

WORKERS' FIGHT

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4p

TUC BACKS TORIES AGAINST PICKETS

Letter instructs: "Don't aid arrested pickets"

The letter from the T.U.C. refers to cases under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act against workers on picket duty:

"who have in the view of the police officers on the spot committed acts outside the definition of peaceful picketing. Trades Councils should not encourage delegates or affiliated branches to take part in any industrial action in support of workers before the Court on charges arising from the Act unless requested to do so by the NECs of the Unions concerned."

By
S. Matgamna

They are simply looking for a different way to apply the Act. Instead of using the NIRC, they bring "conspiracy" charges, which are, deliberately, rather vague. They give the police a flexible catch-all law that they can interpret pretty much as they like. The penalties are indefinite.

Like the government, the union leaders also resent the power of rank and file direct action, as it sets limits on their wheeling, dealing and compromising with the Tories.

What do these office-bound, well paid and totally useless TUC hacks mean by "peaceful picketing"?

According to law, peaceful (that is, legal) picketing means a token presence. The pickets' only right is to "communicate information".

That is, you can ask a potential scab to be a man and not a scab.

But if he is a creep and not a class conscious worker you can't do anything to stop him crossing the line and helping the bosses break the strike. That's what the bosses' law says.

And that's what the TUC says.

But information "communicated" by a few men didn't win the miners' strike. It was the powerful physical presence, pressure and "persuasion" of masses of determined workers that stopped the scabs and the movement of coal in and out of the power stations, and paralysed the police who tried to keep them open.

The Government knows where the knockout punch for their wage norm came from last year. So does the TUC. It didn't come from "peaceful picketing".

In fact the 'right' to picket and the definition of peaceful picketing does not now exist **except** in the Industrial Relations Act, which supercedes all previous legislation on picketing.

When it talks of "peaceful picketing", the TUC is defending a part of the Industrial Relations Act — the Act it still feebly pretends to oppose and to want to render inoperable: **they are helping the Tories to use the I.R. Act in such a way as not to outrage the working class and provoke further explosions like last July.**

In fact they are helping the government to cover up for a growing wave of general repression. Not only strikers are threatened. Many already face Heath's kangaroo courts for opposing British Army repression in Northern Ireland.

We need a campaign to stop this legal repression. If the TUC has faith in the law and in the testimony of policemen sent to watch pickets, rank and file workers can't afford to have faith either in the law — or in the TUC.

Our first concern must be to fight wage cuts, rising prices and the I.R. Act together with the reactionary Tory government which spawned it. We can't do any of this with our hands tied by the bosses' "definition of peaceful picketing". It's up to us how we conduct our struggle.

The striker convicted in the bosses' courts of aggressive action to stop a scab from scabbing, or of occupying or 'damaging' the bosses' property; or of hurting a scab-herding policeman, himself a full time scab against his own class — that man is a hero, not a villain!

Brother Fred Mathews who was killed by a scab-driven truck during the miners' strike is a hero to the miners. But according to the standards of the TUC he was a criminal who, had he lived, should have been hauled into court on the say-so of a policeman.

It is our duty to tear the victims of capitalist class 'justice' out of the clutches of the bosses' courts.

Trade union branches must denounce the treachery of the TUC leaders. So must every Labour Party ward and constituency which claims to have any connection with the struggles of the working class.

Our contempt for the employers, their law and their courts must be expressed by mass demonstrations whenever and wherever these brothers — or any others — are dragged into court.

A strong national campaign committee to arouse the labour movement is urgently needed: too much time has been lost already.

It was direct industrial action that freed the 5 dockers from Pentonville last year. That is still our strongest weapon against repression. But it must be prepared and organised; for that we need to build united front rank and file committees (Councils of Action), and ultimately, a national rank and file movement.

**North
Wales 24**

MORE CHARGES

SEE
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THE POLICE ATTACK ON MILITANT STRIKE PICKETS IS SPREADING. First, 24 North Wales building workers were set up for victimisation and face preposterous charges of "conspiracy" for their part in last year's building strike. Then the police net was cast in London and five pickets were arrested outside St. Thomas's Hospital site. Now five more have been charged in Birmingham and face charges of 'Unlawful assembly'.

IF THE POLICE AND THE GOVERNMENT GET AWAY WITH THIS THEN JUDICIAL VICTIMISATION WILL SOON BE A FEATURE OF ALL MAJOR STRUGGLES OF WORKERS.

All the more scandalous and treacherous therefore is the TUC's intervention to discourage solidarity action with the North Wales 24.

Flint Trades Council wrote to enquire if the TUC was keeping the case of the North Wales 24 under review. Back came a letter from Ken Graham, secretary of the Organisation Department of the TUC. He wrote that over the year a number of charges have been brought under the same Act, (passed in 1875) against workers on picket duty "who have in the view of the police officers on the spot committed acts outside the definition of peaceful picketing. Trades Councils should not encourage ... any industrial action in support of workers before the Court on charges arising from the Act..." (see text at right.)

Routed and forced to retreat when they tried to use the "big stick" part of the INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT last summer the Tories now fall back on the use of older laws which — so they hope — will not call forth mass action such as the Act provoked last year.

'Peaceful picketing' won't stop this scab



The unmaking of the President

WHEN we first heard about the Watergate affair last summer, our first reaction was to laugh. First, that the silly bastards got caught in the act; and then, transferring the incident to the British political scene, the idea of the Conservative Central Office bugging Transport House so that Heath could be one up on Wilson's witty political jibes about grocers and a life on the ocean waves, was just too ridiculous.

But, funny or not, it is the worst crisis to hit America for a long time. At its most dramatic it could mean that the single most powerful man in the world, the butcher of Vietnam and now of Cambodia, could be slung into jail, to be followed into office by the loathsome Spiro Agnew. But even if this course of events is avoided, the USA is in for 3½ years of the lamest of lame duck administrations which has ever stood at the other side of a light-years-wide credibility gap. The gang of common thieves, international footpads and murderers, that normally pass for models of respectability, have suddenly been deprived of their cover.



TRICKY DICKY

For years, everyone has known that Richard Nixon is a nasty piece of work — it was his witch-hunting which led to the trial of Alger Hiss and created the "Reds under the bed" atmosphere which fostered the growth of the McCarthy era. In fact, it was the Alger Hiss witch hunt which put Richard Nixon on the political map.

Then there was the occasion in the early 'fifties when, after he had been adopted as Eisenhower's running mate in the latter's first presidential campaign, he was nearly dropped because of accusations that he had "misused and misappropriated campaign funds".

He wriggled out of that one by making the now famous "Checkers" speech when he "bared his soul to the people of America" in much the same way as he tried to do last week. That time it worked: he

didn't get his nickname Tricky Dicky for nothing!

Nixon wormed his way back to take the presidency on the tide of the unpopularity of the Johnson administration. Millions of Americans reluctantly placed their faith in him. Now the disguise has been ripped off, and instead of 'Law and Order' Nixon we have 'breaking and entering and bugging' Nixon.

Such practices are, in fact, a fairly common practice in American politics, which perhaps explains the careless hamfistedness of the Watergate break-in. Gore Vidal tells a story that when he was running for Congress in 1960 he caught some Republicans buying votes. The leader of the Democrats in his state told him not to prosecute because "if you nail them here, they will nail us somewhere else in the state".

The bugging was in fact only a minor part in a campaign to rig the 1972 American elections. (The

in the early part of 1971 the polls showed that the likely Democratic candidate Edmund Muskie stood a good chance of beating Nixon, so John Mitchell, the then Attorney General (roughly equivalent to Home Secretary) and later Nixon's campaign manager, launched a systematic programme of spying and sabotage to make sure that Muskie did not get the Democratic nomination. He knew that if either George McGovern or George Wallace was nominated, a large proportion of the Democrat vote would be alienated into walking into the Republican camp (as in fact happened).

What is so gloriously different about the Watergate scandal is the rapid escalation in the number of disclosures, with the net widening every day to include, now, eleven of Nixon's top staff, and probably the imminent implication of Nixon himself as an accessory after, and possibly also before, the crime.

Then there is the constantly growing number of incidents revealed. Not for nothing have journalists the world over been able to make numerous plays on the name Watergate, for in the last month we have indeed witnessed a vast murky flood breaking through the crumbling fabric of Nixon's secrecy screen.

There was the fact that the whole operation was financed by secret and illegal campaign funds subscribed by big business in order to keep their man in office and in return for favours. The fact that the Nixon



"I'm sorry—I don't recognize any of them...!"

administration conspired to conceal the facts of the case from public knowledge.

To quote the New York Times: "The basic scheme was said to have called for all those involved in the operation to deny any knowledge of it, and for the re-election committee to issue public statements to that effect. In essence, investigators said, everyone involved in the operation repeatedly lied to Federal investigators, prosecutors, other White House officials, and, finally, to President Nixon." (That last one is debatable, but more of that later).



WHITE HOUSE HOODLUM HUNT

The fact that one conspirator, James McCord, has said that his price for silence about the full facts of the case was "executive clemency" (a minimum prison term) and regular pay while he was inside.

The issue has now widened even further with the news that

Hunt and Liddy, now in prison because of Watergate, were also involved in stealing files from the psychiatrist of the defendant in the Pentagon Papers trial, Daniel Ellsberg. Ehrlichman has admitted to being an accessory after the fact of this burglary, but he did nothing to inform the police or the justice department and Hunt and Liddy remained on his staff. Ehrlichman also offered the Pentagon Papers judge, Judge Byrne, the plum job of director of the FBI during the trial. Judge Byrne wisely refused the carrot, and has now declared a mis-trial on account of "governmental misconduct".

Nixon has now invoked "executive privilege" (guidelines to his past and present staff, ordering them not to reveal to anyone — including the Grand Jury, the FBI, or the Senate Investigating Committee — the contents of conversations with him or any questions relating to presidential papers.) This is hardly the action of a man with nothing to hide, who is seeking a "full and fearless investigation". One can only conclude that he prefers the vague admission of guilt entailed in such a move to the hard and brutal exposure of guilt that might follow without it.

We await further developments.
AMANDA WRIGHT

Nixon steps up Cambodia terror bombing

A SENIOR U.S. EMBASSY official in Phnom Penh, Cambodia recently stated "The ceasefire in Vietnam has released significant resources for Cambodia."

These resources, in the shape of thousands of tons of bombs, are now being used to terrorise the people of Cambodia, as the US Government makes a desperate last attempt to save the crumbling, corruption-riddled dictatorship of Lon Nol.

The most generous estimates have put the extent of this

regime's control as being 20% of the country's territory. But in fact it is confined to a small area around the capital, and Lon Nol himself is generally referred to as the "Mayor of Phnom Penh".

The corruption and demoralisation of his regime are quite phenomenal: even his generals quite commonly sell their arms and supplies, for personal gain, to the insurgents!

Since February, some 150,000 tons of bombs have been dropped on Cambodia, increasingly on

heavily populated areas in the liberated zones, piling ever-mounting suffering on the Cambodian people — nearly three million of whom (around half the population) have been displaced in the course of the war.

