

workers' fight

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SAVE THE LIVES OF THESE TWO SOCIALISTS!

2nd. MONTH ON HUNGER STRIKE

TWO SOCIALIST MILITANTS ARE AT THIS MOMENT BEING STARVED TO DEATH BY THE AGENTS OF HEATH'S TORY GOVERNMENT, WHO RULE NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE INTERESTS OF THE BRITISH RULING CLASS.

MICHAEL FARRELL and TONY CANAVAN, members of the libertarian Socialist and anti-imperialist organisation PEOPLES DEMOCRACY are now (4.8.73) in their 31st. day of hunger strike to support a demand that they be treated as political prisoners, instead of being lodged with Loyalist prisoners who were a permanent threat to their lives.



Michael Farrell

Death for one or both of them could be a matter of a few days away. After a month without food they remain immovable in their determination. Unless their demand is granted it is certain that they will die.

Weak and barely able to get out of bed, they have spent the month of their hunger strike in a small stone cell, denied even such care as would ensure that they consumed the 8 pints of water each day which doctors consider necessary if permanent kidney damage is to be avoided.

The water was placed just inside their cell doors and they had to crawl out of bed to get it.

DAMAGE

In the last few days they have been unable even to keep water in their stomachs, and throw it up. It is probable that even if the strike ends with them still alive, serious and permanent damage to their health will have occurred.

Farrell and Canavan started the strike to demand the status of political prisoners. This is automatically granted even to "people" such as the maniacs who raped a Catholic woman, Mrs. Clenaghan, immediately after shooting dead her 14-year old mentally retarded son before her eyes.

But Farrell and Canavan, imprisoned for their part in organising a demonstration, were denied political status.

The custom is for political status to be granted only to those serving more than nine months — custom, not even 'law'. Farrell's sentence is 8 months and Canavan's 6, so they don't qualify as "political" but as normal "criminals", to be housed with the ordinary jail population, which naturally includes many loyalists. Thus their lives were placed in danger.

The prison authorities' attitude was to tell them that nothing could be done about that until after they had been attacked!

So they went on hunger strike. Northern Ireland socialists believe the reason why Whitelaw refuses to budge is that the authorities want to see the strike continue until they break Farrell and Canavan.

Farrell especially is seen as a formidable opponent by the rulers of Northern Ireland. Peoples Democracy, with Farrell as its main spokesman, has repeatedly set the pace for action in the streets, often disrupting the attempts of middle class politicians such as those of the Social Democratic Labour Party to do a deal with British rule.

They have refused all deals, resisted blandishments and ignored

threats. Farrell, more than anyone outside the ranks of the IRA, has personified determination to have done with British rule in Northern Ireland. To break him would be a big thing for the Whitelaw Administration.

After 31 days it is clear beyond doubt that they are more likely to KILL Canavan and Farrell than to break them.

SCABS

While Farrell and his comrade Canavan are starving to death other leaders of the early Northern Ireland civil rights movement, or people who jumped onto its bandwagon — "men" like Fitt and Hume of the SDLP — are junketing with hangman Whitelaw and Orange bigot Faulkner (the architect of internment without charge or trial) negotiating for ministerial "honours" and salaries.

The Fitts and the Hulmes had their price. They could be cajoled, flattered, terrorised or corrupted into stopping short of freedom for Ireland — or even of a prospect of independence.

For them the revolt of the oppressed Catholic masses in Northern Ireland has now become merely a means whereby little political whores can carve out "big" careers, within a Six-county state reconstructed, so that a few Catholic middle class politicians can get their snouts in the trough alongside their Orange and Unionist counterparts.

Meanwhile imperialism and capitalism continue to exploit and dupe the working people.

But for Canavan and Farrell and many other socialists and republicans, it was and is a struggle for a real change.

To end imperialist domination, not help give it a face lift. To end capitalist exploitation, not to secure lucrative jobs conning the working people into bending their necks under its yoke.

To win self determination for Ireland, not induce people to forget that all the horrors of Northern Ireland are the result of the brutal imperialist denial of Ireland's right to unfettered control of its own affairs without interference by British capitalism.

Money in the bank and personal "advancement" can satisfy a Gerry Fitt. For Farrell and his comrades there must be the advancement of the working class — or else a permanent struggle against imperialism and capitalism.

Beyond doubt Canavan and Farrell, like the other fighters jailed and tortured in Northern Ireland today, would not for one moment consider changing places with the pampered whores of the SDLP.

British workers have difficulty in understanding or identifying with the oppressed workers of Northern Ireland. The divisions, conflicts, traditions, the methods of struggle — such as those of the IRA — are too unfamiliar, too far beyond the experience of life in Britain, so far.

CONTINUED BACK PAGE

STATEMENT FROM FARRELL and CANAVAN

See back page

Race Laws:

Charter for thugs and Blackmailers

FIRST came extortion. Then blackmail and slavery. Following that fear and harassment.

Then Prem Singh Kang thought he was safe to go to work, take up lodgings, and take part in social life, free from the constant surveillance of the 'agent'. Now he waits either for a reprieve from the European Commission on Human Rights or for deportation.

Prem Singh Kang is one of the growing number of victims of the decision to make the 1971 immigration act apply for people who came into Britain before 1971. In a number of detention centres up and down the country, immigrants who came in without 'proper papers' await deportation pending a decision by the Home Secretary.

But these numbers are probably only a fraction of the total number of deportees. The vast majority never get as far as contacting a lawyer and having their case submitted to the Home Secretary, let alone the European Commission. They are simply picked up by the police and deported without there ever being a review, trial, or anything else.

'Race Today' records the following cases. Mr S entered Britain in 1967. In 1972 he paid £300 to an Indian agent who promised to "clear up" his position. He was picked up by the CID in March this year.

Mr E paid 15000 rupees to an agent in Pakistan who arranged for him to cross by boat from Rotterdam. He was picked up in January.

Mr L's uncle paid an agent 15000 rupees to get him to Britain.

He was picked up in February.

Mr P is a Ugandan Asian who has been here for two years. Now the authorities are trying to send him back to Uganda!

Perhaps the most graphic case of the hounding and terror which fills the life of clandestine immigrants is that of Mr M. While in Germany he had been offered a passage to Britain for £700. He refused this but, sometime later, came here as a visitor and stayed over the limit. One day he was spotted by the agent he had turned down and tried to run off.

He was knocked down by a car



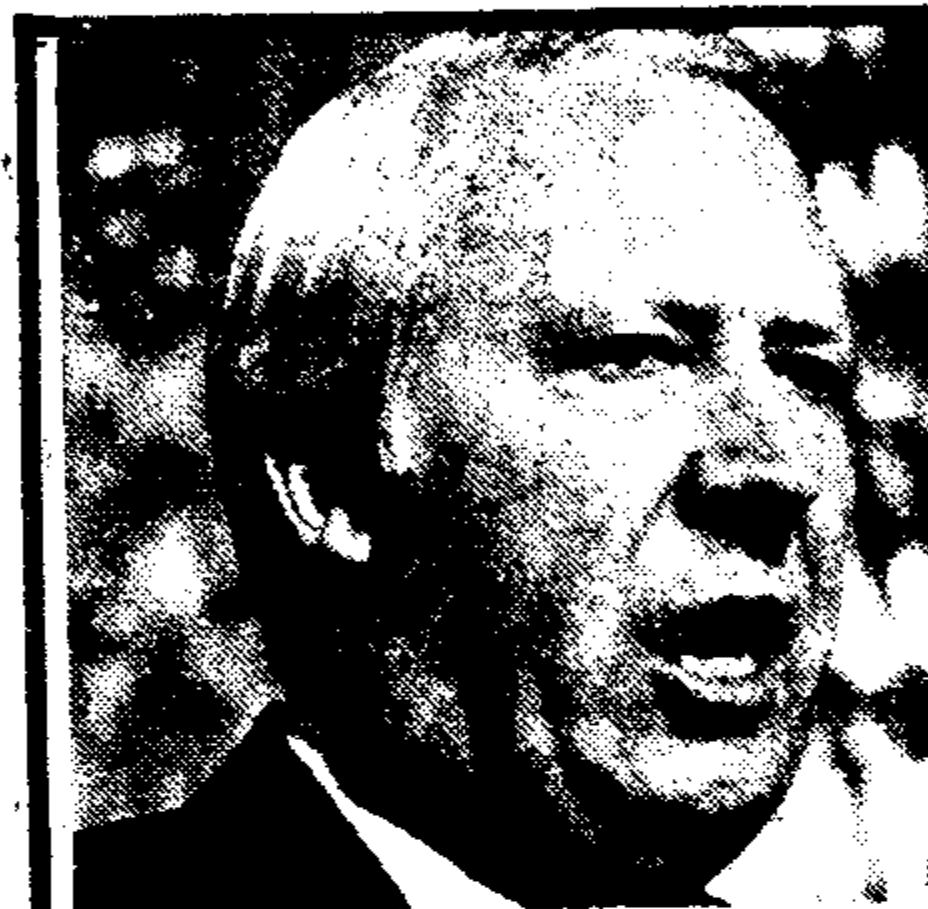
Part of the huge demonstration of protest on July 22nd against the Government's latest racist measures.

and crippled for life. The agent tracked him down to the hospital where he demanded £100 - or else he would report M to the police. After this he got another 7000 rupees out of M's father on a similar basis.

But the authorities have shown not the slightest interest in attack-

ing the blackmailers, thugs, and racketeers that go under the neutral name of 'agent'. In fact the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants offered the police substantial information about M's case. But the police only seem interested in the victims.

ANDREW HORNUNG



TUC/CBI

Living happily ever after...

FRESH FROM HIS TALKS with the TUC and CBI, Heath gave a press conference in which he enthused about the prospects for the economy and demonstrated his conviction that all reasonable men - among whom he counts Feather and the other TUC leaders - would be able to come to an agreement over Phase 3.

First of all he gave a glowing report of the state of the British economy, conjuring up images of the bulging order books of British firms brought about through devalu-

ation. He neglected to state that the working class is bearing the brunt of the resulting price increases. Heath could see only two blots on the horizon - his continued inability to control prices and the increasing evidence of bottlenecks in some sectors of the economy as a result of the boom.

Most importantly, Heath made clear what he expects from Feather and the others in the talks. Heath said that "both (TUC and CBI) recognised that where you have got greater increases in our raw mater-

ials and food prices from overseas this country cannot isolate itself from them". It could not be any clearer that the TUC is willing to accept Heath's excuses for cutting living standards.

He went on to say that "there is no suggestion of confrontation by anybody; nor does anybody wish to see industrial unrest of any kind in the forthcoming autumn or winter."

What this means is that the TUC is totally unwilling to mobilise the vast strength of the labour movement to smash the freeze and that Heath, aware of this, will try to exploit this admission by the TUC to get the best possible deal for British capital.

Whether he can implement such a deal depends ultimately on the response of the trade union rank and file. If there is no determined and united fight this autumn, the chances are that he will be successful.

BRUCE ROBINSON

CAMBODIA

Double danger threatens fighters

AS STALEMATE and sporadic fighting continues in South Vietnam, both Laos and Cambodia are approaching key turning points.

Nixon's extended deadline for bombing over Cambodia, obtained from Congress in June, expires on August 15th. Meanwhile, the Cambodian puppet regime shows no signs at all of being able to stand up a single day on its own. Massively corrupt and massively unpopular, its army has an enormous desertion rate.

