

Workers' fight

5p

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How the Arabs
were driven out
of Palestine

THE STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED at the beginning of the miners' overtime ban and even before strike action has been called is a warning that the Tories are going to fight this one with everything they have got. They have made the miners a test case for Phase 3 - realising that the miners are poised to scuttle their incomes policy and maybe the government as well.

Arthur Scargill, President of the Yorkshire area of the NUM, has put it like this: "Either the miners break Phase 3 or the Government breaks the miners. I can assure you that the miners will not be broken. What is required is a massive mobilisation of the Labour movement in support of the miners."

The Government is preparing for that. Robert Carr has announced that a special "Intelligence Centre" has been set up at Scotland Yard to centralise police anti-strike activity. This is only the logical outcome of the extensive preparations for anti-picket work which Workers' Fight has repeatedly reported in recent months.

Appropriately, the Government now follows up the Industrial Relations Act and the union-robbing NIRC by assigning "industrial relations" to a special Department of the Police.

Carr explains: "We have arranged for police forces to make cooperative arrangements with their neighbouring forces so that at short notice they can send reinforcements to help forces under pressure."

They are preparing for clashes like those during the last miners and dockers strikes. They have learned from their defeats then.

Thus, as well as preparing



ABOVE: Arthur Scargill, Yorkshire miners' leader: "It's them or us"

AFTER THE BY-ELECTIONS

THE TORIES got a bloody nose in the by-elections. But so did Labour. The stench from its years in office still clings to Labour. Many workers do not see it as a better alternative to the Tories. It is seen as the second party of the existing order.

Labour's leadership, parliamentary windbags and horsetraders, totally failed to organise a fighting campaign on the vital issues which concern the working class today. In the elections Labour appeared as a treacherous and opportunist party, exploiting Tory unpopularity but offering no alternative, concerned more with government jobs for the boys than with anything else.

If the Labour leaders were at all serious towards the working class, or the Labour Party activists, they would have campaigned for the Labour Party conference decisions in favour of nationalising the capitalist monopolies which dominate our life. These decisions were not an adequate socialist programme for the overthrow of capitalism. But even these limited decisions were ignored by Labour's leadership. As with all such proposals under this leadership or another thrown up under the present

for physical clashes, the Tories have also launched a Fleet Street campaign to isolate miners from the class-wide support and solidarity which made the big difference in 1972. The strategists of the boss class know that both the victories of last year and the defeats of sections of workers under Phase 2 had a linked cause - the availability or the absence of solidarity.

Strong sections like miners and dockers, who used their muscle and called forth solidarity from other workers, won. But the hospital workers and gas workers, weak to start with and isolated in the battle, lost.

That's the whole of it.

Phase 3 is designed to lay down a divisive framework which works against solidarity action, and the Fleet Street rags work to undermine the very inclination

towards solidarity with the miners and others. But many workers know that the miners are now the spearhead and striking force of the class against the restraints demanded by the bosses and imposed by the Government.

The miners' overtime ban, which involves safety men as well as production workers, has been highly successful, cutting coal output in the first week by 20-25% - nearly half a million tons of coal. Not one group of miners has refused to operate the ban.

Gormley's 'strategy' in the negotiations is to get a few improvements involving productivity deals under Phase 3, and then try to sell the deal to the miners, perhaps with the promise that a Wilson government will 'see the miners right' eventually.

But miners know that the word

MINERS

THE

BIG TEST

of Harold Wilson, who presided over a massive number of pit closures, is not worth a face-worker's spit.

The response to the overtime ban already shows that not many miners will be satisfied with the tail-between-the-legs afraid-to-win approach of Gormley.

The miners face no easy fight. Compared with 1972, the government is well prepared.

Solidarity will be decisive. Not solidarity in words and resolutions only - but solidarity action in blacking and on the picket lines and, where necessary (and it will be) against the police anti-picket squads.

If the miners accept what is offered them without a fight, or, worse, if they go down to defeat, then the chances of the rest of the working class defeating Phase 3 will have declined greatly.

FIGHT TO MAKE LABOUR WIN!

undemocratic structure of the Labour Party.

The fundamental significance of the election results is that disillusion with the whole parliamentary game remains deep and powerful. Its positive side is a tremendous working-class industrial self-reliance - the major feature of working class life today.

The problem is that direct militant action cannot relate to or determine directly the fate of society as a whole, except when it erupts to general strike proportions and beyond. This means that in 'normal' times in a general election situation, the mass of the working class, including the militants, and those who lapsed as Labour voters in the by-elections, will feel they have to opt for Labour, which remains the party of the trade union movement. Without necessarily abandoning the militant industrial posture, or developing any great positive faith in Labour.

And we are moving towards a general election. It dominates the thinking not only of trade union leaders, but of many militants also. The Tories are expected to respond to big industrial clashes in the period ahead by calling a snap general

election on the issue of 'Who Rules - Government or Unions?'

This highlights one major difficulty for socialists. There is now such a balance between the major classes in society that a general strike has threatened to erupt for more than 18 months now, as Workers Fight has continually pointed out. It remains and will remain a possibility, to be triggered by one of a number of possible points of conflict ahead.

It is on this, fundamentally, that revolutionaries must build.

But simultaneously 'normal' politics, related to parliamentary processes will continue for the working class. Militants must relate to this, too.

A general election may come before a general industrial confrontation. It is necessary for militants to relate to both the potential of the general strike and to 'normal' politics. We must walk on two legs.

Concerned to organise the struggle of the class, we cannot be indifferent to the performance of the party of the trade unions. Labour militants must learn from the by-elections.

A campaign to bring down the Tory government can be of major

importance in the class struggle in coming months, if the primacy of the industrial struggle is clearly seen, and electoral calculations and considerations are subordinated to it. And on condition that Labour militants fight to transform Labour into an instrument responding to the needs of the working class and the trade union movement, rather than the needs of capitalism. How successful such a fight can be, will emerge in the course of the struggle.

If the Labour Party which pays lip service to socialism really was a workers' party, a real party of socialism, it would use the chronic problems of capitalism now to mobilise the working class in a struggle for workers' power and the overthrow of capitalism. It is not. It is still the task of militants to fight for socialism - and, where a useful educational purpose can be served by it, to demand that the party of the trade unions takes measures against capitalism.

Here and now, the most immediate task for Labour militants is to work

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FROG-MARCHED TO THE ALTAR

ONCE UPON A TIME there was a not so beautiful princess.

The princess was so unhappy. What with her mother's obsession with shaking hands and incessant talk about "my husband & I"; her father, with his menagerie of extinct animals and his habit of telling the plebs to pull their fingers out; and her brother with his kink about military uniforms, who was often seen wandering about the palace dressed as an Admiral of the Fleet muttering "I'll go down with my ship" - what was the poor girl to do?

Even equestrian pursuits failed to console our desolate princess. After finishing seventeenth in the European Dressage event, she ran away from home.

She clambered aboard a steed belonging to a drunken corporal of the Household Cavalry and headed north. Eventually, tired and worn, she arrived on the shores of the picturesque Manchester Ship Canal. She sat by the shore of this magnificent waterfront and began to cry.

Whilst she watched the effluent from the Esso Oil Refinery a frog, the last living frog in the Manchester Salford area, hopped gaily from one piece of flotsam to another.

On impulse she picked up the frog and kissed it - and the frog was transformed instantly into an upper middle class twit dressed in the uniform of a captain of the dragoons.

"Oh Joy!" our princess cried, "My handsome captain, now you must marry me."

"You must be joking" retorted the soldier boy, whose name was Mark "I'm not marrying a kinky scrubber who kisses frogs."

The princess was distraught. Questions were asked in the House. Norman St. John Stevas was worried about The Family, contraception, who would inherit Queen Victoria's bedsocks, and the bringing up of tadpoles in the True Faith. Enoch Powell showed interest in the racial origins of the frog. Brian Faulkner and Ian Paisley seemed concerned about the greenish tinge associated with the majority of these amphibians. Finally, the Archbishop of Canterbury warned Captain Mark that if he refused to do the honourable thing he would change him back into a frog.

Mark says... DAVE BRODIE

BOMBS TRIAL

SEE PAGE 11

Workers Fight FREEDOM FIGHTERS?

THE ANNOUNCEMENT of a bombing campaign by the so-called ULSTER FREEDOM FIGHTERS is a grim manifesto promising carnage and death on a massive scale in Northern Ireland.

So far, hundreds of Catholics have been slaughtered with knife and gun by Protestant bigots. They were, apparently, picked at random and for no other reason than because they were Catholics. Now there is a new escalation and already a series of UFF explosions has occurred — with no warnings.

Any resemblance to the IRA bombing campaign is superficial and misleading. That campaign was and is organised not against Protestants, but against the British occupying army and the personnel of the Orange sectarian state: bombs aimed to cause economic damage, not indiscriminate slaughter. The UFF campaign is admittedly anti-Catholic and sectarian, an extension of the assassination campaign. Its aim is to inflict massive civilian casualties on the Catholic population.

It is a product of the present desperation of the die-hard Orange bigots. Their alarm has increased as politicians such as Fitt and Faulkner labour under dictator Whitelaw's whip towards agreement on the running of the new Assembly set up by decree from London, in which Catholic and Protestant 'moderates' will form a coalition.

Within the Assembly an effective bloc of the SDLP, sole 'Catholic' party, and the Faulkner faction of Unionists, has in fact upheld London's plans for powersharing, with the result that the old line Unionists who oppose powersharing on any terms are reduced to the political — not the social — position formerly occupied by the Catholics, in roughly the same proportion of one third.

The fundamental present realities of the situation are inexorably asserting themselves. The Unionists like Craig and Paisley who dream of a return to Protestant ascendancy have nothing to counterpose to Britain's policy of doing a deal with the Southern Irish Catholic middle class and their Northern auxiliaries in the SDLP. Northern Ireland's economy is tied too closely to Britain to make a return to ascendancy over the Catholics possible without Britain's agreement and consent. Independence for Northern Ireland is impossible for the same reason. So, recent advocates of independence like Craig now want integration with Britain. But the last thing the British ruling class wants is integration with the problems of Northern Ireland.

Their long term strategy is for complete re-integration with all of Ireland (the proposed Home Rule parliaments for Scotland and Wales are probably partly motivated by plans for a federal solution to the 'Irish Problem'). In the short term they are remoulding the political superstructure of Northern Ireland, and have full support from the Eire government in exerting maximum pressure to fuse a new ruling alliance into existence in Northern Ireland, made up of the flexible Unionists and the SDLP.

Serious problems have yet to be overcome before any sort of stability will exist in the Assembly. There must be agreement on RUC policing of Catholic districts and on a Council of Ireland linking the Northern and Southern Governments. But already the cohesiveness of the SDLP, the small Alliance Party and the Faulkner Unionists, their will to agree, testifies to the grip their masters in London and Dublin have on the situation. Faulkner is said to be even willing to form a breakaway from the Unionist Party if he is defeated in the forthcoming Unionist Council meeting.

Events in the Assembly have added to the rage and desperation of the Protestant militants. Reared believing in an innate superiority and permanent ascendancy over the Catholics, they look with black despair and feelings of betrayal as the new Assembly is forged. No longer able to work through the machine of legal terror which was the Stormont state, they resort to indiscriminate killing of Catholics, and now promise to do it on a bigger scale than ever.

The UFF is such a mysterious organisation, so hard to pin down and locate in the real world — except for its outrages — that it is believed to be an alias for the UDA, or part of it. Whitelaw has just banned the UFF, but the UDA remains entirely legal.

The main thrust of the British Army continues to be against the Catholics. The defeat of the IRA is its priority number one, seen as the precondition for freeing the SDLP from pressure and maybe for placating the Protestants. Far from keeping the peace, as the British press says (and will say even more if there is a big UFF escalation) the British Army has only succeeded in hindering the Catholics' self defence. Since the Army re-occupied the Catholic areas in July 1972, assassination of Catholics has reached such proportions that even normally Uncle Tom-ish Churchmen such as Cardinal Conway (Primate of All Ireland) have denounced the complicity or indifference of the British Army.

But the British authorities are not primarily concerned to save Catholic lives. Indeed, there is massive evidence that army plain clothes squads have been responsible for some of the random killing. Their goal is to stabilise the Assembly and ride out the Orange backlash. They know that in the final analysis the Orange armed groups, murderous though they be, are impotent to threaten Imperialist rule. They are no more than the last ditch defenders of a form of rule that even the imperialists themselves no longer find profitable or even serviceable. If the Army does attempt to crack down heavily on the UFF it will be for fear that Catholic reaction to the new campaign will discredit the collaborationist SDLP among Catholics, and strengthen the IRA.

