet then resolved to use the Industrial Relations Act if the rail unions persisted and if the TUC failed to make them desist.

Barber moved the government on to the offensive with his 'Blackmail' speech that evening. The stress on phoney 'national interest' and 'law and order' was part of a predetermined plan

'The divisiveness intended by the Industrial Relations Act has been nullified and destroyed by the unity of the trade union movement.'
—Victor Feather, Saturday 15 April, speaking in Glasgow.

'My own view is that there will probably be some change [in the TUC position] where a union is being attacked by either a company or by a member or by anyone else. In those circumstances, it should be allowed to defend itself before the NIRC after consultation with the TUC.'
—Victor Feather, Friday 21 April, speaking on BBC radio.

for a compulsory ballot and a cooling off period.

He also summoned all available members of the TUC General Council to meet him at the Department of Employment at 5pm. Feather set up the meeting but ducked the issue. He tried to get more negotiations on any basis, even the redistribution of the 'final' sum.

At 4.30pm the General Council held its preliminary meeting. Feather informed his 16 colleagues of the government's threat. (Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones were absent. Only Alan Sapper, Richard Briginshaw and Tom Jackson of the TUC 'lefts' were there).

BLACKING

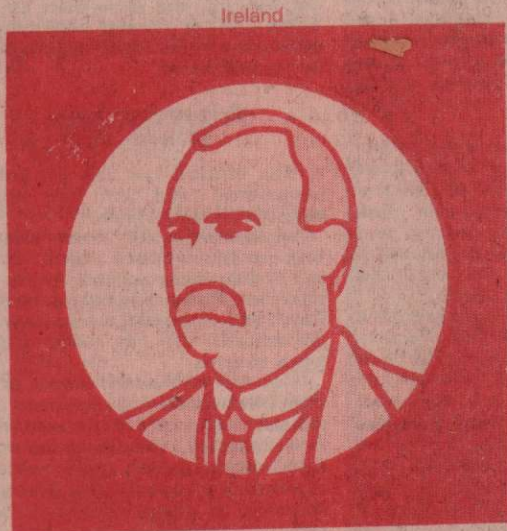
Before moving in to see Macmillan, the General Council decided to do 'nothing that might give the impression they were unconcerned about the implications of the rail dispute.' That is, they decided to take no line whatsoever on the recourse to the Act.

In the formal meeting Macmillan changed tack and asked the TUC to push the rail unions to accept a voluntary ballot on the arbitration offer. Or else.



Feather: Macmillan told him to get TUC leaders together

International Socialism 51



International Socialism on Ireland
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'The fines will not influence the do
defying the union—we are the



Members of the Trades Union Congress General Council
BRIGHT HONOURABLE MAURICE MACMILLAN, M.P.,
 Secretary of State for Employment
requests the pleasure of the company of

at No. 8, St. James's Square, London, S.W.1,
 on Tuesday, 25th April, 1972



George Lowthian and Tom Jackson arriving for Macmillan's reception last week: cocktails smooth the path to surrender

plied: 'It's a pity
 so much trouble when
 appears so marginal. The
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 situations.'
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 deadline of 26 April
 The heat was really
 Tuesday morning
 the rail union leaders
 ultimatum—submit
 later Macmillan saw
 They warned him
 for a ballot.
 The union leaders
 should ask only for a
 cooling-off period.
 the two meetings
 Feather and told
 wanted the TUC
 general purposes com-
 mittee's so-called
 meeting earlier than
 wanted all the leading

figures in attendance. The Department of Trade and Industry laid on a jet and Jack Jones, George Smith (TUC chairman) and Alf Allen (of the shop and retail workers' union) were flown down from Scotland for a 2pm meeting. Hugh Scanlon was also there.
 Feather reiterated the government's position. There were moves to recommend that the rail unions obey the government, but Scanlon successfully led the opposition to this. But nothing was done on the political question of how to fight the Act.
 George Smith and Vic Feather had two more meetings with Macmillan that evening. Macmillan gave them until noon on Wednesday to get the work to rule suspended or he would go to the NIRC. Feather asked for more time.
 On the crucial Wednesday morning the rail unions were left to sweat out Macmillan's noon deadline on their own. They held firm.
 At 12.45 Macmillan lodged with the NIRC his application for a 21-day cooling off period. The TUC finance and general purposes committee did not start its meeting until 45 minutes later.
 At the meeting there was much whining about government recourse to the NIRC preventing the TUC using its good offices to end the railway dispute. Goldrick, of the railway clerks' union, asked by implication for permission to attend the NIRC hearing that afternoon. He underlined that his union's lawyers felt they had a cast iron case.

SEIZURE

Scanlon alone spoke out. There should be no more negotiations with the government unless there were no conditions attached, he argued. The rail unions should be reminded of congress policy and advised not to co-operate with the NIRC. The status quo remained and the railway unions were advised not to attend the NIRC hearing.
 This was of course only a finger in the dyke. For no one moved for a fight with the government. And the Tories had some cards to play yet.
 Later that afternoon the 14-day cooling off order came through, followed by the news of the £50,000 fine on the TGWU and possible seizure of funds. The government threatened the rail unions with contempt proceedings if the work to rule was not called off.
 It was. The rail unions acted on their own, but with the tacit consent of Feather and the TUC leadership. The general staff of the trade union movement had disintegrated.

That evening Vic Feather said: 'The unions will now be looking at methods whereby they can safeguard their members lawfully until the law can be changed.' The unions would go before the courts.
 Saturday saw Jack Jones publicly urge the Liverpool dockers to stop blacking the container lorries. The government was home and dry.
 On Monday 18 April, the finance and general purposes committee met to review the situation. It was a farce. All the decisions had been taken.
 A letter from ASLEF saying the union had a good case to put to the court and asking for a clear instruction for or against was considered.

SUBMIT

Scanlon challenged the discussion, saying that the rail unions had defied TUC policy in agreeing to call off the work to rule. The TUC General Council had no right to change declared congress policy, he said. A special congress should be called to decide for or against co-operation with the machinery of Act.
 This was defeated. Without dissent the Committee agreed to set up a committee to discuss permission for unions to go before the court.
 Later Jack Jones raised the question of the Heaton fine and the threat to seize the union's funds. This was the first time in a fortnight the TGWU situation had been discussed. The union was prepared to submit to sequestration, he said, but only after the TUC had taken a position.
 Scanlon moved support, plus collective trade union responsibility for funding and running the TGWU. It was immediately suggested that if the TUC did this, it could in turn become liable for contempt. The funds of all affiliated unions could be put at risk.
 Eventually, the committee did resolve to support the TGWU if it took an individual decision to defy the law. As with the railway unions, the responsibility was tossed to and fro and avoided.
 The collapse was due to be formalised the following Wednesday at the meeting of the full General Council. This decided that it was not prepared to commit the movement to automatic support for the TGWU in any struggle against the court.
 The question of whether to counsel the TGWU actually to pay the fine was referred back to an emergency meeting of the finance and general purposes committee. This advised (with Jack Jones present and not

dissenting) that the union should pay the fine.
 That evening (Wednesday 26 April) saw the finale.
 TUC leaders went to have talks with Heath who not only suspected but now knew he was their master. The talks went off on amicable terms—a new mood of co-operation was unleashed. A working party would be set up.
 Maurice Macmillan spoke of a period of marriage counselling between government and the TUC. 'This would make recourse to the divorce courts less frequent,' he said.
 The government could have been beaten back on railway pay and on its Act. But the official leadership saw the funds, the so-called fabric of the movement, threatened and caved in.
 They masquerade such surrenders in many different ways—it is 'not bringing politics into it', 'obeying the law of the land' and therefore shying away from a confrontation with the state.
 The ideas the TUC leaders carry around in their heads—all of them, left and right—combine with the official history of the movement to reinforce this. Negotiation, barter and compromise are totally natural to them because as far as they know there are no alternatives.
 In turn they grow to fear the ups and downs, the unreliability of the masses, who seem apathetic and then explode. They cannot take up a principled position and fight to mobilise, to make principles work in reality.
 Yet in Liverpool the dockers' resolution to do just this has not weakened. The dockers have had enough of the national interest, a law and order made for those with power and wealth. They have swallowed enough productivity deals, redundancies and unemployment, enough of a situation where the get-rich-quick aspirations of a few sharp road haulage operators are successfully masqueraded as containerised social progress, backed by the law. In other ports and other places, the same mood is there.
 While the TUC surrender is a set back, it is not a disaster. The stance of the dockers, of the railmen who continued their work to rule in defiance of the law, show that there is no justification for a message that even smells of defeat.
 The point now is to build a movement which will fight in every union for definite policies.
 That movement, infused with the politics of change can make a tremendous step down the road to a society where there are no NIRCs and no wage slavery, where working people at last are free.

