

# WORKERS FIGHT

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4p

## ALDERSHOT TRAGEDY

THE KILLING of 5 innocent British working women in the Irish Republican Army bomb explosion at Aldershot is a tragedy which all sympathisers with the Irish Republican Army deeply regret. It was an accident caused by a mistake in the timing of a bomb, an accident regretted as bitterly by the Irish Republican Army as by us.

That was ONE of the tragedies of Aldershot. The personal one.

The other tragedy – the military and political one – was that the explosion failed in its objective to decimate the officer corps of the Parachute Regiment, which cold bloodedly butchered other innocent working people in Derry on January 30th.

That must be said clearly and without hypocrisy.

The bosses' press is making good use of this tragedy to wipe out the memory of Derry Bloody Sunday. Socialists are not in business to help them by wringing our hands in horror.

The IRA is the army of a people which is now being repressed and terrorised and part of whose country is forcibly occupied by the British Army. We recognise and defend the IRA's right to make war on the British state, and to attack legitimate military targets in Britain itself when and if it thinks it useful or necessary.

Just to compare Derry with Aldershot us to see the vast difference between the two sides in this war.

On one side it is the continuation of a struggle for liberation that has lasted for centuries. On the other side it is a ruling class war of repression, state terror and increasingly indiscriminate slaughter.

In Derry 3 weeks ago the British Government took a cold decision to make a bloody example of peaceful and unarmed civilians and its soldiers carried out that policy with deadly efficiency.

At Aldershot the IRA chose a military target, intending to strike not even at ordinary soldiers – as they are entitled to do – but at the Top Brass of the regiment. The innocent civilians died by an accident of war, not, like those in Derry, as a result of a calculated decision by murdering capitalist politicians.

Only people whose feelings, instincts and ideas line them up on the side of the 'official' violence of the Tory state against those it oppresses can equate Aldershot with Derry.

Only a party like Her Majesty's loyal "Labour" opposition, those

who, when last in office, unleashed the Argyles and 'Mad Mitch' on the people of Aden, would help get the Tories off the hook over Derry by joining the chorus of hypocritical condemnation: not one Labour MP supported Bernadette Devlin in opposing the emergency legislation which was rushed through the Commons to place the stamp of 'legality' on the British Army terror – including the Derry massacre – in Ulster! Not a single one declined to endorse the Army in Ulster, even though they had all made the expected noises of horror over Derry only 3 weeks ago.

For these ladies and gentlemen, of the Right and of the Left, every revolves around the exchange of polite meaningless words, or equally meaningless 'angry' words, as they dance their quadrille and play musical chairs with the Tories in Parliament. But when the realities of power politics intrude then all of them, without exception, know their place, and know which side they are on.

The revolutionary left must also know which side it is on.

But already socialists and 'marxists' are mixing pious declarations that 'Heath' is really responsible for Aldershot with condemnation of "Terrorism". This, for the ignorant, can be passed off as good Leninism.

But it has NOTHING in common with Marxism or Leninism.

### "TERRORISM"

By "terrorism" Marxists understand isolated acts of violence – often acts of despair – by small groups or individuals cut off from the masses, without the support of the masses, attempting to substitute minority action for mass action and usually having the effect of holding back mass action.

This is in no sense the case in Northern Ireland today, where the mass of the Nationalist population actively support the IRA, provide it with all the help and recruits it needs and look to it as their weapon, their militia.

The IRA backs up the Civil Rights mobilisations, the civil disobedience campaigns, the rent strike; without its protection these 'peaceful' mass actions could not stand up to the state. Far from the IRA holding back mass action, the civil disobedience movement is inconceivable without the IRA. And the IRA, in its present phase, grew organically out of the mass movement of the Nationalists.

The IRA tactics of bombings,

ambushes and shooting of individual soldiers and policemen are dictated by the overwhelming strength of the British military machine, not because they lack mass support. This is not terrorism as Marxists have understood it and condemned it (though always of course defending and supporting the terrorists against the state, and defending the right of even individual terrorists to fight against the imperialist state): it is guerilla warfare.

The IRA is not a terrorist organisation. Incidents like Aldershot are not terrorist exercises IN ANY MARXIST DEFINITION OF THE TERMS.

The pompous self styled 'Marxists' who seize on a superficial resemblance in tactics between the present guerilla war of the IRA and acts of individual terror, are not pillars of Marxist rectitude but mealy-mouthed dilettantes, hiding behind a misunderstood, misapplied and utterly emasculated 'Marxism'.

They take sides 'vigorously' and with aggressive 'firmness' after a Derry massacre – and then draw back smartly and put safe distance between themselves and the IRA when an Aldershot tragedy occupies the front page of the newspapers. That is, when it becomes vitally important NOT to flinch.

Both SOCIALIST WORKER and the WORKERS PRESS haven't just flinched: they have run for cover.

Riding its well-oiled weather-vane, IS once more swivels round a few degrees in response to the changed mood of public opinion. They "support" the IRA – but not its right to strike at military targets in Britain!

The blinkered pedants of the S.L.L. with their dehydrated "British Trotskyism" quote Lenin attacking individual terrorism and pass it off as if he were attacking guerilla warfare like that in Ireland (of which Aldershot was an extension). They would turn one of the greatest of revolutionaries into a snivelling pacifist in self-justification – Lenin, who advocated and assisted the armed guerillas in 1905 and defended the 1916 Easter Rising against pseudo-Marxists who called it a putsch.

What Workers' Press and Socialist Worker's designation of the IRA as terrorist, and their reaction to Aldershot, means is that they fear the effect on the average British worker. They fail to realise that a major part in fighting for socialist ideas in the working class is the fight against chauvinist, backward ideas.

Instead of standing firm against the backlash, they partially reflect it.

Instead of defending the right of the IRA to fight back they use pseudo-Marxist arguments as a cop-out.

No British socialists have the right to tell the IRA not to take action – including retaliation for cold-blooded murder in Derry – against legitimate military targets in Britain. To do so for fear of the reaction of the British working class is to deny the right of an oppressed nation to fight for freedom.

It is not a main responsibility of the IRA, fighting against massive odds and an enemy with immense resources, to tailor its military tactics to make life easy for the British left.

It is OUR responsibility to confront the chauvinism and lack of understanding of layers of the British working class – and to fight to change it.

Socialist Worker and Workers Press, from fear of the anti-IRA backlash turn themselves into muted expressions of such a backlash and thereby render themselves incapable of fighting the backlash effectively. In fact, in doing this, they themselves contribute to the backlash and become part of it.

The problem is not the 'terrorism' of the IRA but the failure of the British left to explain the justice of the Irish cause to the masses of the working class.

Socialist Worker and Workers Press evade the principled issue and obliquely pander to the chauvinism which they fear, using pre-fabricated 'marxist' rationalisations against 'terrorism' as a cover.

The attack on the officers mess showed that the IRA knows its enemy: not the British people but the ruling class and their armed and pampered mercenaries.

The IRA know their enemy. British labour must learn to know its friends and allies against the Tory ruling class.

We must refuse to allow that ruling class to use the tragic and accidental death of members of our class to justify its crimes in Northern Ireland.

And we must, above all, understand that the way to end the killings and the violence is to take sides with the IRA and help it to break the stranglehold which Britain still maintains on Ireland.

There is no other road to peace in Ireland but the defeat of British imperialism.



# Dave Brodie

## THE RAGGED TROUSERED FOOTBALL FAN

IT HAS BEEN INTERESTING TO note of late, in spite of rising prices and mass unemployment, the mounting fanaticism attached to the game of football.

Flood, famine, murder and a National Strike are pushed off the front page of the national dailies to make way for the news of George Best's dirty weekend in Nether Wallop with a mannequin for a second-hand shop.

I don't know about you, but I'm totally bewildered. During the high-lights of one particular game between Arsenal and Southampton the commentator remarked, "This is Peter Storey the Iron Man of Football". As the cameras focused on the said player, he was seen to be complaining bitterly to the referee about some big brute who had laddered his stockings.

It doesn't stop at the players. The temperamental Michelle Allison, manager of Manchester City, has oft been seen prancing on the touchline, throwing tantrums that would do Maria Callas proud.

Petulant Leeds United player Billy Bremner has on occasion been caught by the camera threatening to to smack an opponent's wrist.

The bewildering aspect of the case in hand is the type of audience who trek in their thousands to view this all male orgy each Saturday.

Large hairy miners, weather beaten construction workers, foundry workers with muscles in their eyebrows, all converge on the local football stadium to watch Mike Summerbee kiss Colin Bell, or perhaps Charlie George locked in the embraces of an Arsenal forward.

As regards fanaticism, some areas are more fanatical than others. In Glasgow, dress of the day for Ibrox or Parkhead varies from razors to axes, from knives to broken bottles.

Saturday night is normally spent in Glasgow Infirmary having wounds sutured or ears replaced.

Sunday night sees off the last few bottles of Red Biddy.

In the cold grey light of Monday morning things return to normal.

The rampaging terror of Saturday afternoon stands shamed and silent as he is dressed down by his foreman who caught him smoking in the toilets.

The Manchester United fan who raged through Stoke-on-Trent like a marauding Hun comes back to earth with a bang. Without protest he is docked quarter of an hour for arriving at Metro-Vicks five minutes late.

The same character spent his last four quid on rail fares and entrance fee to watch the aforementioned Georgie Best earn £300 in ninety minutes.

I can't help but think there is something wrong somewhere.

At Old Trafford, Royallist tendencies even show themselves.

A campaign, conducted mainly on the walls of the gents toilets, has been in operation for many years.

The aim of the campaign is to bring King Dennis (an Aberdonian by the name of Law) to his rightful place on the British throne.

Surprisingly it took a footballer, another Manchester United named Paddy Crerand, to put things into perspective.

The reason, he explains, that

the game of football is followed with such aggression is the generally pathetic life of the average worker.

I personally accept this as true. Nevertheless it is no excuse.

If as much anger or as much effort were put into fighting for a decent standard of living, as there is in watching the torrid love affairs of professional footballers, capitalism might collapse before the end of the season.

## WHERE HAVE ALL THE GRASSES GONE ?

WHAT has happened to servility? We have lost the Empire.

Those who were born as leaders of men are now having that right questioned.

Entry into the Common Market will force us to accept the existence of all those damned foreigners on the other side of the Channel.

But must we lose all our national characteristics? Are some of the arts we have practised with such expertise to vanish forever?

Will the time honoured practise of fawning and cringing be something of the past?

The Russians may be masters of the chess board, the Americans kings of the athletic field. The Thailander has his badminton, the Basque his pelota.

But no-one has perfected the bending of the back and the touching of the forelock quite like the British.

Yet this art is in danger of becoming as extinct as the dinosaur.

It is a possibility that the son of Master John the owner of the mill may never again be confronted with a deputation of cap-wringing individuals uttering those immortal words - "Could you see your way Master, to giving us a few extra coppers. It's for the bairns Master. They need shoes."

The schools do their level best to teach their charges to have proper respect for their betters, but somehow, somewhere along the line, they have failed in preparing the pupils for the outside world.

For instance. There are those amongst the youth of the nation who consider that they have the RIGHT to work. Obviously, with this idea in mind, they will approach their interview for employment with entirely the wrong attitude. For as we are all aware, when there are five young men for every job, the Personnel Manager must be approached with the utmost humility.

With a little practice servility can become second nature:

Remember you are unemployed. Remove all traces of pride.

When being interviewed, stoop the shoulders.

Keep your eyes downcast. Shuffle the feet.

The use of the word "Sir" cannot be over-emphasised.

Being unemployed for long enough can bring about quite a transformation anyway.

What of another of our national pastimes? I speak of informing.