The IRA on the contrary does challenge imperialism. It does it in a limited and inadequate way, unable to open up a second front against Britain's loyal capitalist garrison in the South, unable to stop the increasingly repressive Southern ruling class aiding British imperialist occupation in the North.

Socialists in Britain must continue to demand and campaign for the withdrawal of British troops. They have no right to interfere in Ireland and they make the situation worse, not better. We must support the right of the Catholics and their IRA militias to defend themselves against the UFF, its parent organisation the UDA, and the British Army.

PHASE 3

TORIES' WEDGE TO SPLIT UP OUR CLASS

by Jack Price and Andrew Roberts

ACCORDING to the 'Economist' the firemen's pay victory has left Phase 3 in a pretty sorry state. The settlement has in fact given the firemen nationally more than the £5 that the Glasgow men were demanding. Firemen have won up to £8 a week, and nearly half of this has been based on the "unsocial hours" clause of phase 3. In Glasgow, where the firemen were already on a 48-hour week, the increases range from £5.33 to £8.87 a week plus an extra £2.48 'travel allowance'.

Overall the settlement means an increase of 19% — i.e. nearly three times the phase 3 basic of 7%. And yet, even though they have won 150% of their claim, the firemen have not smashed phase 3 in the same way as the miners smashed the "7½ norm" last year by winning only 90% of their claim.

DEAL

The government clearly saw that the industrial action started by the Glasgow men was spreading fast. They could see that the firemen would have a tremendous amount of support from other workers and they decided to concede before a major struggle developed.

The Fire Brigades Union, which was negotiating a deal on the basis of the phase 2 pay code, quickly switched to the phase 3 provisions and these were stretched to the limit, so that the government can now claim with some credibility that the award was justified within the terms of phase 3 and that the action of the Glasgow firemen had nothing to do with it.

To understand why the government caved in so quickly and what significance this has for phase 3, it is necessary to look at the Tory strategy as a whole.

Over the past year there can be little doubt that the economy has been through an upturn, but this upturn is based on very shaky foundations indeed. True, profits have hit record levels, but the increase in prices does not truly reflect any increase in production or investment.

PROFITS

Partially the boom in profits has been a direct consequence of Phases 1 and 2 successfully restraining wages, so that take home pay has on average just kept pace with the official cost of living index. This means that any increases in productivity through rationalisations or any price increases directly give rise to increased profits. In as much as there has been an expansion of production, it has been mainly due to the utilisation of spare capacity rather than increased investment.

In fact plant, materials, and labour are now so fully utilised that a lack of them is the major constraint on the economy. All the major manufacturing industries have full order books, but in many cases are unable to deliver the goods because of a shortage of materials and labour.

For example, orders in the engineering industry are 50% up on last year and they are 33% up

in the construction industry. But both industries are having difficulty fulfilling the orders because of a shortage of skilled labour and such materials as steel, bricks, and chemicals.

For the Tory government, then, the major problem is how to increase investment, generally, and in particular in the heavy industries.

When Heath talks about the "unacceptable face of capitalism", it isn't just demagoguery. He must try to attract financiers to invest in industry rather than in such highly profitable but unproductive swindles as land speculation. But to make industry profitable enough to attract investment the government has a number of contradictory tasks.

Firstly they have to control wages. The Financial Times reckons that wage increases should be kept about the 10 to 12% mark and the Government undoubtedly had a similar figure in mind when they worked out the phase 3 provisions. At the same time, in a situation of labour shortage, the important sections of industry must be allowed to attract labour by offering higher wages. Any such competition is ruled out by a rigid wage norm.

However, the government knows full well that, despite the successes of phases 1 and 2, the working class is far from defeated and is as strong as ever. A more or less rigid control of wages has worked for nearly a year now, but the pressure on the working class has been building up, and such pressure can't be applied indefinitely without inflicting major defeats on the class

RISK

Many lower paid workers are now on a lower standard of living than they were a year ago, and to continue with a rigid pay ceiling runs the risk of having it blasted away as was the case with the 7½ norm.

So the 'holes in the net' which phase 3 provides — a sort of 'special case' device in advance — have to be seen in this setting, and they perform more than one function. For example, the 'Economist' states that the "unsocial hours" clause in phase 3 was actually drafted by a National Coal Board official and was included specifically in the hope of avoiding an all-out confrontation with the miners. But for weaker sections of the working class the use of this loophole to gain extra money will mean an increase in shift working and weekend working.

Likewise with the productivity clauses. In an article in the 'Financial Times' Frank Figgures, chairman of the Pay Board, states that no incomes policy can be based on productivity dealing, since employers who want to attract a competitor's labour simply concoct phoney deals in order to increase the wages. No doubt under phase 3 phoney deals will continue to be used in this way, but for many workers any claim above the 7% basic will have to be justified in terms of increased production rates, loss of tea

breaks, and the like.

The other important point about these loopholes is that they are negotiable. The government is throwing a sop to the trade union leaders and giving them back some of the traditional bargaining role they lost under phases 1 and 2. In fact they hope that the Trade Union leaders will actually become the arbiters of how the cake allowed under phase 3 is distributed.

The buying off of union leaders in this way is not a matter which can be taken lightly. The most important struggles that have taken place over wages during the past few years have been official strikes.

SOFT

An estimated figure for the number of days lost through strikes for 1973 is about a quarter of the actual total for 1972, and yet the number of unofficial strikes is the same for both years. The government doesn't want big industrial strikes such as the miners and the railwaymen in 1972, and instead they are offering the union leaders a soft option.

On prices the Tories have dropped the ideological camouflage that prices were being controlled. In fact phase 3 in effect gives the go-ahead for price increases for firms with a profit margin of less than 10% and for firms working at less than full capacity, which are coming up to full capacity.

Instead the new sugar coating to the pill is threshold agreements. Phase 3 provides for a 40p wage increase for every point that the retail price index rises above the seven-point threshold.

But threshold agreements of one sort or another have been in operation in many industries and it is well known that because of increased taxation and loss of state benefits when wages rise, they never fully compensate for price increases. On top of this, the retail price index itself is by no means a measure of the working class cost of living, since for the majority of working class families the basic necessities, such as food, form a far greater proportion of their budget than allowed for by the retail price index.

And anyway it does nothing for a 7% increase in prices.

CLEAR

What then should be the working class strategy for a fight against phase 3? Firstly it must be clear that the new flexibility the Tories have opted for is conditioned by the upturn in the economy over the past year, which certainly will not last for ever.

There is no guarantee at all that the Tories will succeed in getting the financiers to put sufficient money into industry. At the moment they are having the greatest difficulty just making it profitable enough for them to keep it in the country at all.

The capitalist papers themselves talk about phase 3 as a gamble. It is a gamble on the world economic situation and a

AFTER THE FIREMEN

gamble on attracting investment. And indeed, given the trade figures for October and the fuel crisis, it may be a gamble that is going wrong already.

Secondly phase 3 is still about controlling wages. No one should think that because the firemen got through the top before their struggle got into net gear, that it will be as easy for anyone else. The Tories have probably now offered the miners the limits of what they had prepared when drafting Phase 3. Anything more will require a major struggle, which must take into account all the lessons of solidarity, mass picketing and flying pickets, that were learnt last year.

But the struggle this year differs from that of last year in one decisive way. Up to now the Tory attacks, both of the wage freeze and of the legal type have all laid down the objective basis for a united working class struggle. The only exceptions have been the racist Immigration Laws, which are in part designed to split the class. Phase 3, however, aims to avoid providing our class with a common ground for unity. It is divisive. It not only divides one group of workers from another, but also one grade from another.

Because this was not the case last year, 1972 saw a definite tendency towards a General Strike.

The threat of a General Strike last year obviously terrified the Tories - not to mention the trade union bureaucracy and the Labour Party. With the divisiveness of

phase 3 and the Pay Board's anomaly system they hope to dissipate any chance of a General Strike movement developing.

But we must admit that although there are a whole number of unpredictable events that might upset the Tory plans, we must recognise that the unity of the working class which came to the fore last year will not be built up again without hard work.

UNITY

To achieve this unity, three basic elements are necessary. Firstly we must struggle for a genuine reduction in hours. Although there are different claims going in - and we do not countenance any established claim - there should be a general struggle for a 30 hour week.

The demand for a 30 hour week must not remain something that appears in a claim as a negotiating pawn, to be dropped when the going gets tough. It must be at the forefront of any struggle, particularly since, unlike wage rises, it is a gain which cannot be eroded by inflation. The engineers' claim for a 35 hour week is a step in the right direction - if the officials take it seriously this time!

We must also demand a HIGH NATIONAL MINIMUM BASIC WAGE LINKED TO THE COST OF LIVING. Let the Tories junk

their hypocritical rubbish about wanting to help the lower paid (like the hospital workers whom they froze out last time round). We know they have no intention of helping these workers. We say make this a part of your claim. The TUC and the Labour Party say they support this policy. Let them support it NOW. It is needed now; it must be fought for now!

Thirdly comes the question of organisation. Every claim needs a fighting force; every demand needs its militant organisation. Where sections of the working class are engaged in the front line struggle, we have to give them organised solidarity. That means solidarity blacking, solidarity picketing and collections. If such organisation can be kept up between strikes then so much the better, but the main focus must be on the immediate struggles.

The second part of the organisational tasks is to build a NATIONAL RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT. This is a must. The scope and depth of the struggles facing our class, calls on us to unite to beat back the Tory attacks and clear out those who prefer the comforts of their bureaucratic posts to fighting. The first step in this direction was got off to a poor start politically (see report on SW industrial conference) but the fact that it found such ready response should give us great hopes and clear lessons for the building of such a movement.

Applause for Glasgow firemen's leaders - but Phase 3 survives their victory



S.W. CONFERENCE

Impressive Numbers - Barren Politics

The Industrial Conference called on November 11th at Belle Vue, Manchester, by 'Socialist Worker', the paper of the International Socialists (IS) could hardly have shown a greater gap between what was possible and what happened.

The claimed objective of the Conference was to build THE Rank and File Movement. That objective is certainly one which needs to be achieved if the working class is to develop its strength and defeat the attacks levelled at it.

But if anyone went to the Conference suspecting that it was intended more as a publicity and recruiting stunt for IS then their suspicions would have been confirmed. The "be recruited or be damned" vision of the world was clearly expressed by IS leader, Tony Cliff's final summing up speech. But if the message still had not sunk in, the last sentence of the Conference resolution rubbed it in. This made support of 'Socialist Worker' a policy plank of the

new movement.

Seeing as not a word about women workers and redundancy could be found in the resolution (and the struggles against racialism mentioned only as an after-thought amendment) the sheer sectarianism of this stands out sharply.

For those who remember the SLL's All Trade Union Alliance (or does it still exist?) the warning should be plain enough.

But if sectarianism and the "Come to Jesus" jamboree spirit made up the dominant tone of the Conference it was not accidental. It was because these methods act as a cover up and second rate substitute for political discussion, political analysis and political programme.

The barrenness of the majority of speeches was complemented by the exclusion of any speeches against the Conference resolution (one speech for, none against - and you thought the Liaison Committee was bad?), and the lack of any speeches about anything but wages - bar

the one which embarrassed the organisers enough to amend their resolution.

The subject matter of the Conference was supposed to be in two parts: Phase 3 and Building the Rank and File movement. Unfortunately no analysis of Phase 3 was made and no perspectives for the Rank and File movement were discussed. It is equally unfortunate that many of the workers speaking, workers who no doubt understand their own industries and areas pretty well, did not give others much of an insight into the balance of forces over the country as a whole.

Those not bowled over by the rally atmosphere will have left very disappointed. With an attendance of over 2½ thousand and many trade, industrial and factory groups represented, the size of the missed chance, the extent to which self-congratulation and self-satisfaction shoved all seriousness to the side, must serve to teach us a bitter lesson.

Jack Price

Act now to stop Chile bloodbath

NEWS REPORTS are making clearer and clearer what the Chilean junta's alternative to supposed 'Marxist dictatorship' is... fascist-type dictatorship.

Trade unions have been dissolved. The factories are being policed by fascist-type unions run by the employers. Landlords are retaking land distributed under the Unidad Popular's land reforms. Militants are being weeded out of the factories. The junta has described the neo-Nazi 'Fatherland and Liberty' organisation as the "vanguard" in this "anti-Marxist struggle". Besides workers sacked from their factories, thousands more are unemployed as a result of a ban on street traders in Santiago (for the benefit of established shopkeepers).

The newly unemployed are invited to go to work on the land in labour camps. Meanwhile the junta has increased the standard working week by four hours.