The best law that money can buy

THE WHOLE STABILITY of society, as our good Conservative politicians tell us, is based on the rule of law. In fact, to be more precise, the edifice rests on one small part of a Lancashire town. Let the court order relating to Heaton's Transport of St Helens be defied and our entire civilisation crumbles.

Cabinet ministers and the press, both noted for their veneration of the law, have been quick to point out the peril that exists. But, alas, a nasty comment has come from that awkward, disruptive individual who writes Cottons Yarns in Socialist Worker.

Two weeks ago, he pointed out that Heaton's Transport, that chivalrous defender of the law (when it applies to trade unions), has no qualms about disregarding the law (when it applies to capitalist companies).

Heaton's Transport has failed to comply with the provisions of the 1967 Companies Act by filing an annual return. In so doing, Heaton's Transport is merely like 200,000 other companies—two-fifths of the total in Britain today—who thumb their noses at this Act. They could not care a toss for the law.
 But, of course, their conduct does not create any threat to our civilisation. For the assumption on which our legal pantomime is based is that what capitalists do is usually good, what workers do is usually bad. One side can break the law with impunity, but let the other side beware.

by RAY
 CHALLINOR

Refusal

Anybody who has any old-fashioned notions about equality before the law should discard them. Just compare what happened over infringements of the Factory Acts with those of the Industrial Relations Bill.
 The Transport and General Workers Union has been fined £50,000 because its members on the Liverpool docks refuse to lift their blacking of Heaton's Transport.
 On the other hand, when 22 people died in a Glasgow warehouse after an employer had failed to comply with the fire regulations he was fined a mere £175.
 On these calculations, it would be possible to roast 3,300 human beings alive for one breach of the Industrial Relations Act. Can anyone doubt that the capitalist legal system places greater store on the protection of property than human life?
 If doubt still lingers, take the case of the London company which did not observe the factory regulations relating to asbestos and thereby increased the danger of its employees dying from an extremely nasty form of cancer. The company simply received a nominal fine. There was no question of its assets being seized, as is the case with the TGWU.
 When considering the law, Northern Ireland provides an interesting illustration of capitalist practice. All the capitalist politicians and press—all those who, when referring to trade unions, are so determined that they keep within the letter of the law—took a far more free-and-easy attitude towards British troops in Ulster.
 They did not bother to inquire whether or not it was legal before they sent soldiers to arrest people, destroy their homes or resort to torture. Legal niceties about a person being innocent until he is proved guilty or that

an individual should only be deprived of his liberty by due process of law—such niceties were forgotten by Adolf von Maudling when he introduced his internment policy.

After a Belfast court ruled this conduct to be illegal, the British government remained unabashed. The authorities did not shed a tear or show any sign of wishing to make amends for their illegal conduct.

Instead, a law was rushed through parliament in record time altering the rules, absolving troops from possible legislation for the criminal acts committed during the previous two years.

Why this dispensation should extend to only part of the United Kingdom (Northern Ireland) and one category of person (troops) remains unclear. Any resident of Her Majesty's Rest Centre at Dartmoor has a legitimate cause for complaint on grounds of discrimination.

Why should he remain behind bars for breaking the law while British troops in Ulster can break the law with impunity?

Similarly, it seems wrong that the Transport Workers should be unduly worried about breaking the law—Jack Jones could claim that he is simply copying Edward Heath.

Bosses

But, of course, this answer will not do. While perfectly valid, it overlooks the point that the law is biased. What one side is entitled to do is forbidden to the other.

Liverpool dockers cannot black goods but bosses can blacklist workers. Sir John Dennison can make an order that will, if carried out, mean that dockers will lose their livelihood because non-dockers—men from elsewhere on much lower rates of pay—will do their work.

But there is not the remotest chance of the shoe being on the other foot: that Sir John Dennison and other members of the legal profession will permit their jobs to be put in jeopardy by interlopers entering their restricted and highly privileged precincts.

The fact is that, in a capitalist society, the law does not create the basis of justice, but injustice. Far from laying the foundations of a civilised society, it provides the basis for an increasingly barbaric one—a society in which exploitation grows more and more severe and intolerable.

Workers to lift the blacking. We are not union.'
 —Jimmy Symes (chairman of the Liverpool docks shop stewards' committee), Friday 21 April.

THE TASK OF A REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

BECAUSE the workers have been taught to view the world according to the needs of the ruling class, even many advanced workers consciously interpret their own struggles in narrow terms.

Workers have had drummed into them that politics and economics are separate, that they may fight in the factory on wage issues, but so-called 'political' questions must be left to the politicians in parliament.

A strike is therefore experienced by most workers involved as being solely in support of the demand consciously raised—say, a wage claim.

But at a deeper level, workers fighting the boss do so to assert their dignity as human beings, to achieve some measure of control over their own lives. Only in struggle can workers experience themselves as something more than objects to be manipulated, as independent beings who cannot be pushed around indefinitely.

In the past 30 years the proportion of strikes over purely wage issues has fallen from three-quarters to a third. Two-thirds of all strikes in Britain today are over such issues as working conditions, discipline or rules.

There is a growing urge among workers to limit managerial authority inside the factories, to exercise control over their own working lives. Increasingly, strikes break out because a foreman has sworn at a worker, because workers are determined to resist speed-up, or defend a victimised militant, or because they reject the indignity of being told how long they can spend in the toilet. In the case of many strikes fought over purely wage issues, long and bitter struggles are fought even though the workers know that it may be ages before the increase they may win will compensate for the money lost.

EXPLOITED

The basic hostility to management's dictatorial power is never far from the surface.

The ultimate logic of such struggles can only be the creation of a society in which the workers exercise total control over production and the state. But because workers are both economically exploited and culturally deprived, the majority usually lack the confidence to realise what the long-term outcome of their struggles could be.

Revolutionary leadership is needed because at every stage of the class struggle some workers will be more clearly aware of its ultimate goal than the rest. Their task is to explain the deeper meaning of immediate struggles for control, to point to these as the means by which socialism will in the end be achieved.

The prevailing influences within the labour movement underline the need for a revolutionary party. The leaders of the unions and the Labour Party are either right-wing or left-wing reformists.

Right-wing leaders like Roy Jenkins, Vic Feather or Lord Cooper believe in open collaboration with the bosses. As for 'left' leaders like Scanlon, Jones or Michael Foot, even when they do talk about 'socialism', they mean something quite different from what marxists have always meant.

Left reformists mean by 'socialism' the nationalisation of the economy which will then be run on behalf of working people by enlightened bureaucrats within the state machine.

There will, of course, be a measure of workers' participation in the running of a



The burning of the guillotine during the Paris Commune 1871, which failed for lack of a strong revolutionary party

PARTY

Sabby Sagall's final article

Mass action in Britain today: could it lead to a workers' state?

nationalised economy. But nationalisation is to be carried out not as the result of a victorious working-class revolution but as the result of a parliamentary victory by the Labour Party when its left wing has become dominant.

The task of the elected 'socialist' government will then be to ensure increased British competitiveness in a continuing capitalist world through which, it is believed, great benefits will accrue to working people.

Reformist leaders have always believed in the need to persuade the employers and the government to expand the economy so that more reforms will be available to the working class. This inevitably involves collaboration in varying degrees with the bosses so that they can expand.