The US are preparing for the future in two ways. Government spokesmen have said openly that if they think it necessary they will apply for a further extension of bombing. Right now, they are pouring bombs down as fast as they can, 5000 tons a day. They are propping up the puppet regime (as far as is possible) with military supplies. The massive airforce they have built up in South Vietnam could also be used against the guerrilla forces.

But there is no doubt that the US does want to get out of Indochina. While keeping military force

in readiness, they are also pressing for an agreement with Prince Sihanouk, titular leader of the guerrilla forces.

In Laos, according to the Paris paper 'Le Monde' of 31 July, an agreement for the implementation of the 21 February accords (so far largely a dead letter) looks likely. This agreement would involve a provisional government headed by Prince Souvanna Phouma (the present head of state), with Prince Souphanouvong (titular head of the resistance) as one of two deputy prime ministers.

Clearly the US is aiming for a new capitalist 'settlement' in Indochina (with 'peaceful coexistence', for now, for North Vietnam), on the model of the settlement of Geneva 1954 and afterwards. Clearly also the Chinese bureaucracy is not hostile to this settlement; they have stopped supplying weaponry to the Cambodian fighters.

But a large power to decide lies in the hands of the guerrilla fighters, and their political leadership - the Communist Parties and the DRV. Without them, Sihanouk



A 'crack' unit of the Lon Nol army - hungry and demoralised

or Souphanouvong are nothing.

On 19/21 July a congress of the Cambodian resistance forces was held, for the first time since the struggle started in 1970. Its declaration hailed Sihanouk as head of state and called for a 'neutral' Cambodia.

According to some accounts, the congress declaration and the Laos agreement, like the clauses guaranteeing 'free enterprise' in the Vietnam agreement, are not to be taken literally - the Indochinese Communist Parties are simply manoeuvring for tactical advantage. In practice the movement can not stop short of socialist goals.

In the light of the whole previous history of the Indochinese struggle, we cannot rely on it. At the very least, the Stalinists are deceiving the people, spreading illusions, and offering a lifebelt to capitalism and imperialism in Indochina.

MARTIN THOMAS

PICKET AGAINST NIXON'S BOMBING OF CAMBODIA - 12 noon, August 16th, U.S. embassy.

The Indochina Solidarity Campaign will be organising a picket if the bombing does not halt on the 15th.

"Negotiating a threshold agreement does not imply co-operation with the Government, still less support for any dubious principle of wage restraint. I repeat what I said, that is not wage restraint nor is it related to it".

THUS SPOKE VIC FEATHER at a TUC conference on threshold agreements held last year. Such a statement from Feather, coupled with Heath's recent public offer to incorporate a threshold clause into phase 3 wage agreements, might well be enough for any class conscious worker to dismiss the whole question of cost-of-living agreements, without further ado.

But with inflation rampaging into the real wages of many low paid workers, they cannot simply be dismissed out of hand.

A cost of living agreement is

THRESHOLDS: WHO GAINS?

like any other agreement. It represents a temporary truce in the continual struggle over how the value created by labour should be divided.

The idea of cost of living clauses in wage agreements is nothing new. The Transitional Programme of the Fourth International, written by Trotsky just before the outbreak of world war 2, calls for a sliding scale of wages and a sliding scale of hours. Wages were to be automat-

ically tied to the cost of living, and to combat unemployment, the working week would be cut automatically instead of redundancies. (this to operate society-wide and not just in individual factories).

Although it incorporated the whole experience of revolutionary Marxism, the Transitional Programme was written in particular in a definite stage of capitalist development. The opening sentences of

higher than they were for the first half of 1972, so clearly a large part of the increase has occurred during the freeze which began in November. The classic example of where the extra loot has been coming from is given by GEC, whose profits rose 55% although their sales and turnover increased only 5%.

Clearly, during the freeze, GEC have made a mint out of 'rationalisations', increased productivity, and redundancies, while the wages of GEC workers have been frozen.

Incorporating a threshold agreement in Phase 3 does not in the least change the basic aims and effects of Tory policy.

The 'Financial Times' has reported that the CBI are asking for an 8% wage ceiling tied to a 4% threshold. The threshold would operate so that any increase in the retail price index of more than 4% would trigger increments in wages for every so many points that index rose above 4%. So under the best assumptions what is being offered is a 4% increase in real wages.

The nature of threshold agreements will whittle away that 4% increase in wages even further. The first gaping flaw is the retail price index itself.

The less a worker earns, the greater the proportion of his wages that will be spent on the necessities of life, such as food and housing. Since the price of these essentials has been rising a lot faster than prices in general, his cost of living index will rise a lot faster than government statistics.

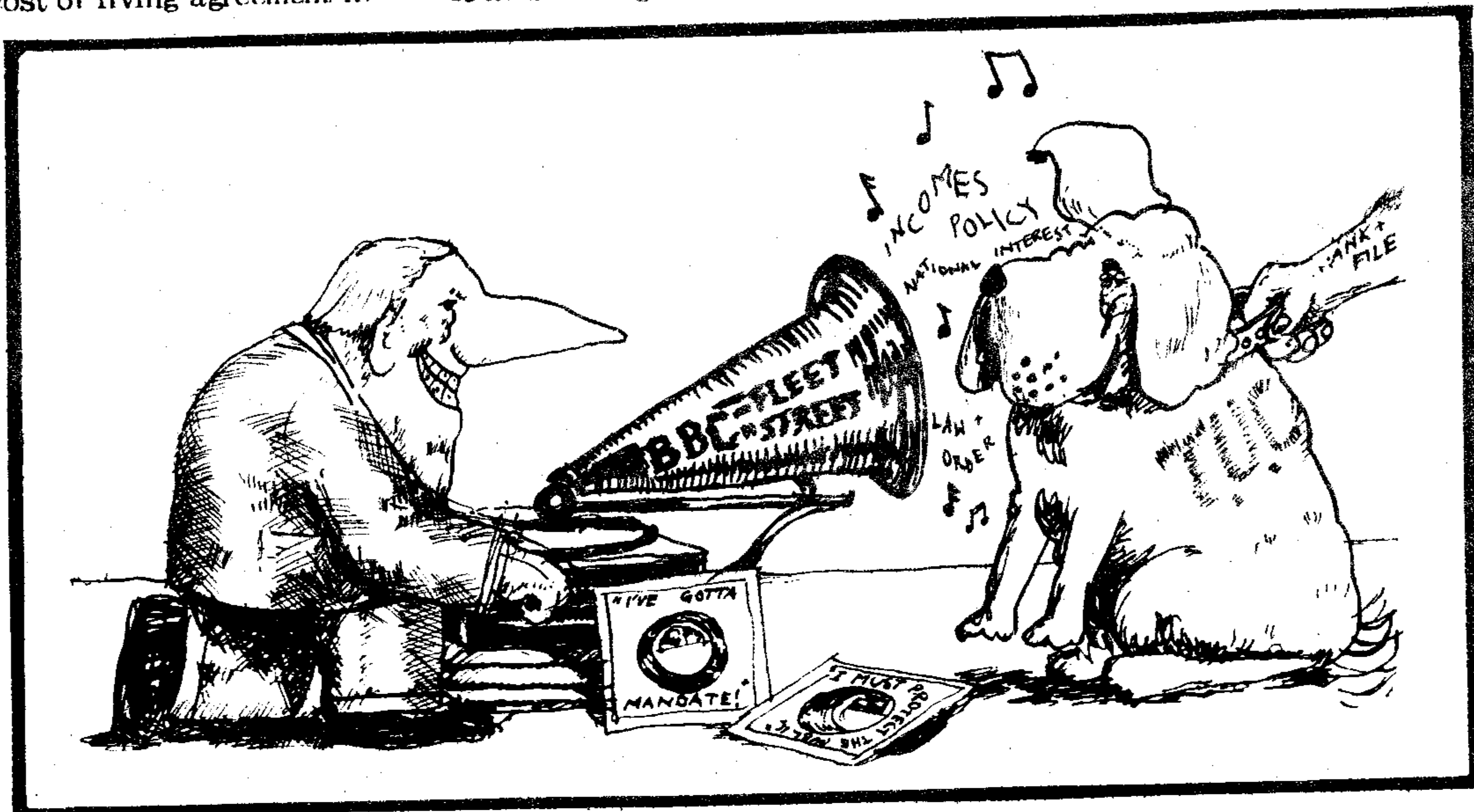
Swindle

Secondly, the increases in pay triggered by the threshold being crossed will be worked out on basic wages. In many industries basic wages only count for half of actual earnings, the rest being made up from locally agreed bonuses and suchlike. Thus a 1% increase in basic rates could mean only a ½% increase in overall earnings. On top of that, increased taxation would reduce the increase in take home pay even further. And lower paid workers will again be cheated by the loss of means-tested benefits.

Threshold agreements are being used by the government to restrict wages and increase profits. Even if it were possible for the government to include a threshold which guaranteed real wages against inflation, the pay restraint still strengthens the hands of the bosses and allows them to appropriate an ever greater proportion of the value which labour creates.

As long as we have the power and the opportunity to push our living standards up through straight, simple wage increases, we should do just that — and not be diverted by the swindle of threshold agreements.

PAUL ITIZE



Argentina: Left in retreat

SINCE TAKING POWER on 25 May, the new Peronist regime in Argentina has had some success in its project of a 'social pact' to prop up tottering Argentine capitalism.

Almost all the guerrilla groups have called a cease-fire. The regime has held to its promise to free all political prisoners, while keeping control of the army, who threatened to prevent such a move by force. It has fixed an agreement between unions and management. It has managed to ride over the demonstrations and upheavals of recent weeks.

Clearly the immediate prospect is of radical government measures, including nationalisations, as in Chile and Peru.

The government has privately promised American and European capitalist interests that they will not be seriously hurt. And in present world conditions, a really sustained radical improvement in Argentina, even of the limited sort that took place under Peron during world war 2, is ruled out.

But for now the government is riding high. Revolutionaries risk being sucked into the wave of popular sympathy for the Peronist regime, or isolated and in due course smashed.

With President Campora stepping down in favour of the 'old fox' Peron himself, the dangers and the repression promise to be even greater.

It is mainly the ERP guerrilla organisation that is being hunted under the slogan of "get the Trotskyists". As the Wall Street Journal put it:

"The ERP guerrillas are described as Trotskyites, which in Argentina means mostly that they are tough and won't give up".

But it is necessary to say that the confusions of the ERP's strategy may hinder them in their fight against the regime.

It is not necessarily wrong in principle (given suitable circumstances) to adopt a strategy of revolutionary guerrilla warfare. It is not necessarily wrong in principle to use tactics of kidnapping individual capitalist and military figures. It is not necessarily wrong in principle (if the situation dictates) to temporarily renounce armed attacks on the government and the police.

But it certainly is a dead-end to try to wage a military struggle for power through tactics of individual terror, while renouncing armed action against the government — as the ERP appears to be trying to do. As the French revolutionary paper Rouge put it:

"To proclaim that war against the armed forces will continue may symbolise a vigorous refusal to submit or capitulate, but it in no way opens up a perspective for advance for the masses".

JOHN STERLING

the section on the sliding scale of wages read:

"Under the conditions of disintegrating capitalism, the masses continue to live the meagerised life of the oppressed, threatened now more than at any other time with the danger of being cast into the pit of pauperism. They must defend their mouthful of bread if they cannot increase or better it".

The 1930s was a period of recurrent capitalist crisis — not the type of mild recessions which have occurred so far post-war, but thoroughly rooted slumps in which profits were turned into absolute losses and capitalists withdrew their money from industrial development.

Millions were thrown onto the dole queues, while those left in work faced wage cuts. In such a situation the full weight of workers' struggle was needed just to prevent the class from being thrown backwards.