Even according to the junta's official statements, 3 500 political prisoners are being held and a concentration camp has been set up in Chacabuco. The paper Le Monde on 13 November published the latest testimony from one of the junta's prison camps.

At Quiriquina, prisoners were made to stand with their arms raised for 15 hours. 15 prisoners were shot to discourage the others from flagging or rebelling. All prisoners were subject to torture. Those who had taken part in resistance actions had fingers, arms, hands, ears, or genitals cut off, or eyes gouged out, and were then bayoneted to death - all in front of the other prisoners.

SURVIVAL

But even this vile massacre does not make the junta secure. The junta cannot physically destroy the whole working class of Chile. Already leading figures of the major capitalist party, the Christian Democrats, after their full support for the coup, are trying to secure their futures with mild criticism of the junta. Evidently they are not confident in the survival of a regime whose political intellig-

ence is shown by the fact that it calls the 'Washington Post' (an American capitalist newspaper with politics something like the 'Times' or the 'Guardian') - the 'Washington Pravda'.

Resistance has been driven underground. In San Antonio, when dockers tried to refuse to discharge boats, the junta simply had six militants shot and forced the dockers back to work.

But, underground, the resistance continues. This is clear from the junta's announcements of frequent executions of 'subversives' and occasional military operations, like a 15-man guerilla attack on army barracks in Temuco (10 November).

The junta's friends have rallied round promptly. The junta and the US have agreed to reach a solution over compensation for nationalised US companies. The US-dominated International Monetary Fund has sent a delegation to Chile to arrange economic aid. The Brazilian military dictatorship has agreed to give aid.

SOLIDARITY

Extensive solidarity action against the junta is also underway. 10 000 marched in London on November 4th. The Scottish district committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has requested the CSEU executive to use its influence to prevent four ships now in British shipyards being delivered to the junta.

Liverpool dockers are refusing to unload a Chilean ship now in Liverpool docks, and tugboat men are refusing to take it out. The Liverpool City Council has decided not to purchase any Chilean goods until the complete return of political and civil rights in Chile and the abandonment of imprisonment without trial. Solidarity committees are being set up.

If we push forward these solidarity actions energetically, we can in the first place save the lives of hundreds of militants in Chile's concentration camps; and try to make sure that the triumph of the "anti-Marxist struggle" is short-lived.

BELOW: Santiago's Stadium. The survivors are now in concentration camps



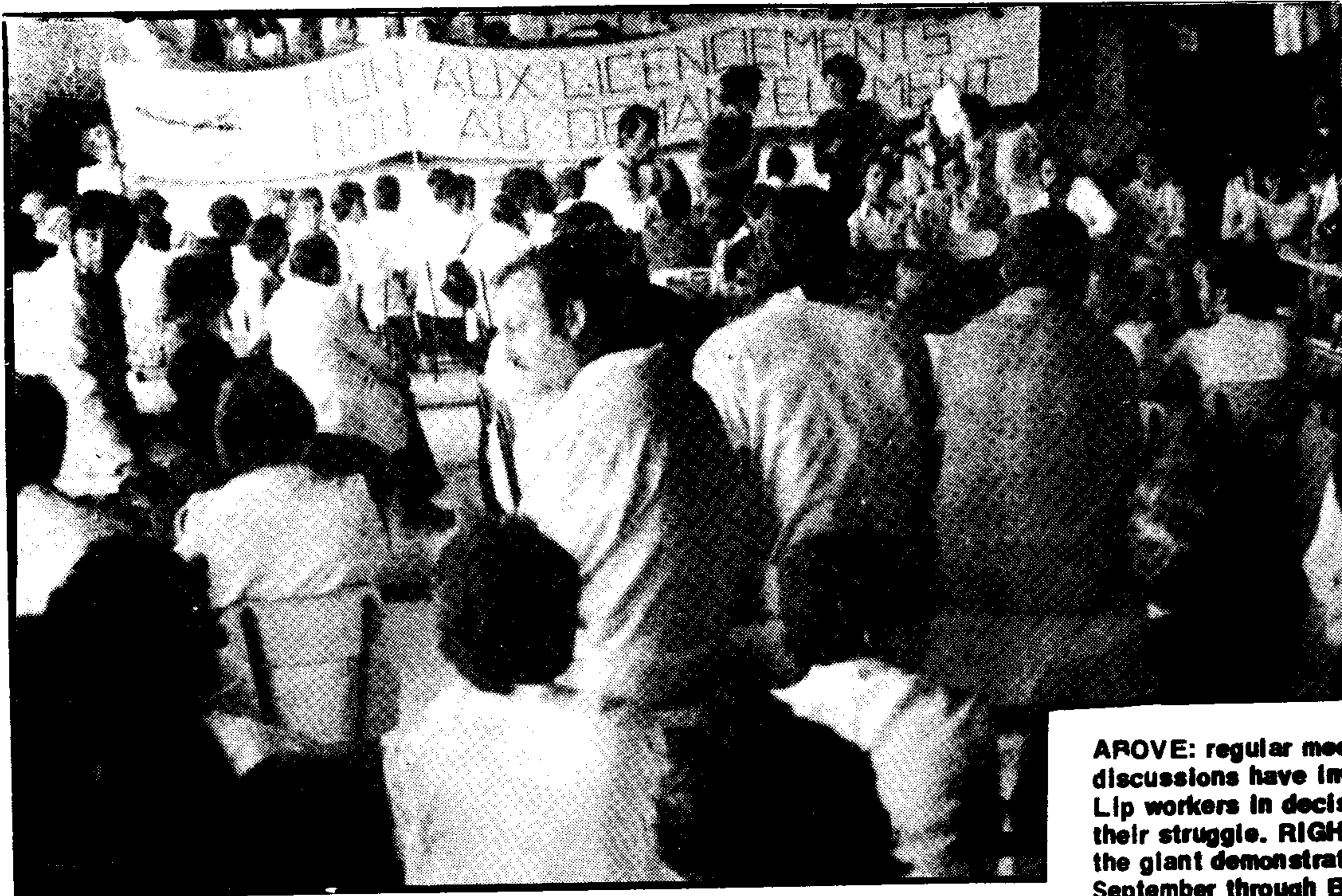
SAVE THESE LIVES!

THE FOLLOWING people are definitely known to be imprisoned or in grave danger in Chile:

LUIS CORVALAN LEPE, Gen. Sec Chilean Communist Party; CARLOS ALTAMIRANO, Gen. Sec. Chilean Socialist Party; MIGUEL ENRIQUES, leader of the Chilean Movement of the Revolutionary Left; LUIS VITALE, Marxist professor at Concepcion University; JAIME BARRIOS, economic aide to Allende; JUAN LECHIN, Bolivian trade union leader; ELSA PENA vda. HERNANDEZ, wife of Dominican revolutionist Homero Hernandez; EMMA DE TORRES, leader of defence efforts for Bolivian political prisoners.

Also, HUGO GONZALES MOSCOSO, leader of Bolivian POR (Combate); GUILLERMO LORA, leader of Bolivian POR (Masas); PATRICIO GUSSMAN, Chilean filmmaker; MARIA ESTER GILIO, Argentinian lawyer and journalist; and GUSTAVO BEGHAUT, ULRICK JOLY, ANNA NAPOLEON & MARIA DO SOCORRO SOARES, Latin American political refugees.

Telegrams demanding the release of people in Chile's jails and concentration camps should be addressed to General Augusto Pinochet c/o The Chilean Embassy, 3 Hamilton Place, London W.1



ABOVE: regular meetings and discussions have involved all Lip workers in decisions about their struggle. RIGHT: part of the giant demonstration in September through Besancon.



FRENCH WORKERS LEARNING FROM LIP

IT IS NOW over six months since the workers of the watchmaking factory of LIP in France occupied their workplace in protest at proposed plans for closing down certain sections and making the workforce there redundant.

It has become one of the longest lasting strikes in France and a focus of attention not only for the French working class movement but also for many trade unionists and militants in other countries.

Thousands of workers have rallied behind the banner of the LIP occupation. The town of Besancon itself, where the factory is situated, has seen many demonstrations of solidarity, and the last major turnout attracted over 70,000 militants, trade unionists and revolutionaries, who marched through the town in a steady downpour of rain.

It was back in April that the LIP workers heard of secret plans for the 'restructuring' of the company — a polite way of saying that 200 would be laid off in order to boost sagging profits.

At first they marched, leafleted, and held meetings, refusing to accept that they should be the fall-guy for the fact that the factory wasn't making as much profit for the bosses as they wanted. It wasn't even, they felt, just a question of a job, but of friendships, a way of life, which were to be cut off abruptly at an employer's whim.

The turning point came when,

on June 19th, they took over the factory and continued to produce watches to pay their wages. These watches have been sold at retail prices, mainly through trade union organisations.

For French capitalism, the LIP experience has been disturbing. First, of course, it upsets them to have their plans for 'their' works defied. Then, there has been the sight of these workers democratically running their working environment at daily meetings, breaking down the divisions and pecking orders that the bosses had carefully built up over the years, and breaking down also the myth that without managers everything would stop.

Theft?

Also, the LIP workers blithely selling off their products went to the very heart of capitalist relationships. For, according to bosses' law, this was theft. Yet how could they be 'stealing' the very watches that they had just made themselves?

Thus this was more than just another local strike in a small provincial town, and the Pompidou regime soon set about trying to destroy this threat to the system it runs for French capitalism. Various overtures were made to the strikers, but the main demand — NO REDUNDANCIES — has not yet been met and the workers

are absolutely adamant that no jobs be lost.

On August 14th the state played its main card. CRS riot & strike police, who had been in the town since the start of the occupation, stormed and took over the factory while the vast majority of the strikers were away on holiday.

But contingency plans had been made, and some vital machinery hidden away. When the strikers returned they were able to set up a 'production line' in a nearby building and carry on production, despite intimidation by the CRS.

The state's next move was to start a series of negotiations in an attempt to take the heat out of the situation. These negotiations, which have now broken down, involved the government, the CFDT (social democratic trade union federation) the CGT (the Communist Party led trade union federation) and representatives of the LIP occupation.

But at no time was the government representative, Giraud, prepared to meet any of the workers' demands (which also included a guarantee of continued payment of wages). All the proposals put forward by the government involved some redundancies, and were declared to be unacceptable by the LIP workers.

While the government was trying everything it knew to force a deal through, the CFDT and CGT

(particularly the CGT) were not exactly backing the strikers to the hilt. All along, the CGT bureaucrats have been prepared to make concessions even on the redundancy question.

So far, these backstabbing attempts have been stalled by the firm determination of the strikers and the strength of the solidarity movement. The official unions have also been at pains to head off this movement, as they are really much happier to see the struggle confined to the negotiating table.

As an illustration of their tactics we need only look at the big solidarity demonstration in Besancon on September 29th. The CGT, instead of pulling out all the stops for a massive mobilisation confined itself to calling out its members in the immediate

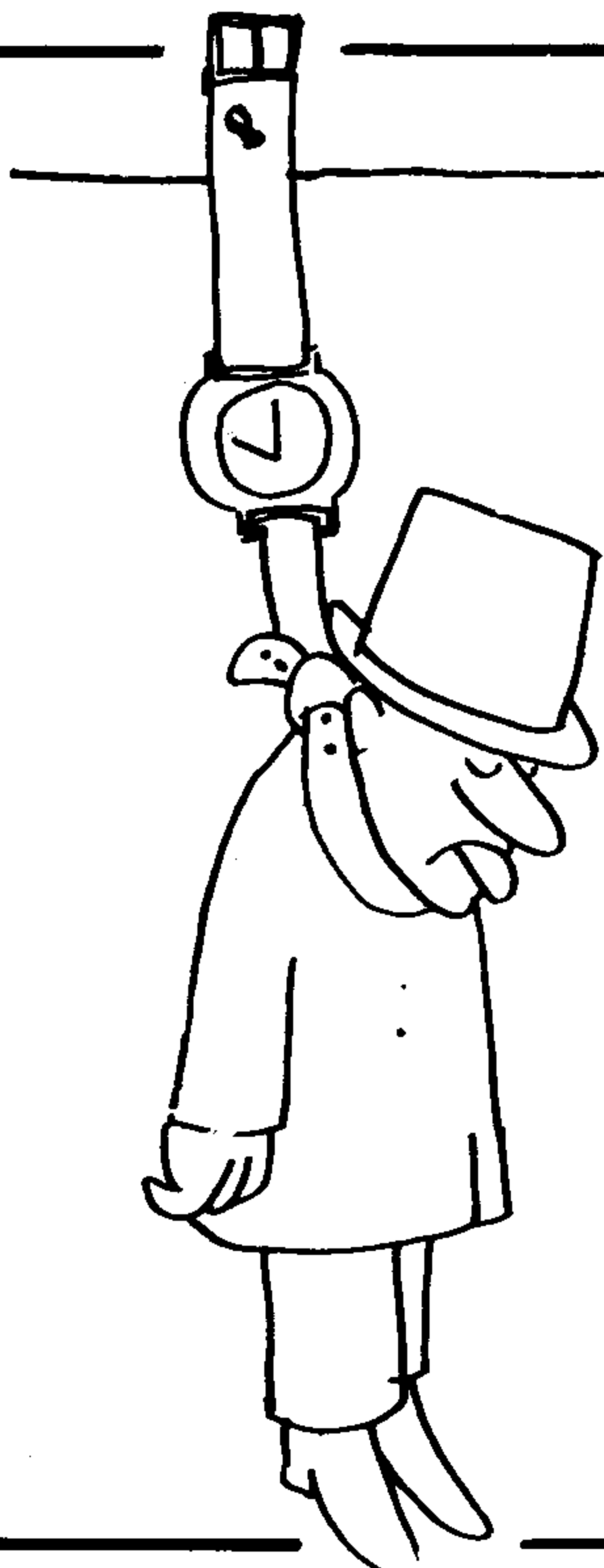
area of Besancon — claiming the action was 'regional'.