So reformist leaders can never be relied on to develop a consistent struggle against capitalism.

MACHINE

Today even right-wing union leaders find themselves forced to support some strikes as a result of the growing ruling-class offensive and an increasingly active rank-and-file. But union leaders, whether of the right or 'left' variety, have achieved positions of special privilege within capitalism, a privilege which stems from their control over the union.

They therefore come to see the organisational and financial needs of the union machine as more important than the needs of their own members or of the

whole working class. To the extent that they do respond to the feeling of their members, they approach their problems in a sectional manner, and rarely connect them with the problems faced by other sections of workers.

In their wish to retain control of the working class organisations, the labour leaders believe in acting on behalf of the workers rather than mobilising them to act for themselves. So these leaders are a barrier to the full realisation by working people of their own potential strength.

For the most part, the capitalist class is able to keep control by relying on ideological control of workers, on the habits of obedience which is instilled into those they exploit, and on the collaboration of the reformist labour leaders.

If all this fails, the ruling class can fall back on the full power of the state to prop up their rule. For they have the police force, the law courts, the prisons and the army.

Of course only in extreme cases, when an increasingly militant working class appears to threaten the whole basis of capitalist power, do the ruling class need to mobilise the full power of the state. But in periods of revolutionary upheaval, or of deepening economic crisis, the range of political choices open to both the ruling class and the working class movement becomes narrower.

The ruling class have to resort to

increasing repression to safeguard their power. And if the working class does not respond with equal firmness, its organisations will be crushed.

In such periods, when the choice is between fascism and working-class power, only a revolutionary party with deep roots in the working class can both lead its resistance to fascism and launch a counter-offensive whose goal can only be the creation of a workers' state.

There is only one example so far of such successful resistance and counter-attack: that of the Bolshevik Party in the Russian Revolution.

URGENT

In all other cases of working class upheaval, Germany 1918/19, Italy 1919/20, Spain 1936, the labour movement was destroyed by counter-revolution. Only in Russia was there a mass revolutionary party which was therefore able both to ward off the right-wing threat and lead the workers to power.

The working class today does not yet face the choice between fascism or workers' power. But confronted with the offensive from employers and the state, it is not only urgently necessary but increasingly possible to build a mass revolutionary party.

The Tory-employer offensive means that different sections of workers are more and more often facing the same sorts of problems. A fighting organisation

uniting the most advanced socialist militants would mean they could exchange ideas and information about their different struggles.

By pooling experiences, they could reach common policies on crucial questions affecting the labour movement. Because of the failings of reformist leadership, it is only through a revolutionary party that militants from various industries can transfer the lessons of different struggles from one section of the movement to another.

A revolutionary party also preserves the lessons, historical traditions and heritage derived from working class struggles of the past. It is the 'memory of the working class.'

It is a constant disadvantage to the working class that they are far less united than the ruling class.

Conflicts and debates do take place within the ruling class, but when they act, they do so as a united body, through the state or another of their organisations. By contrast, the working class acts in a fragmented way, each section taking on the ruling class on its own.

It is, of course, only in a general strike or a revolutionary situation that the working class can be completely united. But the task of a revolutionary party today is to begin to forge the links that can create within the working class the same unity that exists in the ruling class.

CRISIS

Because of the decline of international capitalism, workers can no longer achieve reforms by local action or by relying on their national officials. The state-employer offensive against the working class demands conscious political responses by workers if they are to defend themselves effectively and, in the longer term, launch a counter-attack.

At no time since the 1920s has the opportunity to build a revolutionary party been greater. If this opportunity is not seized, then the crisis of capitalism will lead once again to barbarism instead of socialism, this time with nuclear war as its probable outcome.

But if the opportunity is seized then the result can be socialism and a workers' state. The purpose of the International Socialists is to seize that opportunity.



REVIEW

1972: THE CATCH IS THE SAME

'IN the past 10 days Mr Nixon has let loose more destruction from the sky, on a country smaller than Britain, than Mr Churchill and Mr Hitler and Mr Roosevelt and Mr Stalin let loose on all of Europe during all of 1944.'

—John Pilger, Daily Mirror, 26 April 1972.

JUST over a decade ago, in 1961, there appeared one of the great novels of our time, *Catch 22*. It was greeted with squeals of delight by those critics whose response to any book with guts is to wallow in the agony of it all, and gorge themselves on its 'black humour'.

It was easier to wallow in 1961. The shooting wars seemed on a smaller scale. In Algeria the atrocities of the French occupation continued, but the end was in sight. The Bay of Pigs, Kennedy's invasion of Castro's Cuba, ended in fiasco. Perhaps things were getting better...

But this system doesn't change, and Vietnam and Ireland are examples of its true nature. The relevance of Joseph Heller's novel is greater now than when it was published.

The critics may have called it sick in 1961, but *Catch 22* is specific and depends on the mechanics of modern capitalism for its bite.

COMPLEX

Yes, it is obsessed with death, with the way people die and the ways they see their dying. It deals with 'politics' but not the politics of party political speeches and appeals from Edward Heath:

'Be thankful you're healthy.
'Be bitter you're not going to stay that way.
'Be glad you're even alive.
'Be furious you're going to die.
'Things could be much worse,' she cried.

Dishonesty on film

IN THE aftermath of the spy films a wave of cops and robbers films are pouring round the circuits. *Dirty Harry*, directed by Don Siegel and starring Clint Eastwood, is out on ABC and *The French Connection*, directed by William Friedkin and starring Gene Hackman, is out on the Rank-Odeon circuit.

Dirty Harry is set in San Francisco, where a psychopathic killer who signs himself Scorpio is on the rampage. The task of tracking him down is assigned to a homicide squad detective universally known as *Dirty Harry*, played by Clint Eastwood.

Siegel, the director, is mediocre and pretentious but something of a cult-figure among certain critics. They found the film uncomfortably honest and paradoxical. It isn't.

The hero is a typical Siegel creation. A single man with no family and little interest in women, he stands alone, surrounded by inadequates. Siegel's *Invasion Of The Body Snatchers* was seen by many as a comment on McCarthyism and 'Commie' hunting—in fact it was a celebration of Siegel's dowdy

'They could be one hell of a lot better.'

But forget all the reviewers' trendy rubbish about the 'human predicament'. The dying Snowden spilling his entrails over Yossarian reveals not just the fact of his death, but simultaneously the fact of man's material nature—'Man was matter, that was Snowden's secret. Drop him out of a window and he'll fall. Set fire to him and he'll burn.'

This materialism is Heller's starting point for a complex journey through the absurd ways that people can be manipulated by their own consciousness of the world they live in.

What is *Catch 22*? Among other things it is the airforce rule that says you have to be insane before you can be grounded, but anyone who wants to get out of combat duty can't possibly be insane and so can't be grounded.

It's also the catch that the old woman tells Yossarian about at the end of the book: '*Catch 22* says they have the right to do anything we can't stop them doing.'

Yossarian realises: '*Catch 22* did not exist... but it made no difference. What did matter was that everyone thought it existed and that was much worse.'

Consciousness is at the very heart of the novel, in the political sense of how (or if) people see themselves in relationship to power. It's about how they can organise themselves to kill and be killed and call that sanity and normality, while they call Yossarian mad because he wants to live, enjoy life, and let others live.

The novel is clearly political in its treatment of the Second World War, and goes far beyond the anti-war pacifist attitudes you might imagine from some reviews.

elitism.

In all his films we come across *Dirty Harry*, fighting for something clean and real in a world of people who never understand.

Characteristically *Dirty Harry*'s superiors in the homicide squad and city administration don't understand him any more than the soft-hearted liberals outside, who disapprove of tough police methods. So *Harry*'s job is complicated.

Throughout *Harry* is thoughtless, arrogant, and cruel. Nothing seems impossible to the cop—left to his own resources.

He catches Scorpio—only to lose him through a legal loophole.

When he finally gets his man he intentionally taunts him so that, already wounded, he will try to reach for his gun. It works and Scorpio gets shot.