Granted there are still many participants in this old British sport. But I fear this too is on the decline.

It could well be that Mrs Jenkins down the street, who draws national assistance for herself and five children, could one day be able to go out and earn a few quid without a neighbour informing the authorities.

Is Charlie Cunningham to be allowed to clock his brother-in-law in on Monday morning, and get away with it?

It could well be. As long as the decline in moral standards contin-

ues. Remember this. Your employer (if you are fortunate enough to have one) cannot always be there to watch over you personally. He could be taking a well earned three months in the Bahamas. Whilst he is there he relies on you to keep the wheels of industry turning.

Don't let him down. Respect your employer. Practice makes for perfection, so rehearse humility each day. Grovelling can bring its own rewards.

Not only could you become a veritable Uriah Heap but you could even reach the dizzy heights of chargehand; or (dare I say it) foreman.

So happy cringing, everybody.

## A case history: 12 months on the dole

TWELVE MONTHS AGO, Berry Edwards lost his job at Tillotsons of Bolton. Since then he's been out of work.

Like every other unemployed SOGAT member he goes along to the Richmond Street office every week to sign on and see if there are any jobs going.

But when Berry signs on he doesn't sign the same book as the majority of SOGAT members.

He signs a separate book for members who are blacklisted.

Blacklisted, that is, not by the employers - but by the Union.

The reason for Berry Edwards' unpopularity with the Manchester SOGAT officials goes back to 1967, when he was working for Hugh Stevensons in Stockport. Berry, then a shop steward, refused to accept an agreement over holiday arrangements which the employers and union were pushing.

The Union's response was to try and get him out of the union. Berry had signed a slip allowing management to dock his union dues from his wages. Somehow this slip never reached the management. Instead he was informed by the union that he was no longer a member, since he wasn't up to date with his payments.

Stevensons is a closed shop and SOGAT forced the management to sack him. But Berry didn't leave the matter there.

He took it to the courts and forced the union to reinstate him as a member, and pay damages for the loss of his job. Since then SOGAT officials have been determined to get rid of him.

In twelve months he has only been sent after one job, apart from unskilled work which he refuses to do.

The job was at Simpsons in Denton. When Berry got there he found out that it was a non-union shop.

Now, SOGAT has a rule - and it's a good one - that any union member who takes a job with an employer who doesn't recognise the union, loses his card. So why on earth should the union send a member along for a job at a non-union shop.

It makes a nonsense out of the rule - unless of course you want to drive that member out of the union.

Union control over hiring and firing in the print industry is a demand that we should be fighting for

But how much will it be worth if Manchester SOGAT abuse the small amount of control they already have?

There is a very simple rule that should always be applied when sending members along for jobs. THE MAN WHO'S BEEN LONGEST OUT OF WORK SHOULD GET THE VACANCY That means that the union should only send one man along for any job the employers notify them of. At the moment, anything up to half a dozen are sent chasing after the same job, allowing the employers to pick and choose and operate a blacklist against militants.

The present system leads inevitably to antagonisms and suspicions among the unemployed members. It should be stopped immediately and replaced by a fair system which doesn't allow any member to be out of work for twelve months, while others flit on and off the dole queues.



Berry Edwards

But a fair system is nothing unless it is seen to be fair. The only way this rule can operate is for there to be an unemployed chapel of the union, so that every member knows who gets the next vacancy and who's next in line after him.

This is the only way to create unity of the unemployed - a first essential step to getting rid of unemployment altogether.

The present system results in disunity of the unemployed members. It results in them having little voice in the running of the union. Unemployed members are allowed minimum representation at the half yearly delegates' meeting of the branch, but how can the representatives speak for the unemployed members unless there is an unemployed chapel which meets regularly, which can instruct them what policies to put forward and to which they can report back.

The reason Berry Edwards signs a separate book to the rest of the SOGAT members is that the branch officials want to prevent him getting in contact with the others who sign on.

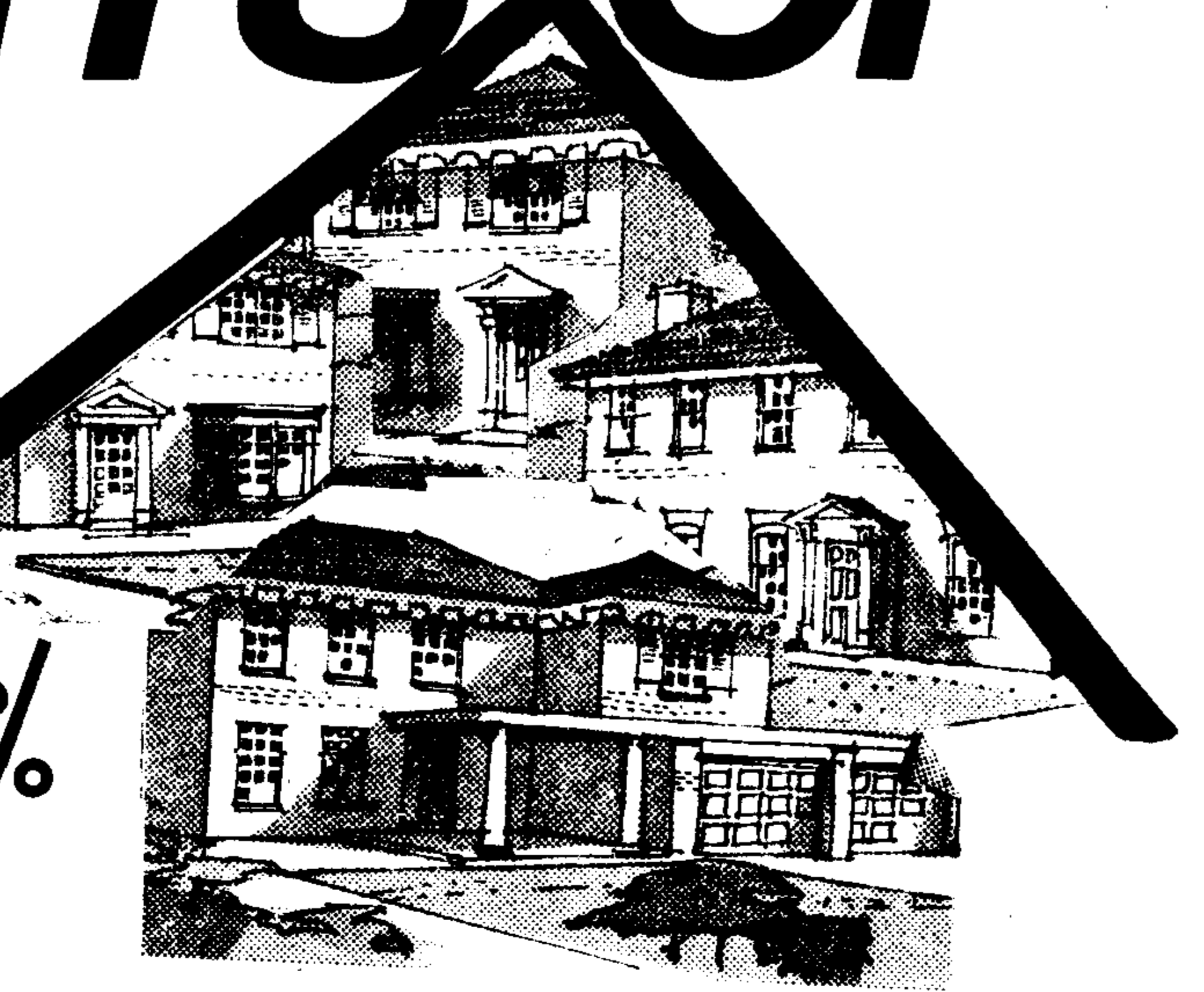
If the unemployed members were united in an unemployed chapel, or even had some contact with one another, they would see what a lousy, unfair system is now being operated.

And they would put an end to it. **FROM MANCHESTER PRINTWORKER**

I would like to know more about Workers' Fight. NAME ..... Address ..... Send to: Joe Wright, 21 Lindum Street, Manchester 14.

# THE PROFITS OF HOMELESSNESS

21%  
UP



ON JANUARY 31 TORY HOUSING Minister Julian Amery jubilantly announced what he described as a 'pretty sensational' boom in private house building. He also predicted that the upward trend would be maintained.

Last year, he said, work had commenced on a total of 207,300 private houses. This figure showed a 26% increase over the figure for 1970.

The picture for the public sector, however, was 'disappointing', said Amery. Last year 17,500 council houses LESS than 1970 were built.

Coming to discuss the reasons for the staggering increase in house building given the present crisis of confidence, Amery asserted that the reasons were to be found in the lifting of the freeze on wages (building workers would like to know about that one!) and prices. Also, he stated that the mortgage rates offered by building societies were now 'more attractive'.

The true story of this 'boom' is slightly different - as the report of the Nationwide Building Society revealed when it was released the next day. The details given in this report shed light on the real cause of this 26% increase in private building

FACT - the cost of a house rose on average in 1971 by 21%.

FACT - over the last few years some house prices have jumped by 72%.

FACT - the steep increases accelerated during the last six months of 1971.

FACT - taken over the whole country this increase represents a price rise of £1,000 on a house which cost £5000 at the end of 1970.

## PROFITS

Given these facts the increases in private building are not at all surprising.

As Karl Marx explained when he first laid bare the workings of this system, capital always flows into those branches of industry which present the best prospects of profit. At the present time land and 'development' of land is one of the few branches of capitalist enterprise which can today guarantee a good return on investment.

Consequently, investment has increased through the influx of capital into building, while it has slumped in other, less profitable branches of industry.

All this in search of profits - and profits are certainly there to be had, though the rat-race has not been without its casualties. Many small construction firms have been driven to the wall by the ferocity of their competitors.

Nevertheless, the overall picture is very favourable for prospective profiteers. Land prices are at a premium, there is an enormous shortage of houses, and to help matters along high unemployment in the building trade enables employers to push down wages.

Not that this boom even

touches the working class. The only people who benefit are the investors, the estate agents, and the middle class who can afford the rocketing prices.

To obtain a mortgage for an average priced house in the London area (which would cost £9,644) a worker would have to earn £60 a week!

Nothing shows more glaringly the absolute incapacity of capitalism to 'deliver the goods'. Nothing is more blatant than the bourgeois system's incapacity to provide decent homes for those who create its wealth.

And nothing better exposes the way in which the wealth created by the worker stands hostile to him after the capitalist has appropriated it.

## WORKHOUSES

Thus, at the same time as this 'boom' was going on, 5,926 families were herded into hostels many of which resemble workhouses in the conditions which prevail in them.

There are, in 1972, more homeless families than ever before. In the London area, the Shelter organisation puts the figure as high as between 50,000 and 200,000 families needing homes. And this figure will increase if the Tories get their way with their scheme to rack-rent council tenants and sell off council houses.

This does not make the prospect of adequate housing very bright for workers. Nor does it offer any hope to the 5 million who live in substandard houses or to the 1,800,000 who live in 'homes' unfit for human habitation.

The Shelter organisation and its whizz-kid Des Wilson (who accepted a job with the Tory Government) offer as a solution slum clearance, 'more houses' and ... education on how to prevent people from becoming homeless!

At a time when the property sharks are at their most active, aided and abetted by their friends in Government, Shelter's 'solutions' are not even mildly reformist.

And meanwhile working class families continue to be broken up and dehumanised in the most foul and demoralising conditions.

This is all to be traced back to one fact: namely that capitalism invests only where there is an easy profit, and that right now land and property represents a much more secure store of value than paper bonds and shares which could become devalued or even worthless.

The only way to begin to solve the problem is to cut right through the system - nationalisation of the land, of finance companies and the building industry, without compensation - in fact, it is they who have much to compensate for.