Meanwhile, Nixon tries to patch together the semblance of a government in Phnom Penh. On April 24th a new "Four-man executive" was announced, adding Sirik Matak (a Nixon protégé), In Tam (who used to work

for Lon Nol as President of the National Assembly and then supported him in dissolving that body), and Cheng Heng, ex-governor of Phnom Penh jail, to the one man dictatorship, with the result that there is now a 4-man dictatorship.

Without US bombing, these crooks would have been swept away long ago or, more likely, would have collapsed under the weight of their own corruption and isolation.

Police pile on more charges

5 OF THE 24 NORTH WALES building workers who are being charged for picketing are coming up in Court at Shrewsbury on 18th May. It is urgent that more places of work and trade union branches organise to send delegations to Shrewsbury on the 18th.

The stepping-up of repression in the last few weeks is a warning of the consequences if the police are allowed to get away with this case.

In Birmingham, five building workers appeared in court last week on charges of 'conspiracy' from an incident last September when they invaded the offices of a known scab-organising firm. Leading Communist Party militant Pete Kavanagh was arrested on the last mass picket outside the St Thomas's Hospital site — he comes up in court in Cambridge on Friday 11th May. Three other pickets who were among Kavanagh's defence witnesses have now also been charged with being 'a blemish to the peace'.

Action to defend the North Wales 24, on trial for the 'crime' of picketing on official union instructions last September, is now being coordinated by a Defence Committee of North Wales Charter. Setting up the committee was an important

step forward in the defence of the 24. It means that those on the committee, not themselves defendants but in close touch with them, can ensure that the defendants are not isolated and the defence campaign is kept up and accelerated.

This has been made all the more necessary by the run-down of the Holst site at Shotton steel works. 10 of the defendants, the only big group to work at any one place, were employed there. On Friday 4 May, 117 men were made redundant, including 8 of the defendants. The committee must ensure that the defendants are kept together by regular meetings.

Screening

Also, Charter in North Wales must fight to ensure that all 117 men get local jobs. Since the builders' strike last year, firms have stepped up their tactics against militants. Men from the Shotton site looking for jobs have been met by strict screening procedures. At the Bidston steel mill they've been told to produce a pass with a photo even to get on the site. Cubitts have recently interviewed 200 men — and taken 2!

The fight to get jobs for union labour means learning from last September's success and repeating the use of picketing against lump sites. It also means putting pressure on union officials to mobilise official support for the picket lines.

At present, Charter is calling for an anti-lump demonstration and lobby of Parliament on 18 May. But the Charter conference recognised the need for picketing of lump sites, and Pete Carter and others pointed out that "our immediate task is to support the 24 lads from North Wales".

If the right to picket is not effectively defended, any talk of fighting the lump is hot air. Action to defend brothers on trial must be put before trying to persuade Tory MPs to vote in the interests of the working class. Militants must put Shrewsbury first, and call on Charter to hold the anti-lump demonstration on the 18th in Shrewsbury.

Meanwhile, the UCAAT leadership have added to their record of betraying the North Wales 24 a refusal to postpone a branch officials' conference billed for the 18th.

We must recognise the trial for what it is — a political attack on our rights as trade unionists to take

action. Latest news on how seriously the government is taking the trial is that they are going to do structural alterations to the court room in order to accommodate it! And apparently the 210 charges and 7 volumes of police evidence were not sufficient — the defendants from Denbigh have now had a new charge brought on top of the others, that of causing an affray.

Mobilise

We on our side have a direct choice: either we leave the bourgeois courts to do their dirty work and act against our interests, or we take the trial seriously too, and mobilise for solidarity action.

Organise to spread and deepen support for the North Wales 24.

Organise a meeting in your area, through the Trades Council, Charter, union branches — and ask the Defence Committee for speakers.

Organise for a member of the Defence Committee to visit the sites and places of work in your area.

Organise a regular levy and send the money to the committee treasurer. One London site collected £61.25 for the North Wales 24 on the 14th May, and further collections are planned.

Organise to get maximum solidarity on 18 May. Send delegations to Shrewsbury. Move the lump demonstration to Shrewsbury.

BE THERE YOURSELF

All donations to: Defence Committee Treasurer: MR Williams, 1 Fford Pentre, Ocean View, Carmel, Holywell, Flintshire.

CYNTHIA BALDRY

Left: demonstration in Shrewsbury for last court appearance of the 24.



COLLECTING FOR

THE NORTH WALES 24
IN NOTTINGHAM

"Repatriation"

A RACIST GIMMICK

IN EVERY BLACK COMMUNITY in the country, the government has set up what they call International Social Service of Great Britain. In South London, this office, which operates from Cranmer House in Brixton Road, attempts to send black people back to Asia and the Caribbean. They are prepared to pay part of the fare to black people who find it difficult to live in this country (what black person doesn't ??) to settle in an overseas community (but NOT a European country)

Not only are they prepared to 'help' black immigrants get back to their countries of origin, but they will extend the 'service' to their children, born in this country!

The purpose is not so much to actually get rid of black people, as to spread the idea that black people don't belong here and have no right here, and thus to split the working class.

This so-called voluntary repatriation works hand in hand with the official and unofficial attacks of the state on the black community... high unemployment among black youth, slum housing, constant harassment of the black community and its political groups, the fire-bombing of black shops and youth clubs.

After an arson attack on one youth club, Police Inspector Jeater (who calls herself the Deputy Police Community Liaison Officer) claimed

that the police were convinced that the fire attacks were the work of a crank on a Lambretta. (The same one who, surprise surprise, was held responsible for the fire-bombing of the Black Panthers' Unity Centre and has still not been caught)

A public meeting, called by the Black Panther Movement, was held in Brixton on 6th May, the first of a series of meetings to be held in

the black community to expose these tactics and initiate community action to stop them. The message of the meeting, attended by representatives of the International Socialists and of Workers Fight, and people from the black community, was clear:

"We are not going to change our addresses, we are going to change this corrupt society".

Martion Kavanagh

Police cause affray in Brixton youth club

THE POLICE SPECIAL PATROL group was brought in to work in Brixton on May 2nd, and within 24 hours they were creating a near-riot at the Railton Road youth club in the heart of Brixton's black community.

At about 10.30 on the night of May 2nd, four policemen tried to enter Railton Community Centre, saying that they were looking for a youth who was supposed to have committed an offence in Birmingham. I van Madray, the youth leader, met them at the door and let them in.

The police went in, and began to hassle the young people there. It was clearly a provocation, and inevitably a scuffle broke out.

The police called for reinforce-

ments, and 15 uniformed men and four in plain clothes arrived, barged their way in, and began to attack the youngsters. Finally a youth was arrested and taken to Brixton police station.

Nobody was allowed to see him. Even at the time of writing, the solicitor got for him by members of the community had not been able to see him.

The police say that he has admitted to the crime they accuse him of in Birmingham, and is being taken there. The Black Panther Movement is now taking steps to ensure that he is not isolated, and the Black groups in Birmingham have been informed of the case.

MARJON KAVANAGH,

At Nottingham on the May Day demonstration I approached the platform about a collection for the North Wales Building Workers.

Remember on this demonstration there was talk of more one-day demos.

General Strike, Workers' Control, Revolution!

I was informed, however, that it was against the law to collect without police permission. Therefore the chairman informed me he could not announce from the platform we were taking a collection, but he would turn a blind eye if we went round with the collection box.

So myself and three other Workers' Fight members took the law into our own hands and organised. We collected £18 from the workers on Slab Square that day.

On the evening of May Day, myself and two colleagues went to The Fox on Parliament St, Nottingham, where the Scheme folk club have a meeting every Tuesday. These good people allowed me to speak from the stage. After I had stated the case of North Wales building workers my collection box was passed round.

After this the Club secretary donated the proceeds of the club raffle to the cause. £9 was the grand total collected.

I wish all my work was as pleasant as that night in May. Not only did I meet with full co-operation, but the music was of the highest standard. Anyone who pays a visit to the club will be rewarded by excellent entertainment.

GEORDIE BARCLAY

British labour must demand:

GET THESE MURDERERS OUT OF IRELAND!

IN AN ATTEMPT TO RESTORE Parliamentary politics to Northern Ireland, and to replace the militant Provisional republicans with the more malleable Social Democratic and Labour Party as the spokesmen of the Catholic community, the British government is stepping up its 'stick-and-carrot' treatment.

While would-be Parliamentarians are being encouraged with promises of power in the new Northern Ireland Assembly, the British army has been given orders to isolate and destroy the Provisional IRA in the Catholic ghettos.

This latter task has been largely entrusted to the 2nd and 3rd battalions of the Parachute Regiment, who, along with the 'counter-insurgency' Special Air Services Regiment, are now rampaging in Northern Ireland in a manner which readily recalls memories of the Black & Tans.

The paras have been assigned to two main areas — the Ardoyne in West Belfast and South Armagh, including the towns of Newry and Armagh. Military spokesmen claim that the Paras are like any other regiment of the British Army, and have been assigned these two areas on a random basis.

This may wash well with opinion at home. But not here. The Paras recently completed a two-year stint in Ballymurphy, one of the first 'troubled' areas of Belfast. In those two years, 56 people were killed and the behaviour of the Paras did wonders for the IRA recruiting.

The Ardoyne has been for some time known as a similar 'tough' area — many of the bombings in central Belfast are planned and carried out from there. In the past four weeks, four unarmed people have been killed by the Paras — the last, a 13 year old boy who was a passenger in a car.

On 12th April, Edward O'Rawe was put up against a wall and casu-

ally shot dead after he had surrendered to army gunmen.

Yet, Whitelaw insisted that: "Suggestions that the army is employing unnecessary repressive actions are unfounded and are the result of a massive propaganda campaign".

In Armagh, two members of the (official) Republican clubs were shot dead on sight in an effort to provoke the Official IRA, which has been observing a one-sided ceasefire for a year.

The paras have been brought in to 'pacify' the South Armagh area. The village of Crossmaglen frequently crops up in news reports. In this area a Provo unit has been remarkably successful, destroying army vehicles with land-mines and explosives planted under roads frequented by army patrols. A surprisingly large number of army cas-

ualties have occurred in this theatre of rural guerrilla warfare.

Constant complaints have been made about the paras saturating housing estates in Newry when the children are returning from school and people are going to mass. This is done, not to 'keep the peace', but in order to start an incident which will attract Provo gunmen. Heavy firepower is then employed in the hope that those who get in the way will be members of the IRA.

Everyone hit by the army is called a 'gunman'. If this is contested, Whitelaw calls it propaganda. Journalists sympathetic to the army conveniently overlook the fact that the Provos acknowledge every one of their members killed and give him a public military funeral.

Austen Morgan, Belfast.



12th April 1973: this remarkable picture was taken just after Edward O'Rawe had been shot dead "resisting arrest", and just before Sean Rowntree, seen here being searched, was shot and seriously wounded by his captors.

CHILD SHOT BY ARMY

TONY McDOWELL was being driven home by his uncle when he was shot.

They were driving down Alliance Ave when his uncle heard shots and saw bullets bouncing off the road in front of his car. He immediately pulled into a side street for cover. Tony started to shout "I'm hit, I'm hit", but his uncle thought he was only shocked until he saw blood all over Tony.

Tony was then driven home and brought inside to be given first aid. The Paras arrived and demanded to see their handiwork. They were kept at bay by Tony's relatives, but they fired a rubber bullet up the hallway of Tony's home. They fled when neighbours began to arrive on the scene.