The people he works for would never understand—so the film ends with *Harry* throwing his police badge into the pond after the dead Scorpio.

Few films have ended more dishonestly. In America the *Dirty Harry*s don't throw their badges away—they get promoted. They aren't misunderstood. The American ruling class, just like our



SAI-2) BONG SON, 19/2/67 - US SOLDIER HITS VIETCONG PRISONER WITH RIGHT FIST IN FACE AFTER THE VIETCONG WAS FLUSHED FROM UNDERWATER HIKING BLADE. TWO GUERRILLAS WERE CAUGHT BY 1st CAV. DIV. SOLDIERS HIDING IN STREAM AND BREATHING THRU BAMBOO TUBES ON OPERATION PERSHING. ANGRY AND FRUSTRATIONS OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS WHOSE BATTALION HAD LOST 120 DEAD AND WOUNDED IN ONE MONTH EXPLODED IN VIOLENCE AGAINST PRISONERS (AP RADIO/str.)

There's a lovely description of the liberal-humanist Clevinger, who was 'constantly defending his Communist friends to his right-wing enemies, and his right-wing friends to his Communist enemies and he was thoroughly detested by both. He was a militant idealist who crusaded against racial bigotry by growing faint in its presence.'

STALEMATE

What is crucial to the book's impact is that it's set in 1944, when Mussolini's forces had collapsed and Allied victory was inevitable. It's set at that point where arguments about the merits of fighting cease to exist, and the Colonel Cathcart wants the men to go on risking their lives for the sake of nice bombing patterns on the aerial maps.

The stalemate features of the permanent war economy loom through the smoke and shrapnel.

Other figures in the book crystallise the dilemmas of a competitive system: 'Colonel Cathcart was conceited because he was a full colonel with a combat

command at the age of only 36; and Colonel Cathcart was dejected because although he was already 36 he was still only a full colonel.'

And deep in the heart of the novel is Milo Minderbinder, the archetypal capitalist, claiming he's doing what he does for the good of everyone, for everyone nominally has a share in his syndicate (rather like the 'national interest').

When he speculates badly and buys up the whole Egyptian cotton crop, the men have to eat chocolate-covered cotton. When the market still refuses to relieve him of his vast piles of cotton, he arranges to have his own base bombed to get rid of them, for, of course, capitalism being international, Milo deals with both Nazi and Allied bosses.

It is because Milo is only the agent of the huge forces of profit that Heller can make him unlike a stereotyped villain—he quite sincerely acts out the laws of profit!

He's not the only one living the contradictions of the system.

Major Major's father's speciality was alfalfa, and he made a good thing out of

not growing any. The government paid him well for every bushel of alfalfa he did not grow. The more alfalfa he did not grow, the more money the government gave him, and he spent every penny he didn't earn on new land to increase the amount of alfalfa he did not produce'.

Catch 22 is perceptive not just about the fact that the Milos of this world profit from the exploitation and deaths of the rest of us. It pivots around the mysterious process that lets them do this.

It is significant that Milo's surname is Minderbinder, (rather than, say, Profit or Million) and that ultimately it is Yossarian's mind that Cathcart and Co are trying to purchase.

At first they were concerned at the way he used to disrupt the education sessions with awkward questions: 'Group HQ was alarmed, for there was no telling what people might find out once they felt free to ask whatever questions they wanted to... Colonel Korn succeeded with a rule governing the asking of questions. Under [this] rule the only people permitted to ask questions were those who never did.'

CRUDE DEAL

'Soon the only people attending were those who never asked questions and the sessions were discontinued altogether since Clevinger, the corporal and Colonel Korn agreed, it was neither possible nor necessary to educate people who never questioned anything.'

Later they try a crude deal with Yossarian, to release him from the war if he will 'say nice things about us, here and back in the States.'

Catch 22 is all the irrationalities and contradictions involved in a tiny ruling group somehow convincing the vast majority, and themselves, that the set-up is sane and just. Of course the catch is still with us.

Catch 22 is 'the national interest' involving hardships for the majority of the nation. *Catch 22* is an American general saying a Vietnamese village had to be destroyed in order to be saved. *Catch 22* is crushing a workers' uprising in the name of a workers' state.

The humour, however, is far from being negatively pessimistic. Behind some of the most important jokes is a glimpse of a collective turn away from the war's madness.

'But suppose everyone on our side felt that way?' they ask Yossarian. 'Then I'd certainly be a damned fool to feel any other way. Wouldn't I?' he replies.

RUNNING

This is one of the best perceptions in the novel: that 'It's the same for everyone' makes a situation not more but less tolerable.

Of course, the novel is set in a tight, vicious corner of the end of World War Two, and it would be wrong to pretend that Heller is explicit about the need for collective change, or even sees that possibility. All that is open to Yossarian is to save his own skin.

But establishment critics are wrong to praise the book just for individualised cynicism. As Yossarian says when he's called negative and escapist for leaving the combat unit: 'I'm not running away from my responsibilities. I'm running to them.'

All the energy of the book's jokes, its satire, its crazy logic strains away from the insanity of capitalism. Yossarian's every move is a wail of human response, and at the close his protest begins to be linked with the patience of Orr who (as his name implies) has been practising for years an alternative to the lunacy of the war, and eventually succeeds in his escape.

Protest and fury need this cool, organised ingenuity if an escape is to be made, let alone any change. Despite its radical pessimism *Catch 22* can give us an awareness, a small beginning from which we, like Orr, can go on.

PHILIP EASTMAN

JILL BRANSTON

Sedgwick and Laing (continued)

THOSE readers of REVIEW Page who were outraged, appalled, disgusted or cheered by Peter Sedgwick's article on the film *Family Life* and the influence of the psychiatrist R D Laing will be outraged, appalled, disgusted or cheered to know that he is returning to the subject on Radio 3 next week.

On Wednesday 10 May Peter Sedgwick will speak on R D Laing, *Doctor For An Epoch* at 8.45pm. The following Sunday there will be a discussion between him and David Mercer, the marxist playwright who wrote *Family Life*, entitled *The Politics Of The Imagination*. This is to be broadcast at 5.50pm.

WHAT WE STAND FOR

The International Socialists is a democratic organisation whose membership is open to all who accept its main principles and who are willing to pay contributions and to work in one of its organisations

We believe in independent working-class action for the abolition of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society with production for use and not for profit.

We work in the mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to themselves and the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multi-national firms.

The international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action by the working class.

A single socialist state cannot indefinitely survive unless workers of other countries actively come to its aid by extending the socialist revolution.

In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country we also believe in the necessity of forming a world revolutionary socialist international independent of either Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close relationships with a number of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist theory with the day-to-day struggles of working people and therefore support all genuine demands that tend to improve the position and self-confidence of the working class.

We fight:

For rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials.

Against secret negotiations. We believe that all settlements should be agreed or rejected by mass meetings.

For 100 per cent trade unionism and the defence of shop stewards.

Against anti-trade union laws and any

curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are 'official' or 'unofficial'.

Against productivity deals and job evaluation and for militant trade union unity and joint shop stewards committees both in the plant and on a combine basis.

For equal pay and a better deal for young workers.

For a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.

Against unemployment redundancy and lay offs. We support the demand: Five days' work or five days' pay.

For all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.

Against racialism and police victimisation of black workers.

Against immigration restriction.

For the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.

For real social, economic and political equality for women.

Against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Against secret diplomacy.

Against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with all genuine national liberation movements.

For the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and organisations. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party in Britain and to this end support the unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle for socialism is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and a world based on human solidarity, on the increasing of man's power over nature, with the abolition of the power of man over man, is certainly worth fighting for.

It is no use just talking about it... More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: 'The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it.' If you want to help us change the world and build socialism, join us.