Since the war, however, capital and the productivity of labour have expanded enormously. The working class has regained its strength, and used it to push up wages. With capitalism expanding it would be stupid to demand that wages were tied to the cost of living with no real increase. If this were the case, then the total wage bill of the capitalist class would remain fixed in real terms and the continual increase in productivity would simply go to increasing profits.

This is, of course, why wage freezes, even if they are tied to a threshold, are so popular with the bosses. During the past year profits have increased on average to the tune of 56%. For the first half of this year profits were 19.9%

Open University — or is it?

ON SATURDAY 23rd June 1973, the Open University held its first Degree Ceremony at Alexandra Palace, London.

The Open University, since its beginnings in January 1970, has been called the 'second chance' university. It claims to give ALL the chance to gain a degree, whether you have GCEs or not, by correspondence courses, TV, and radio programmes.

However, the Open University still can't understand why it has failed in its announced aim, to attract working class students.

Having spent hours deciphering the prospectus and the application forms, the applicant may feel he already deserves a degree. Surely, at least, "Open" must mean no selection for entry whatsoever. No. You are 'accepted' by some mystical process, which they assure us

has nothing to do with 'O' Levels and 'A' Levels. Then there is a further hurdle.

If you are a teacher, you are given two or three credit exemptions, depending on which course you follow. Naturally, you get more credit exemptions, as a teacher, if you continue to study education, and are penalised if you wish to widen your study.

20 Hours

However, the person with no professional qualification must gain the full six credits for a B.A. pass degree — no credit exemptions for them. As you are not allowed to do more than two credits a year, which entails officially 20 hours work a week (in reality, double the time), it will take at least three years to

complete the course. But, from my experience, even as a teacher, with long holidays, one course a year is practically a superhuman task, and allows you little time for anything else.

Now, if you are privileged to be accepted, and if you can bear the thought of six years of studying in the evenings for a pass degree (note: **not** an honours degree), this is just the beginning of the obstacle race. To further 'help' the working-class student, there are summer schools.

One compulsory week at a far distant university, each year, at the cost of £30 a week, not of course including travelling expenses, and presuming that you have already paid your £25 course fee, and at least another £20 on set text books for the year. If you are doing two courses, then double the cost.

A few firms provide grants, usually just for the summer school. But only if the degree course is related to your present employment. Thus a person on the shop-floor finds he is not eligible for such help. Why does he want a degree anyway, they may well ask.

You may ask why one of the very few courses where there is no summer school is education, where the majority of students are teachers.

Finally, you must regurgitate all the material you have managed to memorise in a three hour examination. The Open University, in its usual 'open' manner, still refuses to tell students how much weight is placed on continuous assessment and how much on the examination.

If you want to be educated, you will never last the Open University course. But if you merely wanted the piece of paper, then I advise you to wait for it arriving through the post, and not to go to the degree presentation.

First, you will not be presented with your degree anyway. This 'honour' is reserved for honorary degrees, not for mere students. Likewise there are no refreshments for the 600 or 700 students and their many more guests. Such luxuries are reserved for the press, the TV, and the hundreds of VIPs.

Psychiatry: pills or people?

MOST WORKING PEOPLE know somebody who has had a serious mental illness. In fact, it is difficult to avoid the subject nowadays, with as many as one in every five women and almost as many men spending some part of their life in a psychiatric hospital. Faced with very odd or depressed people, we feel moved to help, but helpless. In most cases they end up in mental hospital for a time.

Most people get out fairly soon. But 'treatment' usually means pills or electric shocks, with no attempt made to change the material and social situation of the patient. Indeed, the patient is often lucky to speak to the doctor at all.

To the patient at least, his condition may seem clearly related to his life situation, but psychiatry is concerned only with the diagnosis and treatment of mental 'diseases', as though these were strictly similar to physical diseases and had nothing to do with the conditions of life.

So the helplessness we feel in the face of mental illness is increased by psychiatrists telling us that this illness is really to do with body chemistry or genetic defeats.

About ten years ago a different theory of mental illness came into popular circulation, particularly with the publication of a book called 'The Divided Self', by R D Laing.

Here Dr Laing, previously a psychiatrist in the National Health Service, puts the view that schizo-

phrenia (a common mental illness) is not the result of a disease, but is understandable in terms of the individual's life situation.

Laing suggests that certain families invalidate the experience of one member. When the external world becomes intolerable for this member, he or she tries to compensate by making internal adjustments to his own mind, so to speak.

Laing's ideas were taken up by newly-radicalised students, particularly after 1968, and have passed into popular circulation. Their effect on what goes on in mental hospitals is minimal, though.

The problem is the number of different areas of life which have to be understood together to make sense of the individual: the family, alienation, the structure of the mind, etc. To pull any one of these elements out of the total synthesis results in a travesty of reality.

Thus in some 'left' accounts, the ideas of Laing and Cooper are massively oversimplified into a story of psychiatrists as mind police going out to arbitrarily seize dissenters and force them into submission by drugs and electric shocks. So, when confronted by the reality of mental illness, even more demoralisation sets in, for the theory gives us no guide to what we should be doing.

This break between theory and practice has started to come together in the experience of the Socialist Patients' Collective (SPK) in Heidelberg, West Germany. The

SPK started in the psychiatric clinic of Heidelberg University with therapy groups comprising about forty sick people. They conducted a theoretical and practical critique of the institution and unveiled the ideological function of psychiatry.

The first stage in the escalating repression against the SPK was when Dr Huber was sacked in 1970; the patients responded by occupying the administration, and obtained Huber's reinstatement and extension of the use of the buildings for their work.

Thereafter they were harassed by phone cuts, refusing prescriptions and so on, but by another occupation they won the right to continue in the University.

The next escalation was the intervention of the Minister of Education to demand the expulsion of the SPK; several suicides followed this threat, and the SPK's protests managed to stave it off.

The final stage in the escalation was the raid by 300 armed police in July 1971. Most of the patients were sent to asylums, and Dr Huber and his wife were put into solitary confinement for fifteen months till their trial, now taking place.

There is still much which is unclear about the experience of the SPK, both in their therapeutic and their political methods. But it certainly represented a more serious and humane attempt to deal with mental illness than is provided by armed police.

ED COLLINS

LIFE AND DEATH—OR LAW AND ORDER

23-YEAR OLD Mrs Olwen Parry was alone in a blacked-out house at night. The electricity at her home in Padgate Road, Pennywell, Sunderland, had been cut off because of an unpaid bill. Although she had

grown almost used to being in the dark, she was terribly scared, for she was about to give birth to a premature baby.

So she fiddled about with the fuses and a bit of wire, her desper-

ation overcoming the fears that she might electrocute herself. Somehow Mrs Parry got the lights back on. Nervous, and racked with pain, but at least able to see, she lay down to have her baby.

The child nearly died — for a time it stopped breathing — but it survived; in the dark it wouldn't have had a chance. But that did not soften the hearts of the Electricity Board officials: who decided to pro-

secute her for "dishonestly using electricity". Nor did it impress the court which found her guilty and fined her £10.

Most likely she was told "We are being lenient this time, but don't let us see you in here again."

That's the Law, you see: and it's not only got to be obeyed, but apparently we're supposed to respect it too!

ALAN THEASBY

Pomp

The ceremony, no nothing so common, the 'meeting of the Congregation' began, sorry, commenced at 2.15, and for 20 minutes the crowd, sorry, congregation, stood while the procession in gowns and fancy hats of every colour filed in and took their reserved seats, at the front of course.

Then we lesser-beings were allowed to sit, while the Pro-Chancellor declared the Congregation open. The Vice-Chancellor escorted in the Chancellor, and it took another 40 minutes to 'install' him. The Pro-Vice Chancellor — this is yet a fourth person, in yet a fourth different gown, explained why Jennie Lee (sorry, the Baroness Lee of Asheridge) should have an honorary degree. Then, more professors in fancy dress attempt to provide reasons for more honorary degrees.

Finally, the students were allowed to walk onto the stage, and bow to the Chancellor.

Does the Open University attract you?

ROSY LITAWSKI



The saying goes "that if a woman were paid for doing the housework, she would look upon it as a job and not as a way of life".

Well, maybe some would, but the question we must ask is, whose job? Now there are not many men who would want this boring and mind-destroying job, this job of a million trivialities, a job that keeps you in complete isolation so that it is a treat to go and sit in the laundrette and watch the washing go round.

Let us examine this brilliant demand for "housewives' wages". We know that women would still be doing this work. It would entrench the idea of "a woman's place is in the home" even further, and such

WOMEN'S FIGHT

'Wages' for housework won't buy liberation

demands as state nurseries, equal pay, etc, would be pushed into the background, if not forgotten altogether. The women's liberation movement would disintegrate, it would have the effect of wrapping up the consciousness of women and storing it away at home for many years to come.

I don't see how wages for housework is going to make the woman 'realise' that what she is doing is just a job like any other job, simply because it isn't just a job like any other job.

The problem is the myth of 'motherhood' and 'womanhood', a myth that has become a material force in class society. A myth that is assumed to be 'natural' like the grass, trees, sky, sun, and the moon.

How is she to become aware of this myth — by paying her a weekly wage? Is the answer to her degradation to come in the first pay packet? Or will it come up through the drain in the kitchen sink, will it come into her thoughts as her mind is being drained down the plughole?

Of course not. The only way she can become aware of her position is through society, by going out into that society, by contact with

other women, women who are conscious of the myths that are set up against them. Women who are trying to bring about a change in society. Women involved in politics and the women's liberation movement.

Only by coming in contact with women who are organised to fight their oppression, can she become aware of hers. Wherever women are organised to fight, wherever they are involved in their struggle, that is where she will come to realise that she is oppressed. Oppressed because she is living in a class society and a woman.

And that men and women can only become aware of each other in

relation to the class struggle, and not in the master-servant relationship that society is forever trying to push at us.

That it is not man himself who is the enemy, but private property and the family, these pillars of class society. These pillars that are cemented into our beliefs, beliefs that will stay cemented if we are paid "housewives' wages". Wages that will deaden our struggle.

Wages for cleaning the house... and the 'muck of ages' goes untouched.

FRAN BRODIE

We would welcome discussion on the points raised in this article.



InBrief

What do you do with a spare foot?

What is the socialist line on dead bodies — of the human variety?

As good materialists, one might have expected all socialists to agree that, since your body is of no use to you once you die, it, or the better parts of it anyway, ought to be used as 'spares' for more unfortunate brothers who have bits missing or worn out.

Thus it was with some surprise that we listened to Paul Foot (pin-up of I.S. and the liberal establishment) expounding contrary views (his 'theses on stiffs') on the radio programme 'Any Questions' recently.

The panel, of which Foot was the only left-wing member, were asked what they thought of a recent case where a surgeon transplanted a kidney from a boy killed in a road accident to another person.

Foot launched into a demagogic attack on the medical profession, arguing that since the career interests of surgeons were the main motivation in the development of medical science, we should be resolutely opposed to these all-powerful white-coated Draculas and their fiendish body-robbing schemes.

The impression he gave was quite clear from the letters read out on the following 'Any Questions' programme. Foot was supported by a motley collection of spiritualists who argued, amongst other things, that 'organ and tissue rejection' took place because the 'spirit' in the dead person's organ could not get on with the spirit in the rest of the body to which it was

being transferred.

The best letter, critical of Foot, came from a listener who had donated his body to a hospital to be used in the best interests of humanity as doctors would deem it at the time of his death. Having heard Foot's daring 'expose' he had now added another clause to the agreement he had signed saying that on no account was Paul Foot to get any of it.