Tony was then taken to hospital in a different car. Some time later two of his uncles were going to see how he was, using the car in which he was shot. They were stopped in

Flax St and arrested by Paras, who said: "We got one of you IRA bastards this morning and we will lock you two up". They were released next day.

Tony was only 12, and was the 46th person to be killed in Ardoyne since the troubles started.

Anthony McDowell was killed on Thursday 19th April. Immediately the army issued a statement claiming that the driver of the car blamed the IRA and that the boy had been killed by an 'armalite' bullet — a type frequently used by the Provos. This line was dutifully broadcast on that evening by radio and TV.

Next day, however, it emerged that the driver blamed the army, and photographs of the scene of the shooting showed clearly the trajectory of the bullet in line with the army post. Of the bullet, there was no trace — it had passed through the car, the boy's body, and out the other side.

The reality of the Internment 'Courts'

As we all know, Internment in Ireland is now ended and detainees get a fair trial. Or so they say. This report (from Republican Bulletin, 3 May 1973, with some additional details from a correspondent in Belfast) shows what the reality is like.

Miss Margaret Shannon (18), Monagh Drive, Turf Lodge Estate, Belfast, was arrested by British soldiers at her home at 3 am, on 6th March 1972, under section 11, Special Powers Act.

She was removed to Armagh prison on 8th March, and brought under heavy armed guard to Long Kesh Concentration Camp on 25th April, to appear before the British tribunal.

She was placed near the curtain from behind which evidence is given by faceless informers against victims unfortunate enough to be brought before what many legal men have condemned as a "kangaroo court farce".

Miss Shannon pulled the curtain aside and saw a person in British Army uniform whom she immediately recognised as a Captain Ball. She shouted at him "I know you".

She was set upon by two burly male warders. They dragged her to the ground by the throat, trailed her out of the room and along a long corridor, all the time choking and beating her, and dumped her unconscious into a cell.

Ann Walsh, another detainee, heard the commotion and also heard a wardress screaming "Leave her alone, you'll kill her". Ann rushed to aid her comrade, and was herself beaten unconscious. Ann received such a severe beating that she temporarily lost her sight.

Margaret Shannon suffered a severe neck injury; her clothes were torn off her while she was dragged from the 'tribunal'.

'Paras' with Riviera tans

THE LONDON CORRESPONDENT of the 'Irish Times' (24.4.73) has recently confirmed that 250 or 300 members of the Special Air Services (HQ in Hertfordshire) are now stationed in Northern Ireland and are serving with the Paras!

The SAS operate as a secret commando force, either backing up the Regular Army or acting as freelance marauders. It is made up of people who volunteer from the regular Army, and then finally go through special physical and mental tests before being finally selected for special training. They are trained in the "art of self-defence" (efficient killing) and in the use of explosives and various other technical matters.

Until recently the SAS has been serving in the Dhofar province of the Trucial Oman state in the Persian Gulf. There they helped the local Sultan train and lead his 'scouts' against the communist Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman.

The SAS didn't come off too well in Oman. 20 members were killed, and many more wounded. On 11th January this year the regiment was finally defeated and later with-

drawn in disgrace.

In Oman they assisted a reactionary feudal leader in attempting to defeat a liberation movement. With this experience, and the humiliation of defeat, the SAS is now helping out the Paras in Belfast and South Armagh. The faces of the people may be white and their language English, but the job of the SAS is similar — to defeat as quickly as possible and as ruthlessly as necessary the military forces of the

Catholic minority of the north — the Provisional IRA.

The SAS were given a month's leave at home before coming to Ireland, hopefully to restore flagging morale but also to get rid of the deep sun tan they obtained in the Persian Gulf. Those who have met units of the Paras on their peace-keeping activities here have reported that many of the Paras serving in cold and wet Northern Ireland sport 'Riviera' tans.

Anti-Internment League Conference

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE BRITISH ARMY IN IRELAND

Sessions on: 1) The Politics of Repression; 2) The Theory and Practice of Repression; 3) The Technology of Repression; 4) The Irish struggle and the British Labour Movement.

Speakers include people involved in the situation and specialists who have studied the repression in the North of Ireland.

Film Show and performance by Combine Theatre Group.

SATURDAY MAY 19th. 10 am. CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, London (Holborn tube).

Enquiries: Maureen Maguire, 88 Roslyn Rd, London N15 (800 9392)

SHOTTON STEEL PROTEST

United national fight needed

"WE ARE FIGHTING FOR THE right to work and the right to live", Shotton steelworks action committee chairman Luke McLoughlin told a big community demonstration in Connahs Quay on 28 April. Thousands attended the demonstration, organised by the Campaign Committee, a community body separate from the steelworks action committee. Both Campaign Committee and Action Committee are fighting for the 6500 jobs which BSC plans to chop by ending steelmaking at Shotton.

The demonstration was a step forward in spreading the cause more widely.

But community involvement in the fight must not take place at the expense of the action needed to save jobs in all steel areas — a militant fight on a clear working class basis.

In an effort to involve everyone, the demonstration was advertised as a 'peaceful procession which will be controlled by over 300 marshalls in conjunction with the police' ... and the police were thanked in advance 'for allowing this event to take place'! Yet Shotton steelworkers have been attacked by the police on their London demonstration.

But, at the rally, Tom Jones, joint secretary of the North Wales TUC, blamed workers in Teesside, Port Talbot, Europe and Japan for

Shotton's troubles. Nothing could please the Tories more! Each little section of workers campaigning against each other little section of workers, squabbling over the crumbs from the Tory table. Workers pleading with governments to stop steel imports — when if they did it would only mean a trade war and more workers' jobs lost the world over.

A campaign on the basis of "Shotton first and never mind about anywhere else" or "Wales first and never mind about anywhere else" may get more support from one or two shopkeepers — but it won't forge the powerful weapon needed to save jobs; nationwide workers' unity.

Labour MP Barry Jones and Communist Party local secretary Eric Cooke were little better than Tom Jones. But Luke McLoughlin — whose committee took the lead in setting up the National Action Committee of steelworkers — did speak up for the need to take action to save not only Shotton but jobs in all steel areas.

He said: "We will need community backing in any action we take". The Campaign Committee must organise to get the support of other workers in the area, on the basis of class solidarity.

CYNTHIA BALDREY



Shotton Steel demo at Westminster attacked by police. At Connah's Quay they thanked the police.

1,000 at Teesside pensions campaign meeting

ON FRIDAY MAY 4th OVER 1000 Teesside pensioners attended a rally at Middlesbrough Town Hall. The meeting was called by the Teesside Pensioners Association with the backing of the local Transport and General Workers' Union area.

The main speaker was Jack Jones, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union. The pensioners are demanding £10 for a single person, £16 for a married couple.

Jones called upon the trade union movement to fight for pensions at the level of the TUC minimum wage, and that the interests of the pensioners should come first and workers should be prepared to make sacrifices for them. He called for cuts in government spending, particularly defence, to cover the cost of increased pensions.

David Reed, Labour MP for Sedgefield, pointed out that the demand for £10 & £16 would cost the same as the hand-out given to the rich in tax concessions by the Tories.

Neither speaker pointed out that if the TUC mobilised its forces on a programme of confiscating wealth and profits, then decent pensions could easily be paid.

Local trade unionists are running a "Pensioners' Penny" campaign, collecting 1p a week from members to support the campaign of the Pensioners' Association.

Chris Whytehead

Norton Villiers sit in Appeal

Norton Villiers Joint Unions Occupation Committee,
Norton Villiers Ltd.,
North Way,
Walworth Industrial Estate,
Andover, Hampshire.

Members of the AUEW and the T&G WU have occupied the above company's premises and are seeking your support in their fight for the right to work.

... Four years ago Norton Villiers closed their factory in Woolwich and moved to Andover... We have now been informed that the factory at Andover is being closed, making 110 members redundant.

... Management would not modify their attitude and at a mass meeting held at the firm the membership of both unions decided unanimously to occupy the factory on a sit-in basis. ... Any financial assistance would be greatly appreciated. Please forward all donations to the Treasurer, Mr Fred Carter, at the above address.

Donald Kemp, secretary
George Wells, chairman.

Asians strike against May 1st. victimisation

THE 41 WORKERS AT THE NOTTINGHAM factory of E. Yaffe & Sons have been on strike since 4 May.

The strike was sparked off by the sacking of one worker, Mr Sarwar, for striking on May Day. Mr Sarwar had been offered the job of foreman if he didn't strike — but he came out together with his 40 workmates, all Pakistanis.

As well as the reinstatement of Mr Sarwar, the workers are demanding:

1) Union recognition. All the

workers are members of the Transport and General Workers' Union and they have been fighting a 10 month struggle for recognition.

2) A 40-hour week and other improvements in conditions. At present the workers work seven days, and conditions are foul. Yaffes and the next door factory, Milmie Lace, work hand-in-hand on hiring and firing in order to maintain these squalid conditions.

The workers are calling a public meeting to gain support for their cause in a week's time.

See Leigh.

BELFAST TEN DEFENCE COMMITTEE

Support the Belfast 10 Rally and March 20th May.
Meet 2pm Clapham Common.

No Irish political prisoners in British jails!

James Connolly and Ireland's struggle for Freedom

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New printing now out.
From 98 Gifford St. London N1

A MAN WHO DRIVES ANOTHER out of his house by force doesn't normally get praised for his humanism — even if he redecorates the place and makes it ever so nice, plants the garden, and brings his widowed and suffering grandmother to live there.

Yet, 25 years after the Zionists consolidated the State of Israel on land taken from the Palestinians people of almost every political hue are eager to cover it with accolades. "The bravest nation in the world" hailed David Astor in *The Observer*, whilst Raymond Fletcher in *Tribune* cretinously eulogises "The socialist hope of the Middle East". To the *Mirror* it's "The Promised Land", with Golda Meir as "that astonishing Jewish momma" (yes, really!), and Moshe Dayan "the military pin-up."

But whether the language used is more or less vulgar, the picture presented is blatantly one-sided. In essence it is little different from those accounts of the 'good life' going in Rhodesia and South Africa — the prosperity, the swimming pools etc — which totally ignore the fact that it is based on slave labour.

In Israel's case, though, it's not a matter of exploiting slave labour, but of driving a whole nation away into the desert. This was the real substance of the Zionist plan, of the 'ideal' held to particularly by the so-called 'socialists' who moulded modern Israel and still control its power structure.

And the 'plan' of many of them is still to expand Zionist occupied Palestine ('Israel') to the widest possible borders of the semi-mythical area of the lands of the Biblical 'Israelites'.

'Left Zionism'

It started with the Zionist movement in Russia and East Europe late in the last century and, more important for the history of 'Israel', the emergence of a 'left' Zionism a little later. Rather than see the usual 19th century style colonisation, they argued that the Jews had their own very special path to socialism, which involved creating a fully fledged nation with its own working class, which could then pursue the class struggle and fight for socialism.

So instead of stretching out their hands there and then in unity with exploited and oppressed people, they set out for Palestine, which they found to be, inconveniently, already populated. In the period up to 1948 they implanted themselves as a hermetically separate community within Palestine. They set up industry which was subsidised by world Jewish organisations to employ only Jewish labour, at European rates. Arab labour was strictly boycotted.