THERE ARE IS BRANCHES IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS

SCOTLAND
Aberdeen
Cumbernauld
Dundee
Edinburgh
Fife
Glasgow N
Glasgow S
Stirling
St Andrews

NORTH EAST
Durham
Newcastle upon Tyne
Spennymoor
Sunderland
Teesside
(Middlesbrough & Redcar)

NORTH
Barnsley
Bradford
Doncaster
Grimsby
Halifax
Huddersfield
Hull
Leeds
Mid-Derbyshire
Ossett
Scarborough
Selby
Sheffield
York

NORTH WEST
Barrow
Blackburn
Bolton
Crewe
Kirkby
Lancaster
Manchester
Merseyside
Oldham
Preston
St Helens
Wigan
Widnes

MIDLANDS
Birmingham
Coventry
Leamington
Leicester
Northampton
Nottingham
Oxford
Redditch
Rugby
Telford
Wolverhampton

WALES and SOUTH WEST
Bath
Bristol
Cardiff
Exeter
Gloucester
Mid-Devon

SOUTH
Ashford
Brighton
Canterbury
Crawley
Folkestone
Gurdford
Portsmouth
Southampton

EAST
Basildon
Beccles
Cambridge
Colchester
Harlow

Ipswich
Leiston
Lowestoft
Norwich
Peterborough

GREATER LONDON and HOME COUNTIES
Acton
Camden
Chertsey
Croydon

Dagenham
East London
Enfield
Erith
Fulham
Greenford
Hackney & Islington
Haverling
Harrow
Hemel Hempstead
Hornsey
Hounslow
Ilford
Kilburn
Kingston
Lambeth
Lewisham
Merton
Newham
Paddington
Reading
St Albans
Slough
South Ealing
Tottenham
Walthamstow
Waltham
Widnes

Papers silent over censorship protest

JOURNALISTS publicly denounce censorship by their own bosses. Examples big and small are cited, complete with those little details that distinguish the authentic complaint from the general, unsubstantiated grouse.

The journalists, at their annual conference, declare that censorship in future will be met by strike action.

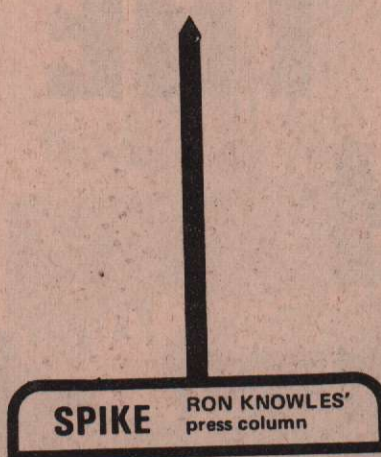
All this, apart from a vague mention in the Daily Telegraph that shied away from the details, was ignored by every major newspaper in the country. Readers are not to be allowed to know of the systematic suppression and distortion of the news our 'free press' pumps out to them each day.

Ironically, however, the National Union of Journalists has been given a lot of space by the 'heavies'—the Telegraph, Times and Guardian—following the conference decision by a large majority to deregister the NUJ under the Industrial Relations Act.

The Telegraph in particular, fresh from its public crucifixion of the actors' union, Equity, is trying the same tactics with the NUJ. The conference decision, taken by delegates elected and mandated by branches of the union, is being branded as 'undemocratic' because it ran counter to a referendum of members which showed a majority of those voting to be in favour of staying on the register.

The Telegraph, rejoicing in the embarrassment of the NUJ executive, published an inaccurate and muddled leader in an effort to convince its readers that Britain's journalists were being politically bullied by a minority clique.

Journalists have now seen the treatment meted out to themselves and may be better able to understand in



future why other groups become furious over the twisted and selective 'facts' that are published about them.

Mind you, the Telegraph cannot be accused of suppressing the Protestant cause in Northern Ireland. On Saturday the paper carried a suitably elusive list of supposed facts under Nigel Wade's byline, claiming that a 10,000-strong secret Protestant militia had been established as the para-military wing of the Vanguard movement.

Sickening

It was the kind of 'exclusive' available to any bored reporter, but only a paper prepared to accept uncheckable, half-baked theories would descend to publishing it. Perhaps it is a sign of the Telegraph's desperation in face of the government's pathetic inability to secure any foothold of working class Catholic sympathy in the Six Counties.

But the most sickening feature of press coverage in Northern Ireland over the recent period was the treatment meted out to themselves and may be better able to understand in

after his wife, Elizabeth, approached Whitelaw personally.

McSheffrey, like all internees, had been under arrest without being charged, called to trial, or asked to face any recognisable legal procedure. He was simply whisked away to a camp

Without exception Fleet Street treated his release as something for which he should feel personally grateful to Whitelaw. The fact that McSheffrey had been denied his freedom for six months under a system of non-justice that no civilised society would tolerate was totally ignored by the press.

Chapman Pincher and the Daily Express had their own Concorde scoop on Thursday. And they were welcome to it.

The Pincher pitch, appearing under a headline IT'S A ROYAL FLUSH OF CONCORDES, claimed that Air France and BOAC were each going to order five Concorde. The announcement would come when the Queen visited France later this month.

Pincher referred to the 'inaccurate propaganda' of the many faults listed against the Concorde project.

In addition to Pincher's front-page rubbish the Express found space inside for a nicely 'objective' feature on the 'fastest flop on earth' by Geoffrey Knight, whose ability to maintain an uncommitted view was doubtless not the slightest bit affected by the fact that he is chairman of the commercial aircraft division of BAC, makers of Concorde.

Like Pincher, he reassured without putting forward any form of evidence. Concorde is a world-beater which will sell and have no detrimental effect on the environment, the quality of life, the price of houses, the rate of mutual orgasm among non-married couples, television reception in the Hebrides, or the mating abilities of Chi-Chi in old age.

Vive l'entente Cordiale!

IS NEWS

MORE than 250 people packed the Lord Morrison Hall in Tottenham at a meeting organised by the local IS branch. The meeting was called to draw attention to the attempted frame-up of Angela Davis by the US government. Two-thirds of the audience consisted of young black people.

A film about Angela Davis, called Portrait Of A Revolutionary, was shown. IS national committee member Mike

Caffoor, speaking after the film, stressed the need for solidarity action in Britain against the attempt to liquidate the entire leadership of the black revolutionary movement in the US.

LAMBETH IS have been active in founding the Lambeth Public Employees' Alliance, which aims to co-ordinate local trade union activity in the public sector. It

produces a local bulletin called Public Worker.

A meeting called by the alliance attracted 100 people to Lambeth Town Hall last Thursday. On the platform were Wally Preston (AUEW), who spoke on the struggle in the electricity supply industry, and Andreas Nagliatti (NUR), who dealt with the dispute on the railways.

WHAT'S ON

Copy for What's On must arrive first post Monday or phoned Monday morning. Notices are charged at 5p per line. Semi-display 10p per line. Cash with copy. No insertions without payment—invoices cannot be sent.

MEETINGS

WANDSWORTH IS public meeting: The Present Crisis of British Capitalism. Speaker: John Palmer. 8pm Thurs 11 May. The Spotted Dog, SW18 (near Wandsworth Town Hall). All welcome.

GREENFORD IS public meeting: Tony Cliff on The Struggle For Socialism. Tues 9 May, 8pm, at the Co-op and Labour Hall, just off Greenford Broadway.

WALTHAMSTOW IS public meeting: The Industrial Relations Act And How To Fight It. Speaker: Tony Cliff, Thurs 18 May, 8pm, Trades Hall, 17 Hoe St, Walthamstow, E17 (near The Bell).

HAMMERSMITH and FULHAM IS: Kick The Tories Out. Speakers: Frank Campbell (UCATT), Andreas Nagliatti (NUR) and John Palmer (NUJ). Hammersmith Town Hall 5 minutes from Hammersmith Broadway, Fri 5 May, 8pm.

THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT: THE DOCKERS' CASE. Speakers: Denny Harriman (Southampton docks TGWU) and Bob Light (London Royal group of docks TGWU). A public meeting held by Southampton IS at UCATT Hall, Hemstead Rd, 8pm, Weds, 10 May.

MANCHESTER IS District public meeting: Unions Versus The Law. Speaker: Roger Rosewell (Socialist Worker industrial correspondent). Thurs 11 May, 7.30pm, Milton Hall, Deansgate.