Both the CFDT and the CGT made the usual slanders about the groups to the left of the Communist Party and in fact created a 'red scare' in the town with their ravings about 'ultra left adventurism'. In fact it is the groups to the left of the CP, particularly the comrades around 'Rouge' (formerly members of the banned Ligue Communiste) who have consistently mobilised support and solidarity for the LIP strikers, and helped to broadcast the lessons of their struggle — that workers must not be made to pay the cost, in lost jobs and disrupted lives, for the bosses' mistakes, or be thrown onto the scrap heap according to the fluctuations of the capitalist market.

John Cunningham

The Lip affair is something else again. Calmly and without creating any great distress, it is denying or transforming property rights; it is bringing to light a great weakness on the part of the employers; it is showing that public power and justice can be defied or even mocked, and it is doing all this with the moral support of the greater part of the population, and we repeat, it is doing it calmly." (from an article in a French Employers' magazine)

Lip is the most disturbing social conflict ... because the continued operation of the factory after, in essence, a robbery of the shareholders, calls into question the principles of authority, of property, of responsibility, of respect for contracts ... which are at the very base of our economic system and of our commercial law.



If the fight is becoming 'political', as they say, it's simply because the more you go on, the more things you realise. Workers are not stupid: we know what's been going on behind our backs. ... we know from experience exactly what the multinational companies are like, the way big capital is linked up across frontiers. ... so, if you want to insist that the LIP workers are more 'political' than at the beginning, of course it's true! But whose fault is that? (Charles Plaget, member of Lip Action Committee)

What's been happening here is only a small example, it's exactly what everybody's got to do now. ... the echo will be heard in the car factories at Sochaux, at Renault and other places: the workers are thinking, they're thinking about their work, and they're realising that things could be otherwise. (Member of Lip Action Cttee.)

'POLITICAL MURDER IN NORTHERN IRELAND'

New Penguin Special reviewed by AUSTEN MORGAN

WITH THE present escalation of Orange terror in Northern Ireland, it would seem that the publication by Penguin of a Special on "Political Murder in Northern Ireland" (45p) might give a timely analysis.

However, anyone seeking an intelligent analysis will probably be sadly disappointed.

The political 'naivete' of the authors, Dillon and Lehane (of the Belfast Telegraph) has to be read to be believed. Clearly, too many free drinks and dinners from suave and sophisticated Sandhurst trained army press officers have affected their sense of reason and judgment.

Even by the standards of their profession, generally biased towards the status quo, this book is a bad piece of hack work. The

case of the Catholics of Northern Ireland is ignored, Protestant assassins are virtually treated as freedom fighters, and the British Army comes out of its four years in Northern Ireland like the proverbial knights in shining armour.

The book is not in fact about 'political murder' as the title suggests, but rather an account of the campaign of indiscriminate civilian assassination, originally referred to by the police as ' motiveless murders' but now called 'sectarian murders'.

Of 198 deaths recorded up to August of this year, the large majority of which took place in the preceding 18 months, the authors attribute 42 to the IRA and 142 to Protestant organisations. The British Army gets the credit for two.

THE PHONEY PEACE which has been operating in South Vietnam since the so-called settlement signed at the beginning of the year looks as if it might be coming to an end.

Full scale battles involving tanks and artillery have been fought out near the Cambodian border and South Vietnamese jets have bombed two towns controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG), killing 100 people.

In fact, the fighting never stopped. According to Saigon figures, many thousands have been killed in fighting during the past six months. The South Vietnamese have now withdrawn from the peace talks in Paris and the PRG is boycotting the military ceasefire talks which are held in Vietnam itself.

Already in March Nixon was threatening to recontinue bombing in Vietnam. In May, the PRG alleged that US bombers had started to operate once more. And during the very recent fighting, Saigon declared that they consider that 'now US Air Force intervention cannot be considered as a breach with the January agreements.'

No one can say with any certainty whether the increased tempo of the fighting will lead to a resumption of full scale war. President Thieu of South Vietnam has appeared on television making a demagogic appeal for national unity in preparation for the 'com-

VIETNAM THE BLOODY CEASEFIRE

munist offensive', while the PRG themselves deny any plans for a general offensive and put the blame on the South Vietnamese for any violations of the ceasefire.

But who actually started the recent outbreak of fighting has little meaning and even less interest. The fact is that fighting has been going on ever since the ceasefire was signed. The agreement, which was supposed to provide for an end to hostilities and progress towards free elections in the South, does not provide any solution to the issues which have kept Vietnam in a near-constant state of warfare since the Second World War.

For the North Vietnamese and the PRG, the agreement was a compromise, which they were forced to concede by the terrible toll of US bombing of the North, and by heavy pressure from Moscow and Peking. It was a compromise which left the Thieu reg-

ime in control of most of South Vietnam and all the most important towns and cities.

The result is that the Thieu regime continues to survive.

In terms of popular support or economic independence, the South Vietnamese state is a bad joke. But in terms of its military hardware and the size of its army and air force the Americans have built it up into one of the most powerful defenders of US interests in the world. Since the ceasefire, Saigon has received (according to PRG sources) 500,000 tons of US arms and munitions, 500 aeroplanes, 600 armoured vehicles and 600 pieces of artillery.

But although the US can arm the South Vietnamese to the teeth it cannot begin to solve any of the problems. Economically South Vietnam is still dependent on American money, and the amount of home production

of agricultural and industrial goods is pitiful.

In fact only a minority of the potential 'active population' are actually involved in production, whether it be agriculture or industry. Instead, the major 'occupational categories' include a standing army of 1.1 million, 0.3 million political prisoners, and half a million prostitutes!

An inevitable result is a massive trade deficit and roaring inflation. Manufactured goods have increased in price by 50% since the beginning of the year and the price of rice has doubled. It is now the rice shortage which is throwing the Thieu regime into yet another crisis.

South Vietnam once had some of the most fertile land in Asia and was a major exporter of rice. But the American bombing has rendered large areas of land infertile, and, more important, large numbers of peasants have been taken off the land and herd-

ed into makeshift compounds around the towns.

Now, South Vietnam has to rely on American financed imports for its rice. The Americans promised 375,000 tons of rice, but have only delivered 305,000 tons. As a result Thieu is now having to requisition rice from those peasants still working the land.

These peasants are not paid for their rice in piastres (which have been devalued seven times this year already) but in even more worthless government tokens. Also, the requisitioning has often left the peasants without enough to feed their own families and naturally they are cutting down on production.

In this situation profiteering and corruption are as rife as ever — indeed one of the major scandals at the moment concerns the illegal trafficking of rice to PRG controlled areas.

The treaty which was signed at the beginning of this year has meant a temporary lease of life for the corrupt, entirely artificial Vietnamese state.

It was a treaty imposed by American might and which offers no solution at all for the people of South Vietnam.

American imperialism has no right to impose its solutions on Vietnam, and the PRG and the North Vietnamese have every right to put an end to the American-sponsored South Vietnamese state.

Paul Itze

▼ Freedom for NLF prisoners — but Thieu still holds over 300,000 political prisoners



"The story of the sectarian assassinations in Ulster is the story of the Protestant backlash" (p. 24). The backlash was the response of Ulster Protestants to the demands of the minority Catholic population, initially for civil rights and then for the abolition of the Orange state. Having been deprived of their traditional instrument of repression — the B Specials — the Protestant groups had to do the job themselves.

Anger

"The anger, the bitterness of a people who felt their only crime had been loyalty, was translated into the most ruthless and dedicated campaign of civilian killings that had been seen in Western Europe since the second World War. The Protestant backlash had been a long time coming, but when it finally came it made its presence felt with a vengeance that only the righteous can inflict" (p. 26).

But the authors do not objectively look at reality to see who is the oppressor and who the oppressed, who is the exploiter and who the exploited, who has an interest in maintaining the status quo and who has little or nothing to lose by fighting it if they had done this then their

'Protestant backlash could be situated in some sort of historical perspective.

Instead Dillon and Lehane focus on how militant Protestants think at present. From this, they derive not only an understanding, but also a justification, for what is a vicious murder campaign, aimed not only at active Republicans but at the entire Catholic community. Of the 142 victims attributed to Protestants only one may have been a member of the IRA and his killing was more by chance than design.

Referring to the UFF which emerged in June of this year, and who ritually knifed to death a SDLP senator and a Protestant woman friend, the authors write "(they) consist of dedicated Protestant Ulster militants motivated by a high idealism. They were the first militant Protestant group to formulate and articulate a cogent and compelling justification of their actions" (p. 280).

The "cogent and compelling" justification is yet another variant on a "two Irish nations" theory. This claptrap says that there are two nations in Ireland, Protestant and Catholic, and that each has the right to its own nation state. In reality it serves to justify the power and privileges of the Protestant populat-

ion at the expense of Catholics.

Just what one Protestant thinks of her Catholic neighbours is clearly illustrated by a letter published in the UDA Bulletin of February 1972. The writer asks "Why have (Protestants) not started to hit back in the only way these nationalist bastards understand? That is, ruthless, indiscriminate killing... If I had a flame-thrower I would roast the slimy excreta that pass for human beings". Of such stuff are freedom fighters made!

The UFF see some similarity between the Ulster and Middle East situation, casting themselves in the role of the Israelis. Because they are under attack from 'Arab terrorists' (the Catholic population) ruthless 'counter-terrorist' measures are called for. Innocent Catholics are legitimate victims because they passively acquiesce in the activities of the IRA.

Analogy

It is the UFF itself which has drawn this analogy about its own activities. Dillon and Lehane become preposterous when assessing the militant Protestants' understanding of their position. "If this statement (comparing themselves with the Israelis) is to be taken

at face value — and there is no reason not to do so — the UFF would appear to be a fundamentally non-sectarian body" (!)

Yet at the same time the Provos are seen as 'sectarian', not because they have killed innocent Protestants, but by "shooting members of the RUC and UDR (Ulster Defence Regiment)". The Provos "have never appreciated that to the average Protestant in the province the killing of soldiers, UDR and RUC men, has always been a sectarian act. . . ." Sectarianism is therefore what the Protestants think it is.

If the authors have been myopic about the Protestant militants they have been positively blind about the British Army. They attribute 'categorically' only two deaths to the army out of the 198 cases they examined. "A more down-to-earth interpretation of the known facts of Army involvement in shootings" they claim "is to be found basically in the explanations the Army themselves gave for every one." And if you believe that . . .

Dillon and Lehane note the fact that the notorious Brigadier Frank Kitson was the supreme army commander for the Belfast area between 1970 and 1972. They also note, and find significant, that Kitson, because of his views on and experience in

'counter-insurgency', was slotted in above more senior (and more traditional) military men to try out his new theories — of defeating the guerilla fighter by playing him at his own game. It is also true that the army has an element capable of engaging in a civilian assassination campaign, and plenty of motivation to do so.

Army

Yet they still refuse to draw the conclusion from this, and from the massive amount of factual and circumstantial evidence, that the army did engage in such a campaign, their main reasoning being that Kitson "does not in his book refer to political assassination. . . ."

But this is no argument at all — not even Kitson could have got away with recommending civilian assassination in his military manual.

The authors, however, do reveal that there are "Shoot on sight" photographs pinned up in military barracks. So, if you just happen to look like a Provo on the Wanted list — too bad . . .

But, last words should go to the authors themselves: ". . . history would tend to suggest that the instant judgments made on insurgents at the time are not always borne out in the long term view."