A load of Bull

ONE OF HISTORY'S greatest ironies is the fact that when King William of Orange won the battle of the Boyne in 1691, he was part of a European coalition against France which included ... the Pope and the Papal States! A special mass was celebrated in the Vatican to thank God for William's victory — a victory which opened further ages of bondage and slavery for the Catholic people of Ireland.

It isn't known if the Pope's prayers actually helped William make Ireland safe for British rule and protestant ascendancy in 1691 — but the Sunday Express thinks His Holiness could help Britain keep control in the year 1973.

Recently this strike-bashing, racist weekly ration of lavatory paper suggested that the best way to stop "violence" in Northern Ireland is for the Pope to "place Ireland under an interdict". An interdict would place every Catholic in Ireland outside the Church, with no marriage, death, sacramental services, or any religious activity at all — until the struggle in northern Ireland ceases!

Would it apply to Catholics in the British Army, terrorising and murdering people in the Catholic ghettos? Or would the Express ask the Pope for a special dispensation for them? And presumably the sectarian orange murder gangs would call off their part of the

"violence" and stop preying on the Catholics when they saw that the Pope was now on their side?

If the ignorant scribblers of the Beaverbrook press knew anything about Ireland they'd know that such idiot talk only exposes the lie that the big issue in Ireland was or is religion. While the orange bigots have been supported by their clergy, the Catholic Hierarchy has always bitterly opposed the Republicans, denouncing them, excommunicating them sometimes even refusing the Last Sacrament to Republicans awaiting the firing squad or the hangman, because they refused to 'repent' for having disobeyed the church and fought for Irish freedom, while otherwise being good Catholics.

The Republicans have always been under an interdict. That has never yet made Ireland safe for British imperialism.

Dog days in Belfast

RUBBER BULLETS, live bullets... CS gas, water cannons, electrical shock tortures, hoods, truth drugs, etc, etc, etc.

The people of the six occupied counties have had to face these, and more. Resistance is higher now than at any time previous, the Kitsonian tactics employed by the British against the Irish people have been dismal failures.

But now a new weapon has been introduced by the "finest army in the world" ... not against the Irish people, but against the Irish canine species. Troops in the lower Andersonstown estate have been equipped with a spray to ward off dangerous dogs (both Provie and Official).

The canister which the troops now carry contains a fluid which blinds the dog and leaves it in extreme agony for several hours. One dog in the Slievegallon area lay in the middle of the road yelp-

ing for 15 minutes after getting a dose of British hospitality in his eyes.

An obvious danger here is that dogs, normally friendly towards children, could become extremely dangerous when blinded. Youngsters on the estate stand the risk of being mauled by one of the blinded animals. from 'Republican News'

"Our own comrades"

BACK IN AUGUST 1969 when British troops first assumed a major role in Northern Ireland, the International Socialists supported the use of troops as the lesser evil. "Withdraw the Troops" had previously been a major demand in 'Socialist Worker' — they suddenly dropped it and began polemicising in 'Socialist Worker' against those who continued to deny British troops any right to be in Ireland.

Inside IS, where Workers Fight was then a tendency, those like ourselves who said the new I.S. policy was either the result of conscious treason to socialist principles or criminal stupidity induced by blind panic, were denounced as callous brutes, indifferent to the possibility of anti-Catholic pogroms in Northern Ireland.

Hysteria ran so high that we were denounced at the September 1969 conference as 'fascists' for this and other 'sins'. Most hysterical — as usual — was I.S. guru Tony Cliff, who evoked a great deal of feeling by conjuring up visions of the bloodshed that the British Army (and only the British Army) were preventing.

"And the first victims would be our own comrades of the P.D.," shouted Cliff, and he was echoed by John Palmer and many others.

Last Sunday the demonstration to demand political status for P.D. members Farrell and Canavan, in danger of death from starvation, was virtually boycotted by I.S. ! One I.S. branch only participated in the scandalously small demonstration ! So much for "the lives of our own comrades".

U.S. corporations and the Soviet government are in the process of negotiating the largest commercial ventures ever undertaken by private industry or public agencies. These are two projects to pipe thousands of millions of cubic feet of natural gas from the fields of eastern and western Siberia to the Soviet ports of Murmansk and Nakhodka, respectively, where the gas will then be shipped to the east and west coasts of the United States.

The Yakutsk-Nakhodka project, involving the Occidental Petroleum Corporation and the El Paso Natural Gas Company, is already at the "agreement of intent" stage. It will include investments of \$10 thousand million and covers twenty-five years of construction and delivery. If fully exploited, the mammoth Siberian oil fields will produce per day twice the average daily consumption of gas in New York state.

These are the largest of more than 1,000 joint manufacturing or production agreements now existing between the capitalist West and the workers states of the East. New York's two largest banks, the First National City Bank and the Chase Manhattan Bank — two of the central pillars of world imperialism — are opening branches in Moscow. This most illustrates the striking turn in economic relations between the United States and the So-

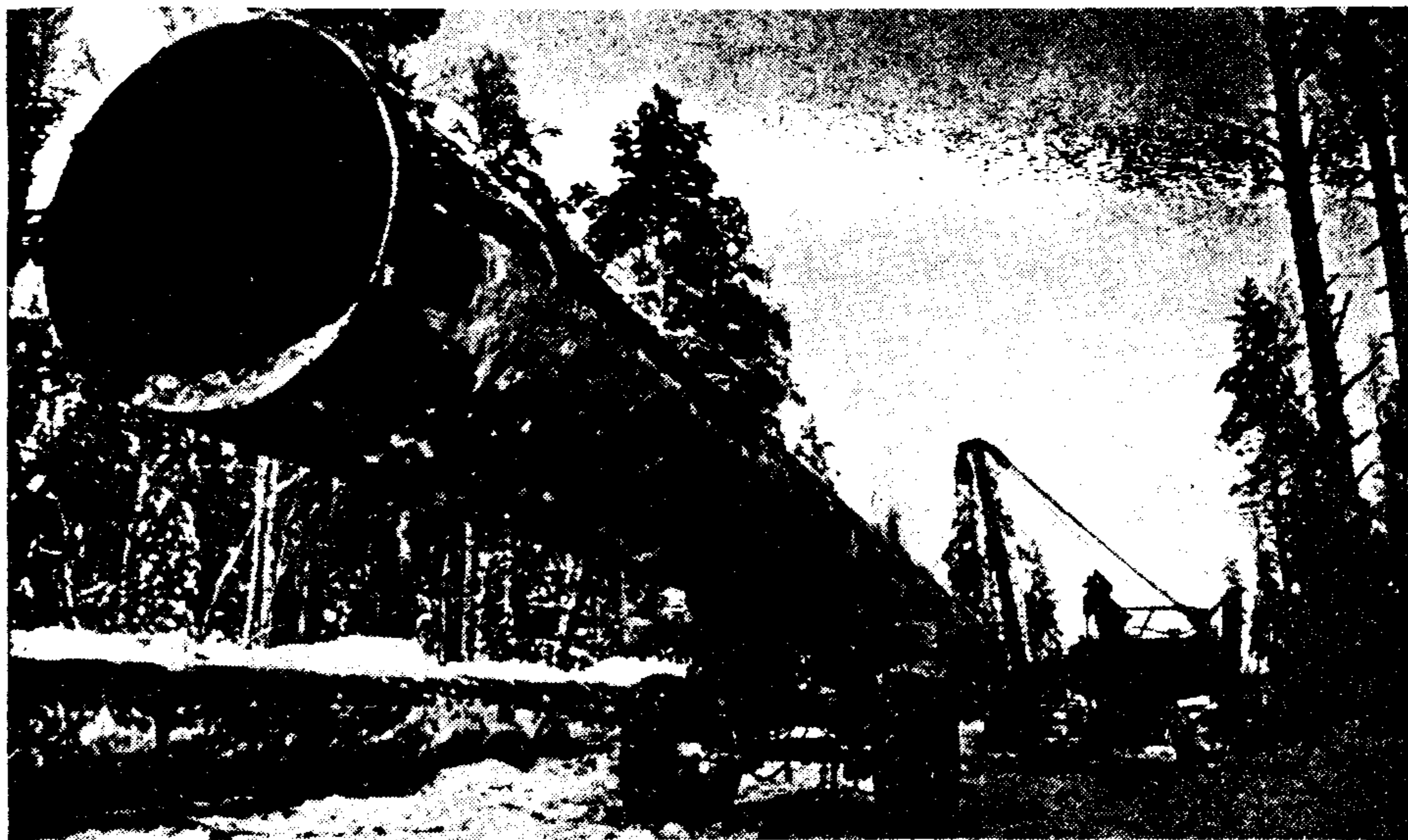
viet Union. But this was relatively unpublicized until recently.

The first major breakthrough of Western capital into the Soviet market itself was Moscow's May 1966 agreement to allow the Fiat corporation of Italy to build an \$887 million auto plant in the Ukraine. Constructed in the river city of Stavropol-on-the-Volga (renamed "Togliatti" to suit the occasion), this gigantic plant was scheduled to produce about 2,000 medium-sized cars a day by 1972 (the Fiat 124 modified for Soviet weather conditions).

Large-scale operations are one of the typical features of the new "co-production." When completed, the Togliatti plant will raise Soviet car output from roughly 200,000 autos a year to 700,000-800,000. The plant will employ 70,000 workers, turning the old river city 500 miles east of Moscow into a large industrial center.

The giant sums of money required for such projects are raised by banking syndicates in combination with governments. Credit is advanced to Moscow on a long-term, fixed-interest-rate basis. Italy itself provided credits of \$322 million for the Fiat venture. The loan is to be repaid by Moscow at 5.5 percent over fourteen years.

In December 1969 a second large-scale Italo-Soviet agreement was projected, whereby Italy would be sup-



Pipe for natural gas being laid in Russia. Siberian pipelines now planned will cross some of the most difficult stretches ever attempted.

viet Union that has developed in the last two years.

What is the planned and potential scope of the new "partnership"? What are Washington's objectives? To answer these questions it is helpful to glance at the background of the economic turn. The relaxation of the Cold War embargo on imperialist tradewith and investment in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe did not begin in the United States, nor is it only a few years old. It began in Western Europe more than a decade ago.

Fiat

Trade relations between Western and Eastern Europe gradually opened up in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Even with the barbed wire around West Berlin, trade mounted between the two Germanies, from \$560 million in 1961 to \$1,600 million in 1971, so that West Germany became East Germany's biggest trading partner next to the So-

viet Union that has developed in the last two years. The purchaser is ENI, the big Italian oil firm. This would run to about \$3 thousand million. But at the time the agreement was announced, it provided for "only" \$200 million worth of purchases of Italian machinery over five years at 6 percent interest. (See the British *Financial Times*, December 11, 1969.)

Parallel to these developments Japan had begun regular commercial trading with the Soviet Union and also was conducting periodic high-level meetings to explore the possibility of opening up the Siberian gas fields. Between 1960 and 1970 trade between Japan and all of the Eastern workers states had climbed sharply. Eastern exports to Japan rose from \$110 million to \$750 million, an increase of 582 percent; Japanese exports to Eastern countries rose from \$75 million to \$1,040 million, an increase of 1,287 percent.

U.S. - SOVIET TRADE

THE MULTI DOLLAR FOR THE DOOR

The trade between the USSR and Japan in 1968 exceeded \$500 million, and it typified the exchange of Western technology for Soviet raw materials. Japan supplied the USSR with iron and steel, tractors, construction machinery, scientific instruments and machines, lumber, and heavy electrical equipment and home electrical appliances. Soviet exports to Japan included 2.7 million metric tons of coal, 2,764,000 metric tons of oil and oil products, 1,224,000 tons of ferrous ores and almost 6 million tons of timber.