NEATH IS meeting: Reform And Revolution. Speaker: Colwyn Williamson. Weds 10 May, 7.30pm, The Angel Hotel.

IS COLLEGES OF EDUCATION CONFERENCE: Sat 6 May, Wether College, Wetherby St, Wetherby, 11.30am-6pm. Participants: work, NUJ, Rank and File.

WOMEN'S SUBCOMMITTEE: 13 May, 7pm, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

FULHAM AND HAMMERSMITH IS Social: Fri 12 May, King's Head, Fulham Broadway (above tube). Extension applied for. Tickets 30p from any branch.

IS TENANTS CONFERENCE 6 May, 10.30am onwards Digs Civic Hall, Birmingham
1. History of rent struggles
2. The fight against the Tory proposals
3. The role of IS

NEWCASTLE IS special public meeting HANDS OFF THE UNIONS! SOLIDARITY WITH PARSONS! Speakers: Terry Rodgers, chairman C A Parsons office committee, and Tony Cliff, author of The Employers' Offensive, Productivity Deals And How To Fight Them Bridge Hotel, next to high-level bridge, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 8pm, Sunday 7 May

IS PSYCHOLOGY GROUP Sun 14 May, 3.30pm 12 Montague Rd, London E8 Discussion on film Family Life—the importance for marxists of the issues raised Suggested future topics: Freud, Reich, Piaget Further information from Alan Phipps, tel: 01-226 5625

IS MIDLAND CONFERENCE Sunday 14 May in Birmingham 10.30-5pm Fraction meetings and discussion on National Conference perspectives All IS members should attend Details from: Midland Region Secretary 109 Merridale Rd, Wolverhampton

RANK AND FILE CONFERENCE Education in capitalist society 'The role of the Socialist teacher' Saturday 13 May 10.30 am to 5pm and Sunday 10.30pm to 5pm Council Chamber, Aston University Union, Birmingham. Accommodation and details: Colin Falconer, 25 Beechwood Rd, Birmingham B43 6JN.

NOTICES

LUTTE OUVRIERE FETE, near Paris, 20-22 May, combining politics and entertainment. Anyone wishing to attend or wanting more information, write to International Sub-Committee, dept K, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2 8DN.

THE council tenant and the Tory Housing Bill—5p. An IS in Scotland pamphlet for Scottish tenants. Order from your local IS branch or from M Dougal, 2 Elm Row, Edinburgh.

IS BOOKS opening hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday: 2-5pm. Thursday: 2-7pm.

WANTED: Assistant business manager for Socialist Worker. Clerical experience essential, typing an advantage. IS members only. Apply Jim Nichol, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2, Tel: 01-739 1870.

UNFREE CITIZEN The revolutionary socialist weekly of THE PEOPLES DEMOCRACY Sent first class post every fortnight for £2 per year, from 50 Newry Road, Armagh, Northern Ireland



**The choice
that is
no choice**



DUBLIN:—People in Southern Ireland vote next Wednesday in a referendum which could have a deep impact on the political situation. The issue is whether Ireland should join the Common Market.

The campaign has become really urgent only in the last few weeks. The enormous resources being poured in by the Fianna Fail government seem to indicate that it is getting worried about the outcome. Ministers are promising a bonanza for everybody with 50,000 new jobs in eight years, increased incomes for farmers and a halt to emigration.

Opponents of entry see more redundancies, a faster decline in small farming, higher prices and wage controls. Among those calling for a 'No' vote are both wings of the Republican movement, the Labour Party and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions.

Irish capitalism has been integrated more and more closely with the British and European system over the past 10 years. It has little choice but to join the Common Market. Outside the Europe of the Six it would face difficulties just as great as inside.

The only way the Irish workers and small farmers can avoid paying the price of these difficulties is by completely changing the basis of control of industry.

But the forces of the revolutionary left are not strong enough to ensure that

large numbers of workers see the issues in a revolutionary class conscious light. The referendum may be added to the list of missed opportunities.

● Thousands of Dublin Corporation tenants went on rent strike on Monday, joining 20,000 other tenants throughout the country. The previous Thursday 10,000 of the tenants had marched to the city hall, where they burnt notices of rent increases and pasted an announcement of the rent strike to the door.

Evictions

In some provincial towns the authorities have brought criminal proceedings against rent strikers and have attempted evictions. But the tenants' associations have resisted and the strike remains united.

● The shift workers in Ireland's power supply industry returned to work last week after 15 days on strike. They still showed signs of defiance, although they were badly beaten by the combined efforts of the employers and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, which told union members to scab.

The men refused to go in to work until scabs who had taken their jobs left the plant.

The Shift Workers Association, which organised the strike, has said that it will pursue the claim for parity with staff workers through new tactics and has asked its members to leave the unions that opposed the strike and to form a new trade union.

**And in the North...
A DAY OF
'LOYALIST'
ANGER**

BELFAST: In a long series of street fights last weekend the young Protestant workers of East Belfast found themselves for the first time in two years at the receiving end of the brutal treatment for so long reserved by the police for Catholics and republicans.

The police baton charged crowds which had been stoning and trying to burn down a pub on the edge of the small Catholic area in the Short Strand area.

After decades of official permission to intimidate and beat down the Catholics, with the police on their side, the Protestants are now having the shock of learning that the state machine belongs not to them but to the British ruling class.

But this does not mean an immediate change of heart within the Protestant working class. They will still try to wreak their frustrations on their Catholic neighbours, rather than on the ruling class and its state. So far clashes with the police and army have been accidental.

The attitude of the Protestants is that the Tory government has somehow made a terrible mistake in attacking them. They do not see that capitalism has only one loyalty—to its profits.

Protestant workers are also threatened with redundancies at ICI and Standard Telephones, massive lay offs at Belfast's biggest engineering plant, Sirocco, and an unofficial three-month strike at Michelin was recently defeated. All hit Protestant workers more than Catholics.

Negotiations for an engineers' pay claim start soon. The relationship bet-

ween Bill Craig, the Vanguard leader and life-long enemy of the trade union movement, and his Protestant working-class supporters like Billy Hull, the Harland and Wolff steward, are bound to be strained.

The Protestant workers are being forced into direct conflict with the monopolies—the very interests which, in the last analysis, the British Army is in Ireland to protect. The fact of being British will more and more ring hollow as growing numbers of Protestants find themselves in the dole queue.

But the easy way out, as always, will be to blame the Catholics and the IRA.

There will be no true class consciousness unless the forces of Protestant discontent can be shown that there is a genuine third alternative to increasing misery within the British set-up or the same reduction in living standards within Jack Lynch's Green Tory Southern state.

A movement is needed to forge the industrial struggle of the Protestant workers and the struggle of the Catholics and republicans into one fight for a united socialist workers' republic.

**UNION BACKS
'LAWBREAKERS'
AT PARSONS**

SW reporter

NEWCASTLE: Fourteen hundred members of the technical and supervisory section (TASS) of the engineering union at C A Parsons broke the law with the full backing of their union on Monday.

They defied an order from the National Industrial Relations Court forbidding sanctions against non-unionists.

Terry Rodgers, chairman of the office committee, said: 'The order makes no difference. We shall carry on exactly as we have been doing for the past few weeks.'

In March a bogus organisation, the United Kingdom Association of Professional Engineers claimed before the court that it should have negotiating rights for its handful of members in Parsons. The courts referred the matter to the Commission on Industrial Relations.

This was an attempt to smash the closed shop agreement recently agreed with Parsons by TASS.

CONFRONTATION

But TASS members refuse to let their agreement be scrapped. They have been blacking the work of UKAPE members and for four months have been fighting with management over redundancies.

This double fight has now developed into a confrontation of national importance. The TASS decision to give full backing to its Parsons members means that attempts will almost certainly be made to charge the union with contempt of court and to seize some of its assets.

Inside Parsons itself, the struggle continues. Last Friday 600 workers that management claim are 'sacked' marched up to the firm's industrial relations department and threw their cards back at the management.