Nothing else can even approach meeting the needs of the working class.

## WHY JOE KELLY DIED

JOSEPH KELLY, 18, of Blyth, Northumberland, was recently murdered by the Tory government.

After 6 months wandering the streets, looking for work at factories and building sites, he took his own life.

The Coroner at Blyth recorded the verdict that he took his own life while the balance of his mind was disturbed. A simple way to brush the real cause of death under the carpet.

After all, what is more simple than to lay the blame on the lad himself and, at the same time, to imply that his mental faculties were not all they might have been.

But look behind the neat and tidy explanation of the coroner and we see something else. We see the fact that the British ruling class and its executive arm, the Tory Government, has consigned over a million people to a life without a future, on the dole.

It was this class - the brigade who trip to Ascot, in the crowd with the second Rolls Royce - who

signed Joe Kelly's death warrant, which came in the shape of the little white slip given him each week at the dole.

The history of the working class is scattered with martyrs. Like the 13 dead in Derry, Joe Kelly was a martyr - but in a different way.

He was not in active struggle. He never got that far. He was not shot by bullets. But he was murdered all the same. Murdered by the system which places greater premiums on making profits than on guaranteeing the right to work.

As his father told a newspaper, "He never stood a chance, our Joe". The grim reality of the present destroyed Joe's future.

So next time you hear the Tories telling us that unemployment is the fault of the working class, remember Joe Kelly in the best way you can, by strengthening your resolve to make an end of the Tory system once and for all.

RUTH BLACK

DAVID BLACK



The Fourth International, Stalinism and the origins of the International Socialist Group — Some Documents.

Pluto Press, £1.00

Reviewed by KEN TARBUCK, who was during the period covered by these documents the Secretary of the Socialist Review Group.

# I.S. WRITES ITS OWN HISTORY

WHAT, ONE MAY ASK, is the purpose of this small selection of "Some Documents" relating to the history of IS?

To the uninformed it may appear to be an exercise in educating the present membership, to help round out their picture of how the organisation came into being.

Unfortunately Pluto Press have engaged the services of a person to introduce the documents whose only gifts seem to be an ability to falsify and to develop a defective memory when convenient.

All the tortuous political arguments on Trotsky's views on the nature of the Soviet Union — as seen by Hallas — are in fact merely a preamble to some rather clumsy falsifications.

## EAST EUROPE

In the late 1940s a vital discussion took place in the Fourth International on the class nature of the East European states.

Hallas attempts to distort the developing position of the F.I. in order to claim that there had been a summer-sault from regarding the East European states as capitalist, to regarding them as workers' states. Thus he alleges that as well as the FI characterising the state capitalist analysis of these states as revisionism, it also characterised as revisionist the view that they were workers' states.

The document to which Hallas refers, using a single phrase torn out of context, is a lengthy resolution passed by the 2nd. World Congress in 1948. As to the actual position taken in this document, we find the following:

"The peculiarity of the buffer-zone countries consists in this, that the Soviet bureaucracy has succeeded, for the time being, in orienting the capitalist economy in a sense corresponding, in the first instance, to its own interests. This situation can only be transitional. It must end either in the bureaucracy's withdrawal from its position, under the pressure of imperialism, or in the real destruction of capitalism. ... The Stalinist state apparatus has acquired a great deal of independence in relation to the bourgeoisie and proletariat, not alone owing to the balance between and the growing prostration of both these classes; but above all to its intimate ties with the Soviet state apparatus and the overwhelming weight of the latter in Eastern Europe, amid the existing world relations." (p.119, Fourth International June 1948)

It is certainly true that there was some initial confusion, and the resolution quoted above reflected this ambiguity. But what does this prove? Merely, that when faced with an unprecedented situation the F.I. refused to rush in with ready made answers.

In this connection it is pertinent to point out that Cliff did rush in, as his document on the "Class Nature of the Peoples Democracies" (included in this selection) shows.

Any examination of this and the current reality in Eastern Europe will show that what Cliff described (largely correct factually at the time) no longer obtains. All of the special companies and other economic forms which he attributes to "Soviet Imperialism" have long since disappeared.

The 1948 resolution of the Fourth International has been vindicated in this respect, since it emphasised the

transitional nature of the regimes at the time.

Finally, what of the "workers' statist Revisionism"? A reading of the actual resolution makes clear that it refers to . . . pro-Stalinists outside the Fourth International!

## KOREA

Given that it was the issue of the Korean war that was the catalyst which broke a number of members away from the Healy group (the forerunner of the present Socialist Labour League), the bulk of whom went on to form the SOCIALIST REVIEW GROUP — parent of today's I.S. — it strikes one as odd,

attack on the "pro-Stalinist" policy being pursued by Socialist Outlook (which supported North Korea against US imperialism). It very clearly parted Socialist Review from such policies, and took an uncompromising 'third camp' position.

Why then select an article written in India to represent the Socialist Review group policy on this key issue?

Quite correctly Hallas repudiates the slander that the SR group in any way supported American imperialism. Yet there is no doubt that, given the support for the Vietnamese revolution by IS today, Hallas and the other leaders of today's IS feel very uncom-

We are served up a short paragraph which does NOT talk about reforming the Chinese and Yugoslav parties or states, but says Trotskyists should strive to create revolutionary currents within these parties.

However, this point of view was not predicated upon the view that these states were in conflict with Russia, but on the fact that they were the two Communist Parties that had carried through an overturn in property relations within their respective countries, independent of, and against the advice of, Stalin.

It was precisely because these two parties had had to mobilise the masses in their struggles that led the FI to

*I.S. today. But behind the shop-front democracy, a hardening bureaucratic centre needs to lie and distort its own past, of two years ago as much as of 20 years ago*



to say the least, that the article chosen to represent this group's point of view on the war is one taken from the second issue of the journal, one, moreover, which originated in India.

(Incidentally Hallas' claim that it was Cliff's document on the "Peoples Democracies" that rallied people is just not true — see "Some Notes on the History of British Trotskyism" in Marxist Studies, Vol.2 no.1, Winter 1969-70)

Didn't the group have anything to say on such an important issue in the first number of Socialist Review? After all any journal worth its salt must say something on such a burning current issue in its first number.

In fact TWO articles appeared on this question in the first issues of Socialist Review. The very first article in the journal was "The Struggle of the Powers" by R. Tennant (Tony Cliff). This devoted two pages to criticising American imperialism — and nearly five pages to attacking "Russian Imperialism".

The other article on this question was entitled "Whither Socialist Outlook?" (the Healy group's paper in the Labour Party). This is a scathing

fortable about the Korean war and the stand taken on it. Yet they dared not leave it out of this collection.

Therefore the choice was made to republish an article that is short and comparatively mild in tone compared with the articles in the first issue of Socialist Review, which were a real reflection of the feelings on the S.R. Group.

And of course so anxious are the present leaders of IS to put distance between themselves and Shachtman — given his present support for US imperialism in Vietnam — that they fail to mention that Labor Action (the paper which the article came from) was Shachtman's paper!

## CHINA & YUGOSLAVIA

A claim is made that "Cliff's forecast of the political development of the FI was rapidly confirmed. The majority adopted Michael Pablo's notorious (sic) document 'The Rise and Decline of Stalinism' ... which represented a return to the reformist Trotskyism of the twenties with respect to Stalinist states where these happened to be in actual or potential conflict with Russia".

argue at that time that these parties were still capable of responding to mass pressure and actions. It was this aspect that led to the particular judgment being made at the time. One, incidentally, that I now feel was wrong, but has been corrected by the test of events.

But, on the main issue of the Stalinist states, the document in question is clear and unequivocal — "Our sections ought to resolutely combat any tendency towards apology or justification for the present regime in the Soviet Union. . . The smashing of the dictatorship and the privileges of the bureaucracy, the task of a new political revolution IN THE SOVIET UNION remains more burning than ever." (p.43 Fourth International (Paris) Winter 1958, emphasis in original. Passed at World Congress, 1954.)

The so-called 'notorious' document of Pablo, if read as a whole, has in fact stood the test of time far better than Cliff's liberal use of statistics as a substitute for analysis.

## WESTERN EUROPE

But where is the relapse into 'reformist Trotskyism' that Hallas writes about? It is another figment of his imagination.

He alleges that the Fourth International indulged in some "fantasy" of a perspective of reforming the mass Stalinist parties in Western Europe, and like the proverbial children's party conjurer he pulls a quotation out of the hat.

"These organisations cannot be smashed and replaced by others in the relatively short time between now and the decisive conflict. All the more so since these organisations will be obliged, whether they wish it or not, to give a leftward turn to the whole or at least part of the leadership."

The reference Hallas gives for this quotation is "The Decline and Fall of Stalinism", a document adopted in 1954 by the world congress of the International Secretariat of the Fourth International, and reproduced in 1970 by the Socialist Workers Party (USA).

Unfortunately for anyone wishing to check the validity of this quotation they will not find it anywhere in the 1970 edition, nor in the 1958 edition; the reason is quite simple. The quotation does not come from this document at all.

It seems to be one of the laws of politics that the worse the mistake or falsification the more likely it is to be repeated.

Hallas is no exception.

He had previously used exactly the same quote in his article "Building the Leadership" in I.S. journal No.40, Unfortunately it is taken, at second hand, from a source other than that which he cites. (\*)

If all that was at stake was some confusion over the correct source of a quotation it would not merit such a lengthy explanation. But a proper reading of "A Recall to Order" (Hallas' actual source) makes it quite clear that the quotation is not talking about the Communist Parties at all! The reference was in fact to the mass social democratic parties.

It must be recalled that at the time in question, ie 1952, nearly every tendency on the left thought that a third world war was not only possible but imminent.

If one reads the above in this context one can see that the report was based upon the assumption of a quicker tempo of development than subsequently occurred and that it posed a very real and legitimate possibility of some social democratic leaderships or sections of them being forced in a revolutionary direction by the pressure and activity of the masses.

The report in fact says -

"In all these countries it is extremely probable, except for some new and at the moment unforeseeable developments, that the radicalisation of the masses and the first stages of the revolution, of the objective revolutionary situation, will manifest themselves within these organisations. The main forces of the revolutionary party of these countries will spring up by differentiation or disintegration of these organisations."

Does Hallas actually think (even in these brave new days of the 12 page Socialist Worker...) that there can be a complete by-passing of the existing organisations of the working class in the building of a revolutionary party, or that it is not reasonable to suppose that ferment within them and splits and disintegration will be a part of the process?

Finally, lest Hallas and his ilk think that only the "Pabloites" thought a third world war was imminent, let me quote from a "Socialist Review Youth Supplement" of the same period:

"The world today is divided by and large into two vast imperialist Power blocs, both striving for world supremacy. You may be quite ignorant of the coal and steel production figures of these countries but of one thing you can be certain. Both power blocs threaten world peace, and war between them is inevitable."

How, then, does this fit in now with the picture of IS being right all the time and everyone else wrong? Perhaps readers will now understand why only "some documents" were republished, and others left to moulder in the archives.

### SMOKESCREEN

The question that has to be asked now is why these particular documents were reproduced at this time, and why Hallas has to write such a falsified introduction to them?

Certainly new members of IS will want to know about the origins of IS and its present leaders. In this respect both the selection and introduction serve as a smoke screen to cover up far more than was intended to reveal.

That Cliff was the main driving force of the organisation's ideas and has remained with it all along cannot be doubted.

But the inclusion of Hallas' document from 1951 (dressed up as the Group's main policy document but in fact only a rehash - "for use on contacts" - of a Secretariat resolution endorsed two months previously) along with his introduction serve as camouflage to prevent new comrades wondering where Hallas was during the intervening years.