But Japan hesitated to supply the large-scale credits asked by Moscow to develop the Siberian natural gas reserves. It was not until the United States entered the picture in 1972 that joint U.S.-Japanese projects in Siberia were announced. The extent of Japan's participation, undoubtedly small by comparison to that of the United States, has not been made clear. (See *New York Times*, October 30, 1972.)

Meanwhile in 1969 the West German firm of Mannesmann in Düsseldorf had agreed to supply the Soviet Union \$598 million worth of pipe to be repaid in gas shipments to Austria and Germany over a twenty-year period. The smell of the multimillion and sometimes multibillion dollar contracts reached Detroit. In April 1970 Henry Ford 2d, inheritor of one of the capitalist world's gigantic fortunes, went to Moscow.

Ford was accorded the diplomatic treatment usually offered heads of state. He was asked to build a trucking complex at Naberezhnye Chelny, 550 miles east of Moscow on the Kama River. It would be the largest truck plant in the world, with a planned output of 150,000 eight-ton trucks a year by 1974. The price would be several thousand million dollars and the British, French, and West German capitalists had already been forced to turn down the offer. Ford said he would think it over.

One month later the project was scotched by Washington. In May 1970, after all, U.S. imperialism was at war in Southeast Asia with one of Moscow's allies. The USSR was shipping weapons to Hanoi, as U.S. war secretary Melvin Laird pointed out to Ford. Washington chose to keep the bait of economic aid dangling in Mos-



cow's eyes for two meantime insisting of the detente ought first.

New F

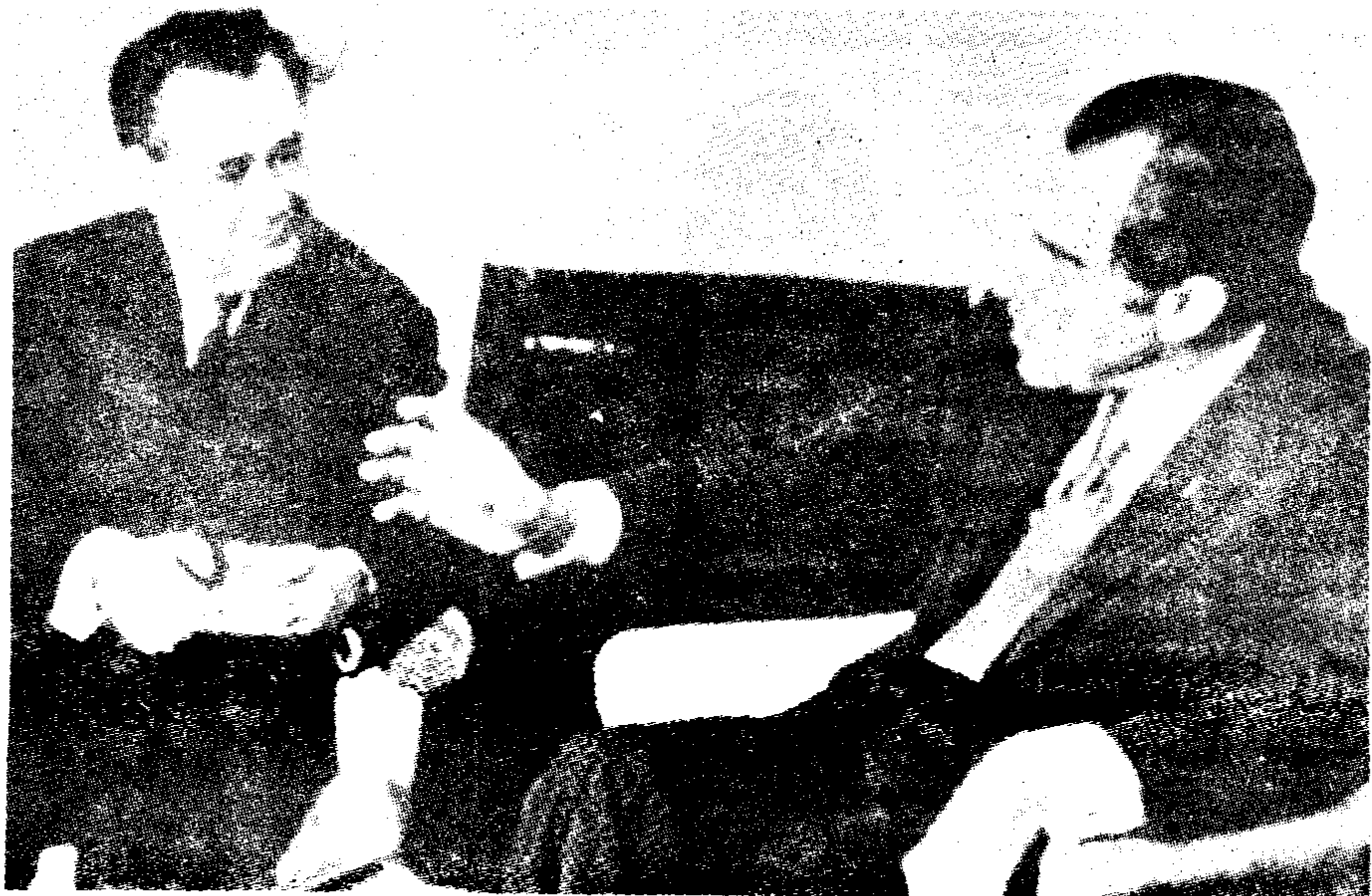
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BILLION OOT IN

By Dick Roberts .



Nixon discussing economic deals with Soviet trade minister Nikolai Patolichev

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port for trade with workers states. In September 1972, the CED released a statement entitled "A New Trade Policy Toward Communist Countries."

It is worth taking a closer look at this authoritative document. The CED is a unique think-tank in that its board of trustees consists exclusively of the directors of the most powerful U.S. corporations. For example, the present CED is chairman Emilio G. Collado, executive vice-president of Standard Oil of New Jersey; two of its five vice-chairmen are Fred J. Borch,

head of General Electric, and John D. Harper, chairman of the Aluminum Company of America. Just these three men bring together the Rockefeller, J. P. Morgan, and Mellon sectors of U. S. finance capital.

The CED stressed the edge that the imperialist rivals of the United States had already gained in trade with the workers states: "Trade with the East of most other Western industrialized countries," it said, "though a small proportion of their total trade, was relatively much greater than that of the United States. For example, in 1971, the trade of the six European Community (EC) members with the East (which included exports of U. S. manufacturing subsidiaries operating in the Community) was more than ten times as great as that of the United States, and the trade

of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) was almost six times larger."

CED sharply criticized both business and trade-union officials for opposing trade with the "Communist" bloc: ". . . the maintenance of restrictions by the United States is a gesture in futility since other trading nations have relaxed their restrictions. . . . American business firms and their foreign subsidiaries have been deprived of numerous export opportunities. These have been seized by European and Japanese business competitors."

While strongly recommending removal of restriction on exports to the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China, the CED specifically noted, "There has been no change in the restrictions and embargo on North Korea, North Vietnam or Cuba." Furthermore it recommended that "the export control chapter of U. S. history should not be treated as closed."

In its own terminology the CED emphasized the main advantage that the U. S. capitalists have in catching up with and overtaking their imperialist rivals: economic clout. "The most important factor affecting the U. S. trade potential in Eastern countries may well be the extent to which there is complementarity between the U. S. economy and the communist economies—taking into account not only comparative advantages in production but also geographical location and costs of transportation," the CED stated.

In August 1971 the Nixon administration imposed a freeze on American wages, devalued the dollar, and escalated U. S. protectionist measures in world-trade warfare. The same factors that forced this drastic turn also forced the White House to reverse its policies on Soviet trade. In fact the new policies on Soviet trade were part of the New Economic Policy.

In November 1971, Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans, and in April 1972, Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, went to Moscow to return with optimistic predictions about the future of U. S. trade. The May 1972 Nixon-Brezhnev summit in Moscow, however, did not go beyond setting up a "Joint Commercial Commission" to negotiate further steps on trade. But since then, the final difficulties seem to have been clearing up. On May 30, Soviet State Planning Commission deputy chairman Mikhail Misnik told *New York Times* reporter Theodore Shabad, "It's about time we moved beyond the Stone age practice of, say, bartering a sheep for half a camel. . . . we advance beyond that stage into large-scale arrangements in which the United States would provide plant and equipment and we would pay with raw materials and the end products of such plants, then the possibilities are indeed immense.

Contracts

Western businessmen argue for *multilateral* trade relations based on credit. The big coproduction agreements are of this type. The Kama River truck plant that Ford had been cut out of, for example, was by 1971 being built under contracts with a number of firms. Renault is the main contractor for its machine tools. A £200 million British loan from the Exports Credit Guarantees Department backs up British participation in the project. The West German firm of Liebherr Verzahntechnik also has a \$125 million machine-tool contract in the Kama operations.

In the summer of 1972, Peter G. Peterson, by then U. S. Secretary of Commerce, attended the first meeting of the U. S.-USSR Commercial Commission. The "U. S. no longer has the monopoly it once enjoyed in the production of certain goods," Peterson once again warned. "The increased availability of high technology products elsewhere rendered some of our original curbs on exports to the Soviet Union increasingly anachronistic. The real loser from these particular restraints would have increasingly been the U. S. producer and worker, not the Soviet consumer or the Soviet economy. There comes a point at which we must face the fact that business is business, and, if it is going to go on in any event, we might as well have a piece of the action."

This came rapidly:

● On July 8, 1972, an agreement was reached providing credit through the U. S. Commodity Credit Corporation for Soviet purchases of U. S. grain, originally announced at \$750



hed, Nixon continued his devastation of Indo China

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US-SOVIET TRADE

Continued from preceding page

million worth over a three-year period.

● On October 14 a maritime agreement was concluded that removed barriers to commercial shipping between the U.S. and USSR.

● On October 18 a settlement of the Soviet Lend-Lease debt was signed. "The Russians agreed to settle \$11.1 billion [milliard] in Lend-Lease debts for a total payment of \$722 million between now and July 2001," *Newsweek* magazine explained October 30. "In 27 years of sporadic bargaining since the end of World War II, Russia had never offered to repay more than \$300 million of the total bill. In return for the Lend-Lease settlement, the U.S. Export-Import Bank was authorized to extend credits and guarantees for the sale of goods to the Soviet Union."

● By this time there was also talk in the air of a multibillion-dollar deal for the U.S. development of Siberian natural gas.

Business for Minneapolis

The headquarters of the Cargill Grain Company is a World War I-style chateau in the wealthy western suburbs of Minneapolis, Minnesota. This giant firm with grain elevators throughout Minnesota, the Dakotas, Iowa, and Montana ships grain abroad from its twelve terminals on both coasts the Gulf, and in Duluth, Chicago, Buffalo, and Albany. Of the roughly 11 million tons of wheat sold to the Soviet Union in 1972, Cargill's slice was about 2 million tons. Its even larger competitor, Continental Grain Company, picked up almost 5 million tons in the deal. The actual agreements were made secretly through the U.S. Agriculture Department. While they were being settled, a top aide of the Agriculture department, Clarence Palmby, quit his \$38,000-a-year government post to take a \$100,000-a-year job as an official of Continental Grain.