The sacking of the computer operators has put in jeopardy the wages of all 15,000 workers at Reyrolle and Parsons, and so directly involved the shop floor. But support from manual workers is still in the balance despite recommendations

from the national confederation of engineering unions.

The office sit-in by workers the management is trying to sack has become more active in the past few days. Sub-committees have been set up to organise propaganda, education and publicity. A broadsheet, The Platform, has been produced, to present the office committee's case.

But the company is keeping up the

pressure. Last week it announced a £8,250,000 loss for last year. This was an important blow in the propaganda war. The management has exaggerated the company's losses by including estimated future losses in the figures.

The aim is to blackmail the workers while pressing the government for a share in the massive handouts being given to the lame ducks of yesteryear.

As the Financial Times put it last week: 'The government is unlikely to be harder to Reyrolle Parsons than it was to the shipbuilders.'

**Frank Chapple in
power struggle**

THE ELECTION for the key position of general president of the Electricians and Plumbers Union is being held this month and next, after 18 months delay since the death of the last president, Les Cannon.

The union rules give the president considerable powers, in particular by making him responsible for all negotiations with employers. Cannon had been able to extend this power until the presidency was by far the most important position in the union.

That explains the delay. Frank Chapple, the general secretary, was worried that a newly-elected president would use this power to overshadow him. So he persuaded the executive to postpone the election on the grounds that the 1971 rules revision conference would have to decide whether full-time officials could stand for the post.

Meanwhile Chapple has been acting as the union's chief negotiator.

The result has been considerable dissent within the executive and among the other full-time officials. Mark Young, like Chapple, one of the leaders of the right-wing 'reform' group that won control of the union 10 years ago, took legal action in an attempt to force an early election. But he lost the case and £1500 costs.

Such infighting on the executive meant there was no hope of the right wing

deciding unanimously on a suitable candidate for the vacant post.

Chapple then carried out an earlier threat that if the executive could not agree on a single candidate, he would stand himself.

So Chapple, Young and an executive member, Eric Hammond, are contesting the election. The only rank and file candidate of any standing is Fred Gore, a senior steward at London airport.

The left in the union supported Gore in the election for general secretary last year, and it was expected the same pattern would be followed this time.

So there was consternation when it became known through the grapevine that a section of the Communist Party wanted to support Hammond instead. Certainly Hammond had originally been elected to the executive on a left-wing ticket, but since then he has by and large voted with the right wing.

Fortunately the majority of the left, including the Flashlight group, are sticking to their principles and supporting Gore.

Certainly, a vote for any of the full-timers that are running will do little to change the attitude of the union leadership. Only the election of rank and file candidates pledged to fight for radical changes in the union structure can help the fight for a democratic union.

Technicians at the crossroads

THE annual conference of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs this weekend takes place when the whole trade union movement is at a decisive crossroads.

The decision it takes at Bournemouth on the union's attitude to the Industrial Relations Act are vitally important. Last year Clive Jenkins tried to persuade ASTMS to co-operate with the Act by registering. But conference decided to deregister, and he and the rest of the leadership were forced to change tack.

True, Clive Jenkins wrote to the registrar of trade unions making a formal request to come off the register. But he deliberately undercut conference's position by sending another letter saying that ASTMS had no legal right to do so.

Since then Jenkins has adopted a public position of urging unions to appear before the legal machinery of the Industrial Relations Act.

Already ASTMS has presented evidence to the Commission on Industrial Relations about the C A Parsons struggle in Newcastle by the back door. Jenkins has also announced that ASTMS will appear in a National Industrial Relations Court action against an employer for wrongful dismissal of one of the union's members.

At the conference Jenkins hopes to formalise this position. A policy statement from the national executive will be put forward which expresses total opposition

to the Act and states that the union should not be registered.

All very well. But this is not the key feature of the statement at all. The second part follows up with the policy statement that 'ASTMS should appear as and when necessary to defend members' interests in any cases or references under the Act.' This combines opposition in theory with collaboration in practice.

This unprincipled stance is not of course confined to the ASTMS leadership. It is precisely what led to the TUC leadership to collapse the first time the Tories threatened their funds under the Act.

There are other forces in the trade union movement who cannot run and hide in this shameful manner. ASTMS rank and file delegates should not allow the union to stab them in the back. That is why they should defeat the national executive's policy statement.

Labour pledge to tenants

CARDIFF:—500 delegates at a protest meeting last week against the Rents Bill called for militant action to defeat rent rises. Labour councillors from Bedwas and Cwmbran declared that their councils would refuse to put up rents.

But delegates heard that Llantrisant, which also has a Labour council, had already put the rents up. A joint Miners and Tenants Movement in the town is organising the tenants in a partial rent strike, and more than 75 per cent of tenants are refusing to pay the increase, they were told.

HALSTEAD, Essex:—150 tenants packed the first meeting of the Tenants' Action Committee. The local Labour council is refusing to put up the rents, but the tenants realise that they must prepare for state intervention through a Housing Commissioner.

They unanimously agreed to withhold their rents from the commissioner if he is sent in. They are also organising a district conference of tenants in Essex to fight the Bill.

LONDON:—The United Tenants Federation in Hackney is planning a two-week token rent strike to get tenants ready for the real battle in October when they may

**THE RENTS
BATTLE**

be faced with a £1 a week rent rise.

Bexley Labour Council decided last week to implement the Bill if it becomes law. This leaves a minority of Labour boroughs in London ready to refuse to implement the Bill. Some are likely to reconsider their position now that they are

in a minority.

This makes the building of the tenants movement more vital than ever if we are to defeat the Tories' attempts to double rents.

REDDITCH:—300 tenants marched to the offices of the development corporation in protest against the most recent rent rises, which mean that the rent for a four-bedroom house can now be as high as £9.60. The doors of the office were barred, but eventually corporation members were forced to agree to meet the tenants.

Meanwhile the tenants are paying what they claim is a 'fair rent'—£5 and no more.

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Socialist Worker

No compromise on hours and pay say sit-in workers

MANCHESTER:—No compromise! That is the message being spelt out in more than 20 occupied engineering factories.

After nearly two months of struggle, the workers are determined to hold out for their full pay and hours claim against the powerful and well-heeled employers.

The claim is for £6 a week on minimum rates, a 35-hour week, equal pay for

women, longer holidays, better lay-off pay—and no productivity strings. The fight is organised on a factory-to-factory basis by the district committee of the engineering unions' confederation, following the collapse of national pay talks and the refusal of the top union leaders, led by Hugh Scanlon, to wage a country-wide fight against the bosses.

Some factories have settled for cash

agreements that ignore the demand for a shorter working week. But the workers still occupying their plants are set on sticking out for the 35 hours demand.

Stewards at the occupied Ruston Paxman factory—part of the mammoth GEC combine—are calling for urgent steps to be taken to form a new combine committee covering GEC's 300 factories.

Such a committee would go a long way towards breaking down the isolation that some factories feel and the demoralising effect of the bosses' expensive propaganda. Last week, the Hawker (Woodford) management gave each worker a broadsheet detailing six cash-only settlements and claiming that no agreement so far has included a change in the working week.

The policy of the local leadership of the engineering union—strict secrecy on each agreement reached—does not help dispel such lies.

A call has gone out for all stewards to demand that the local leadership fling back the bosses' lies by publishing the full facts of all settlements.

Victimisation

EDINBURGH: After a six-week strike 140 workers at Bertram's have settled for £3 on the basic wage and £1 on the bonus, with productivity strings to come in 11 months time.

During the strike, Ron Brown, local Labour councillor and engineering union member, offered to help the strikers with questions concerning rent and rate payments. For this elementary act of solidarity, the right wing of the union's district committee reported him to the executive committee for 'interfering' in the strike.

80 suspended

LEEDS: The struggle is hotting up.

The sit-in at Hoe-Crabtree continues, despite an unofficial company offer of £1.50. Eighty men at Hindle Valves were suspended after working to rule, and when valves were moved out of the factory despite their picket, they decided to occupy.

They also used mass action to claim social security. When all 80 appeared in the office of a previously unfriendly social security manager, he decided that the only way to deal with them was through preferential treatment.