Certainly he cannot claim a continuous membership of the organisation since its inception. (indeed even in the first two years of its existence his membership was put in question. There is a note in the Nov. 1952 minutes of the NC where it was moved that Hallas be dropped to the rank of sympathiser for non-payment of dues.)

It would be instructive for new members of IS to look through the issues of Socialist Review during the 1950s. They will be hard put to it to find any contribution by Hallas. The book "A Socialist Review" published in 1965, which was a selection from articles over the years from the paper, contains not one contribution from Hallas.

The whole of the present exercise is like someone trying to answer the question "what did you do in the war Daddy?"

In fact during those long hard cold years during the 1950s and early 1960s Hallas seemed to have dropped from sight. It must all be a bit embarrassing for someone who now has the temerity to describe Trotsky as a bigger revisionist than Bernstein.

If such antics were not despicable they would be funny. There are always those with a glib tongue and pen who come flocking into the revolutionary movement when it is expanding and winning some victories. Then the movement is a relatively warm and cheerful place to be.

Hallas is one of the clowns who has come from out of the cold.

(\* The original being a report of the Xth. plenum of the International Executive Committee of the FI, published in the Feb/April 1952 issue of Quatrieme Internationale.)

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# The Fight Against Redundancies

## G. E. C. COVENTRY

A NEW WORD IS BEING USED in Parliament bars; Stock Exchange corners and other corridors of power - Weinstocking.

The word originates from Sir Arnold Weinstock, managing Director of GEC. Its meaning - more production and profits with less workers.

And there is no doubt that 1971 was a highly successful year for Sir Arnold and GEC shareholders, and a disastrous one for GEC workers.

In COVENTRY, GEC is the biggest single employer of labour - 14,000 workers in 8 factories. GEC Stoke is the biggest of these factories, with 8,000 workers.

Four weeks ago 1,000 redundancies were announced at Stoke, 750 manual workers and 250 clerical workers.

Management say that only 150 workers will be actually sacked, others will be redeployed within the Company and natural wastage will take care of the rest.

They blame a fall off in orders for transmission division - they make the telephone exchange switching equipment. They have not revealed details of the fall-off, but it is known that the multi-million pound orders from the Post Office are no longer forthcoming, and that production in this area this year is to be cut by a quarter.

Clearly this is part of Weinstock's shake-out and streamline policy. Wages saved on 150 workers over a year could amount to £¼ million extra profit. Redeployment could mean workers moved to lower grade

jobs on lower grade pay - once again a saving for GEC.

And what is this natural wastage? A man retires at 65, a girl leaves to have a baby, a couple leave for Australia - and their jobs are not filled (except by a redeployment within the plant).

That's one less job vacancy, one more place on the dole.

GEC save their wages every week, and have also saved paying redundancy money! What could be nicer - for GEC?

To fight back, GEC workers should demand:

1. No sackings
2. No loss of pay or status with redeployment.
3. Every worker leaving voluntarily to be replaced from outside.

The management's action in GEC Stoke is typical of their policy elsewhere in this group. They sit in London and plan which factory's workers to isolate next.

A strong GEC combine shop stewards committee is absolutely essential to link struggles in all areas.

It is no use thinking that the chop will come once only and then will go away. When Britain enters the Common Market and GEC competes with Siemens and Philips, shake-outs and closures will get worse, not better.

European combines will have to be built if electrical workers are not to be smashed by their employers - let alone links between Fife and Colchester.

Dave Spencer



## Book Review:

# The Smell of Human Flesh

"THEY CAME IN THE MORNING"  
Seamus O'Tuathail.

compiled by  
Republican Publications. 15p.

ONE OF THE MYTHS most consistently flogged by the Press is that of "British standards of justice." At a time when the nature of imperialism is being seen ever more clearly on a world scale, Britain's image remains to most of her citizens relatively untarnished.

We believe that Hitler and his fascists committed inhuman outrages in Germany; we believe that the Americans are guilty of atrocities in South East Asia; we believe that the French tortured the freedom fighters in Algeria; but the British—no, their sense of fair play is too strong. Their honour as officers and Gentlemen prevents them from behaving like their foreign counterparts.

The fact that time and again allegations of brutality and torture by Her Majesty's Forces have seeped through the facade, has not yet dented this overall image. But this was all in Aden, in Kenya, in Cyprus, where the people involved were far away and could easily be 'represented' as "savages".

Now, once again, such allegations are being made, coming this time from only a few miles away, from the mouths of ordinary English speaking workers not very different from those to be found in Liverpool, in Manchester, in Birmingham.

**THEY CAME IN THE MORNING** is essentially an account of the methods employed by the British forces in the enforcement of "law and order". It tells of the treatment of the men seized by the troops when internment was introduced, and in the following weeks.

It rejects the conclusions of the Compton Inquiry (set up by the Tories to whitewash Internment) and attempts to set out what really happened. Most of the booklet is devoted to accounts taken from the internees themselves, and substantiated by doctors, lawyers and clergy.

All the men who were seized on the night of August 9th suffered from starvation, from bags being kept over their heads, from being forced to run in their bare feet over stones and broken glass, and from being kicked, beaten and threatened.

### ELECTRIC TORTURE

Some were treated even worse. For instance, Michael Mallon was taken from his home on the night of October 1st. His account continues: "He walked me over to another big, bare room and left me in the charge of two uniformed RUC men. One of these went out and came back in and grabbed me from behind by the two arms. I had only a jersey and trousers on me as I dressed hurriedly when the military came.

"The other RUC man lifted two wires off the floor with what appeared to be two black caps on them and taped them on each side

of my chest with sticking plaster. Then the other RUC man let go my two arms. Nothing had been said to me by this time.

"The RUC man that had been holding my arms flicked a light switch on the wall up and down a few times. I felt severe electric shocks and my whole body was convulsed. I jumped up and down and the wires came off and fell down on the floor. My body was disjointed and a nervous twitch set in. I could not think straight and was all confused. I was also terrified."

After further maltreatment this man was released, as clearly there was not a shred of evidence to associate him with the IRA. Not that that matters. It only serves to illustrate that in their orgy of oppression the British Army are indiscriminate in their choice of victims.

For they are threatened by a section of the whole population, and therefore the whole Catholic population is the enemy.

### OPPRESSION

This is the recurring pattern where imperialism, whether it be American, French or British, is threatened by the mass upsurge of the people it oppresses. The severe contradictions within the capitalist system are far more acute where it has extended its grasp over whole nations, and squeezes them of their lifeblood.

There, in the neo-colonies, the robbery of the people is so complete that capitalism cannot pretend to be benevolent. Massive unemployment, low wages for the employed, bad housing — if any — force the masses of the people to rise up in rebellion. Because of the widespread and determined nature of this rebellion, normal capitalist methods of enforcing "law and order" are not enough.

The whole population must be terrorised, whatever rights it had must be taken away, in an attempt to maintain their exploitation. That is why imperialism, as this booklet says "leaves the smell of human flesh behind it wherever it goes."

### AND IN BRITAIN...

But we must not make the mistake of thinking that capitalism is basically different in Britain itself. So far the high level of industrialisation and technology in Britain has meant that normal bourgeois law can be maintained. In simple terms, while the profit comes rolling in, the forces of the state will be happy and friendly.

But when this profit falls off, as is beginning to happen, and when the working class refuses to accept unemployment and cuts in standards, then we can expect the events described in this booklet to be relived in the cities of Britain.

C.C



## "But you don't call it m whe

**TORY MURDER IN DERRY —**  
"But you don't call it murder when our lads get killed."

There's a war on in Ireland. On one side is the Irish Republican Army, popular militias fighting for a chance for Ireland to develop, independent from the extortion and domination of British rule.

On the other side is the British Army. Are they fighting to defend you and your home and rights? Do you gain anything from their presence there? No. The working people pay them (£11½ million last year) to fight in Ireland so that English bosses can keep the profits coming in, and prop up the present set-up of police state, discrimination poverty and unemployment.

The British Army is there to support the oppressors of the working people of the North; the IRA is defending the oppressed against them. If you think it wrong that English or any other capitalists should exploit the Irish people, then it is RIGHT that people should organise themselves to resist this.

"But still, our lads are getting killed."

The British Army are "our lads" as long as they are our relatives or friends or neighbours. But when they are conned into joining the Army, then the orders they obey are not ours, the interests they serve are not ours — they are the interests of the British Empire. We can't side with the army about attacking down Irish working people any more than we can side with allies attacking pickets.

"The troops may be the only thing they have to stop you can't expect them just to do nothing when they're fired at."

Quite true. But they do not just shoot people out of self-defence —

if they did, their best defence would be to get out altogether.

The people who ARE defending themselves are the people of the Falls, Ardoyne, Bogside and the other Catholic areas. Without the I.R.A. they would be quite defenceless against the troops, who bust up people's houses and drag the men away for torture and unlimited imprisonment.

So you would do better to ask: "Can you expect the Republicans to take all that and not fight back?" And fighting back against the British gunmen with stones and bottles is pretty silly. The Republicans have in fact been forced to fight guns with guns.

"But the troops are there to keep peace between Protestants and Catholics."

The Protestant workers have a few privileges, it is true, and some of them are prepared to fight if they feel these are threatened. But this too is the fault of British imperialism, who set up the Orange state to defend their interests, and tried to buy off the Protestants. Down the centuries it has been Britain's deliberate aim to create and foster divisions in Ireland. Now they pretend to be the 'peacemakers'. But they are not neutral. They are using the divisions they have created as an excuse to send in troops to crack down on those who now refuse to accept the regime Britain has imposed.

"But the IRA are just terrorists'."

What do you mean by "terrorists"? This, the IRA use bombs and snipers. But if they had 15,000 trained men, and tanks and machine guns (and perhaps an internment camp or two) they wouldn't need to. They have to use any methods they can.





Lieutenant General Sir Harry Tuzo — troubleshooter for Westminster

# murder on our lads get killed”

Because they are fighting for a just cause, they have a right to use any weapons they can against the oppressors.

Anyway, their activities are distorted by the British press, which naturally supports the present system.

Take two examples, from Eamonn McCann's pamphlet "The British Press and Northern Ireland". On May 9th 1971 the mother of John McKeague, a militant Protestant bigot, was killed by a petrol bomb. The RUC issued a statement saying that they did not believe the incident to have "any sectarian significance". In the Northern Ireland context this meant clearly that they did not believe the IRA was responsible. John McKeague's "Loyalist News" claimed that the killers were known, and were not members of the IRA — ie were from a rival Orange group.

Yet the "Daily Telegraph" nonetheless carried a front page headline "MOTHER DIES IN I.R.A. BOMB FIRE."

Another example. On 3rd. September 1971 someone took a shot at a British army patrol in Belfast. The bullet missed, ricocheted off a wall and killed 17-month old Angela Gallagher.

On 6th. September Annette McGavigan, 14 years old, was killed by a British army bullet, aimed, according to the Army, at a sniper.

The headlines reporting the two deaths were significantly different in tone.

- On 4th September —
- 'Sun': "BABY GIRL SHOT DEAD BY I.R.A."
  - 'Mirror': "THE BABY-KILLERS"
  - 'Mail': "I.R.A. GUNMAN KILLS BABY"
  - 'Express': "I.R.A. IN STREET TERROR: BABY SHOT DEAD"

- On 7th September —
- 'Sun': "GIRL, 14, DIES IN GUN BATTLE"
  - 'Mail': "GIRL SHOT DEAD IN GUN BATTLE"
  - 'Mirror': "GIRL, 14, DIES IN GUN-FIGHT"
  - 'Express': "GIRL OF 14 KILLED IN DERRY CROSSFIRE"

"Perhaps you're right, we should get the troops out and let the Irish fight it out among themselves."