Clay Cross did implement the

FOR WELL OVER a year and a half now the 'rent rebel' councillors of Clay Cross have been holding out against the attempts of the Tory government to bludgeon and force them into implementing the so-called "Fair Rent" Act.

The defiant stand of the eleven councillors has been an oasis in the desert of capitulation to this attack on the working class. Labour Council after Labour council up and down the country gave in when the pressure became too great — and many did not even bother to put up a token resistance.

Despite the fact that the councillors were only carrying out official Labour Party policy, the Party refused to back them and they were left to fight the Tories more or less on their own — though help and support on an unofficial level has come from other tenants and from the working class movement.

The stand that Clay Cross has taken, though apparently quite isolated, has had its impact on whole sections of the working class. Even the Labour Party has been forced by rank and file pressure to declare support for the eleven councillors. At the last Labour Party conference a whole string of resolutions was put through criticising the NEC for their position on Clay Cross. Under such pressure even the sell-out merchants of the Executive were forced to put on the appearance of supporting the Councillors.

But as a measure of how much, or how little, the Labour Party NEC actually intend to support Clay Cross, it has only to be noted that they are refusing to put up a fighting fund for the rebel councillors. As usual, paper support costs nothing and at least gives the impression that something is being done.

Now the Tories have admitted defeat in their attempt to bully and threaten the Council into implementing the Housing Finance Act. Some 5 weeks ago, a Housing Commissioner was sent in to 'take over'.

Many other councils, after an initial refusal to implement, caved in when threatened with the Housing Commissioner. But, as GEORDIE BARCLAY found out when he went to Clay Cross to talk to one of the eleven, Cllr. DAVE NUTTALL, the Housing Commissioner is in fact nothing like the unbeatable figure so feared by such fainthearts. What Clay Cross has shown in the last few weeks is that if you are determined to fight, then there are ways round each new obstacle.

DESPITE the fact that a fair amount of publicity was expended on the arrival of the Housing Commissioner (the capitalist press having previously said little or nothing about the struggle at Clay Cross), his arrival has made no difference to the functioning of the Council and has not affected at all their determination to continue to fight the Rent Act.

Nuttall was adamant about this. The Commissioner had been refused all facilities, and Nuttall thought this, for a start, would make his job impossible. "He can hardly do the job from Henley on Thames" (where he has an office now). Under no circumstances would the Commissioner be given an office, a phone, staff or any facilities or help in Clay Cross.

As far as the council is concerned, the only thing that the Commissioner can do is to look at the books, as these are public property open to anyone who wishes to look at them.

When the Housing Commissioner arrived, one of the first things he was reported to have

said was that "lots of tenants were paying more rent than they need to because some of them could claim rent rebates." But Nuttall told me he had no idea where these figures came from. The commissioner had only been in Clay Cross about 10 minutes when he made this statement.

"Not only could he not have had time to look at the rent records, but he certainly couldn't have known the incomes of the tenants — which is necessary to calculate rebates under the Housing Finance Act. The man is either a genius or a complete bluffer."

"If he had taken time to look at the rents he would have found that the average rent is £1.50: at this level of rent, only a very tiny number of people could qualify for a rebate."

Nuttall thought that in any case the councillors had a simple answer to these splitting tactics — "as the Housing Commissioner thinks our rents are too high for lots of tenants, we are seriously considering giving all tenants a decrease. That should keep the Commissioner happy and no doubt it will please our tenants."

Could the council be bypassed? I asked what would happen if the Commissioner instructed the rent collectors to collect the increase? Nuttall emphasised that the rent collectors are council employees and would be instructed by the council to collect only the rent which the council decided.

The council is still being fully supported by the mass of tenants: in the recent total rent strike called by the councillors, 84% paid no rent at all. During the strike, street committees were set up, with attendance of 30 — 70 people per street.

The Housing Commissioner, a Mr. Patrick Hillington, has a pension of £5,000 a year, and on top of that, for each day he attends at Clay Cross, he gets £40. This must make him one of the highest paid robbers in his-

tory — with the possible exception of Sir John Donaldson of the NIRC. But Nuttall observed that the Tories must think it worthwhile "seeing as the total amount of rent owing (according to the Commissioner) is now about £91,000 — about £90 per tenant!"

Nuttall thinks that the situation in Clay Cross could easily have been avoided "because if other local authorities, even a minute number like 6 or 7 and one or two big boroughs, had refused to implement, the Tory government would have been in real trouble because the Housing Finance Act would have become a non-entity."

And so, it seems, would the pay laws if everyone followed the example of Clay Cross. The council has just given its employees a rise of between £3.50 and £5 a week. "We're treating the Pay Board in exactly the same way as the Housing Finance Act."

I wondered how the strain of being up against the Tory system was affecting the Councillors. Each faces a Surcharge of around £7,000 — a tidy sum for these 11 working people — and the prospect of being barred from future office. But Dave Nuttall seemed quite unconcerned. Would he try to pay the fine? "Don't be bloody silly Geordie — I've got no money". Did he fear going to jail? "No. I've got too much faith in the trade union movement for any fear on that score. Besides, I doubt whether the Tories would risk trying to jail us — they haven't yet forgotten the Pentonville Five and are hardly going to want a Clay Cross 11!"

So, the message coming from this north Derbyshire village is that the fight goes on — fines, commissioners or whatever. If Dave Nuttall is anything to go by, the leaders of this fight are in a relaxed and confident mood. Their slogan is as true today as it was at the start — WE WILL NOT IMPLEMENT THE RENT ACT!



Trade unionists and tenants rally to the support of Clay Cross.



Dave Nuttall at Stanton steelworkers' demonstration last year

not Act



Photograph by Alan Cohen

Above, scenes from the mass demonstration

THE RENT STRIKE in Bolton is now 12 months old, and the handful of tenants who are still refusing to pay the "Fair Rent" increase are more than £40 in arrears.

What happened during the course of those 12 months is fairly typical of what happened up and down the country, and is worth looking at in some detail.

Prior to last October, only one estate in the town was organised. Even this was difficult enough to achieve, as local Labour councillors were loudly boasting that they would go to jail rather than implement the Act, and therefore the town had no need of Tenants Associations.

Labour in Bolton came to power very largely on the strength of these boasts, yet they backed down at the last minute with all the other Labour councils, leaving the tenants only two or three weeks in which to organise the other estates.

By October, after an intensive campaign of marches, petitions and rebate form burning, seven tenants associations were operating and more than five hundreds tenants (by official figures) withheld the rent increase.

Many Labour councillors reacted immediately by saying that they could not support public "law-breaking", and the Labour council as a whole declared their intention of "helping" Bolton's tenants by "lessening the effects of Fair Rents."

SPLIT

They appealed for a special dispensation and succeeded in getting the original £1 a week increase reduced to 75p, which they then treated as an average increase, keeping some increases at £1 and reducing others to as little as 20p, with a whole range of different levels in between. The immediate effect of this was to split the tenants movement in half, dividing the tenants in newer property, paying the big increases, from the ones in older property, whose increase was now reduced.

Next came an intensive "You may be eligible for a rent rebate" campaign which split us up even further — those getting rebates and those paying full rent.

By Christmas the numbers had dwindled to around 150. Then came the Council's Provisional Fair Rent Assessments and a public campaign by the Labour Party for tenants to "appeal" against their particular assessment. The tenants Associations managed to fight off support for this manoeuvre within their own ranks, but some damage had been done; and when the predictably low assessments were published the rent strike dwindled even further as many tenants mistook the provisional assessment (set by the council) for the actual Fair Rent (yet to be assessed by the Government's Rent Scrutiny Board).

APPEALS

Throughout all this period the Tenants Associations had conducted a continuous campaign, publishing leaflets and information, holding meetings and organising rent office pickets. All the major trade union branches were circularised and their offices invited to joint Trade Union-Tenants meetings. None ever came.

In fact the local secretary of the AUEW is himself a council tenant, yet at no time did he respond to appeals for solidarity action from the tenants, nor did he himself go on rent strike.

An application by the Tenants Federation to join the Trades Council was greeted with the curt reply "Tenants Associations are not eligible for

...Bolton's Labour council did

HOW A RENT STRIKE WAS DERAILED

affiliation to the Trades Council?"

By the spring, only six tenants were left on rent strike and the Authority felt strong enough to act against them. Bailiffs appeared without warning at the homes of the six tenants and furniture and other goods were confiscated to pay off the arrears.

The bailiffs did their job enthusiastically, taking far more than was needed to pay for the arrears, and in one case confiscating everything the tenant had. But even then the local officials had underestimated the fight still left in the tenants movement.

Within four days a demonstration was organised and attended by 500 tenants. The case attracted TV and press coverage, and by the following week the officials backed down and the goods were returned.

DENIED

At the time, Labour councillors were quick to assure tenants leaders that it was not their agitation or their demonstration that had caused the officials to back down, but the action of "sympathetic" Labour councillors behind the scenes. This of course was said in private.

But at the next council meeting an altogether different story emerged. The Tories accused Labour of putting pressure on local officials. Very much rattled those very same "sympathetic" Labour councillors couldn't deny the charge strongly enough, and announced themselves to be opposed to all rent strikes.

In fact they went even further and claimed that "had it not been for their responsible action earlier in the year the situation could have been far worse."

For once they were telling the truth.



Neill Duffield at Clay Cross rally

Labour's action, right from the beginning, had the effect of stabbing the tenants' movement in the back. The eventual outcome of their "lessening the effects of Fair Rents" will be negligible, yet its immediate result was to kill off the one chance tenants had of throwing out "Fair Rents" lock, stock and barrel.

VILLAINS

Whether tenants could have succeeded in doing this without widespread Trade Union support remains doubtful. Yet with a strong and militant tenants' movement organising effective rent strikes throughout the country the Trade Union movement would inevitably have been drawn into the struggle whether its leaders wished it or not.

The villains of the piece emerge clearly. On the one hand the Labour Party — both locally and nationally — and on the other the trade union bureaucracy.

The Tories are probably content enough to establish "Fair Rents" in principle for the moment. Their success in holding down wages reduces the immediate need to increase rents. But as long as the Act is there it represents a threat and the Tories will not hesitate to use it to increase rents to unheard of limits the moment they feel the need to do so.

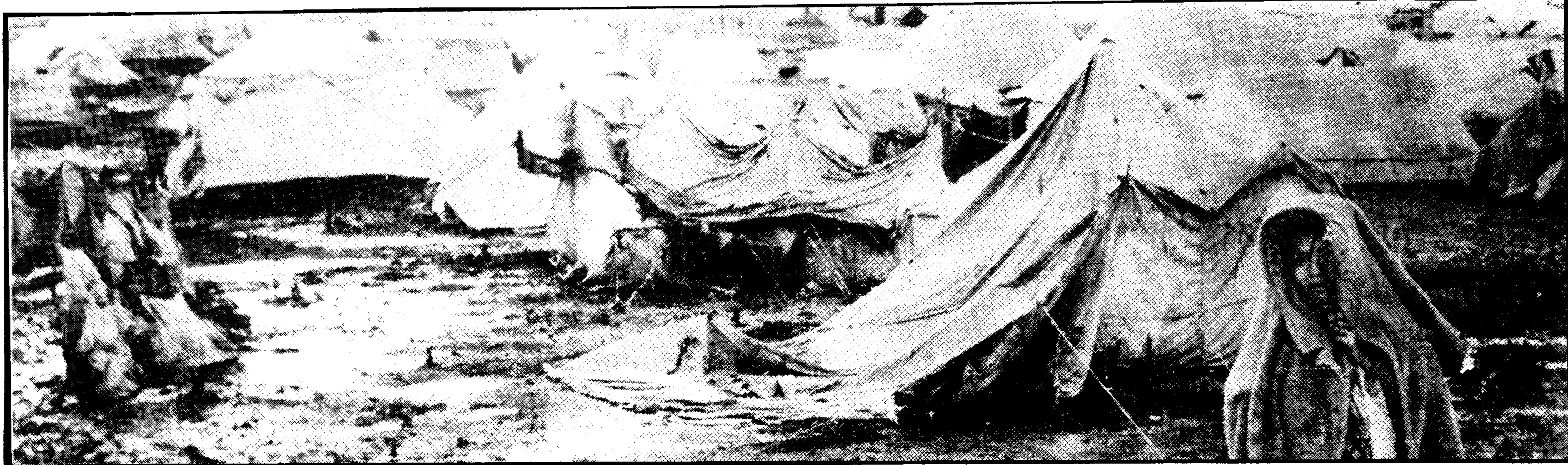
LINKS

The job of Tenants' Associations should now be to form long-term links with organisations of rank and file workers with a view to breaking the monopoly of the Labour Party/TUC coalition on working class politics. Difficult as this is to do, it is now more important than launching into another series of rent strike campaigns for next October.