Levy for strike

LONDON: The strike by toolmakers at Smiths Industries, Cricklewood, is now in its fifth week. The North London district committee of the AUEW intend to organise a district levy of all members.

Factory organisation at Smiths is weak, disorganised and compromising. Last week the toolmakers took an important step to remedy this disunity by issuing a leaflet explaining their actions, calling on the workers inside to refuse lay-offs without pay and for a mass meeting of all workers although the works committee has always refused to call one.

1400 out

GLASGOW: 1400 workers at the Caterpillar Tractor Company are now in their second week on strike. The factory is in the traditionally right-wing Mid-Lanark district of the AUEW. But its action contrasts well with the rest of the Glasgow area, where the Glasgow and Paisley district committees have been reluctant to begin district-wide action.

DOCKERS FACE THEIR TOUGHEST BATTLE

by Bob Light (TGWU Royal Docks, London)

HISTORY is being made in Britain's dockland. In the past week alone the temperature has been brought to boiling point.

There was the news that Liverpool was maintaining its black on containers loaded outside the dock labour board scheme. Then the employers announced that they were going to shut down Southern Stevedores, the third biggest employer in the London docks.

Hull, Manchester, Preston, London and Southampton decided to follow Liverpool's lead.

Finally, the Transport and General Workers' Union decided to pay the Tory fines levied against the union for not ending the dockers' fight to keep their jobs.

It is no exaggeration to say that dockers are now engaged in the most crucial battle in their history. They are fighting for their very existence, and to survive they are taking on the Tory government and its Industrial Relations Act in the face of a top level retreat.

The threatened closure of Southern Stevedores and the battle against the haulage firm Heaton's and their kind are closely related. Both concern the battle for jobs.

Southern is owned by a consortium of three huge shipping and stevedoring firms: Ocean Steamship, Furness Withy and British and Commonwealth Steamship. The employers say that Southern must be shut down because 'trade has been driven elsewhere.'

DIVERT TRADE

What they mean is that they want to divert their trade away from the docks and the dock labour board to depots outside the scheme where pay rates are much lower than dockers can command, and where they can get fewer men to do more work. For the dockers, the Southern closure involves the transfer of 1250 men to the lowly-paid limbo of the unattached register where they would get only a minimal basic wage.

Because the official leadership of the Transport and General Workers Union is caught up in all the phoney philosophy of productivity dealing it has co-operated with the employers and successive governments in running down the ports industry. It has concentrated its fire on getting better severance pay and the like.

Where work has been transferred to the disguised subsidiary container firms, the TGWU has gone in and obtained closed shop agreements. As a result a serious rivalry has been allowed to grow up in the union between the road transport and docks trade groups.

It is against this whole background that the dockers have taken their stance. The purpose is not to deprive other workers of their jobs. It is to extend the benefits of the dock labour scheme to the whole

transport industry.

This is the great beauty of the Liverpool initiative. The committee responsible for organising the blacking is jointly composed of lorry drivers and docks shop stewards.

In the face of the challenge to our very livelihoods, the dockers cannot retreat. We had already found out what the law means for workers even before it was strengthened by the Industrial Relations Act. In the recent past 12 test cases on this very jobs issue have gone before the courts. Each decision was in favour of the employers.

Right now, following the TUC surrender, the TGWU is to pay the blacking fine. It is looking for a compromise on the docks. This involves the recall of the docks' delegate conference, a welcome move, but probably designed to head off the active rank and file blacking.

But instead of fighting to maintain jobs and the union rate, the TGWU leadership envisages some sort of settlement along the lines negotiated by longshoremen in the United States.

A levy would be raised on all containers which by-pass the dock labour board scheme. The money collected would then be used to finance 'higher' severance payments and reinvestment in the docks. In no way would the danger of redundancy be lessened.

Under no circumstances can we allow the blacking to be lifted. Rank and file action alone can force a settlement which really prevents the murder of the docks industry and extends trade union wages conditions to new sectors.

In any case other issues are now at stake. Dockers did not chose the battleground as one involving an historic showdown with the Industrial Relations Act, but this is now what is involved.

The TGWU must be forced to stop its retreat. It must officially recognise the national ports shop stewards committee. An official extension of the blacking to all ports in the country would settle the employers and unleash the full might of the TGWU to destroy the act altogether.

Whatever happens, neither the dockers nor TASS, the technical section of the engineering union, must be left to face the government alone. It is the duty of every trade unionist worth the name to help and back us in every possible way.

Unity is now the key to success—unity of all transport workers for their common interests against the employers, unity of the whole labour movement behind those fighting the government and the Act.



Car workers on last Sunday's London May Day march to Trafalgar Square, supported by trade unionists, the International Socialists, International Marxist Group, Communist Party, Anti-Internment League and the Labour Party. Large numbers of marchers roared and jeered their disapproval at the appearance of Barbara Castle at the Trafalgar Square meeting and her hypocritical attack on the Tories' anti-union laws.

Sweat shop workers call a halt

LIVERPOOL:—Behind the facade of Kirkby's modern industrial estate lies a tangled mass of sweat shops built on the site of a disused World War Two ordnance depot. The 100 workers in one of these factories, Wingrove and Rogers, which makes forklift trucks and mining equipment, voted last week to occupy the factory.

The decision was in support of a claim that includes the 35hour week, a substantial wage increase and longer holidays.

Management reacted to the occupation by seizing control of the office block. But the workers have kept their grip on all the stores and the lighting and heating systems. An attempt by management to serve writs on the workers was rejected out of hand.

Conditions in the factory have to be seen to be believed. There is no canteen and tea has to be made in an old wash boiler.

Current wage rates are £26 for skilled men, £20.50 for semi-skilled and £18 for labourers. Yet despite these drawbacks, the men organised themselves into 100 per cent trade unionism 18 months ago and were able, by an overtime ban, to force the employer to increase the labour force.

The men realise that the struggle will be a long one. But the fighting spirit is strong.

Published by the International Socialists, 6 Cottons Gdns, London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers Ltd (TU all depts.) Registered with the Post Office.

Round the clock picket backs strike

CHELMSFORD:—900 workers at English Electric Valve are striking in support of a pay and hours claim. It is the first official strike in the town since 1926.

The workers, members of the AUEW and EEUPTU, are keeping a 24-hour picket at the Chelmsford and Malden factories, which are part of the giant GEC complex. The two-week-old strike is the third GEC dispute in Chelmsford this year.

STRATHLEVEN:—Within weeks of the partial victory by Plessey workers at nearby Alexandria after a five-month occupation, Burroughs, the business-machine makers, has announced its intention to axe half its labour force of 1400. At the firm's Cumbernauld factory 290 workers are also to be sacked.

A thousand workers were sacked in 1970 and 1971, but since then much has happened on Clydeside to guarantee that this time the firm will not find things so easy.

LONDON:—A mass meeting of London Overseas telephonists last week turned down demands for militant action in a fight to prevent the length of their working week being extended.

Two years ago the postal workers' union made an agreement with the Post Office which meant a reduction in hours for inland telephonists. But it also replaced some time allowances for overtime working by cash. This meant that telephonists working nights on the international exchanges face an increase in the number of hours they actually work from 35 to 41,

PICKET LINES

in return for a small cash increase.

For two years they have refused to accept this agreement, but have received no backing from the union leadership, who instead have supported the Post Office's arguments. Meanwhile, the Post Office has been withholding two hours' pay a week in an attempt to force them to give in.

BIRMINGHAM:—850 rank and file delegates attended the third annual conference of the Building Workers' Charter last weekend to lay down a strategy for their wages battle.

Bert Smith (Manchester) said that in the current pay negotiations the joint building union executives knew they had to deliver the goods or they would be discredited. The Charter now had to put every possible pressure on them to fight for the full £30, 35 hours claim. Any wage structure which included job evaluation or grading should be rejected out of hand, he said.

The conference decided to campaign for a one-day national stoppage and demonstration in support of the claim, and to work at local and regional levels for selective official strikes until the claim is conceded.

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