The Zionists bought land from Arab feudal landlords, displaced the Arab tenants, grew their own produce, and proceeded to boycott all Arab produce. Trade unions were established (the Histadrut) whose aim was to create Jewish workers, and to defend them not against their employers, but against Arab workers.

What a travesty of language was perpetrated when all this was described as "socialism".

For the 25th year, Israel will be celebrating 'Independence'. But before 1945 the Zionists had no wish for independence, as they relied on British rule for their position. Had their aim been a multi racial society, they could long before have



united with the Arab independence movements against British control.

But the Zionists did not want a multi-racial state. They joined with the British to put down the Palestinian revolt in 1936, scabbing on a general strike and later aiding in savage punitive raids on Arab villages, some of which were wiped out. The combined might of the British Army and the Zionist militia the Hagannah, slaughtered between five and ten thousand Arabs; and the British colonial administration 'legally' murdered one hundred Arab nationalist fighters on its gallows.

Until such time as they felt ready to set up a viable state, the Zionists opposed independence: it had to be independence for themselves alone — or not at all.

The second World War, with imports from Britain cut off, saw a boom in Zionist industry. In addition, the 1930s had seen both an appreciable growth of the Zionist population, and, under the impact of the monstrosity of Nazism, the widespread espousal by Jews around the world of Zionist sympathies.

In 1945, Britain re-appeared as competitor. In addition, balancing between Jews and Arabs, Britain came into conflict with the Zionists over restrictions on immigration. That the Zionists were to fight Britain did not mean a turn to anti-imperialism. Britain had seen Jewish settlement as a chance to secure a divided society and thus allow easy British control through manipulation, on the model of India and Ireland. For their part the Zionists were always clients of the dominant imperialism — but with their own distinct interests. Armed underground organisations sporadically engaged the British forces.

Partition

Britain referred the situation to the UN, expecting to have her authority upheld. Instead, under the influence of the Zionists' new imperialist patron the USA, the UN adopted a resolution which partitioned the territory into two, giving the Zionists and Palestine independence.

The UN allocation was generous to the Zionists; but they wanted more, and saw partition as a first step. And an indignant Britain, not yet fully schooled in the business of relinquishing direct control of her empire, tried a last ditch manoeuvre, organising armies from other Arab countries to invade.

The Jews were well equipped to fight back. But the Palestinians lost out completely. Their independ-

ence was short lived, as Israel in the course of the fighting did a deal with the Hashemites of Transjordan to carve up Palestine between them.

Thus instead of the 14,000 sq. km. allotted by the UN, Israel got 20,000 sq. km. But not only that: the rest of what had been Palestine now came under Jordanian rule, and was thus deprived completely of a state power base to defend itself from further encroachments. It had lost its identity, and had no voice, no army, no economic self-control, and totally dependent on the rulers of Jordan, who had connived with the Zionists for its dismemberment.

The birth of the "bravest nation" was accompanied by wholesale terror, as the Zionists endeavoured to gain vacant possession. Hundreds of thousands of Arabs were driven from their homes, told — at gunpoint — to leave within half an hour or an hour. To show they meant business, one of the wings of the Zionist forces slaughtered the entire population of a village near Jerusalem. After that, a thousand other Arab villages were vacated, as were 34 largely Arab towns. Memories of 1936 backed up the new threats and fears.

The Palestinians who stayed behind within Israel's borders were to see Israel's far-famed 'democracy' in a different light. They were subject to curfews, had to have special passports for internal travel and were completely excluded from the internal life of the country. They had become strangers in their own land, the victims of a ruthlessly racist society.

Even with the coming of peace they were not safe on their land. The Zionist state, holding an absolute monopoly of power and able to make up the 'rules' as it went along

made further incursions into Arab property within Israel's borders.

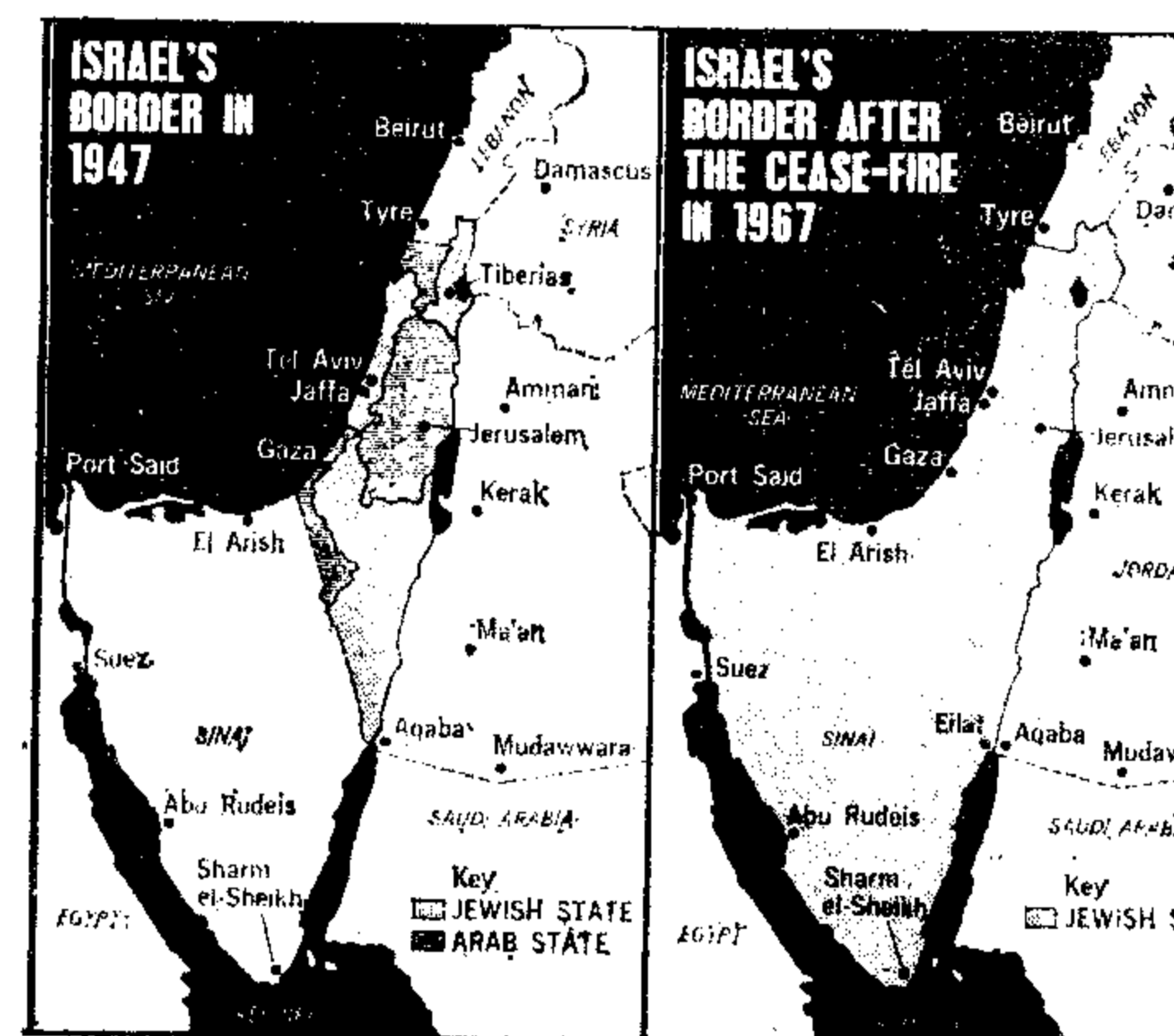
If before '48 the Arabs were bought out of the land and in '48 driven out, after that they were legislated off it.

Laws decreed this or that area a 'Jewish Zone' or a 'military zone'. Laws forbade building by Arabs; and thereafter, the authorities might pick out a choice patch of land, and clear out and demolish the Arab village on it on the pretext that "illegal building" had taken place.

Confiscated

Laws required the authenticity of land ownership to be proved with documents going back at least 15 years, with the result that most Arab village common lands were confiscated.

In all, 160,000 acres, most of it under cultivation, was purloined on one pretext or another, bringing the average cultivated area in Arab villages in Israel from 2 acres per person in '48 down to 1/2 acre in '65.



Israel's 25 years as a garrison for Im

Zionism: shall over the Midd



Far left: Palestinian refugees 1967
Centre: ready for action
Left: 'dealing with' resistance
Below: Palestine liberation fighters
imprisoned in Israel.

Imperialism How the East

Meanwhile, if you were a Jew and a Zionist, it wasn't a bad place to be. If you were a worker, there was of course exploitation, as in any other capitalist country, especially if you came from North Africa, Iraq or Yemen. You could join a trade union — though, as the all-embracing TU organisation, the Histadrut, is also the biggest employer of labour, you'd better be satisfied with its social services and not expect it to be a particularly zealous representative of working class interests.

Israel is anything but a new type of society. But, booming with a constant transfusion of dollars and a superabundance of highly qualified settlers from the advanced countries, it has so far been able to afford a liberal capitalist regime.

(Though it is rarely noted that since 1967 most of the area within its borders is under military rule, and Israelis living in or entering those areas are subject to military rule and military 'justice'. A recent demonstration by 80 young Israelis against the confiscation of an Arab village's land was arrested in its entirety by the army, and the five leaders given stiff sentences by a military court.)

Israel is a state that would never have been set up and could not have survived without imperialism. It has repaid its patrons generously.

In 1936 its forerunner helped put down an anti-colonial revolt which, had it taken root, could have spread through the region with wideranging repercussions. In 1956, its army stormed through to Suez with the French and British when Nasser (at that time militantly anti-imperialist) tried to nationalise the Suez Canal. Its defeat of three Arab armies in 1967 and the heavy punitive raids

since, has produced a deep caution among Arab leaders and a warning not to step seriously out of line with imperialism. A combination of diplomatic hints and military warnings is used to influence even the internal politics of its neighbours in a generally right wing direction.

Worldwide, "socialist" Israel has allied itself with reaction and imperialism. While Palestine guerrillas are dubbed anti-semites, Vietnam's Marshall Ky (whose admitted hero is Adolf Hitler) has been a valued friend of the Israeli government. It has supplied arms to the Portuguese for their war in Angola, and helped the French against insurgent Algeria.

Israel's least publicised export is of capital, as it invests in the cheap labour of parts of Africa, clambering aboard the imperialist midas-wagon.

Israel also has undoubted territorial drives, which are limited chiefly by the desire for a 'racially pure' state. Since 1967, though, it has learnt to 'deal' with large numbers of Arabs within its borders, combining techniques of community reprisals with economic inducements to the middle class leaders of the Arab community.

Expansion

While views on further expansion are sharply divided among Zionists, the territories taken in 1967 are being rapidly absorbed. 44 military style settlements have been dotted about these areas, and there is a long list of "non-negotiable" places.

However, those expansionists who favour a 'Greater Israel' stretching into Syria, Lebanon and Jordan are bound to be strengthened by the opening up of Jewish emigration from Russia.