Certainly we should get the troops out. But that is not enough. If we oppose the Tory government on the miners' strike, we must recognise that they serve the same interests in their attitude to Ireland.

There are two sides — the Tories, their Army, police, press and the people they oppress, including the workers in Britain and the Irish people, on the other.

Ireland is a separate nation from Britain, with a separate history and a separate culture. The majority of the Irish people have always resisted the imposition of British rule. The present fighting is one battle in a long war.

If we do not support the Tories, then we must recognise that they have NO RIGHT AT ALL in Ireland, and we must support unconditionally those who are trying to get them out, and recognise their right to do it any way they choose: including pursuing the British Army onto its own home ground, whether this be Aldershot or anywhere else.

As long as British workers can be conned into supporting our own bosses in their exploitation of Ireland, we'll never be able to fight them properly ourselves.

That is why British workers must stand clearly for the victory of the Irish Republican Army.

# No Brutality?

Excerpts from a statement taken in Armagh Jail from George Burt of Belfast. The statement, taken by a priest, is among a number made by people detained by the British Army in Northern Ireland, and collected by the Association for Legal Justice.

"I WAS ARRESTED in the early hours of Sunday morning in the beginning of December 1971. ... I was brought to the Royal Victoria Hospital because of gunshot wounds in the back and head. ... I was put into a private ward.

There were about six soldiers, four in the ward and two outside. They started squealing at me — 'Shoot me! Shoot me!' Three of them with Stirlings immediately took the magazines out of the Stirlings and beat me on the shin — when I was in the hospital bed with the drip on my arm.

When I tried to stop them the rest took their magazines out and beat me around the shin. The others did the other leg. When I grabbed hold of one of the Stirlings, one with a sniping rifle came in now and again and he brought it down on the side of my face. There is a scar still there about my left eye.

This went on for an hour. Then they cooled off.

They kicked me when I tried to fall asleep and then I got sick. When I put my head over the side to vomit one of them put his boot up and kicked me under the right ear. When they got tired they looked about and found a syringe, started sticking needles up my legs and feet. ...

After a while they started kicking me on the legs from the bottom and the top of the bed.

A soldier came in and did a bit

of whispering. Then they really got stuck into me, went crazy with the Stirlings on my legs. One brought the butt of his rifle down on my ribs.

I threw my arms around my ribs and ankles and knees to prevent them. They lashed away. ... One of my arms got stitched from that beating. They took me away in a saracen red cross car to Hollywood. By that time I was quaking, just a bundle of nerves. They had to lift me out in a stretcher. ...

After a lot of hours I tried to get some sleep but got none. Policemen banged chairs and plates shouting 'keep awake you rats'; there were other prisoners there. I was taken into another wooden hut, partitioned off for interrogation. There were three interrogating me the first time. ... One said: 'someone here wants you.' A man came in with side holster, pistol hanging out of it. He hit me with the pistol on the shin where most of the damage was done. I screamed with pain.

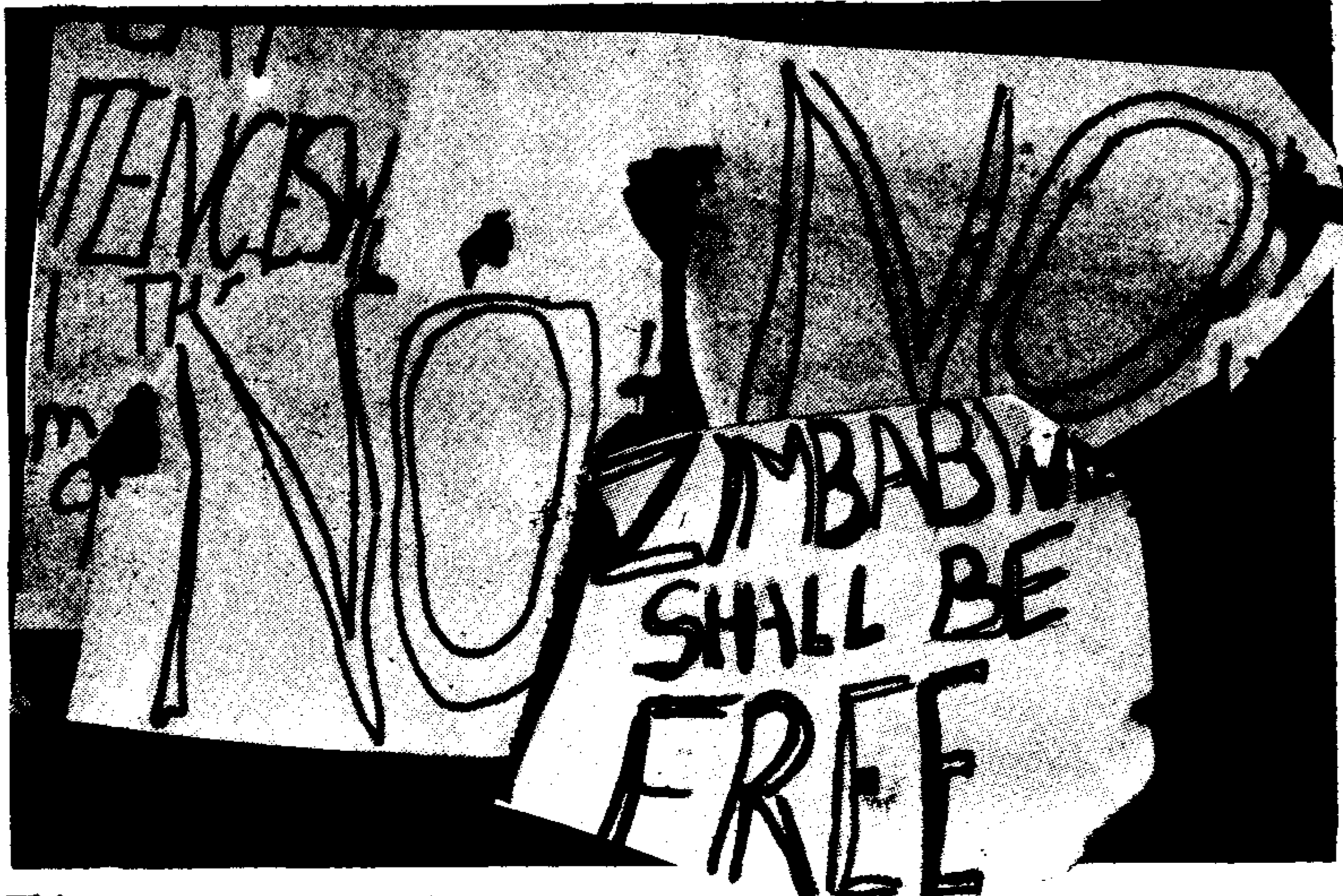
They took a verbal statement from me — you did this, you did that and so on. I said Yes, I did, every time. I said anything as a matter of fact as long as they left my shins alone.

They brought me back to the cubicles where most of the men were. I could hardly walk. Someone shouted to the rest of them there: 'Look around. This is what you'll get if you don't talk.'

Some looked around. Some didn't."







This Tory Government has once again demonstrated that its politics are motivated solely by the need of the capitalist class to make profits.

This is what lies behind the recent attempted settlement with the Smith white-supremacist regime in Rhodesia.

The Tories' primary concern is to rescue an ailing British economy. Declining profit rates and a shrinking share of world markets in the face of competition from less sick capitalist rivals have forced the Tories to cut their losses and do a deal with Smith.

The settlement means that they give recognition to the Smith regime and call off the farce of sanctions, which were damaging the British bosses' most treasured possessions, their moneybags and bank vaults.

The only effect sanctions had was to deprive British industry of cheap sources of raw materials and of Rhodesian export markets. Meanwhile, other capitalist countries took full advantage of the situation and carried on trade with Rhodesia, via the backdoor, using South Africa as an intermediary.

Among British companies which stand to gain from a settlement are: British Leyland (around £19 million in export orders), Imperial Tobacco and B.A.T. (The two largest tobacco monopolies which stand to gain between them around £16½ million, Rhodesian tobacco being cheaper than the American tobacco they were forced by sanctions to buy). BAC will make £4.5 million from the sale of three BAC 111 aircraft. Turner and Newall (who own the asbestos mines at Shabani) stand to increase their profits by about £3 million annually.

The fury of the Zimbabwe (Rhodesian) people, which erupted as a result of the proposed settlement, was sparked off during a demonstration of 3,000 miners from the Shabani mines on January 11th. They were on strike for the reinstatement of sacked workers and for a pay rise. Police opened fire on the demonstration, killing at least seven workers and imposed a curfew after the demonstration had developed into a riot.

The workers expressed their hostility to the settlement by taking up unanimously the simple slogan "NO", and emphasising it by burning beer halls, municipal buildings and stoning and burning any cars (all cars are white owned) that got in the way.

The spark at Shabani turned into a flame in the next week as Africans in town after town took to the streets expressing their contempt for the regime, for what they saw as a sell-out by Britain and for the Pearce commission.

Gatoona, Salisbury, Umtali, Que Que and Fort Victoria saw mass demonstrations by angry Africans.

The white racist hounds responded by baying for blood, and met the demonstrations with all the savagery and brutality they could muster, using armoured cars, machine guns, dogs and helicopters to quash the resistance of the Africans. The police admit to having killed 14 people and there is no doubt that the real figures are much greater. Even mild critics of the regime, the Todds, who in England would be considered to the right of the Liberal Party, have been imprisoned without trial.

The Pearce Commission, which was sent out to Rhodesia to do a gloss-up job on the settlement, has now really got its work cut out in the face of mass hostility from the Africans and the embarrassment of a white backlash.

It is significant that the largely spontaneous demonstrations were in the main led by workers, with the trade unions, 100,000 strong, in the forefront.

The upsurge of the African workers has cleared away forever the myth of Smith's "happiest Africans in the world." The African workers have stood up and said: "Enough!"

This first upsurge will lead the Zimbabwe workers along the road to the smashing of Smith and the white colonial ruling class. Their regime is a regime of violence and suppression. It can only be combatted and defeated by the organised counter-violence of the African workers.

The whites are not just a racial group, they constitute at the same time the ruling capitalist class. For the black people to end their racial oppression, they will have to overthrow this capitalist class.

The struggle for African liberation is inconceivable outside of the mobilisation of the African workers on a revolutionary socialist programme.

That is why movements such as ZANU and ZAPU which are not explicitly socialist, which want to establish African rule and yet not do away with the capitalist system, can offer no road forward for the Zimbabwe workers and farmers.

British workers must support the fight of all those sections and organisations of the Zimbabwe people who fight to clear out Smith. In so doing they are weakening the British Leylands and the Turner and Newalls who we have to fight in Britain.

Ken Stratford

## “ BOSSES ADMIT DEFEAT

Nobody in the Government is pretending that the miners' strike is ending in anything but a crushing defeat — with a court of inquiry that ministers had never intended and a settlement that they can hardly bear to contemplate. (The Economist, Feb 19, 1972)

\* \* \*

Most important is that the authority of government has been damaged and that at best the damage will not be repaired quickly. (Financial Times, Feb 21st 1972) \* \* \*

...if a cooling-off period were ordered, would the miners obey? Mr. Carr may not want to put idly to the test his long-held belief that the British actually are a law-abiding people. (Economist)

\* \* \*

And the mere threat, without a harsh word spoken, of miners assembling in their thousands has been enough, in the past two weeks, to frighten local police forces into closing whatever plants and depots the pickets wanted. (Economist)

\* \* \*

THIS IS CERTAINLY NOT HOW MINISTERS INTENDED THE STRIKE TO END. (Economist) ”



## SALTLEY - The turn of the tide

“WHEN THE WORKING PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY UNITE, THEY CAN ACHIEVE ANYTHING.”