Whilst Tenants Associations may be effective to do this in certain areas where trade union support has already been achieved, in most areas further rent strikes will only serve to demoralise tenants even more.

A start in the right direction was made in Bolton on May Day when tenants joined AUEW pickets outside the factories and striking members of Equity staged a street theatre which included a scene on Fair Rents. Much more similar action is needed before all the lost confidence can be restored and widespread rent strikes can once more be effectively campaigned for.

Neil Duffield
Secretary, Bolton
Tenants Federation



How the Arabs were driven out of Palestine

From Intercontinental Press
By JON ROTHSCILD

Between ourselves it must be clear that there is no room for both peoples together in this country. . . . We shall not achieve our goal of being an independent people with the Arabs in this small country. The only solution is a Palestine, at least Western Palestine (west of the Jordan River) without Arabs. . . . And there is no other way than to transfer the Arabs from here to the neighboring countries, to transfer all of them: Not one village, not one tribe, should be left.

— R. Weitz, Zionist leader, for many years head of the Jewish Agency's colonization department. Notation in his diary, 1940.

Abdel Hakim left with his battalion, which had a duty to perform in the battle of Deir Suneid. Before leaving, he gave me the sum of £1000, which had been entrusted to him. With this money I was to buy as much cheese and olives as I could. Our forward troops had no emergency rations to rely on in

Displacement of the Palestinian Arabs was a gradual process at first. But in 1948 it became a sudden one. How sudden is best indicated by one statistic: In early 1949, within the borders of the newly founded state of Israel, there lived about 133,000 Arabs. In November 1947, in the same stretch of land, there had lived more than 800,000 Arabs. That little alteration in population is the "miracle" of which Weitz spoke in 1967.

A common misconception fostered both by Zionist propagandists and by the Western capitalist press is that the "first round" of the Arab-Israeli conflict began on May 15, 1948, the day after the proclamation of the founding of the state of Israel, when Arab armies from Egypt, Transjordan, and Syria invaded the new state with the objective of obliterating the Jewish population.

Partition

Apart from the facts that the 1948 war was hardly the "first round" and that the aggressive statements of the Arab leaders had exactly nothing to do with their real intentions or abilities, it is simply not true that the war started in May 1948. By the time

the front-lines, where they could not be served with hot meals. No one had taken the trouble to think about providing the front-line troops with emergency rations. All that they had done was to send us £1000 and say: "Buy cheese and olives."

I bought all the cheese and olives I could lay hands on in Gaza. My heart ached at the thought of the soldier who was to attack fortified positions with his bare body and then sit in a hole like a mouse nibbling away at a piece of cheese. We bought all the cheese we could find with the £1000 they had thrown to us saying: "Do as you see fit." But my heart cried out with every beat: "This is no war."

— Gamal Abdel Nasser, memoirs of the first Palestine war.

. . . when the UN passed the resolution to partition Palestine into two states, the War of Independence broke out, to our great fortune. In this war, a twofold miracle occurred: territorial victory and the flight of the Arabs.

— R. Weitz, September 1967.

The Arab armies entered Palestine on May 15, full-scale war had already been raging for at least one month; intensive civil war between the Jews and the Palestinian Arabs had been going on since November 1947.

A second misconception, which usually parades along with the first, is that the Zionist army was heavily outnumbered by Arab hordes and that the extinction of the Zionist state hung in the balance during the battles that raged from the middle of May until the end of 1948. In fact, at the height of the fighting, Jewish combat troops numbered at least 70,000 (some estimates run as high as 100,000), while the total forces committed to battle by the Arab states stood at not more than 40,000, and probably closer to 30,000.

Furthermore, the security of the Jewish state was firmly established by early June at the latest. The remainder of the fighting was over exactly how far the borders of the new state would extend and over the related question of how many Arabs would be left within those borders.

The Yishuv emerged from the second world war considerably stronger, although numerically smaller, than the Palestinian Arabs. The rapid develop-

*Yishuv — pre-'48 Zionist settlement in Palestine

ment of the Jewish economic sector in Palestine, the large number of Jewish immigrants that poured into Palestine during the 1930s and during the aftermath of the second world war, the training that Jewish youth in Palestine had received fighting with the Allies, and the intensive development of the Yishuv's administrative structures (the precursors of the Zionist state apparatus) combined to place the Jews in a position not only to expand the area of Jewish control, but to challenge the British regime for control of a large portion of Palestine.

The Palestinian Arabs were in a completely different situation. From 1936 to 1939 they had participated in a revolt against foreign domination that had swept both Palestine and Syria and had tied up between one-third and one-half of the British army during those years. The defeat of the 1936 revolt—in large part a result of its semifeudal Islamic theocratic leadership—had left the Palestinians atomized, demoralized, exhausted, and unarmed.

With the end of World War II the Zionist movement began an extensive military campaign consisting largely of terrorist attacks against British occupying troops. The interests of British imperialism and the Zionist movement, so long in tandem, had diverged as the Zionist leaders began pressing for the overturning of the British mandate over Palestine and the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

In late 1947, the British government took the Palestine question to the United Nations, hoping to find some way of internationalizing but preserving its mandate. But the British, weakened by the war and facing a rising independence movement in other colonies, were unable to prevent the UN from divesting them of Palestine. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations passed a resolution by a vote of 33 to 13 (with the support of the Soviet and American delegations) calling for the partition of Palestine into two states, one Arab and one Jewish, that would maintain some sort of loose ties of an unspecified nature.

The partition resolution was a victory for the Zionist movement, as it allowed for the creation of the Jewish state. About 54 percent of the area of Palestine was allotted to the Jewish state. Inside that area there were some 498,000 Jews and about 407,000 Arabs. The Arab state was to be composed of about 45 percent of Palestine, with a population of about 725,000 Arabs and 10,000 Jews. The city of Jerusalem (105,000 Jews, 100,000 Arabs) was to be a separate international zone.

The Zionist leaders realized that the partition, while a partial satisfaction of their demands, was inadequate. The Jews were only slightly more than 50 percent of the population of the Jewish state.

The immediate problem before the Zionist leaders was therefore twofold: to eliminate the bulk of the 400,000 Arabs in the area reserved for the Jewish state and to expand the borders of that state as far as possible, the partition being seen merely as a step along the road to Jewish conquest of all Palestine. They set out to achieve these goals in late 1947.

Terror

In November 1947, the Irgun Zvei Leumi, a Zionist military organization with several thousand members, abandoned its terrorist attacks on the British occupation authority and turned to meting out "reprisals" for anti-Zionist acts on the part of the Palestinian Arabs. The latter, lacking organized leadership and increasingly alarmed by growing Zionist strength in Palestine and by the impending UN partition resolution, were frequently moved to express their opposition to the Zionist colonization in undifferentiated assaults on Jews. In this they were encouraged by the Palestinian theocratic leadership, the "old notables" centered around the former mufti of Jerusalem and his cousin Abdel Kader el-Husseini.

The Irgun took advantage of these incidents to launch a widespread "retaliatory" campaign, which consisted mainly of attacks on villages suspected of harboring those responsible for the anti-Zionist actions, and attacks on villages that were not suspected of being involved, just for purposes of "setting examples." The Irgun campaign had a double effect. On the one hand, it began the process—later intensified significantly—of terrorizing the Palestinian Arabs into what was to become wholesale flight. On the other hand, it incited Arab counterattacks against Jewish settlers, thus ensuring that the gulf dividing the Jews from the Arabs would widen and deepen.

Divide

An example was the Irgun bombing attack against Arab workers at the Haifa oil refinery on December 31, 1947. Six were killed and dozens wounded in the attack. Nineteen Jewish workers were killed and many were wounded when the Arab workers were incited by their own reactionary leaders to strike back.

The example of the Haifa refinery is an important one. The installation was one of the few in Palestine that employed both Jewish and Arab workers. It had been the scene of some collaboration between them, a development that was not to the liking of the Zionists, the Arab reactionaries, or the British government. The Irgun's terror raid and the Hussein response ended the example once and for all.

By January 1948, the Irgun terror campaign—winked at by the Hagana, the "official" armed forces of the

Zionist movement—had done its work. The lines of the conflict were set; the possibility of Jewish-Arab cooperation was squashed; the Palestinian Arabs were on the way to learning what Zionist terror was to be like.

The events of the past twenty-five years make it hard for many people today to imagine that Jewish-Arab cooperation was even a possibility in 1947. But the truth is otherwise. The vast bulk of Jewish immigration to Palestine in the aftermath of the second world war was not an "ideological" immigration of committed Zionists arriving to expel the Arabs. It was instead composed of thousands of displaced persons who had barely survived the Nazi holocaust and had set out for Palestine because they had no alternative. In fact, the Zionist movement itself made no effort to force the U.S. government to open its doors to the refugees and even opposed the open door policy.

Here is an example of the Zionist attitude, from a letter from David Ben-Gurion to the Zionist executive dated December 17, 1938:

"Britain is trying to separate the issue of the refugees from that of Palestine. It is assisted by anti-Zionist Jews. The dimensions of the refugee problem demand an immediate, territorial solution; if Palestine will not absorb them another territory will. Zionism is endangered. All other territorial solutions, certain to fail, will demand enormous sums of money. If Jews will have to choose between the refugees, saving Jews from concentration camps, and assisting a national museum in Palestine, mercy will have the upper hand and the whole energy of the people will be channeled into saving Jews from various countries. Zionism will be struck off the agenda not only in world public opinion, in Britain and the United States, but elsewhere in Jewish public opinion. If we allow a separation between the refugee problem and the Palestine problem, we are risking the existence of Zionism." (Quoted in *The Other Israel*, p. 171.)

No separation was made. The refugees were not offered asylum in the United States or Britain. The anti-Semitic alliance between imperialism and Zionism ensured that the refugees would be barred from the West and thus provided the Zionists with a not inconsiderable portion of the human material for their new state.

Unity?

But there was another side to the problem of the refugees. If they had seen a possibility of cooperation with the Arabs in a fight for an independent Palestine, Zionism would have been almost as much in danger of extinction as if the refugees had been admitted to the United States. Ensuring hostility between Jew and Arab, crushing any sign of cooperation (as in Haifa), thus became a goal of the Zionist leaders. That objective was shared by British imperialism, whose aim was to maintain its rule in Palestine on the pretext that its enlightened soldiers were necessary to keep the Arab and Jewish savages from slaughtering each other, a time-honored technique that has been used by London in areas closer to its own shores.

The result was a never ending series of racist murders, provoked in the first place by Zionist terror squads and answered in kind by Arabs incited by reactionary theocratic misleaders, with the British imperialists assisting now one side, now the other, maintaining a constant bloodletting.

The only local winners in this multi-sided game were the Zionist leaders, who held superiority in weapons and organization and used their superiority to transform the Jewish-Arab clashes

of late 1947 into a full-scale terror assault on the Palestinian Arabs. By the end of 1947, Irgun and Haganah attacks on Arab villages had reached epidemic proportions, and the 1948 war was on.

Arab force

In January 1948 the Jaysh el-Inqadh (army of salvation, usually translated as Liberation Army) led by Fawzi el-Qawuqji entered Palestine across the Jordan River. Qawuqji's force numbered some 5,000 men, about 1,500 of them Palestinian. The force was under the direction of the Arab League offices in Damascus through which Qawuqji had to clear any action.

The entry of the Jaysh el-Inqadh was unable to turn the military situation around. Qawuqji, an archreactionary, was unwilling to mobilize the masses of Palestinian Arabs in the struggle against Zionism. The force was in any case ill equipped by the Arab League leaders, who viewed it solely as an adjunct to their diplomatic efforts to overturn the partition resolution.

The Haganah concentrated during the December 1947-March 1948 period on consolidating positions in the Jewish areas, solidifying lines of communication, and occupying the majority of the cities.

At the beginning of April 1948 the Haganah went over to the offensive. The offensive was known by the code name Plan D.

Thirteen military campaigns were waged under Plan D, eight of them outside the area assigned to the Jewish state. On April 1 Haganah forces started down the Tel Aviv-Jerusalem road. Along the way they attacked Arab villages, driving the population out and dynamiting their houses to ensure that they would not return. Within one week, between 10,000 and 15,000 Arabs had become refugees.