In fact, if Israel is to accommodate all those to whom it extends an automatic right to citizenship (the 11 million Jews not living in Israel) its logic and ideology are expansionist.

Israel's 'programme', history and current policies have all denied not only the rightful self determination of the Palestinian people, but in fact their very right to existence as a nation. Zionism's 'Jewish only state' will ensure that the Arabs within Israel's border, be they a minority or a majority, will be denied civil rights and equal status.

The Israelis claim that the alternative is that they will be made refugees. But the programme of the Palestine liberation fighters in fact calls for a democratic multi-racial

society. It is the only programme that provides for both peoples to live and to determine their own lives. Moreover, it calls for the integration of that society into the Middle East in opposition to imperialism, and as such is the only socially progressive programme for the region.

Those who say that the State of Israel should continue and that, in time, a class struggle will develop, with the Israeli working class emerging as "the force for progress in the Middle East" are essentially accepting the original left Zionist ideology. This was a completely 'Europe-centred' 'socialism' which simply didn't see the colonial people or the importance for world socialism of the "national" revolutionary element in the revolutionary process in the less developed areas of the world. And of course, it was precisely this ideology which has given Israel its present character.

On the evidence of the last 25 years, and of all the preceding period, the Israeli workers are no more a force for progress than the Israeli rulers. They are utterly bound to their own ruling class and to imperialism, and stand four square against the march of the Arab masses, for whom they have a racist contempt.

As a British Tory journalist wrote last week: "For a romantic Tory it (Israel) is a total tonic. Nowhere else in the world are rich and poor... so constructively bound together in a common cause."

Reactionary

As long as the State of Israel continues to exist, it will continue to create the conditions for the degradation and dispossession of the Palestinians, and for a reactionary stance on the part of the Israeli working class.

Socialists must support the fight for the abolition of the State of Israel, for the return of the Palestinians to their land as free and equal citizens in a multi racial Jewish and Arab state, and for the strict limitation of Jewish immigration until all that has been achieved.

Socialists concern themselves with the rights of the oppressed — of the Arabs, not of their Zionist disinheritors who are allied to imperialism and dependent on the financial, political and diplomatic support of the sort of romantic 'restorers of Zion' who operate vicariously from New York or London.

Rachel Lever

Is Israel a haven for the Jews?

THE TERRIBLE HISTORY OF PERSECUTION of the Jews, and of the Nazi holocaust which annihilated 6 million people, is seen by many as a justification for Israel. It is used by Zionism both to gain sympathy and to attempt to morally terrorise its enemies by a blanket use of the label 'anti-semitic' against all opponents of Israel, especially revolutionary socialist ones.

* Zionism offered no solution to Nazi persecution — on the contrary. While some refugees did go to Palestine in the '30s, the powerful Zionist movement in America used its influence against a Trotskyist campaign for the opening up of the USA to unlimited numbers of Jewish refugees from Nazism.

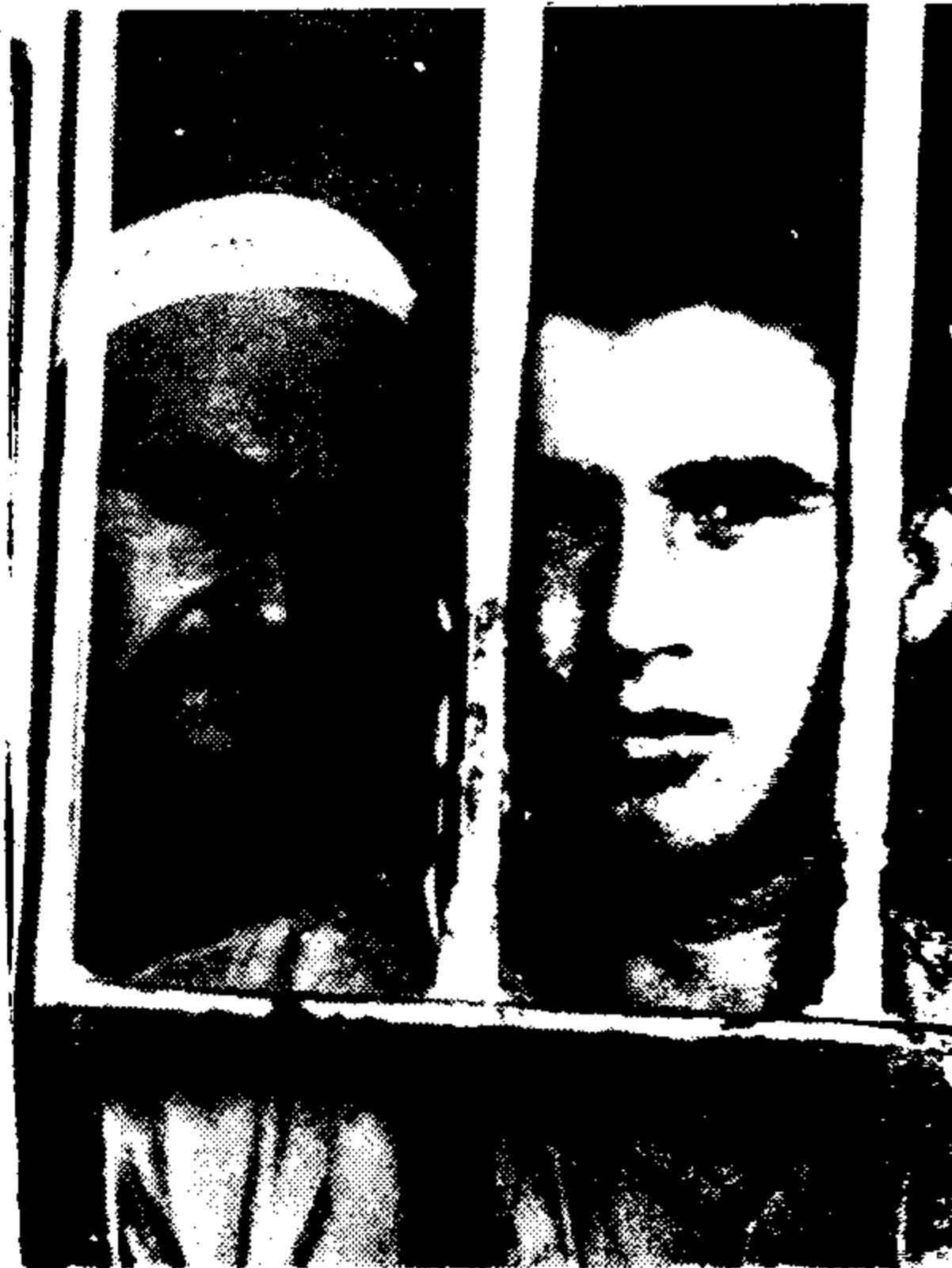
Why? Because the U.S. Zionists were shortsighted and blinkered dogmatists who wanted to use the persecution as a lever to secure the right of unlimited entry into Palestine, and feared that if the US was opened up, the pressure for immigration into Palestine would lessen.

* Zionism has created hostility to Jewish communities in the Arab countries — where anti-semitism such as existed in Christian Europe was previously unknown.

* This 'refuge', created after the holocaust of the Jews, has meant a holocaust of the entire Arab population of Palestine: driven out, many killed, and repeatedly attacked even now in their refugee camps with bombs and napalm.

The nearest equivalent to the Jewish victims of Nazism in the Middle East today are the inmates of the Arab refugee camps.

Israel deserves neither sympathy nor support. Its shameless apologists should be treated as we treat apologists for South Africa or Rhodesia.



Now build a new leadership

The contradictions of our May Day were summed up by the examples of the miners and the dockers. Both of these sections have recently gone down against the Freeze.

Yet both miners and dockers contributed strongly to the May Day strike. Dockers provided a large and militant contingent on the London demonstration. Miners were among the many workers who defied the scabbing of their own union leaders.

May Day showed clearly that the working class is certainly not crushed and demoralised by the Tories' victory so far over Phase 2. The mood and the turnout were not those of a class that has lost its will to fight. The momentum of mass action has not been fundamentally broken. The general strike is still on the agenda, even though, as a popular catchword, it was not to the fore on May Day.

Yet why was it that the miners, for example, who were not prepared to strike for their own demands and to support the hospital workers, came out strongly on May Day? They are willing to join in united action — but not confident about their sectional action. They will join in protest action — but hold back from a struggle which could have been prolonged and hard.

Special Cases

The Industrial Relations Act is an issue which affects the whole organised working class, as a class. When five dockers are jailed for trade-union activity, we fight to free them out of basic trade-union and socialist principle, and not because dockers are specially deserving or something.

That's clear. With the Freeze, it's not so simple. Both the miners, victorious in 1972, and the hospital workers, eventually defeated in 1973, got their support essentially on 'special case' arguments.

Of course, few people believed the Government thought the miners were a special case. But many workers *did* think that the miners (and the hospital workers) were special cases, and supported them actively or otherwise, on those grounds.

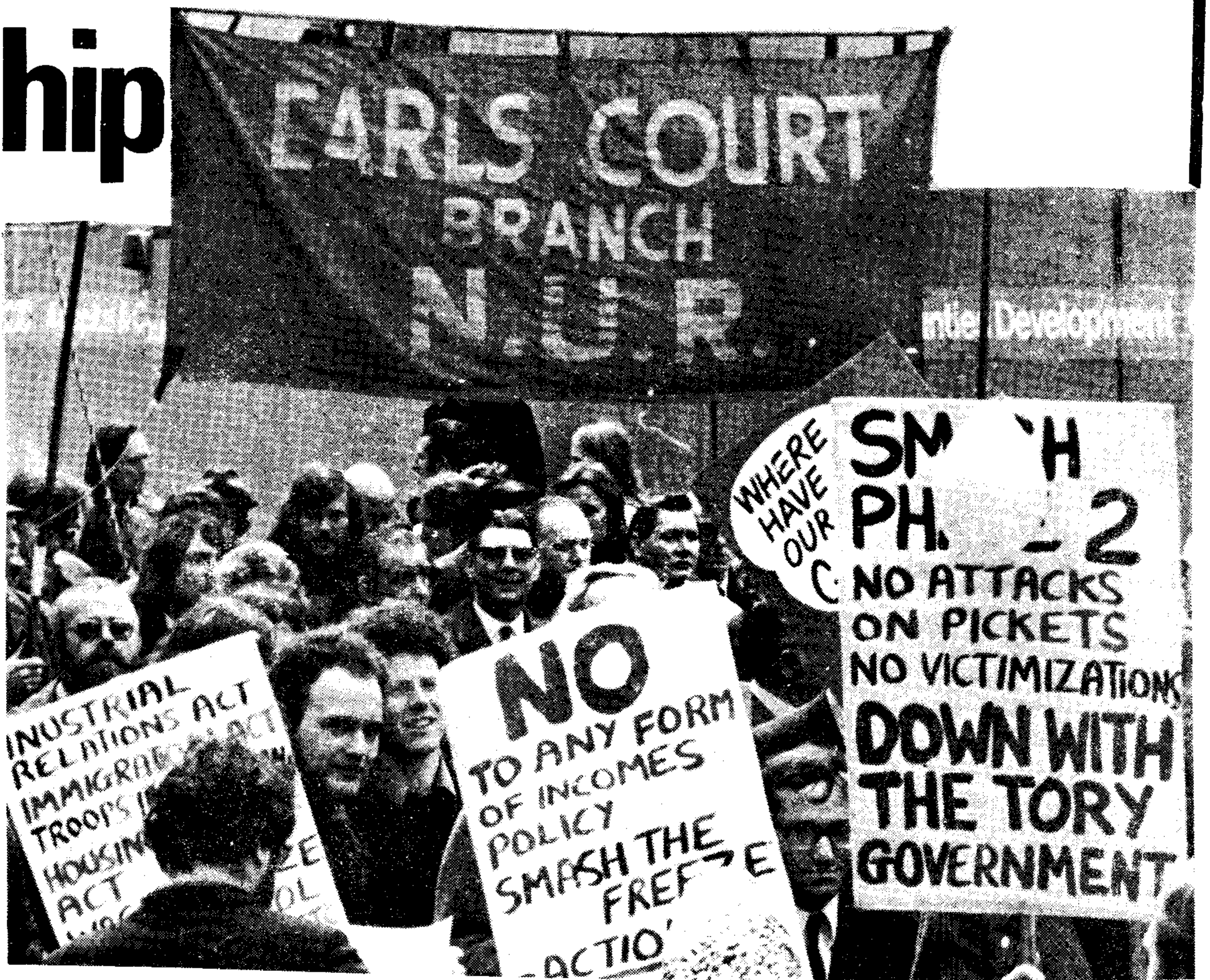
Thus each section of workers coming up against the Freeze tend to think that they've got to fight it 'on the merits of their own case'. If they can't make out a "special case", they will be cautious.