Arthur Scargill, speaking after the gates of Saltley had clanged shut, was indulging in no empty rhetoric.

The “7% Government” had expected to sit it out against the miners as they had with the post office workers, waiting as the momentum and morale dwindled week by hungry week.

Instead, nourished by countless separate small acts of solidarity, the strike gathered weight and momentum. Blacking spread from coal to alternative fuels, scab ships sailed away without a chance of unloading, even local councils chipped in with solid material aid.

And at Saltley the gathered strength went on display, showing this arrogant Government that it dared not stick to its “fortified position” lest it and its class be engulfed.

For a week the miners had struggled with police in an attempt to stop coke leaving the depot, with its stocks of 100,000 tons. Day by day the pickets were swelled as contingents poured in, until close on 1,000 were mustered.

But the 5,000 reinforcements promised by the NUM never materialised. A train bringing down 700

Scottish miners was cancelled by the NUM.

And the police, determined to keep the depot open, drafted in enormous forces, engaged in constant provocation of the pickets, and arrested 90 of them.

But then the workers of Birmingham took up the struggle. Despite their completely different working conditions, recent history and traditions, they saw clearly that the miners' fight was their fight too.

So 40,000 motor and engineering workers struck in support of the pickets. In a magnificent show of solidarity, 5,000 marched to join the picket — and the gates were shut.

On the following day it was announced that the depot would remain closed while the miners' strike lasted — a decision undoubtedly influenced by the engineers' threat of further strikes if the gates re-opened.

Up and down the country, as employers began to schedule ‘power cut’ lock-outs, the reverberating example of Saltley made it probable that many of these locked-out workers would join the miners' pickets. There was no telling where it might all end...

And up at Westminster, the Government turned and ran.



# Workers revive tactics that deepen the struggle

by **Connie Lever**

EVERYONE KNOWS the miners' victory in smashing through the Government's 7% ceiling was due neither to the reasonableness of Wilberforce nor the obvious justice of their case. Justice must be armed. The miners won a power confrontation.

The reasons for this victory should be understood by all workers, and the experience assimilated to be used in future battles.

Here were not two armies, each with a given number of men and weapons, testing their strength.

On the one side indeed are the employers and the Government with their police and their press lined up.

But on the other side stand not only the miners, but the whole working class — confused, divided, unmobilised, but potentially such an irresistible force that if it were all brought into play, the notion of a trial of strength would itself be comical.

It is always so, not a clash of given forces, but for the workers a test of the capacity to mobilise. The tactics used by the miners showed the possibilities inherent in decisive action by workers.

A case where it was used to the full was the response to the attempt by the Tsarist General Kornilov to overthrow the Russian Revolution in August 1917.

## HUMAN LINKS

Trotsky described it like this: "The conspiracy was conducted by those circles who were not accustomed to know how to do anything without the lower ranks, without labour forces, without cannon fodder, without orderlies, servants, clerks, chauffeurs, messengers, cooks, laundresses, switchmen, telegraphers, stablemen, cab drivers.

"But all these little human bolts and links, unnoticeable, innumerable, necessary, were for the soviets and against Kornilov. The revolution was omniscient... There immediately appeared queues of people eager to join the ranks of the red guard... the unarmed workers formed companies for trench digging, sheet metal fortification, barbed wire fencing... The railroad workers tore up and barricaded the tracks... The railroad workers' union armed its members and sent them along the lines...

"The rebel general had stamped his foot, and legions rose from the ground — but they were the legions of the enemy.

"The railroad workers in those days did their duty. In a mysterious way echelons would find themselves moving on the wrong roads. Regiments would arrive in the wrong division, or tillery would be sent up a blind alley, staff would get out of communication with their units.

"The Telegraphers held up the orders of Kornilov. Information unfavourable to the Kornilovists was immediately multiplied, distributed, pasted up, passed from mouth to mouth. The machin-

ists, the switchmen, the oilers, became agitators."

The military uprising was defeated — without a shot being fired.

## MASS PICKETS

When the miners' strike started, no-one could have assessed the forces and predicted the outcome. Heath was not alone in this. Many feared the miners would be isolated and smashed even if not sold out. It was this fear among the miners themselves which had for so many years prevented strike action.

Mining, after all, everyone knew, was a 'declining industry' with declining power. Everyone remembered too, how in 1926, before oil and natural gas had made their inroads, a nine months strike to the bitter end had gone down to defeat and had only a minimal impact on the economy. The gross national product in 1926 had been the same as in 1925. Massive fuel imports had nullified the miners' action — fuel imports in 1926 were more than double those in 1925.

But tactics in a class struggle are not just the best use of avail-

enced sections, newly drawn into struggle, have proved the most militant and inventive, the least set in traditional forms of conflict.

## TIDAL WAVE OF STRIKES

It was for example at first the struggles for union recognition by the previously unorganised which swept millions in America in the 1930s into a tidal wave of strikes such as that country has not seen before or since, evolving as they went ever more daring tactics.

Paving the way came the Toledo Auto Lite strike of 1934, the first successful action of the auto workers. Despite court injunctions the Unemployed League brought its members onto the mass picket lines where 10,000 fought a six day pitched battle with armed police and National Guard, and routed them, besieged the scabs in the factory for 15 hours and then shut it down.

This was the first victory of the many to come.

While this struggle was reaching its climax another was being waged by the lorry drivers and warehouse-

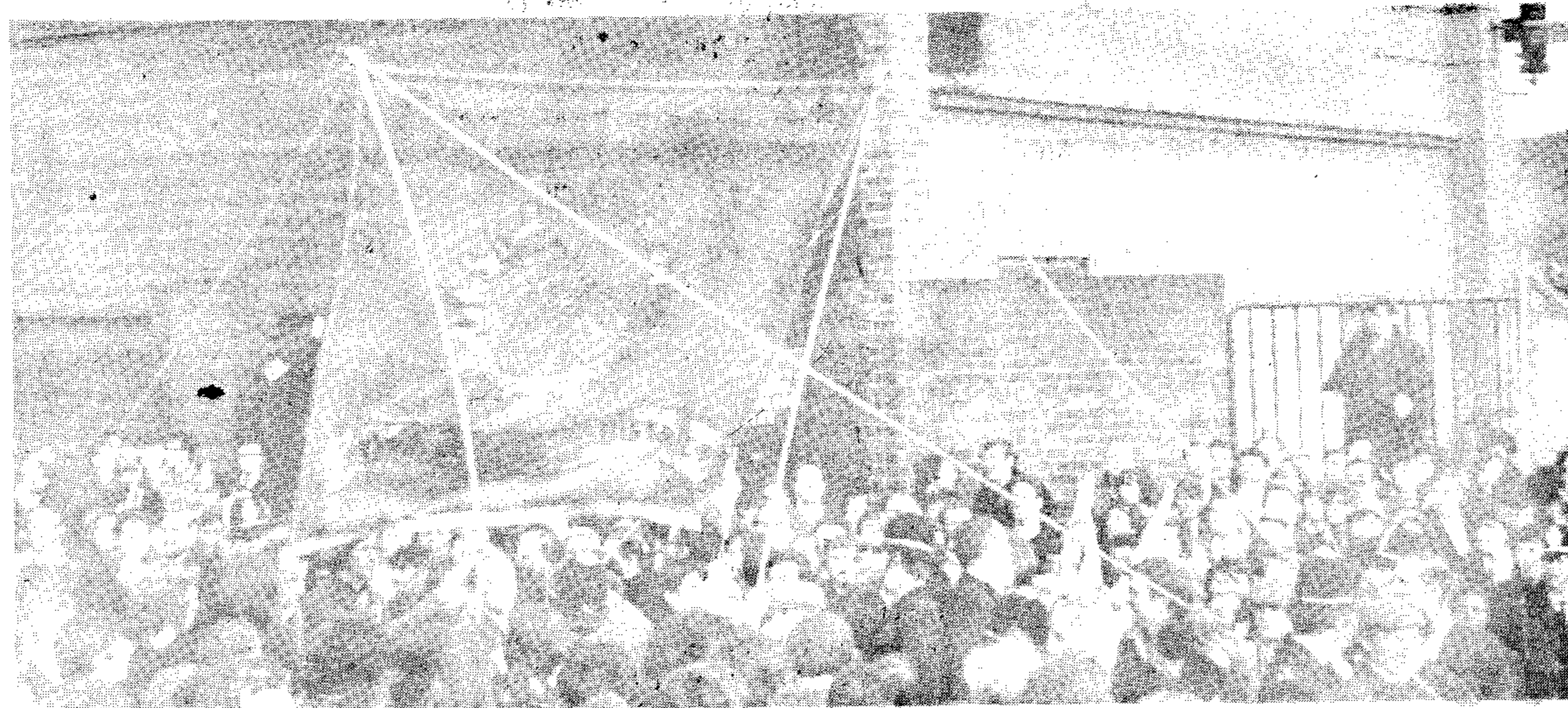
## NEW TACTICS NOW

In the postwar period, with expanding production and manpower shortage, tactics which involved massive confrontations and extensions of the struggle seemed unnecessary. Victories could be won in the individual factory or even the individual shop, often by short actions or by the mere threat of them by small numbers of key men.

But capitalism could afford it then. Now these victories have to be fought for. Since 1968 we have seen the revival in France and Italy of the sit in strikes so widespread in the 20s and 30s, and the beginning of their extension to Britain.

Now we have the adoption here too of the massive mobile pickets which won such tremendous victories in America in the 1930s.

Their potential is enormous — preventing the use and movement of stockpiles of materials and of finished products could be a powerful force in many disputes. Again, could cross-picketing for example, perhaps bring about a unified strike



able resources, but the tapping of the unlimited potential of the class. It was the mass pickets on the power stations which broke the Government defences — and its nerve. Might not mass picketing of the ports in 1926 have achieved, by drawing in the dockers, what mass picketing of power stations has achieved in 1972 by drawing on the solidarity of lorry drivers and power workers?

The formal union organisation repeatedly rats on active solidarity — as in 1926 when the TUC called off the General Strike, and as when the power workers' overtime ban was called off by the EPTU leaders.

But mass picketing is a direct appeal over the heads of the bureaucracy to the rank and file, and the victory it has achieved has proved its power.

The initiative for this action came from the Yorkshire miners — an area not recently noted for its militancy. In fact it has often been the case in history that inexper-

men of Minneapolis, till then a notoriously non union town.

A large garage was the strikers' headquarters, from which flying squads of pickets were despatched by trucks and cars to wherever needed. The city was isolated from all truck traffic in or out by mass pickets.

Gun attacks on pickets around the market square brought other workers out on strike, and many unorganised workers stayed off work to join the pickets. Pitched battles in which workers were killed and injured did not stop them, nor did large scale arrests of their leaders.

This strike too was won. In San Francisco at this time the police shot two docker pickets dead and injured over 100. The response was a local general strike on 125,000 workers which paralysed the city.

These cities showed how workers could fight and win. They gave heart and hope to labour everywhere for the climactic struggle that was to build the CIO.

of London's buses and trains — a mirage ever sought and never yet attained?

These tactics bring in a whole series of political questions — they involve a challenge to management's right to remain in control of 'its own' property — its buildings and stockpiles.

They take the challenge beyond local confrontations, challenging wider sections of the employers and drawing on the solidarity of wider sections of the working class. This brings on a confrontation with the state, bringing in the whole question of who runs society.

Yet it has always been the case that in most periods of even limited demands for wages and reforms can only be effectively waged by tactics whose potential is revolutionary if their logic is carried out.