Concurrently with the Haganah's campaign, the Irgun and the Stern Gang, another Zionist paramilitary outfit, stepped up their terrorism against Arab villages. On April 12 they hit the village of Deir Yassin, which had remained aloof from the war and had denied refuge to Palestinian Arab forces in an effort to avoid Zionist reprisals. But to no avail. The Irgun and the Stern Gang executed 254 of the village's unarmed inhabitants—men, women, and children—and threw the bodies down a well. Even the commander of the Irgun, Menachim Beigin, an off-and-on cabinet minister in the Israeli government, later admitted that the village of Deir Yassin was not a military target and that the massacre his gangsters committed there was designed to provoke panic among the Palestinian villagers, who had no means of defending themselves.

Cruel

A similar massacre was committed on April 29 in Katamon, a section of Jerusalem. While the Haganah was waging its Plan D and the Irgun and Stern Gang were escalating their terrorism, the Haganah command was using all possible propaganda means of terrorizing the Arabs into flight. In Galilee, a heavily Arab area, the Haganah dropped leaflets signed by the district commander warning that "all people who do not want this war must leave together with their women and children in order to be safe. This is going to be a cruel war with no mercy or compassion."

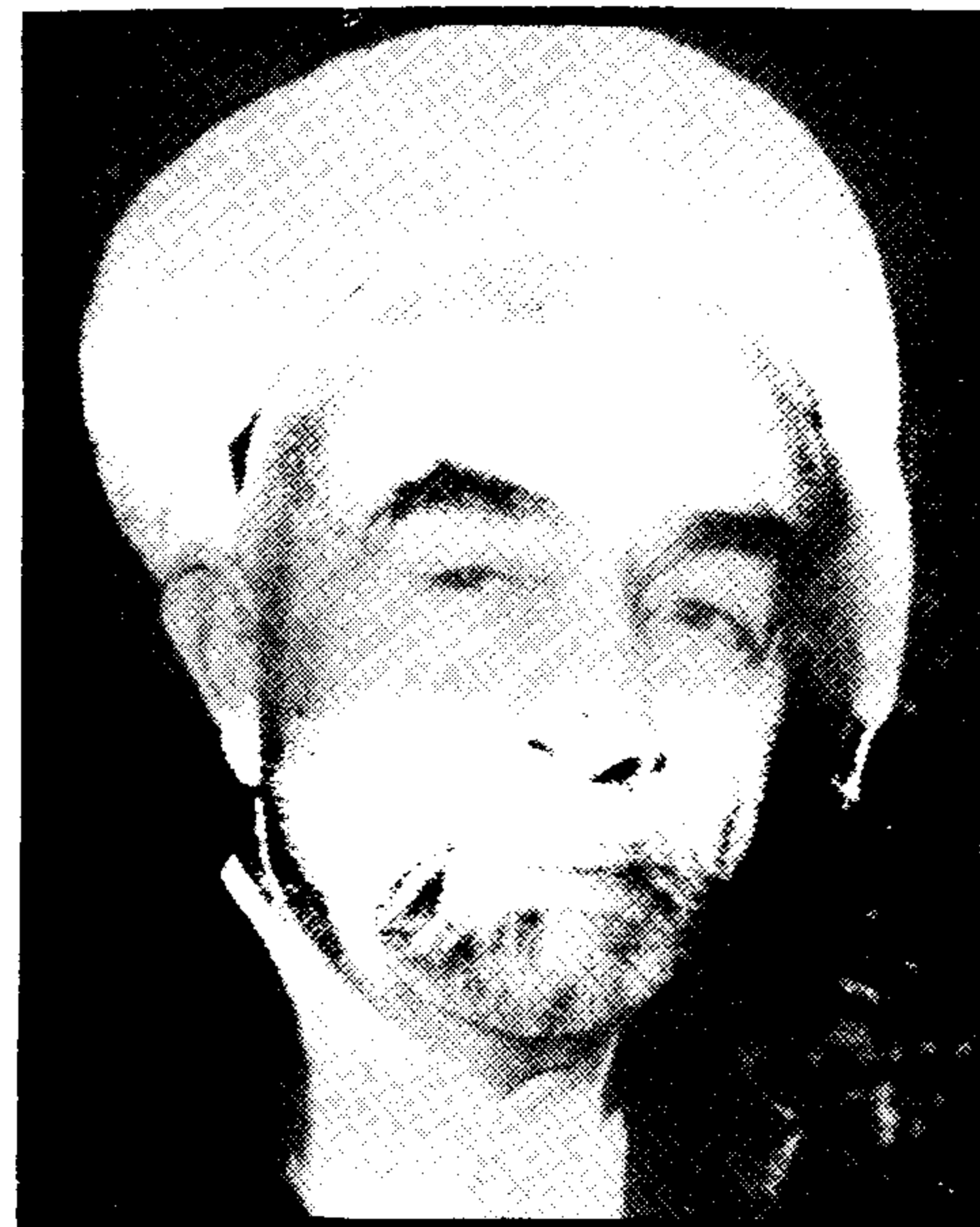
During the first two weeks of May, attacks were launched on northern Galilee. Throughout April and early May, major cities were attacked and captured by the Haganah. On April 18 the town of Tiberias was taken; 5,000 Arabs were put to flight. Haifa

was taken on April 22; more than 50,000 Arabs were forced to flee. One week later Jaffa was taken; Acre fell early in May. When Abdel Kader el-Husseini's forces were liquidated in the town of Qastel, Palestinian forces ceased playing any role whatsoever in the fighting.

On May 14, 1948, the independence of the state of Israel was proclaimed. By that time, more than 250,000 Palestinian Arabs had become refugees; the Haganah was in possession of all the areas allotted to the Jewish state except Jerusalem and some sections of the Negev desert; and the weak, disorganized, and misled Palestinian forces had been eliminated completely from the fighting. And all this took place before the entry of the "outside" Arab armies.

Arab Legion

Militarily, the last opportunity the Arabs had to reverse the developing disaster in Palestine came when the Arab Legion, the British-armed and -trained force under the command of King Abdullah of Jordan (grandfather of King Hussein), entered the fighting on May 15. Simultaneously with Abdullah's entry, an Egyptian force moved in from the south and some Syrian forces attacked on the northern front. The numbers of opposing troops in the field were approximately equal.



ABDULLAH: Connived with Zionist leaders to take over Palestine.

The problem was political. The most effective Arab force was Abdullah's Arab Legion. It was able to drive the Haganah out of Jerusalem and inflict many casualties. But its aim was not to crush the state of Israel, and it never made any attempt to pierce the areas allotted to Israel. As was later discovered, Abdullah had been in secret negotiations with a member of the top leadership of the Zionist command, Golda Meyerson, who was later to change her name to Meir.

The essence of the Meyerson-Abdullah deal was that the Arab Legion would occupy and later incorporate into Transjordan the West Bank of the Jordan River, which was supposed to become part of the Palestinian Arab state.

The first phase of the Arab-Israeli war of 1948 was ended by a truce that went into effect on June 11 and lasted until July 7. While the United Nations was busy trying to "mediate" the dispute, the Zionist leaders were busy consolidating their positions, obtaining new arms, and increasing the flow of Jewish immigrants into Palestine.

The number of new immigrants totaled 30,000. The arms came from the United States and Czechoslovakia, the Kremlin having decided to support the founding of the Zionist state, which Stalin apparently believed would reduce the influence of British imperialism in the Arab East. There is no evidence that any Arab government made any effort whatsoever to

bolster its military position during the month-long truce. On July 9, when fighting resumed on a large scale, the Israeli army was able to surround nearly 100,000 troops armed with Czechoslovak and U.S. weapons into the field. The Arab forces were outnumbered by at least two to one.

The second phase of Arab-Israeli fighting lasted ten days. During that time, the Zionist forces added 1,000 square kilometers to their area of control. Fourteen Arab towns and 200 villages in the area allotted to the Jewish state were seized; 112 villages in the Arab district were taken. The road to Jerusalem was opened. By the time the second truce went into effect after the ten-day offensive, the Arabs had clearly lost the war.

The truce was supposed to be permanent. But in October, the Israeli army moved some 15,000 troops into the Negev and attacked the Egyptian army. New armed settlements—called Nahal—followed the troops into the Negev. A similar campaign was waged in central Galilee, where the tatters of Qawuqji's forces were wiped out.

In December 1948 and January 1949 the Israeli army pressed into Gaza and marched south in the Negev to the Gulf of Aqaba. The fighting stopped on January 7. On February 24 an armistice was signed between Israel and Egypt; an armistice was concluded with Lebanon in March 1949, with Transjordan in April, and with Syria in July. The "war of independence" was over.

Aftermath

The Palestinian flight, which had already reached massive proportions by May 1948, increased twofold during the July-November period. An estimated 400,000 to 500,000 Palestinian Arabs were driven from their homes as the Israeli army bulldozed its way through Galilee and parts of the West Bank of the Jordan. More than 700,000 Palestinians left their homes between April and December 1948. Some of them left under pursuit by Irgun gangsters or Haganah "official" troops. (The difference in behavior between the two outfits was not easy to detect.) Others fled when Zionist forces approached their villages, the lesson of Deir Yassin having been well learned. Still others left simply because war had come to their villages, a war in which they were not participating. So they moved out of the way, as civilian peasants have always done when invaders enter their fields, hoping to return when the war went away. But this was a new kind of war. The peasants who fled their villages to avoid the war found that they could never go home, that their fields had become the property of the Land of Israel, that their houses were occupied by foreign settlers, that they had been declared "absentee-landlords" and had been expropriated.

The Israeli state turned out to be 2,500 square miles larger than the state the UN had allotted to the Jewish sector. About 2,200 square miles of Palestine was annexed by Transjordan, which became the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The Palestinians were scattered across the Arab world, the majority of them settling in miserable camps in Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, where they remain today.

The Palestinian Arabs had been bystanders in the war that determined their fate. They were driven out by the Israeli army, betrayed by the Arab regimes, double-crossed by British imperialism, ignored by the Kremlin bureaucrats. And lurking behind the entire process, reaping maximum benefit, were the U.S. imperialists.

This article has been abridged for shortage of space.

'COMING TO GRIPS' - WITH ILLUSIONS!

I.M.G. ON CHILE'S UNIDAD POPULAR & THE M.I.R.

WITH ITS accustomed modesty, the International Marxist Group announced in No.25 of 'Red Weekly' that "It is no idle boast to say that the I.M.G. has been almost (?) alone among the organisations of the left in being able to come to grips with the lessons of Chile."

On the contrary, we think the IMG, the 'British Section of the Fourth International', displays the greatest centrist muddle on this important question, muddle which has serious implications.

The first confusion is the IMG's analysis of the Popular Unity government. This stems from a compound of factual inaccuracies and counterpositions in which the idea of a popular front and a reformist united front are falsely opposed to each other as though a Chinese wall separated them. In this counterposition, the two forms (Popular front and reformist united front) are seen as qualitatively different from each other.

AIMS

In his pamphlet "There is only one road to Socialism and Workers Power", Comrade Tariq Ali asks - "Was it (the UP) a classical popular front as existed ... in the 1930s?" He produces several reasons why it is not.

1) A popular front embodies the collaboration between a working class party and a party or parties of the bourgeoisie.

2) It is a tactic utilised by sections of the bourgeoisie to contain the rise of the mass movement and keep a grip on the working class parties.

3) The 'stated aim' of the UP was 'socialism', whereas the popular fronts of the '30s were pledged to combat fascism, and were "completely within the political and ideological framework of bourgeois democracy" (our emphasis).

4) The Chilean CP was on the right wing of the UP government.

5) Because of the existence of a militant rank and file in the Socialist Party, the UP government could not selectively repress the mass movement and was therefore unsalvageable from this point of view as far as the bourgeoisie saw things.

SPAIN

Take these points one by one. It is simply not true to say that the 'classical popular front' needed the presence of a bourgeois party within its ranks in order to survive. As Trotsky points out in relation to Spain:

"(In the Spanish Popular Front) The bourgeoisie's place was occupied by its shadow. Through the medium of the Stalinists, Socialists and Anarchists, the Spanish bourgeoisie subordinated the proletariat to itself without even bothering to participate in the Popular Front. The overwhelming majority of exploiters of all political shades went over openly to the camp of Franco" (our emphasis).

But did the UP government subordinate itself to the bourgeoisie? If you merely look at the composition of the government and find no major bourgeois parties there, you can blindly answer "no". But of course, from the very beginning the Allende government subordinated

itself to the bourgeoisie, while the latter didn't even need to move from their seats in Congress. What was 'the "Statute of Constitutional Guarantees" but a political subordination to the bourgeoisie? What was 'loyalty to the Constitution' but a political subordination to the bourgeoisie?

If the bourgeoisie did not dominate, then what were the armed forces doing in the coalition government? Weren't they political representatives of the bourgeoisie, or do the IMG consider them 'neutral'?