This scandalized the Nixon administration in the pre-Watergate period, because the Soviet grain deal, ultimately priced at more than \$1 thousand million, absorbed about one-fourth of the total U.S. crop. It drove the price of hard red winter wheat, the principal kind sold to the Soviet Union, from \$1.69 to \$2.49 per bushel. This is a significant factor in the politically explosive inflation of

food prices rocking U.S. markets in the spring and summer of 1973. It also cost millions of dollars to small farmers who sold their wheat before the price rise, and it netted windfall profits to the futures speculators in Chicago who played their cards right.

All of these factors illustrate the big scale of U.S.-USSR trade agreements when measured against the business of particular corporations and particular industries: The grain deal opened up spectacular profits for the giant exporters involved; it included such a large sector of the U.S. grain industry that the government was forced to intervene to cover some losses sustained by American farmers; it affected food prices across the country; the immediate profiteers were directly represented at top government levels; and major U.S. competitors, in this case Canada and Australia, were cut out of profitable markets.

The CED report on trade already cited notes that "the Soviet Union which has imported U.S. wheat for some years, may also become a continuing market for corn and oilseeds not grown in adequate quantities there. China, which also is importing wheat (principally from Canada), may want to buy U.S. wheat in the future, since we have a wider range of qualities better adapted to Chinese requirements than does Canada."

Scramble for Raw Materials

Another important aspect of the opening East-West trade is the scramble of the imperialist powers for sources of energy and raw materials. This competition is itself an integral part of the intensified interimperialist competition generally, which underlies Nixon's New Economic Policy.

The United States cannot internally provide all the minerals and fuels that it consumes domestically. It draws on its global monopoly of resources in the underdeveloped world, and its importation of ores and fuels is increasing sharply from year to year. This increase simply indicates that the most advanced capitalist country must absorb additional external resources when domestic supplies are insufficient.

Yet this growing need of the imperialist superpower takes place under world economic conditions in which U.S. economic hegemony has been severely undermined. The dollar has been devalued twice and its value is still falling, causing the prices of imports to rise sharply. Certain of the neocolonial regimes in the underdeveloped world are succeeding in jacking up resource prices even more. And these factors take place as the imperialist rivals of the United States are extending their own power and influence in the Third World. The monopolistic necessity of controlling supplies, that is, keeping supplies out of the grasp of one's competitors, is all the more keenly felt by U.S. imperialism in its epoch of decline. This has caused U.S. businessmen to take a new look at the vast reserves of the Soviet Union.

"The natural resources of the Soviet Union are enormous," wrote Eugene Guccione, senior editor of *Engineering and Mining Journal*, in the July 1

New York Times. "They account for 57 per cent of the world's coal reserves, 40 per cent of the iron ore, at least one-third of all natural gas and oil and respectable percentages of the world's reserves in nonmetallic minerals.

"Most of these huge reserves, particularly those in Siberia and Kazakhstan, are almost untapped because of the Soviet shortage of development capital and technology."

Guccione emphasized the increasing U.S. need for minerals: "In May the United States Bureau of Mines reported that the vitality of the American economy during the next 25 years would depend on the country's ability to find, import, or both, an additional \$60-billion [milliard] worth of mineral resources.

"The \$1,200-billion American economy, like an inverted pyramid, rests on a foundation of some \$40-billion worth of minerals—of which \$10-billion are imported. By contrast, the 1971 Soviet mineral output amounted to some \$25-billion, of which \$3-billion were exported.

"The magnitude of potential deals with Russia can be grasped when considering that within the next 10 years the Soviet will expand its mineral industry output to as much as \$60-billion or \$65-billion, of which \$20-billion to \$25-billion may be available for export," according to Alexander Sutulov, visiting professor of metallurgy at the University of Utah.

Other aspects of the changing circumstances were added by *The Economist* in its January 6, 1973, survey of "East-West Trade": "The prices of fuel and ores have only recently risen to levels which would justify the cost of exploration and extraction from the fastnesses of east and northern



Russia," *The Economist* said. "Russian minerals were never fully believed in until space satellites were launched which could spot them better. But even if they had been, it would still have cost too much to dig them out of the ground for use in the west. In this respect, Russia's activities in the Middle East have a unique and surprising bearing on east-west trade. Russia has not won what it was originally aiming for by its meddling in the Middle East and the Gulf. Political changes in that part of the world have not all gone Russia's way. But, instead, Russia has got perhaps an even more useful gain, namely a jump in the cost of energy which at last makes Russia's own oil and gas worth exploring.

"For the west it is not just a matter of the price of energy and ores but also of security of supply. Only in the past 10 years has consumption of fuel and minerals, notably copper, nickel, chrome, reached a scale in the west when the need to multiply sources of supply, almost regardless of price, has become an end in itself. The ironical result of this for the west is that the forthcoming addition of an ideological foe to its list of suppliers will add up to a net increase in the security of its supply."

The irony is really twofold. It was political considerations, above all the necessity for U.S. imperialism to contain the colonial revolution in South-east Asia and the Middle East, that attracted President Nixon to Moscow. On the way to this forum the imperialists discovered that Moscow would not only stab the colonial revolution in the back, it would undersell the colonies on the world market.

Project North Star

Second only to the struggle for control of world resources of petroleum, the struggle for natural gas stands at the epicenter of imperialist policy. A relatively new feature of this is the global operations of U.S. pipeline companies aimed at opening the U.S. market to imported liquified natural gas (LNG) in order to produce synthetic gas from imported oil (SNG). *Business Week* reported April 21: "... the pipeline companies are proceeding with plans to build 30 SNG plants, some costing as much as \$300-million. By 1985, there could be \$5-billion [milliard] worth of these plants in the U.S. ... El Paso Natural Gas Co. ... won approval last year to import 1-billion cu. ft. of LNG a day from Algeria for the next 25 years. The project calls for \$1.7-billion in capital investment for liquefaction plants in Algeria, gasification plants in the U.S., and nine LNG tankers. ... The project would surely help revive American shipbuilding: Some of the pipeline companies estimate that by 1985 LNG ships could import as much as 5-trillion [million million] cu. ft. of gas a year, about one-fifth of the country's annual gas consumption. That would require some 100 LNG tankers."

The two natural gas projects in Siberia dwarf even these figures. The larger of the two would pipe gas from Urengoy on the Western Siberian plain to Murmansk. From there it would be shipped to the U.S. East Coast. John P. Hardt, senior specialist in Soviet economics at the U.S. Library of Congress, described the project in the May-June issue of *Problems of Communism*:

"According to the US firms negotiating with the Soviet Union—Tenneco, Inc., Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation, and Brown & Root, Inc.—a credit of 3 billion dollars (US) and an additional 700 million in cash provided by the USSR would finance purchase of American-made transmission equipment (compressors and 1,500 miles of 48-inch steel pipe capable of withstanding temperatures of minus 60 degrees Fahrenheit) and construction of a plant at the ice-free port of Murmansk to liquify the gas for shipment to the east coast of the United States. The US credits would consist of a 6-percent loan of 1.5 billion dollars from the Export-Import Bank and a loan of equal amount from various US banks, insurance companies and suppliers, the latter guaranteed by the Export-Import Bank. In addition, the American partners would build 20 specialized LNG ... tankers at an added cost of 2.6 billion dollars. The USSR would repay the credits and earn an additional 10.8 billion dollars (which could only be spent in the US) by deliveries of gas over a 25-year period beginning in 1980."

It takes us into the twenty-first century. All that is needed is the survival of world imperialism and the bureaucratic misleaderships of the workers states.

The Economist in its January survey indelicately pointed to the importance of bureaucratic rule to the whole scheme: "The reasons for industrial

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cooperation go beyond being a mere 'licence to export money,' said the British magazine. "Though the ratio of capital to labour has risen in the east as in the west, labour still remains cheaper in the east than in the west. Even better, it is virtually strike free."

Is This 'Convergence'?

It is a popular social-democratic notion that over the course of time the capitalist system and the "Communist bloc" will "converge" peacefully toward the same type of economy. Nothing like this is involved in the trade and investment now envisioned between the capitalist countries and the workers states.

Even taking into account all the long-range multi-billion-dollar projects, the total sums are very small compared to the economies of the nations. "The economic advantages of Soviet-U.S. economic relations are likely to be significant in particular sectors, rather than for the national economy as a whole," John P. Hardt and George D. Holliday of the Library of Congress write in a June 1973 report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives. "Grain traders and petroleum companies," they continue, "may benefit, but the overall effect on the national economy will be modest."

"U.S. trade with the Soviet Union represented less than 1 percent of total U.S. foreign trade in 1971. In 1972, trade turnover increased substantially. However, if U.S.-Soviet trade should increase in eight years to \$3 billion—a remarkable attainment—it would still be only about 2 percent of U.S. foreign trade. Currently, the United States imports as much in a week from Canada as it imports in a year from the Soviet Union. As a result, a major relative change or increase in trade with the Soviet Union could be offset by a relatively minor change in U.S. trade relations with its major trading partners. . . ."

"Furthermore, the U.S. trade and balance-of-payments deficits will probably not be substantially reduced by increased Soviet trade. Although the United States is likely to have considerable surpluses in its trade with the Soviet Union, they will be small in comparison with U.S. deficits."

Only a drastic restructuring of the Soviet economy along capitalist lines could open up its market to such amounts of goods and capital as to modify the conclusions of this Congressional report. Of course, the imperialists would like nothing better. "The presence of many American citizens in the Soviet Union with some decision-making power and a wider exchange of ideas may in the long run contribute to a moderation of the Soviet political control system and command economy," Hardt and Holliday speculate. ". . . there is at least a possibility that the process of integrating the centrally planned Soviet economy into the market economy of the United States and the rest of the non-Communist world might unleash irreversible forces of constructive change which could, in turn, contribute toward international interdependence and stability," the Library of Congress economists add.

But if they looked around their stacks they would not find any previous example in history where one social system was replaced by another merely by the presence of a few foreigners and their wares. That takes wars—either revolutionary or counterrevolutionary. At this point one of the ground rules of the détente is "peaceful coexistence."

FROM "THE MILITANT", NEW YORK.

THE LITTLE RAT WHO STARTED INTERNMENT

'Brian Faulkner', by Andrew Boyd. Published by Anvil Books.

IN ALL THINGS MODERATION — said the sage old motto. If we amend it to read "in all things smallness", it sums up the subject of Andrew Boyd's new book perfectly.

A rat, but a little rat; an orange bigot, but willing to do a deal with Whitelaw; one of the new breed of 'moderate' Unionists hatched out under the wing of the British military dictatorship, but buckling under Vanguard pressure; a renegade from hard-line orangeism, but afraid to stand against it; a collaborator with Whitehall, but a feeble one: in all things a little man, scavenging and hustling to make the best deal he can in any situation. That is "Wee Brian" Faulkner, former Prime Minister of Northern Ireland.

Boyd's book is really an account of the years 1968/72 in Northern Ireland, years of the biggest upsurge in anti-imperialism in Ireland for half a century. Faulkner is merely a focal point, a piece in the jigsaw of Northern Ireland politics, which includes the Orange Order, the Unionist Party, and its internal divisions. Internment (the Faulkner

'solution' whose failure brought about the fall of the Stormont regime), and direct rule and military dictatorship under the jovial Gauleiter Whitelaw. Boyd takes the account up to May 1972.

The choice of Faulkner as centrepiece is a wise one. Who is Brian Faulkner? He is a small capitalist, born in 1921, the son of a clothier in Cookestown, Co Tyrone. He is in the Orange Order, the elite "Apprentice Boys of Derry" — more elite still. He has been an MP since 1949, was Stormont Home Affairs Minister from 1959 to 63. In early 1969 he resigned from the Northern Ireland Cabinet in protest at the timid reform gestures of Terence O'Neill.