In the coming wage battles, the implications of mass pickets, sit-in strikes and so on must be understood. WE own society, and WE can run it, if we drive out the Tories and the system they represent.



# PERISCOPE

## FRANCE — THE FRUITS OF OFFICE

The French tax system has become a major scandal. The satirical paper *Le Canard Enchaîné* revealed that the Prime Minister had paid no taxes for years on his large income and property.

The personal attack escalated when he defended himself on television, proving all was legal, and therefore leading millions to the obvious conclusion that the whole taxation law favours the rich and the propertied. A new system is proposed — which is even more weighted than before in favour of the wealthy.

This comes after a series of major financial scandals which associated Deputies and Ministers of the governing UDR party with fraudulent building societies.

Other cases have come to light where big fines on major companies guilty of massive illegal tax evasions have been drastically reduced after ministers interceded with the tax inspectorate.

Meanwhile, small shopkeepers are in prison for minor tax infractions.

As in the days of the Profumo case here in 1963, the integrity of the government is quite discredited.

Yet the working class is aware of being in an impasse, and its increasing frustration has not yet found a way out.

Unemployment has reached ½ million and is rising steadily — in a country where a 48 hour week is the norm and miserable wages can't cope with rising prices.

Since 1968 many methods of struggle have been tried, mass demonstrations (including those against rising underground fares) and sit-in strikes, often explicitly against the wishes of the unions' Communist leaderships.

Though not defeated they have proved too inadequate and fragmented to shift the government and employers from their entrenched positions. Their momentum has for the moment run out.

The CP and its union, the CGT, have been largely responsible for this, by watering down the demands thrown up by the rank and file, especially those which have challenged existing wage structures and differentials, and by assuring that strikes remain isolated.

But the lid cannot remain clamped on the pot much longer.

The growing mood of discontent coincides with the stagnation of the French economy.

The 1973 general election will give some opportunity to express this. Most workers are determined to return a government which will guarantee their current demands.

But as with the Labour Party in 1964, the possible candidate has not much of an alternative to offer. The policies of the Communist Party seem likely to lead again into the same blind alley of some empty reforms and class collaboration as before.

Their electoral programme is even, at this early stage, already ambiguous on the return to a 49 hour week to combat unemployment.

Typically, this is promised not "at once", but ... "in due course"!

C.L.

## BANGLADESH MUKTI BAHINI DISARMED AS BIHARIS CONTINUE THE KILLING

The desire of the Mukti Bahini (Liberation Forces) rank and file to eliminate the threat of armed Bihari terror is more than a simple thirst for revenge.

Even during the last days of the Pakistani occupation, the Biharis, armed by Yahya's troops, demonstrated a relentless determination to inflict massive casualties on the Bengali people.

While the relatively few instances of revenge killings by Bengalis have been splashed over the front pages of the Western press, the role of the collaborators in the March-December murders has generally been relegated to the inside pages.

The end of the "time of the guerilla" in Bangladesh has been punctuated by a series of macabre developments that had been predicted by the Mukti Bahini rank and file.

Elements who supported the Pakistani regime, unimpressed by the Awami League's prestige, have refused to disarm themselves. On January 29, while Bengali guerillas were en route to Dacca to give Rahman their arms, bands of Biharis (non-Bengalis who collaborated with Yahya's occupation army) opened fire on Bengali refugees returning to their homes on the outskirts of Dacca.

In two Bihari-dominated neighbourhoods, Mohammedpur and Mirpur, fighting raged for three days. Despite the Western bourgeoisie's hypocritical concern for the well-being of the accomplices in Pakistan's gen-

ocide, initial reports indicated that the Bengalis suffered considerably higher casualties than the Biharis.

At first the Bangladesh government refused to reveal how many Bengalis had been killed — "apparently to avoid inflaming the Bengali population" according to the *New York Times*.

But on February 2nd a spokesman for the Bengali armed forces said that 100 "or maybe more" soldiers had been killed. He did not report the number of civilian dead.

The same spokesman charged that some of the "Biharis" shooting at the Bengalis were in fact Pakistani soldiers who had kept their arms, changed into civilian clothes, and vanished into Bihari neighbourhoods after the Pakistani surrender on December 16th.

Rahman refused to allow the Mukti Bahini to deal with the situation. "In the latest violence in Dacca's two Bihari neighbourhoods", wrote Sydney

Schanberg in the February 2 *New York Times*, "...the Bengali guerillas were heavily involved in the initial stages. But Sheik Mujib quickly ordered them out and turned over the collecting of arms to the Bengali police and the East Bengal Regiment..."

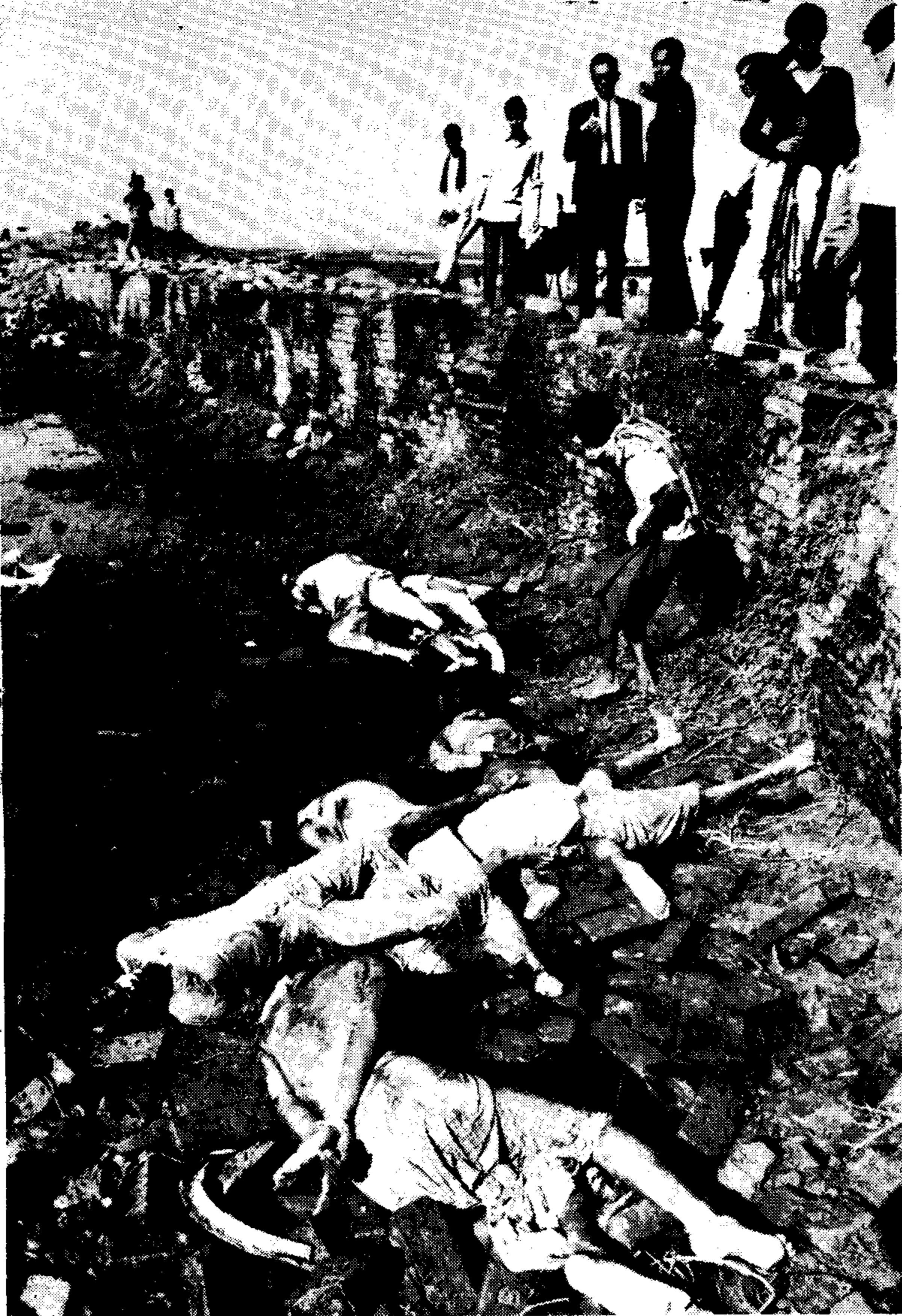
Mohammedpur and Mirpur have been placed under 24-hour curfew. But as of the second week of February, the Biharis have yet to be disarmed.

In other parts of the country, similar situations persist.

Rahman, qualified bourgeois prime minister that he is, has shown considerably more concern for the disarming of the revolutionists than the quashing of the counter revolution.

Rahman's aim is to show the Western powers, towards which he has politically oriented the regime, that his government can be relied upon to destroy the Bengali revolution and re-establish firm capitalist rule in Bangladesh.

from *Intercontinental Press*



PAKISTAN'S LEGACY: AND THE MURDERING COLLABORATORS ARE STILL AT LARGE





One of the many spontaneous workers' demonstrations after the Derry murders.  
The following day, a massive trade union demonstration burnt the British Embassy

## After Derry

# The workers move in the South

By Carol Coulter

THE SHOOTINGS IN DERRY have radically transformed the situation in the South of Ireland. From an attitude of passive sympathy, the whole population moved into a position of solidarity with the Catholic people of the North, and of opposition to British imperialism.

Before the Derry murders both wings of Sinn Fein, the political parties of the two IRAs, failed significantly to whip up any mass support for the struggle in the North. This contrasted unfavourably even with the '56 bombing campaign, when thousands of unemployed young workers threw themselves against British imperialism.

There were many reasons for this. In 1956 the working class was weak and demoralised by massive unemployment and emigration. Consequently individuals vented their frustration in isolated anti-imperialist actions. But the 60s saw the increase and strengthening of the working class, arising from economic expansion. The industrial record of the Irish workers became the most militant in Europe.

On the one hand their apathy with regard to the North showed a certain political backwardness: they failed to see how the struggle related to their interests.

But on the other it showed a healthy reluctance to be drawn away from their own immediate struggles into nationalism, which had so often in the past proved a blind alley of defeat and demoralisation.

### GENERAL STRIKE

Consequently it is both significant and to be expected that when the true face of British imperialism was brutally unmasked in Derry on January 30th it was the *trade union movement* and not the Republican movement which mobilised the workers against British Imperialism.

It was the trade union march which burned down the British Embassy — they were the only people with the strength to protect those who actually threw the bombs.

On Tuesday February 1st a general strike took place throughout the whole country. It was called a "national day of mourning", but this is the usual technique of the Government to try and disguise the class nature of the question. (The same thing happened in 1947, when De Valera was forced to call a "national day of mourning" in order to forestall a general strike, with all its implications.)

On Wednesday 2nd, the whole country was convulsed by spontaneous stoppages, when workers downed tools and marched.

The reaction to this by all the political parties has been, understandably, one of terror. The pacifist collaborationist policies of most of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and the Labour Party have been utterly discredited. On the other hand, the 'Republicans' within both Fianna Fail and the Labour Party are afraid of the social implications of the upsurge, and are reduced to empty phrasemongering. No-one wants to be in power at the moment, knowing that they are faced with a mass mobilisation of the working class.

If all this took place in a vacuum it might be possible to defuse the situation on a pseudo-Republican basis, confining it to gestures and empty talk. But, sadly for the ruling class, this is not the case.

Before the events in Derry the Government had quite enough on its hands. The economic situation had been deteriorating for some time. Unemployment was rising steadily. What was in effect a wage freeze had been instituted.

Most important, these measures were not being met with passivity

on the part of the working class. Even the Union leaders were forced to make militant noises about unemployment.