It's not that people think that Phase 2 is fair — everyone knows that the price controls are a farce. The trouble is more the idea of a "fair day's work for a fair day's wage" — which is deep-rooted in

This idea serves to disguise the fact that whatever isn't paid out in wages is taken in profit, most of it going to people who have never done a "fair day's work" in their lives.

Holding Back

An increase in wages of one section will generally mean a rise in the overall share of labour and a drop in the share of profits — not a



drop in wages for another section of workers, and not necessarily a rise in prices.

But the "fair day's work for a fair day's wage" idea means that workers tend to judge a "fair" wage by comparison with other wages, rather than by comparison with the *needs* of the workers and with *profits*. Wage demands are thus based on special cases, and not on *general* needs to defeat the bosses and improve living standards.

Even some militants — who have few illusions in 'fair' wages — have been holding back. Many feel that it's best not to jump right in and confront the Government now, but to wait for a better opportunity. Thus many miners in Scotland who voted against their own strike said "of course, we'd support a general strike".

We think that the holding back was mistaken, since it let the Tories beat the hospital workers. But the fact remains that the government victories *now* are preparing an explosion later this year. And then we must be better prepared.

Phase 3

If anyone thinks the fight on Phase 2 is over, they're wrong. For the Tories and the bosses, the job of pushing down wages and boosting profits is a long haul. After Phase 2, there's Phase 3.

So there is an urgent need to take account of the defeats over Phase 2 and launch a new offensive.

Sectional struggles *can* bash through the Freeze — as long as they are backed up with solidarity actions, sympathetic strikes, and so on.

Many local Joint Action Committees were formed during the fights against Phase 2. We must fight to stop them folding now. They must continue to mobilise solidarity with any workers' struggle, however small — and particularly, at present the 24 victimised North Wales building workers.

A tremendous number of new weapons have been forged over the past two years — sit-ins, flying pickets, and mass picketing. To these we must add the fact that the shadow of 1926 has now been lifted, adding one of our most powerful weapons — the general strike — to the working class armoury.

What is needed now is a unified rank and file leadership prepared to use these weapons — not as tokens, but in a fight to win.

We must work for a national rank-and-file movement, uniting local Action Committees and the various rank-and-file groupings in individual industries and unions (Charter, Rank and File Teacher, Steel National Action Committee, National Port Shop Stewards' Committee, &c). In the course of this we must weave together the bonds of solidarity that failed with the hospital workers.

Paul Adams.

TUC prefers defeat

A quick flashing of the sabre, and then into the Tory conference room — that was the TUC's perspective for May Day.

The official call for May Day was as wishy-washy and half-hearted as it could possibly be. Even the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, which provided the majority of the strikers in most places, only "invited" members to strike, and local officials were generally far from dynamic in organising for May Day.

But even this flabby May Day call brought out, on Tory government figures, 1,600,000 workers — more than any of the unofficial mobilisations of recent years. The power of militant action *is* there — it *can* be mobilised, given a lead. Who can doubt now that *if* the union leaders had campaigned and prepared consistently for a general strike, and called the movement into action over the £55,000 fine on the Transport and General Workers' Union last April, then the Industrial Relations Act would have been swept away and the Tory government with it.

The fact is that the experience and the prospect of that sort of militant action *scars* the top leaders. It disturbs their cosy relationship with the Tories and the bosses.

Thus they took care to call the

one-day protest strike well *after* the major struggles against the Freeze, and *after* the hospital workers had been defeated and isolated. They stressed that they saw May Day as *just* a protest, not a first step to further action. They admitted defeat in advance, *accepting* Phase 2.

Those of the top leaders who spoke on May Day rallies were not concerned to look at the reality of the present situation, to draw the lessons of the recent defeats, and to rouse the working class to action. Not at all.

General phrases about the evils of the Tories (as if we didn't know) and the legendary virtues of a Labour government "with a socialist programme". Speeches that could have been made at any time in the last three years. No reference whatsoever to struggle going on now. It was left to the few revolutionary socialists to raise the question of the 24 victimised North Wales building workers, in speeches and collections.

The turnout of millions shows that the TUC has the power. We must demand that they use it. In the meanwhile, we can't afford to wait for them or rely on them. If the leaders won't lead, the rank and file must

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LEFT OPPOSITION

ALMOST 50 YEARS AGO THIS YEAR, IN DECEMBER 1923, LEON Trotsky threw down the gauntlet against the rising tide of bureaucracy that was threatening to engulf the Bolshevik party. This struggle began with a series of articles in 'Pravda', published in the pamphlet 'The New Course'.

It was an attempt to put the party on a new level, through more inner-party and workers' democracy, and resulted in the formation of the Left Opposition, the only tendency to defend Leninism.

The leaders of the Russian Revolution stressed again and again that without a victorious revolution in the West, above all in Germany, the Revolution was in danger. The backwardness of Russia in 1917 was bad enough, but by the early 1920s its industry was devastated and its workers were exhausted by a civil war and imperialist intervention by twelve nations. The harshness of War Communism was undermining the alliance of proletariat and peasantry essential for the survival of the Revolution.

All this led to the New Economic Policy, which Lenin put forward at the 10th Congress (1921), after the Kronstadt insurrection on the eve of the Congress. Trotsky had made recommendations to the Central Committee on similar lines — tactical retreat, concessions to market economy — as early as February 1920, so much for the Stalinist slander that Trotsky opposed NEP.

But by necessity there were enormous dangers in NEP. From January to July 1922 the number of private enterprises increased from 285,000 to 450,438. The peasantry increasingly looked towards the private traders, or Nepmen as they were called, who placed themselves between the peasantry and the workers' state.

This alarming situation became the focal point of the 12th Congress, the first that Lenin did not attend due to illness. The principal report was delivered by Trotsky. He

appointment of officials which was the rule now.

For the first time, Trotsky appealed to the rank and file over the heads of the bureaucracy. A week later, 46 party members, including prominent Old Bolsheviks, signed a letter to the Central Committee proposing a special congress. 'Pravda' published an article in which workers' democracy was favoured: the bureaucracy could not yet openly attack Trotsky.

On 21 January 1924 Lenin died after a long illness. He left a 'Testament' stating that "Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated an enormous power in his hands, and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution... I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position..."

LENIN LEVY

The Testament was suppressed. The bureaucracy made Lenin an ikon, a sort of god figure to be used against 'Trotskyism'. Under the 'Lenin Levy', 240,000 "workers from the bench" joined the party, increasing the membership by 50% overnight. The raw recruits — who often joined the party more out of careerism than out of genuine political understanding — were putty in the hands of the bureaucracy, and became a voting bloc against the opposition.

Many of Stalin's allies of this period — Zinoviev, Kamenev, Lashovich, etc — later came over to the Opposition and admitted that "the myth of 'Trotskyism'" was invented to allow the bureaucracy to break from Marxism under cover of attacking Trotsky's "deviations".

(Since then 'Trotskyism' has come to mean the defence of Marxist principles of internationalism,

together with Trotsky's own theoretical contributions, permanent revolution and the analysis of Stalinism).

The bureaucracy cooked up the idea that Trotsky "underestimated the peasantry". Any number of episodes from past history were dragged up and used out of context to justify this. They attacked Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution — setting against it Lenin's theory of the "democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and peasantry", which, as Lenin himself emphasised, had been completely outdated by the experience of 1917.

In 1924 Stalin published the second edition of his pamphlet on 'Leninism'. The first edition had asked: Is socialism possible in one country? and replied, no — in line with all the theoretical traditions of Marxism. In the second edition, the question was the same — but the answer 'no' was replaced by 'yes'.

Thus, according to Stalin, the international revolution was not vital for the Russian workers' state. Socialism could be built "at a snail's pace" in Russia, and meanwhile the Communist Parties outside Russia should subordinate themselves to whatever bourgeois or bureaucratic forces were willing to be friendly with the USSR government.

EXILE

Stalin was the spokesman for a privileged caste, which rested on the nationalised property relations but reflected the pressure of imperialism on the workers' state. The caste drew its strength from the defeats of the revolution in Europe and elsewhere; from the demoralisation and atomisation of the Russian working class after the world war, the civil war, the destruction of industry, and the drafting of the most class-conscious workers into administration; and from the growth of the Nepman and the rich peasants.

The crushing of the Chinese revolution in 1927 — result though it was of Stalin's policy — coincided with the defeat of the Opposition. In early 1928 Trotsky — like thousands of other Oppositionists — was exiled from Moscow; later to be exiled from Russia altogether and finally assassinated by Stalin's agent in 1940.

The later Stalinist inventions about Trotsky being a "fascist agent" are no longer seriously believed. But some of the Stalinist mud still sticks — the picture of Trotsky as a Don Quixote figure who was continually tilting at revolutionary windmills while practical, pragmatic comrade Stalin got on with the job.

But who was practical in 1923-27? Barely a year after the routing of the Opposition, the Stalinist bureaucracy was faced by extreme social and economic crisis. They had to adopt the demands of the Left Opposition for industrialisation, planning, and a drive against the rich peasant — but in a panic, forced-march way, and *without* workers' democracy.

STANLEY LEE.

"A Bolshevik is not merely a disciplined man; he is a man who in each case and on each question forges a firm opinion of his own and defends it courageously and independently, not only against his enemies, but inside his own party"

Leon Trotsky.

argued for: 1) a comprehensive plan for the entire economy, 2) strict economy in administration, a campaign against bureaucratism, 3) rationalising production, 4) drawing rank and file workers into the leadership, and reviving the workers' democracy which war communism had undermined. Workers' democracy was a direct economic necessity.

These proposals were unanimously endorsed by the leadership.