Boyd shows him reminding orange bosses to "take care of their own" — to find jobs for fellow Orangemen (that is, not for Catholics). In 1960 he warned against the "false and dangerous suggestion that the Orange Order was a religious body only and that its members should not concern themselves with politics". Simultaneously, then as now, he expressed public indignation against the very suggestion that there was an

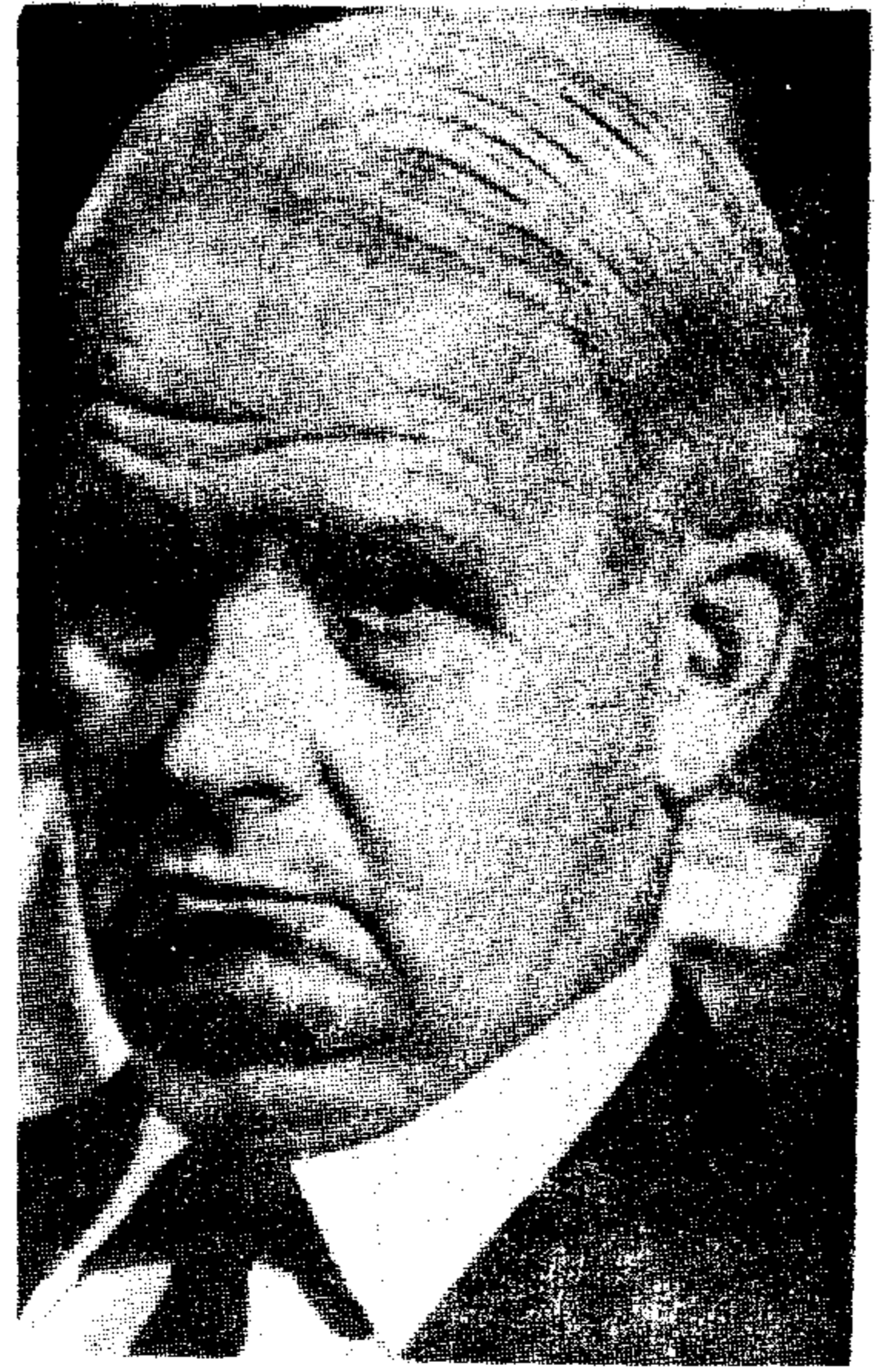
orange 'Mafia' system, discrimination, electoral frauds (gerrymandering), and, in sum, a Tory-unionist dictatorship in Northern Ireland.

Listen, for example, to him in 1967. "We in Ulster should know that most if not all the criticism flung at us has been unwarranted and unjustified... but we should make certain that we never take any action that would weaken Ulster's position within the United Kingdom. On the maintenance of that our whole future depends." Quite consistently he continues that policy now in somewhat changed conditions: that is, he aims to defend Orange privilege in alliance with the British ruling class.

To maintain his grass roots base he resisted O'Neill's little 'reforms', intrigued against him with men like Paisley, publicly and behind the scenes; now, to maintain what he can of orange ascendancy he collaborates with the British in trying to renovate the Northern Ireland state.

No wonder the Catholics distrust and detest this opportunist rat, now being used as the best unionist frontman he has by dictator William Whitelaw.

CHRIS GRAY



THE APPARATUS OF REPRESSION — A RAIDING PARTY

Danger—soldiers at large

POLICE throughout the south of England recently were alerted when two soldiers formerly stationed in Northern Ireland broke out of a mental home and proceeded to terrorise the inhabitants of a Hampshire hamlet.

British television and press gave wide coverage to the manhunt until the escapees finally were run to ground and returned to the institution.

Every day in Ardoyne, Bally-

murphy, and New Lodge the local people are subjected to the same sort of terrorism by armed soldiers as were the natives of the Hampshire village.

Old people and young children go in constant danger of being shot at and, indeed, murdered by these invaders.

The casualty list in these areas contains a large percentage of pensioners and schoolchildren.

However, the British press and

TV is strangely silent on coverage of these events, and, worse still, so is the shackled media of the 26 Counties.

It would appear that two crazy, unarmed Brits, breaking windows in an English village, warrants more attention than armed killing and pillaging in the little side streets of Belfast.

(Slightly edited from 'An Phoblacht')

Spanish militant appeals for support

Dear comrades,

Thirty-four years ago General Franco won his victory over the republican government. The Franco troops challenged the republican government in the name of a unity that for Spanish people has never existed. Now, 34 years later, the oppression continues more than ever.

The prisons are full of political prisoners, workers whose only crimes were to ask for their human and civil rights. The police ('guises', as we call them, because of their terrifying grey uniforms) are trained to torture until blood runs freely in the cells, because blood is the only thing which runs freely in the Spanish streets and jails.

In the factories and universities all over the country you do not know whether the person sitting near you is one of your comrades fighting for our rights, or one of the many policemen in disguise trying to catch the leaders of the struggle.

Carabanchel is one of the most terrible prisons where political prisoners go without any trial whatsoever, where they are tortured and stay for months and months to come; and one day you discover that the man who was one of the leaders has died. His death is announced with such a disinterested attitude that he could have died from old age!

"ROUGE" SAVED BUT CP 'BANS' LIGUE

MEETINGS are being held all over France to protest against the banning of the Ligue Communiste and the continuing imprisonment of Alain Krivine. Some meetings have been called by the big left parties, the Communist Party and the Socialist Party, but at these meetings ex-members of the Ligue are banned from speaking!

At one meeting in Bordeaux, according to the revolutionary paper 'Lutte Ouvriere':

"The last speaker was the representative of the PSU (Unified Socialist Party). This comrade was going to read a declaration of the ex-Ligue Communiste at the end of his speech. Jose Juste, local secretary of the CGT (Communist Party-controlled union)...

...went white, stammered a few words, and leapt to his feet. Launching into the Internationale, he prevented the PSU representative from reading the declaration..."

However, the defence campaign in France and internationally seems to have succeeded so far in checking more ambitious plans the French government may have had. 'Rouge', formerly the paper of the Ligue, has appeared openly since the banning, and has not been prohibited.

The July 6th issue of 'Rouge' reports that the leader of the biggest police union, Gerard Monatte, has accused the minister of the interior, Marcellin, of being either a manipulator or incompetent. Suspicion is growing that the violent episodes on 21 June which are the excuse for banning the Ligue were largely provoked by government mishandling of the police.

'Rouge' points to a number of factors giving rise to suspicion:

"...the presence, on June 21, of individuals in civilian clothes known for their ties to the far right and used in curious ways: some were found among the demonstrators throwing Molotov cocktails at the police; others were on the other side, grenades in hand, right next to the police in uniform. Their deployment was so obvious that a commissioner was asked about these 'reinforcements' and transmitted a report to his superiors asking about these 'unofficial teams'".



This is what we want generally speaking: a 40 hour week (we still have to work 48 hours a week and people are forced to do many hours of overtime to solve their most important needs); Trade Unions to fight for better wages and workers' rights instead of conspiring against them.

Culturally speaking we want to abolish the invidious censorship which leads to the continual banning of any sort of artistic expression in the cinema, painting, literature, theatre, etc, as is happening

now.

When people think of Spain they think of the sun, the fine weather, good food, wine, joy... as if these were the most important things.

Comrades — thousands of innocent people are screaming in the Spanish jails — shall we listen to them? Thousands are now fighting in the streets, factories, and universities all over the country — shall we not support them?

V.P.



WHERE
workers
fight
- WE
STAND

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries and guided by the ideas of revolutionary Marxism can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable instruments of working class interests, independent of the bosses' state.

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

STEP UP THE PRESSURE TO SMASH THIS SHOW TRIAL

ELEVEN OF THE TWENTY-FOUR North Wales building workers charged with 'conspiracy' have been found not guilty on the major charges of affray and intimidation. In passing this verdict, the jury indicated that they simply did not believe that police witnesses were telling the truth about events in last year's building strike.

Pressure must now mount for all the charges to be dropped. Arthur

Murray, one of the defendants, stated:

"These trials are nothing but witchhunts against pickets. Building workers in small towns and villages have been picked on in the hope of creating a case law against picketing with which to attack the big battalions in the trade union movement.

We shall be calling on all Welsh Labour MPs to insist that the Shrew-

sbury trial of 24 building workers on similar charges should be halted as a complete waste of public money and an attempt to bring those charged to the brink of financial ruin."

But no-one should be over-confident. The acquittals were not due to mass pressure. There were no big militant demonstrations outside the courtroom. There were no plans for protest action if a 'guilty' verdict had been returned.

Through good fortune, and efficient use by defence lawyers of their power to reject possible jurors, the jury was largely made up of local working class people. They saw in the dock men like themselves, men whom they could not consider as violent criminals.

To trust on this situation being repeated in Shrewsbury — where the big charge, 'conspiracy', is vaguer and so needs very little evidence

to make it stick — to trust on that would be folly. The government has clearly launched a major campaign against picketing to clear the ground for a clampdown on wages. We cannot fight them by just relying on juries.

The solidarity campaign is still necessary. Money is still necessary for the defence.

British Leyland Chorley stewards voted £25 and a delegation to the next demonstration after being addressed by Workers Fight national committee member Roy Ratcliffe. The Transport and General Workers Union has declared support, and must be pushed to back up its words with cash and with mobilisations.

Money and messages to: M. R. Williams, Defence of Pickets, 1 Ford Pentre, Ocean View, Carme Flintshire.

Print Unions' recipe for the deep Freeze

THE CLASH right now on Fleet Street is an important warming-up for the battle over Phase 3.