These first months of 1972 are when the "wage agreement" is really beginning to bite. But the maintenance men, the most influential section of the working class, have put in for a big increase and a 35 hour working week. Two years ago their strike brought the country to a standstill.

To add to the Governmental nightmare, the EEC referendum (demanded by the Constitution) is only three months away, and the I.C.T.U. have voted to oppose entry.

### SOCIAL CRISIS

So this massive reaction to the Derry shootings comes at the intersection of a national and a social upheaval in Ireland. This marks a huge step forward. The whole nature of imperialism and its repressive state apparatus has been exposed.

Lynch's complicity in the workings of imperialism, in Britain's continuing domination of Ireland, is becoming clearer and clearer. And this coincides with a huge attack on the jobs and living standards of the workers.

The mobilisation of the labour movement shows what can be done by the workers. The failure of anyone except the labour leaders, treacherous though they are, to mobilise this reaction shows the organised strength and self-reliance of the Irish workers.

Recent events show more clearly than anything else the truth of Connolly's dictum "the Irish working class are the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for Irish freedom."

But they will only fight this fight vigorously, bringing to bear the full might of their organisation, if they see it to be in their inter-

ests. Only a socialist programme can make this clear. Any nationalist programme which puts the socialist transformation of society off to a distant future, until after Britain is thrown out of Ireland, will not gain the mass adherence of Irish workers, unless they suffer a defeat in a battle for their own rights.

Irish workers have learned what can be gained by a battle for a better life. They are not going to forget that lesson.

That must now be fused with the fight against imperialism. A defeat on the question of wages and jobs could lead to the kind of demoralisation of '56, and this would undoubtedly be combined with isolated action against Britain. But Irish socialists will fight against the possibility of such a defeat.

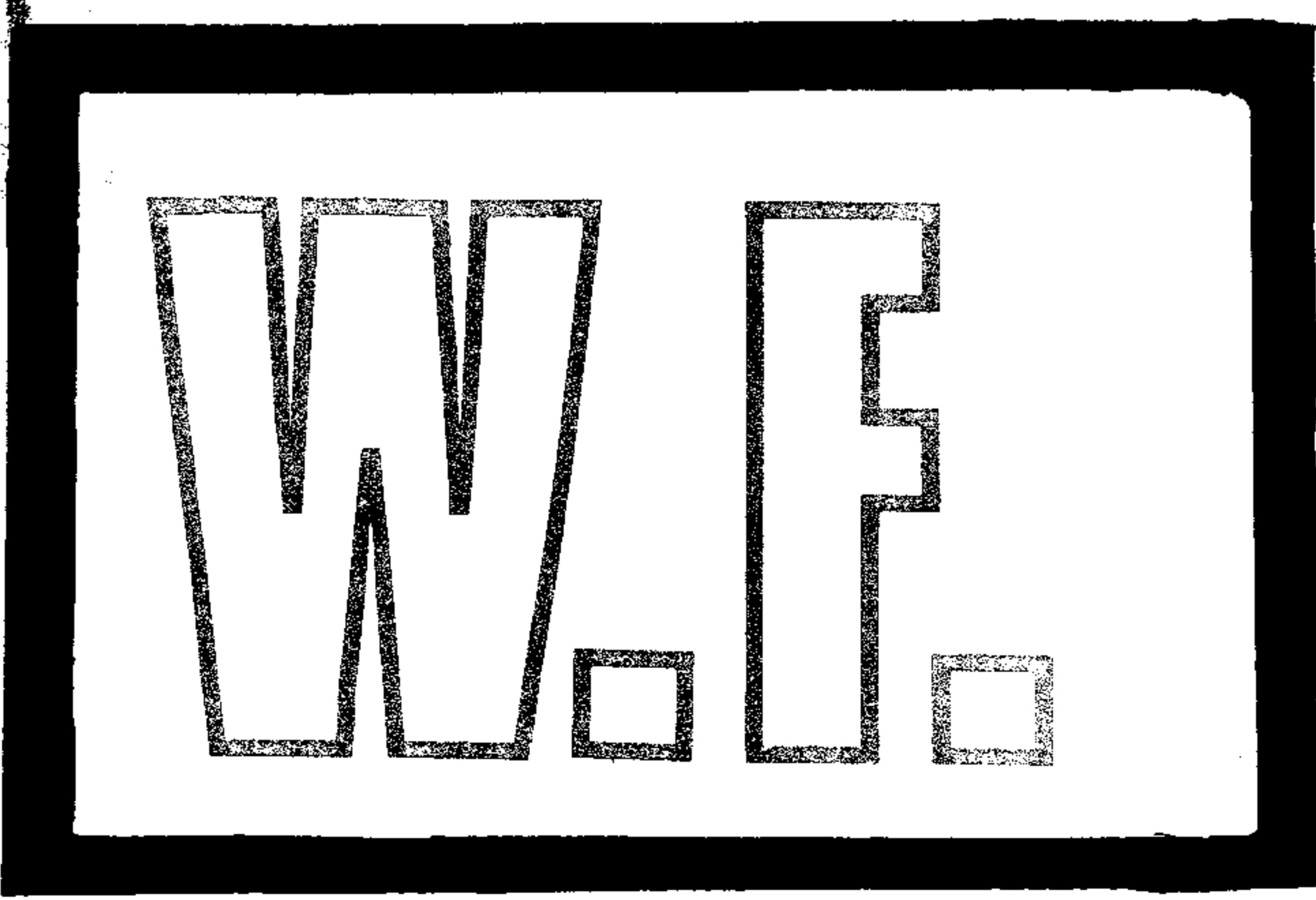
Socialists in Ireland are fighting in the trade union movement for real, effective action against British imperialism. They will fight to stop the leaders backing down.

Meanwhile material help is being given to those fighting the British Army. The labour movement must be mobilised to throw out British imperialism and its Irish collaborators, and to restructure the country in the interests of the working class.

These events are very important for English workers. The Irish workers are fighting the same fight for better wages and against unemployment as the miners, the Plessey workers and, indeed the whole British working class. The Army they are opposing is the army of the British employers, ordered by their Government, the Tory Government. The fight is different, but the enemy is the same.

United action by the British and Irish working class can hasten the downfall of this whole rotten regime. That is what we are all fighting for.





## I.R.O. strike sparks Rank & File

A DISPUTE HAS BEEN ON AT the I.R.O. Computer Centre at Bootle for 12 months, since the electricians contracted by James Scott & Co struck for a living wage in February 1971.

The strike spread, as other electricians and site labourers joined the picket. The demands were aimed ultimately at the JIB agreement, which aims to increase 'productivity' (ie ex-  
patriation) and which directly attacks basic methods of trade union organisation, like site-level negotiations.

After a disgusting history of trade union bureaucrat/management collaboration in victimising the militants, the men finally came out unofficially on October 25th. under the leadership of their strike committee, demanding a decent wage, an end to blacklisting, and site level negotiating rights. The strike committee issued a leaflet which attacked the role of the trade union officials who had totally ignored their demands.

But rank and file working class support has been growing steadily. Demonstrations have been joined by other workers, and a rank and file organisation has grown up. This has put the strikers in a stronger position in relation to the Union.

At the beginning of this month the strikers travelled to London to get support.

Ten building sites agreed to support them with levies - and six EPTU branches (including Frank Chapple's branch) overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling on the EPTU to make the IRO strike official.

### CHARGED

On February 5th John Byrne (chairman of the IRO strike committee) was told he would be charged under the JIB penal clauses.

Every electrician must sign the JIB agreement individually, and thus it is legally binding. The penal clauses, never used before in 5 years of the JIB, allow for penalties ranging from withdrawal of all benefits and £100 fines, to a permanent ban from the industry.

As Bro. Byrne said, "this is the employers' last desperate move. They can't break us any other way. They can't get men on the site.

"They, and the EPTU officials, are worried a national rank and file movement will develop

around the strike."

The IRO strike HAS in fact sparked off the beginnings of a national movement.

On March 25th. (\*) there will be a national rank and file conference of contracting electricians and plumbers, to fight for:

- \* £1 per hour
- \* Implementation of EPTU Conference decisions.
- \* The right of site stewards to negotiate.
- \* The co-ordination of a national rank and file strategy.

(\* 3pm - 6pm at Central Hall, Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Moral and financial support for the IRO strike should be sent to J. Byrne at 44, Sidney Road, Bootle 20, Lancs)

**Paul Barker**

## Battle ahead for Printworkers

ALL WORKERS IN THE GENERAL print trade now face a major battle which could determine the whole pattern of wages and conditions in the industry for many years ahead.

Employers in the industry are determined to cut the real wages of trade unionists. The miserable pay increase they have offered is well below the rise in the cost of living and would leave workers worse off than a year ago.

In the face of this offensive from the employers, workers in every chapel should insist that there should be no retreat from the original demands. Industrial action in support of the claim should receive the fullest support.

Last November, the four main print unions, representing over 180,000 general print workers, met the bosses' organisation, the British Federation of Master Printers, and submitted a just claim representing the following demands:

1. Reclassification.
2. Elimination of the Graduation System.
3. Revision of Machine Extras.
4. Establishment of National Manning Standard.
5. Elimination of Grade II towns.
6. Adjustment of Apprentices and Learners' percentage rates.

7. Study of Training and Education.
8. Wage increase of £4 men, and £4.50 women.

The employers rejected all of the demands but finally agreed to no.7. They offered a miserly £1.32 a week for Class 1 members, with proportional increases in other categories. Women workers would receive the Class 4 men's rate increase only. These generous payments would be made from 1st. May 1972.

The four unions rejected the bosses' proposal, and late in January they submitted a revised offer.

They were prepared to increase the wage rate from £1.32 for Class 1 to £1.62. Women workers were to be offered an increase of £1.50 per week as a token advance towards equal pay.

At the time of publication, there appears to be deadlock.

The bosses are determined to carry out the instructions of the Tory government in refusing to offer pay rises in excess of 8%. The present attack on the miners will soon be facing all print workers.

A united rank and file at shop floor level is our only guarantee against the bosses' miserable pay offer.

## Coventry Toolroom

The Coventry Tool Room Rate has been broken. The Rate, agreed in 1941, meant that in the Coventry area (Coventry, Nuneaton and Leamington) covering 40 federated firms, the wages of the 7,999 toolmakers were fixed every month to the average earnings of the area's pieceworkers.

The Engineering Employers considered that the Rate was inflationary and caused 'wage drift'. Also, since Coventry workers' wages are comparatively high, the toolmakers' wages were a national standard for workers in other areas to aim for parity.

In November the 7 month dispute over the Rate ended with an agreement to have 3 months of individual plant bargaining to replace the old district scale.

So far 15 domestic agreements have been reached covering half of the toolmakers. The minimum basis for plant agreements is 105.9 p. an hour or £42 a week.

Jaguar toolroom workers have negotiated a rate of £48 a week, which may become a guideline for all British Leyland toolroom workers. Triumph Engineering

(BSA) workers have negotiated a rate of £52.50 a week.

These agreements are in well organised factories. In the smaller, weaker plants, lower rates will obviously be the norm. Mr. Alan Berry, Secretary of the Coventry Engineering Employers' Association, is well satisfied with the new moves.

He said, "These new wage rates are no higher than could be expected from the old tool room rate and in many cases a good deal lower."

This breaking of the Coventry Tool Room Rate together with the attempt to introduce Measured Day Work into British Leyland, plus growing unemployment in the area, is part of the Government's and employers' strategy to keep a ceiling on wages in the Coventry area, and to prevent national claims for parity and wage leapfrogging.

Traditional rights and bargaining methods are being attacked everywhere, and being replaced by what always turns out to be a worse deal. These innovations will have to be resisted, because they mean a cut in real wages, and less men employed, in the long run.

**D.S.**

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