BUREAUCRACY

But the increasingly solid and arrogant bureaucratic layer largely ignored the decisions. Lenin, in the last year of his life, became increasingly concerned with the problem of bureaucratism, and sought Trotsky's aid.

In the autumn of 1923 a crisis broke out. Strikes took place in many places and rebellious groups organised in the Communist Party. The failure of the German comrades in October, and a crushing defeat in Bulgaria, made the situation worse for the beleaguered Russian fortress.

The party leadership's answer to all this was to clamp down bureaucratically. On October 8th, Trotsky addressed the Central Committee and the central control commission, warning about the system of the



Leaders of the Opposition after their expulsion from the party in 1927

Sitting from left to right: Serebryakov, Radek, Trotsky, Boguslavsky, Preobrazhensky
Standing: Rakovsky, Drobnis, Beloborodov, Sosnovsky

1983

by
Geordie Barclay

THE MAN SAT ON A WOODEN box and huddled closer to the pot-bellied stove set in the middle of dispatch cabin at Stanton Iron Works.

A knock on the door startled him. He said "Who's there?". A voice answered, "Does Geordie live here?"

"Aye, come in", said the man.

The door creaked open and a fellow squinted in the dim light and said "Don't you recognise me?"

"It's David", was the joyful cry from the man. "Come in, I haven't see you for a hell of a long time, David, where have you been?"

"Don't tell me you didn't know I got ten years in Littlecost, the interment camp for trade unionists. I was charged under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act".

"What property did you damage, David?"

"Well, this copper hit me with his truncheon, I raised my arm to

protect my head, and another copper gave me a bloody great thump and I staggered back into a glass door which broke. So I was charged with breaking a glass door, denting a police truncheon, and making blood stains on a policeman's uniform. My blood".

"Why did he hit you, David?"

"I was on picket at Steel House, there were six of us, and the police said the picket was too big. That started the trouble. What I want to know, Geordie, is how did you sink to this level?"

"Remember the steel National Action Committee proposal of 43 million tonnes a year minimum? Well, the steel board agreed to this on condition that we accepted rationalisation and redundancies. We soon discovered to our cost that, with the technological advances, 43 million tonnes was quite easily obtained with a lot less men, so

various plants were closed down, about 80 000 redundancies altogether. Stanton was one of the first to go, being a Midland site."

"But, Geordie, what did our MP do about it?"

"Oh, he was successful in getting Ilkeston made into a grey area. This meant we had six new capital intensive factories built on part of the old Stanton site. Two of which cleared off lock stock and barrel as soon as their three year qualifying period for the government grant was up."

"We are now left with four factories employing about 100 women between them. Naturally the equal pay act doesn't apply because men are not employed there. As you have gathered, there are no jobs for men here."

"Geordie, why aren't you living in your council house now?"

"That's a good question, David, When the Housing Finance Act was implemented in 1973, my rent was £4 a week; now, in 1983, it will be £15 a week. Florence's wages and my dole money altogether only make us a total of £25 a week."

"Good God, Geordie, that's not much".

"Too bloody true it's not much, but what can we do? Florence's wages are only £17 a week, and we can't get any more, as phase 16 of

the pay and prices freeze says you can only get 25p plus 1/2% a year. Well, David, you'll have to excuse me while I get Florence's dinner ready - and I expect you're hungry"

With that Geordie started to peel some potatoes, set them on to boil, and then sat down again.

David said: "What about the meat, Geordie? and the veg?"

"We can only afford meat and veg on Sundays, the rest of the week it's mashed potatoes and bread. We used to have meat three times a week, but the price of spuds went up, and we were in the position that if we bought meat we couldn't afford to buy as many spuds. So we were forced to spend our money on spuds, and we had to buy more in order to fill us".

"Hells bells, Geordie, I'll never call the porridge at Littlecost again. Are the kids still living with you?"

"The girls are married and have emigrated, but the lad is still with us. He has just left school. He worked ruddy hard and managed to get 8 'A' levels, so we are hoping he can get a good job as a bus conductor".

Florence came in just then. Tears streamed down her face.

"Oh Geordie, I've got the sack".

Geordie took her in his arms. "Never mind, duck, the working class were born to struggle".

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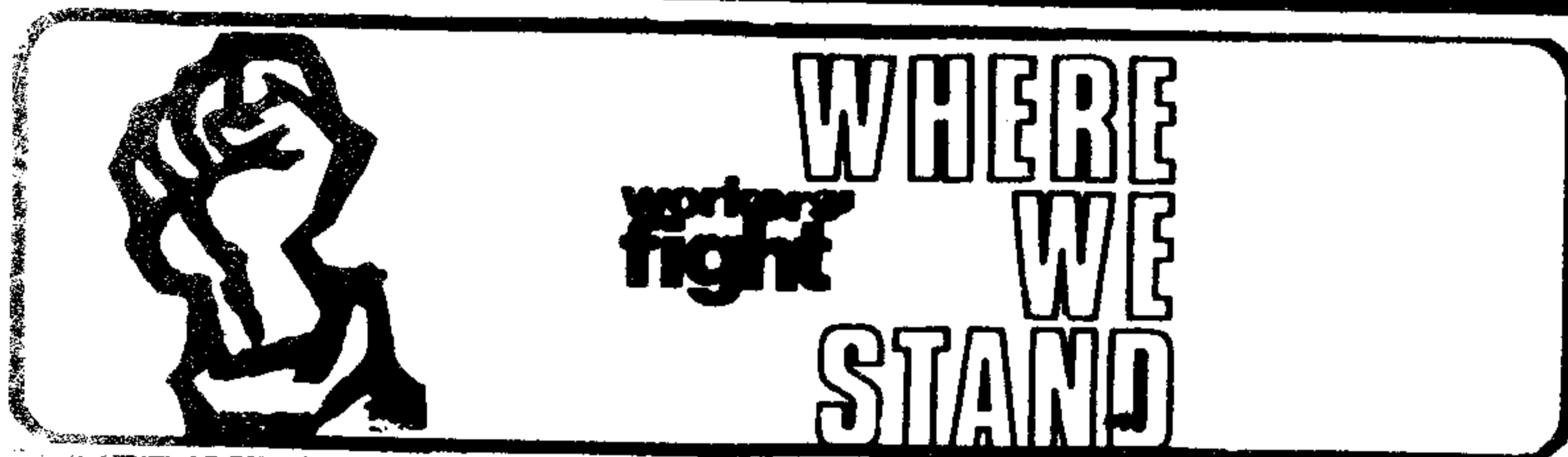
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CAPITALISM is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class at home and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racialism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. Already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

TODAY the ruling class can keep their system going only at the cost of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

THE ONLY WAY OUT is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

The working class has created political parties for this purpose - **LABOUR PARTIES, COMMUNIST PARTIES, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES**. But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class. **WORKERS' FIGHT** is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

The basis of our activity is the scientific theory of **MARXISM**, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

Although they cannot organise the struggle for workers' power, **THE TRADE UNIONS** are indispensable for the defence of workers' interests. We fight for the independence of the unions from all state control, and within the unions for militant policies and for democracy. We see the trade union bureaucracy as a distinct stratum which acts as a broker between workers and bosses. Its life and work-situation is quite different from that of the working class. Lacking a direct, necessary allegiance to working class interests, or any fundamental interests of its own, its general tendency is to work with the bosses and their interests against the working class.

- Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries and guided by the ideas of revolutionary Marxism can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable instruments of working class interests, independent of the bosses' state.
- We fight against the **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT**, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.
- We fight against **UNEMPLOYMENT**; for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.
- We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for **WORKERS' CONTROL**, with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.
- We believe that the **'PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM'** is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully; no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine (army, police, civil service) which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.
- THE LABOUR PARTY** is a capitalist party in its ideas, its policies, and in its record in government. At the same time, the bedrock organisations of the working class, the trade unions, support and finance the Labour Party. There is an 'open valve' connection between the Labour Party and the Unions, allowing the possibility of large scale active working class participation in the party.
- We relate to the Labour Party, therefore, not by simply denouncing it, but by attempting to advance the working class towards outgrowing and breaking through the particular stage in its own development - ideological, political and organisational - represented by Labourism.
- We fight for full and equal rights for **WOMEN**, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and which has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves".
- We fight against **RACIALISM** and against immigration controls. We fight for the integration of immigrant workers into the labour movement and for a united front against capitalism, whilst supporting the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.
- We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere fighting against **IMPERIALISM**, and to their organisations leading the fight.
- British workers have - fundamentally - more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world-wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party, such as Leon Trotsky founded the Fourth International, in 1938, to become. We consider that the mainstream of Trotskyism surviving from the 1938 Fourth International is the United Secretariat of the Fourth International but that this organisation, in some of its theories and much of its practice (for example that of the British section) represents a degenerate form of Trotskyism. We fight for the regeneration of the Fourth International.
- We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of **THE U.S.S.R.** and the other countries called 'communist' which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time, we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism, unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working-class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.
- There are **OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS** which have generally similar aims, but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously - sometimes grossly - inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

'TORIES OUT'

BY FAR THE MOST POPULAR slogan on May Day's demonstrations was 'Tories out' or 'Heath out'.

And it's only reasonable that we should be keen to get rid of the vicious gang of spivs that is trying to grind our faces into the dust.

But if you look into the matter a bit deeper, it's not so simple. 'Tories out', like it or not, means another government *in*. And the alternative government — much as we, as revolutionaries, would like it otherwise and strive to have it otherwise — is, right now, the Labour Party.

When Labour Party figures spoke at the rallies on May Day, workers' reactions ranged from sheer boredom (Liverpool) to open contempt (London). The London rally was treated to a particularly fanciful piece of speech-making by a member of the 'Militant' tendency ('Marxists' within the Labour Party) about the glorious future Labour government nationalising the umpteen biggest monopolies with really only the *tiniest* compensation. One group of workers was moved by this performance to buy a pamphlet 'Lenin on strikes' from a nearby vendor and wave it at the speaker with the cry "This is what you want to read!"

The fact is that workers remember very well the 1964-70 Labour government. Fancy talk about 'a Labour government committed to socialist policies' is all very well for bureaucrats who want smooth phrases to get out of *doing* anything now. But it doesn't correspond to the reality that workers know.

Many workers have an unspoken hope that if we kicked the Tories out, we wouldn't get socialism, but we would at least get rid of the Tories' vicious policies. We would at least get back to the pre-Tory status quo of 1970, without Industrial Relations Act, wage freeze, school milk cuts, Housing Finance Act, etc.

Dream

Marxists must say clearly that this is a dream. We can't get 1970 back again by kicking out the Tories or by any other means. Vicious and evil though the Tories are, their policies since 1970 are not dictated simply by their viciousness. All other things being equal, they would prefer to leave well alone, as the equally vicious-minded Tory governments of the 1950s did. They are driven by the crisis of capitalism — the falling rate of profit and the pressure of international competition.

Any capitalist government, Tory or Labour, is bound to submit to the pressures of that crisis. As far as we are concerned — *either* we bow to the needs of capitalism in crisis, and, whatever temporary and partial victories we may win, we fall increasingly under the shackles of the State; or we defy the needs of capitalism and overthrow the system. Neither way can we get 1970 back again.