The Newspaper Publishers' Association has refused to stand by the nationally negotiated two-year agreement with the unions involved in the printing of national newspapers in Manchester and Fleet Street.

The agreement said that if the Retail Price Index rose above 177.4 in any two successive months, then an 8% pay award due to be paid on 1st October would be brought forward to begin July 1st. But the NPA, basing themselves on the Phase 2 law, have refused to pay up.

So far the unions have been less than militant. Five of them — the AUEW, EEPTU, SLADE, NGA, and SOGAT have tried to work out a 'legal' way of getting the £1.68 million due to printworkers under the agreement into some sort of union pension or benevolent fund.

The sixth union, NATSOPA, has threatened to withdraw from the two year agreement (which has given the employers a lot of advantages in the way that long term agreement do — stability, breathing space, &c).

But instead of leading a fight on the floor of the printshops for rank and file unity against the NPA's refusal to pay out, NATSOPA has opted for a strategy of trying to negotiate 'house agreements'. This attempt to return to old ways of fighting has so far roused no great chords of enthusiasm from print workers.

The NPA, at this stage, probably do not want a showdown. The last year or so has seen higher profits from advertising, increase in profits from the more profitable provincial papers owned by the 'nationals', and higher profits from companies associated with the national dailies, for example the Thomson group has made a lot of money

from its connections with television. Profits have had a boost not seen in or around Fleet Street for a long time.

They do not want to lose advertising through a stoppage. But in the long term a showdown is to be expected. The new machinery introduced or planned can be profitable for the bosses only on the basis of reduced manning. The employers have to break the union resistance which has kept manning scales up so far.

If nothing is done now, the showdown between the NPA and the print unions will be timed to the convenience of the bosses. The formula "sit back now, and fight later" can be a recipe for defeat for printworkers.

STEPHEN CORBISHLEY

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A NEW PAMPHLET...

THE STRUGGLE AT SIMCA

In the factories of Simca — the French branch of the international CHRYSLER company — the union is a fascist union, the CFT. This pamphlet gives details of the activities of the CFT, the oppression of Simca's immigrant workers, and the fight back.

From Coventry Workers Fight — D Spencer, 17 Winifred Avenue, Earlston, Coventry. 15p plus 5p postage.

S.E.I. Strikers rattle Weinstock

THE STRIKE AT Salford Electrical Instruments (SEI) goes on. The management backtracked on their verbal agreement with the strike committee to negotiate equal pay, and instead offered 70p to 90p according to how your face fits — which is what the factory floor AUEW have accepted. (If it wasn't for the strikers they wouldn't have got that!)

The strikers rejected this offer, and voted to continue the strike at both Eccles and Middleton.

In fact the picket has now grown 'roots' at the factory gate, thanks to local miners donating a hut which is positioned outside the main factory gate to provide warmth and

shelter — with the full approval of Eccles Corporation!

The women's action has hit the heart of the Weinstock GEC empire: Weinstock himself has had to come to Eccles and tell local manager Brian White that he had better settle the dispute. And P.D. Shaggly, the personnel officer for GEC, has also been down to see White.

Today, Mrs. Wright, one of the Eccles strikers, who was knocked down and hurt by a scab lorry two weeks ago, told me that the solidarity of the strikers has not weakened. In fact they have had a boost by knowing the bosses at the top are worried by their action.

Their picket line has a real air of permanence now, with camping stoves installed, and coffee and soup continually being made to keep their energy going.

The factory is on holiday now, but the 24 hour picket continues to stop supplies going in.

To further boost their spirits, a dance is being held at Eccles Labour Club, organised by Manchester Women's Liberation, with all proceeds to the strike committee.

LINDA YOUND 2.8.73

Use this Pamphlet

To help campaign against racism, WORKERS' FIGHT has produced a 20-page pamphlet which explains the roots of racist thinking, takes up 'reasonable' sounding racist arguments, examines the racism of the 'popular' psychologist Eysenck, and exposes fascist infiltration in the Unions.

The pamphlet is written in a clear style, and should be an invaluable aid to militants striving to fight racism at work.

We appeal to all readers and supporters of Workers' Fight to take it into their workplace and make sure it gets as wide a circulation as possible.

Single Issues 10p & postage Bulk Orders: 50p for 6; 80p for 12



Racism and the Working Class

Just out, a collection of reprints from Workers' Fight on the general strike. A short introductory section deals with the events of July 1972 and the situation leading up to them. The central section contains articles on the experience, including Britain 1919-26; France May 1968; the 1972 Quebec general strike, and a new translation of Rosa Luxemburg on Belgium, 1902. A third section deals with the question of trade unions and the State, and an appendix discusses the positions of the left groups on the General Strike and the July Crisis of 1972.

Price 20p plus 5p postage from: 98 Gifford St, London N.1

The Industrial Relations Act and the fight for a GENERAL STRIKE

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FARRELL, CANAVAN STATEMENT

TONY CANAVAN AND MICHAEL FARRELL have been on hunger strike in Crumlin Road Jail, Belfast, since July 6th. Their motives for taking this step are explained in a statement smuggled out of the jail on that date.

"Our case is simple and clear. We were prosecuted for our part in a political demonstration against internment, repression, and sectarian murders. We received mandatory six-month sentences which are reserved for political offences. Our trial was blatantly political and we were convicted and sentenced by a political Judge — W W B Topping, a leading Orangeman, a Unionist MP for 15 years, chief whip of the Unionist Party for six years, and minister of Home Affairs for three years...

When we entered this prison we refused to wear prison clothes and demanded political status. We were threatened with loss of remission and since then have been held in a basement cell 13 ft x 7 ft, locked up for 23 hours a day. We have been denied all recreational facilities and association with other prisoners... We have been subjected to constant threats and intimidation... We regard the refusal to grant us

political status and our confinement to the basement as sheer victimisation by the prison authorities and the Ministry of Home Affairs. *We are determined to get our rights*"

Now (2nd August), on the 28th day of their hunger strike, Canavan and Farrell are in the hospital wing of the prison. It should be pointed out that the only difference between hospital and normal cells is that prisoners held in the former are visited every two hours to ascertain whether they are still alive.

BREACH

They have refused to let prison doctors examine them because these doctors have been issuing inaccurate statements to the press concerning their condition, without their consent — an obvious breach of medical practice. They have asked to be examined by their own doctors. The request has been refused.

Both men are extremely weak, too weak to fetch the water which is placed just inside the door rather than carried to their bedsides.

Demonstrations of solidarity with Canavan and Farrell in Belfast on Sunday 29th and Monday

30th July were banned only hours before they were due to commence. The reaction to Sunday's demonstration in the Lower Falls by the British Army shows clearly that it was used as an excuse to once again harrass the Catholic population of Belfast, in a well-planned military exercise.

A march was held in London by People's Democracy on Sunday 29th July, followed by a token 24 hour hunger strike outside the Home Office. Although the demonstration was supported by representatives of most of the left-wing and Irish organisations in Britain, it did not receive a great deal of publicity.

It is obvious that Canavan and Farrell have been imprisoned in order to silence their opposition to the White Paper and the Assembly. PD has long represented a thorn in the side of the Whitelaw administration.

So far the administration has acted as if it is prepared to allow Canavan and Farrell to die. Unless a major issue is made of the case in Britain they may indeed die. Socialists in Britain must take a hand in defending the lives of these comrades. P. DOCHERTY

PORTS

'UNREGISTERED' THREAT

A YEAR AGO, registered dockers stood eyeball to eyeball in confrontation with unregistered dockers in the Humberside region. The registered men from Goole and Hull tried to close the scab, non-NDLS ports.

Since then, the Hull dockers have had to face entirely new problems, associated with the rise of Hull into an important Common Market port. The whole of the east coast from Teesside to Kent has seen a rise in the tonnage handled; but not all men who handle cargo have benefited.

Following the National Ports Council report some of the scab wharf owners have been under pressure to pay better wages. Now the unregistered men have begun to see the point that the registered dockers tried to make last year. Though wages are high, conditions are

terrible. As one of them said "Sometimes there are so few of us working a ship that it's like slave labour. This is where the employers are coining it — they should be paying more men."

The Hull and Goole dockers still see the unregistered ports as a threat, but for the moment the upsurge in traffic has pushed this important problem into the background. Like in many other registered ports, the central problem still remains the threat of casuals.

The fight over casuals has so far been very confused. Ports with a great tradition of militancy have given way (Liverpool), while ports with no great tradition like Manchester and Tilbury have fought back. As yet their efforts have not led to a systematic campaign to defend the National Dock Labour Scheme.

From p.1

That is no justification for the widespread indifference to the liberation struggle of the Irish people. But it does partly explain it.

With Farrell and Canavan there can be no problems of identification for British militants. These comrades are socialists, totally and actively devoted to the working class. Their goal is to unite the working people, and achieve an Irish workers' republic. Their methods have been the methods of agitation, propaganda, street demonstrations. True, they have faced up to the fact that the Protestant working class has, in the main, an attitude of racist contempt and hatred for the oppressed Catholics, and have taken

sides with the oppressed. True also they know that the "terrorists" in Northern Ireland are the British Army and the Orange murder gangs, and they take sides — as does this newspaper — with the militia of the Catholic people, the Irish Republican Army.

So would every class conscious British worker in similar circumstances.

Socialists and militants must act to save the lives of these two men and work to mobilise pressure to help win them political status.

Send immediate telegrams to Whitelaw at the Northern Ireland Office. Organise pickets and demonstrations to stop these two socialists from being murdered by Heath's government. Act now - URGENTLY.

SEAN MATGAMNA

Sparks Picket ETU Head Office

HOSPITAL electricians from many parts of the country picketed the ETU Head Office in Bromley on July 30th. The demonstrators, about 100 in all, were protesting at their EC's reversal of its previous decision to back strike action over the Government's refusal to implement the recommendations of the Davidson Enquiry into hospital sparks' pay.

The Enquiry recommended that hospital electricians' pay should continue to be linked to the Electrical Contracting Agreement. At the present, hospital electricians' pay is £3.20 behind the Contracting Agreement, and will still be 92p behind when an agreement under Phase 2 is implemented.

The decision to picket the ETU headquarters was coupled with a 24 hour unofficial strike which had strong support in Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and Leeds; Liverpool hospital electricians also staged unofficial strike action last week.

Tempers flared among the pickets when ETU General Secretary Frank Chapple refused to meet a delegation from the men until after the monthly EC meeting, which was then taking place, was over. The men blockaded the ETU offices in retaliation, and refused to allow official cars in or out of the grounds. Only women office staff were allowed to leave.

The blockade went on for 25 minutes until Chapple appeared to meet all the men in the canteen.

Chapple's excuses for the EC's decision not to back strike action did nothing to soothe the sparks' feelings. He said that only a small number of the 2,700 electricians in the hospital service had voted for strike action and that taking action at the moment would have opened the union and its stewards to legal action by the government. "When we feel legally able to insist on implementation of the Report we are going to do so. The time for action could be right in a little time."

I spoke to an ETU steward at Manchester Royal Infirmary who took part in organising the demonstration. He was highly critical of Chapple and ETU leadership's lack of support for their demands and said that if the EC refuses to call a strike then they will go ahead and organise it themselves.

And another MRI electrician said "If Bro. Chapple feels that we would do better to demonstrate outside the Department of Health, then he should be there leading us". An unofficial co-ordinating committee has been set up to organise further action. JACK SUTTON

JOHN MACLEAN COMMEMORATION

Panel of speakers — at General Picton pub, Wharfedale Road, Kings Cross, 8pm Friday August 10th.

TOM RAMSEY