And in fact the 'back to the status quo' idea is only a vague and wistful hope. When it comes to practical matters, workers are — on the whole — relying on their own direct action rather than on pressure through the Labour Party. It is scarcely the job of Marxists to re-focus the activity of the working class onto the Tory-Labour infighting.

When it comes to the major problem of the Industrial Relations Act, we don't argue that kicking the Tories out is the way to get rid of the Act. It is unfortunately very likely that a Labour Government would maintain the Act. We argue that a general strike is both possible and necessary to smash the Act.

All the same

But in fact most of those who claim to be Marxists have peddled pretty much the "back to the 1970 status quo" idea.

The most crude is the Socialist Labour League, for whom "kick out the Tories" is simply the answer to every problem, from Bangladesh to Ireland to decimal currency. For them, the SLL's struggle to kick out the Tories absorbs and includes every other struggle.

With the International Socialists, the equation works the other way. Every major struggle already is political, is the fight against the Tories. Thus the answer is, be more militant, i.e. (the same thing) kick out the Tories.

The International Marxist Group and the 'Red Mole'/'Red Weekly' are new converts (as from January) to the view that 'Tories out' is the answer.

Previously such low language as the word 'Tory' had not been allowed to sully the 'Mole'. That sort of talk could stay with the working class, where it belonged! The pure pages of the 'Mole' were devoted to such sublime slogans as "struggle decides, not the law", "a government based on the struggle inside the trade unions for workers' control", and (try singing this one, it sounds better that way) "a government which permits the working class to struggle through its organisations for workers' control"

But eventually the editors of the 'Mole' got the idea that it was useful for socialists to try to relate to workers' ideas and concerns. So bowled over were they by this new thought that, by no. 61, they had gone over to the line of "General Strike to bring down the Tories".

And at one moment — around the end of March — all three groups, IS, SLL, and IMG had this same slogan. With the International Socialists, admittedly, the slogan did not ring out clear. It was slipped in, in IS's peculiarly wishy-washy mealy-mouthed way, at the bottom of an article: all the better to let it drop again as soon as possible. "It's all right, we didn't really mean it".

ANSWER TO ALL EVILS?



Of course, we're for a general strike that will bring the Tories down: in the sense that a general strike to smash the Act will surely sweep away the government too. But to call a general strike with the main aim and purpose of kicking out the Tories is wretched phrasemongering.

The general strike — the biggest industrial mobilisation of the working class — is too serious a weapon to be used just as a pressure tactic in the competition between two capitalist/bureaucratic apparatuses.

Weapon

Only the SLL is sufficiently far gone to propose a general strike for a general election. But if the aim of the general strike has been defined as bringing down the Government, then the capitalist class has a ready-made weapon to stop the strike developing in too radical a way. The government resigns and elections are called. The strike has apparently 'won': the way is open for a return to work, and 'Labour to power with capitalist policies' — or, more likely, a Tory victory, as backward workers, newly drawn into the struggle, and then disillusioned by the lack of immediate practical results, turn against the labour movement.

Some leftists, notably the IMG, have a 'subtle' counter-argument here. Ah, they say, we don't fix what alternative to the Tories we favour — it *could* be Labour, but it *could* also (given favourable circumstances) be a workers' state.

But evasion is no substitute for clarity. The slogans of "general strike for the untold good things that will follow the fall of the Tories" or "general strike for workers' power" are deceitful and dishonest.

Here we have the "back to the status quo" idea again ("general strike to get back to 1970"). And there is a total overestimation of the power of the general strike.

A general strike *in itself* is simply people doing nothing on a large scale. General strikes can force and have forced many big concessions from the capitalists. But for workers' power much more is needed. Certainly in the event of a general strike Marxists would argue for that 'much more'. But we don't give people to suppose that general strike *in itself* can bring revolution.

None of this talk about "general strike to bring down the Tories" helps at all with the problems facing workers who want the Tories out but don't trust Labour. But then evasive and deceitful phrases rarely are of use to the working class.

PAUL EMMICK

DOCKS Liverpool takes a step backwards

A CASUAL IS NOT A SCAB, BUT he is a possible scab.

If he is a docker's son, he is still a possible scab. Not because he wants to be a scab, but because the employers will certainly use him to scab on strikers.

The acceptance on Sunday 13th May in Liverpool of 500 casuals is the acceptance of 500 possible scabs. The blame does not lie with the Liverpool dockers. In fact, many militants reckoned that — despite the stewards' ruling the other way — the resolution to accept casuals was in fact clearly defeated in the vote.

The blame lies with the action of Jack Jones in undermining the

National Dock Labour Scheme through high severance money, and the action of the stewards in Liverpool (including those who are members of the Communist Party) in fighting to get casuals.

At the last National Port Shop Stewards' Committee meeting, the Liverpool stewards said they were going to accept casuals. The fierce protest of other delegates forced them to back-track and join in a unanimous vote that they would reconsider accepting casuals.

By accepting casuals now, the Liverpool stewards undermine the NPSSC and those other ports, like London, Manchester, Tilbury and Hull, which will now be under

pressure to take casuals.

One way the employers (especially those combined in container-road haulage—shipping consortiums) will try to force a further victory will be to continue the game they played at Liverpool, and at Hull last year before the national docks strike: that is, to divert ships and trade away from a port, and to talk of closure, collapse, and disaster.

Without a fight for opening the register and for a 30 hour week, the days of the National Dock Labour Scheme and of the registered dock-worker are numbered.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

Coventry

Trade Union Action Committee May Day meeting

THE OFFICIAL MAYDAY DEMONSTRATION called by the Coventry Confed. attracted 1500 workers, who were addressed by two Labour MPs, an AUEW official, and one T&GWU district committee member: all on the theme 'vote Labour and all your problems are over'.

As soon as the last speaker had finished, the Coventry Trade Union Action Committee mounted their own rally, the speakers being rank and file trade unionists and shop stewards.

Among the speakers were Jack Sprung, one of Coventry's leading militants, and Eric Harrison, a shop steward and a member of Workers Fight.

Jack Sprung spoke of his 20 years in the Labour Party, nine as a councillor, fighting for socialist policies. He spoke of seeing changes of face but never of policies. He was asked — could the Labour Party ever lead the country to socialism? — and replied, categorically — No!

His conclusion was that the only solution was to build a revolutionary party based on the working class.

Eric Harrison spoke in detail on the North Wales 24, and the daily attacks by police on pickets.

He described the double-dealing of Feather and Scanlon. To his question 'is this the leadership we deserve?', the reply was a tumultu-



Eric Harrison — "We must build Councils of Action."

ous 'No!' He spoke of the need to prepare and educate for a general strike & of the need to build rank-and-file organisations and councils of action. His May Day message, which the meeting endorsed 100%, was:—

"On this First of May, this traditional workers' day, this message must go out. To the capitalists, to the racists, and to the exploiters — we will smash you! To the Labour and Trade Union leaders — lead, or in the name of god depart.

"To any section of workers that come under attack in the future — never again will you stand alone.

"We must build councils of action, we must build a united front to smash capitalism — not just with the workers of this country, but with the workers of the world."

AT RALEIGH'S, NOTTINGHAM, workers are demanding that three scabs who worked on May Day should pay the day's wages into a union charity or forfeit a day's work.

Union officials have been trying to 'cool' the situation since 50 workers from the shop where the scabs work walked out on May 2.

Fisher himself intervened in most of the important debates.

On one important motion — Composite 14, calling for the throwing out of 'bonus incentive schemes' — Fisher was defeated. But that defeat will not undo the damage he has already done and is still likely to do with his fight for these schemes.

It was the lure of the extra money to be gained through the acceptance of work study and productivity deals that helped sell the recent settlement to many members.

The danger of the schemes was shown by what the bosses' magazine 'The Economist' wrote after the strike: "... the strike has also brought home to hospital managers what many of them have long suspected, and what the Prices and Incomes Board told them in 1967 and 1971, that there are too many ancillary workers and that they are employed inefficiently."

caution and bitterness that many delegates came together at the annual conference of NUPE. The conduct of the conference — while there were a number of defeats for the leadership — was always firmly in the hands of the National Executive Committee and the General Secretary, Alan Fisher.

An important motion calling for election of officers (as against selection) failed to get through.

THROUGH MONTHS OF STRUGGLE many hospital workers looked to their union leaders for help, organisation, and guidance. The way the strike was carried out and the terms of the settlement opened many ancillary workers' eyes. Amongst the four unions involved in the organisation of ancillary workers, NUPE, the largest, played the most important and damaging role.

It was with a mixed feeling of

STEEL NAC gives militant lead

~~~~~ by Andrew Hornung ~~~~~

AT ITS FIRST MEETING, IN MANCHESTER, the new steelworkers' National Action Committee took its first steps to being a real fighting leadership for steelworkers.

The main resolution arose out of the discussion on how to save the jobs of some 600 workers at the Newport Tube Works, Mon.

After an explanation of the situation at Newport by Mike Anderson and Joe Parry, the following resolution (proposed by G. McCart of Corby and seconded by G. Barclay of Stanton) was passed unanimously.

1. No Closure.
2. Refuse to allow any redirection of materials because of closure.
3. Support any sit-in.
4. Fight the BSC proposals for the Steel Industry and put alternative proposals.
5. That an investigation into the closure of Newport Tube Works be held immediately by BSC, the TUC Steel Committee, and the National Action Committee, in conjunction with local MPs, and that this investigation be the forerunner of future tripartite talks on BSC policy.

Pending the investigation, closure plans are held in abeyance."

To show the Newport Tube workers that the NAC means business, the NAC will hold its next meeting at Newport on June 11th, when delegates will also address a mass meeting of Newport Tube workers. This was proposed by T. Duffy of Lackenby.

N.B. The resolution discussed in the last WORKERS FIGHT was the resolution presented to the NAC meeting. A composite was later made with other suggestions, after we went to press.

## BOLTON RAFFLE

- 1st prize: Bottle of whisky.  
No. 408 white (security number GS5731)  
2nd prize: China tea set.  
No. 189 pink (HU7632)  
3rd prize: Fruit dishes  
No. 23 pink (HU4215)  
4th prize: Glasses  
No. 477 brown (GS5567)  
5th prize: Box of chocolates  
No. 352 white (GS5526)

Many militant resolutions were passed, including ones calling for a 35 hour week, a £30 minimum wage, retirement at 60, double time on overtime, and 25% above grade rates for shift work. These are obviously going to be the basis for the formulation of the next claim.

But what is important is not only the nature of the claim but how it is going to be fought for.

An important issue is the way the TUC mouthed phrases about 'solidarity'. We had more solidarity from miners in Sheffield when they marched with us. We had more solidarity from workers who helped us financially and obeyed our picket lines. We must ensure that we fight together with sections of workers inside our own union like the dustmen. We must strengthen the local Joint Action Committees born of recent struggles.

Jack Sutton

## NUPE CONFERENCE

# Delegates fail to dent Fisher

THROUGH MONTHS OF STRUGGLE many hospital workers looked to their union leaders for help, organisation, and guidance. The way the strike was carried out and the terms of the settlement opened many ancillary workers' eyes. Amongst the four unions involved in the organisation of ancillary workers, NUPE, the largest, played the most important and damaging role.

It was with a mixed feeling of