Taking up the second point, the bourgeoisie did give the Allende government the go-ahead on the conditions worked out in September 1970, and they did utilise that government to try to contain the mass movement. The Arms Control Law passed by Congress was not opposed by UP deputies (they abstained) and Allende didn't veto it.

The military used this law and the legality of the Allende government itself to disarm the workers' movement and prepare the way for a coup.

Allende also supported the naval high command in its crackdown on petty officers loyal to the UP. As LE MONDE reported: "... we have come to the paradox that for encouraging the loyalty of sailors who refused to rebel against the regime, political leaders defending respect for the Constitution are being prosecuted by the President of the Republic on behalf of putschist officers, and they face a minimum sentence of ten years' imprisonment."

The UP was certainly utilised by the bourgeoisie - the point being that they could only utilise it

and ideological framework of bourgeois democracy" in its actions.

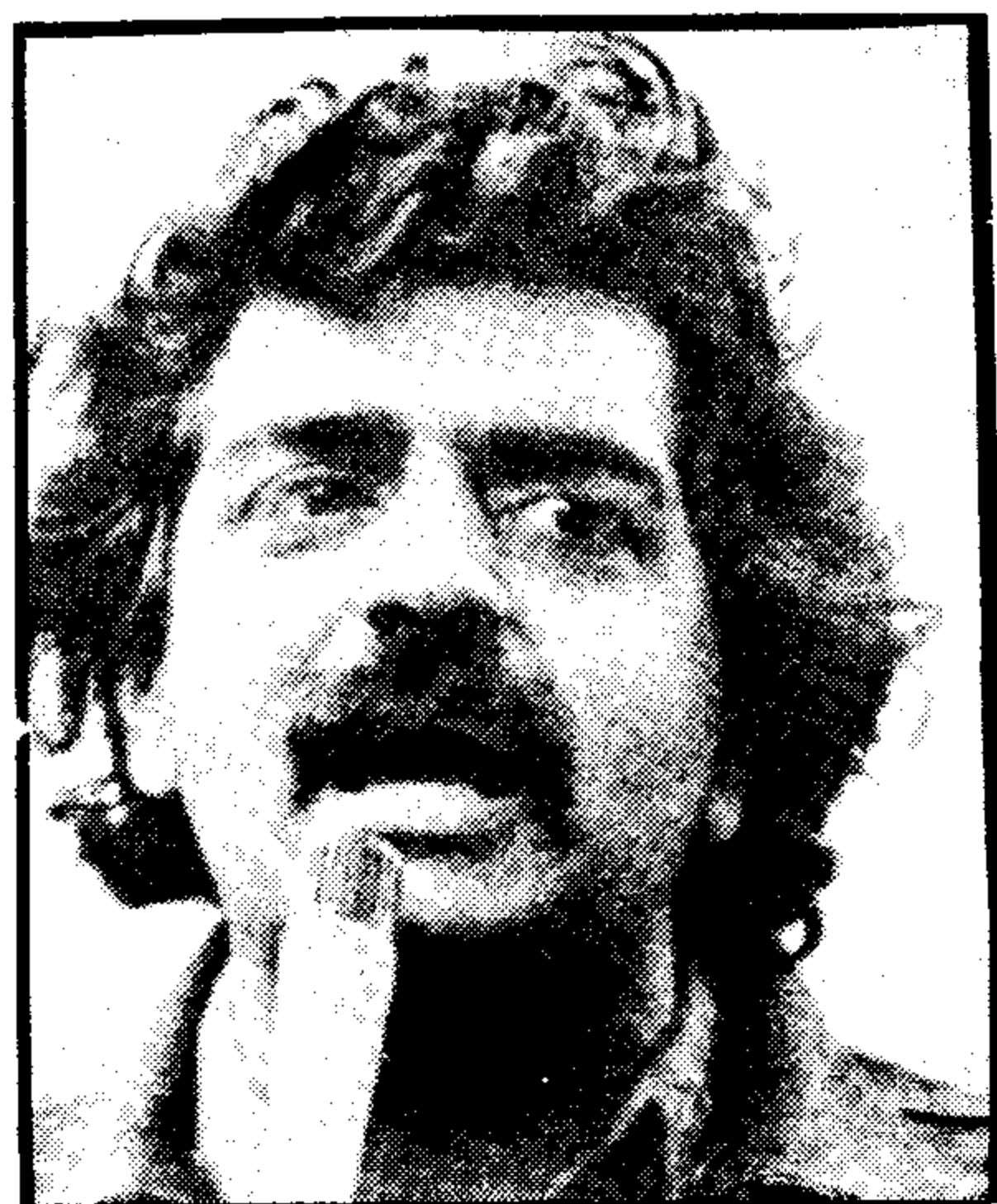
The point about the Communist Party being on the right wing of the UP coalition is a minor one. This was also true in the case of Spain. According to Trotsky "the Spanish Communist Party stood in the right wing of the popular front". Their position in Spain didn't stop them repressing the workers' movement.

In Chile, the CP and the right wing leaders in the SP did carry out a selective repression, as we've already established, and would probably have gone further if the bourgeoisie wished them to. Shortly before the coup, according to LE MONDE, "Allende was ready to introduce a constitutional reform strictly defining the three sectors of the economy (public, mixed and private) and restoring to their owners a number of factories occupied by the workers."

POLE

Allende's downfall was not due to the strong left pole in the SP which, according to the IMG, prevented him from moving to the right. On the contrary, the bourgeoisie themselves did not think Allende sufficiently able to suppress the masses effectively, and took the view that his repression was too selective, not indiscriminate enough.

Allende wasn't even given a chance by the bourgeoisie to dissolve his own electoral coalition. They murdered him instead. He was crushed between two movements: bourgeois counter-revolution on the



Tariq Ali - 'Was UP a popular front?'

for a limited period and with diminishing success. It had to give way to more drastic measures to contain the masses who had been instinctively striving to go beyond the UP and were certainly stimulated by the existence of the UP government and their illusions in it.

Thirdly, Tariq Ali argues that the UP was not formed to fight fascism. True enough. But he seems to agree that a popular front government exists in Ceylon. Was that formed to fight fascism?

The 'stated aim' of the UP was, we learn, 'socialism'. So what! That can be the 'stated aim' of any class-collaborationist government, including popular fronts. We do not go by what the UP 'saw its electoral victory' or 'stated aim' as, but by what it did concretely. Concretely it did not go beyond the "political



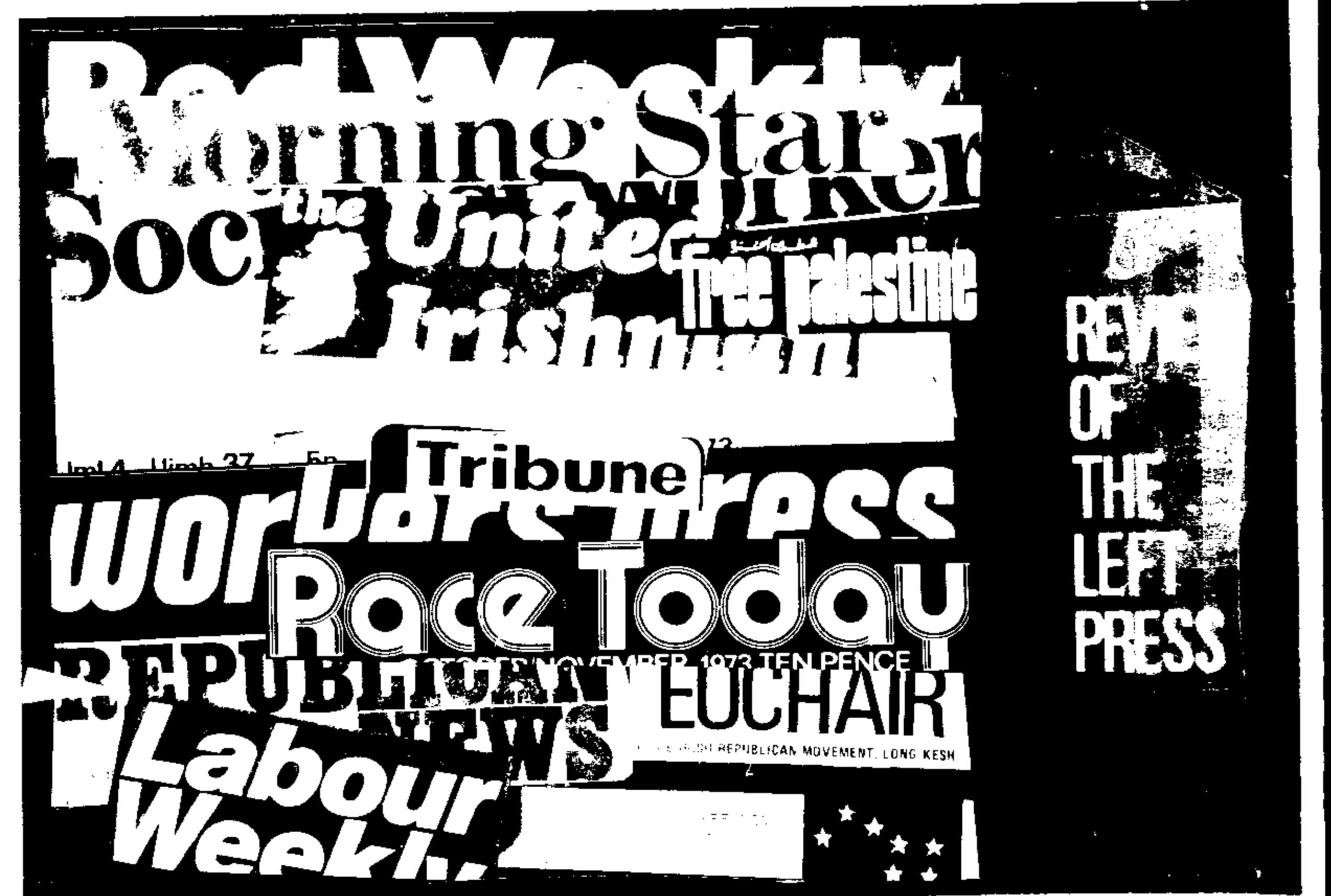
Allende supporter - "betrayed"

one hand, proletarian and peasant revolutionary mobilisation on the other.

But we do not wish to refute Tariq Ali merely point by point. That would reduce the argument to comparing features of the classical popular front of the 1930s and the popular front of today (or 'reformist united front' as the IMG will have it) and would risk turning into a semantic quibble.

The point is to recognise the common essence of both popular frontism (involving a great or a token bourgeois presence in the government) and a reformist government of parties based on the working class.

The common essence lies in confining the working class to the framework of bourgeois democracy, in affirming that the party of the



proletariat refuses to step beyond those limits. Differences there certainly are, but to counterpose a 'reformist united front' against the popular front is to escape this essence and ignore the fact that in Chile the leadership of the workers' parties, which was a petty-bourgeois leadership, pre-set these limits and refused to go beyond them in its actions. Because the IMG differentiates in this manner, it tends to paint the Popular Unity in brighter colours than it deserves.

Allende had personal courage, but personal courage is not confined to revolutionaries, and he is not the first reformist to go down fighting reaction. It is true that he "went out of his way to associate himself with the Cuban revolution", but what does this prove? That he deserved the association?

Reformists and centrists of all hues have gone out of their way to associate themselves with the Russian revolution (eg the Anglo-Russian Committee), but only in order to prepare to deceive and control the workers in their own countries through this association. It is our criticism of Allende, too, that he deceived the workers, if not consciously then by the most idiotic self-deception which can on no account be justified.

As Trotsky said of Spain: "L'Humanite (French CP paper) tearfully begged that the army be purged of fascists. But what is this plea worth? When you vote credits to maintain the officer corps ... and ... same time demand that this entirely capitalist army serve the 'people' and not capital, then you have either become a complete idiot or else you are consciously deceiving the masses."

RADIO

Allende allowed the Chilean army to be expanded and re-equipped by US imperialism. That doesn't say much for his self-proclaimed "total, scientific Marxist socialism", which Tariq quotes at face value.

A few days before the coup, Allende 'permitted' the army to close down the workers' radio station in the University of Chile. When the army moved in, the workers shouted 'treachery'. To whom was this cry addressed? Undoubtedly to their leaders in the 'reformist united front'

In Chile, estimations of the government were not a question of 'terminological differences invented by one small group to differentiate itself from a larger group'. The question of the nature of the government and the attitude to take to it was a life and death question.

The position of all revolutionaries would of course have been to defend the reformist government against reaction. We do not for one moment deny that. But this position must also have implied that the government had to be defended in order later to be overthrown.

M.I.R.

The failure of the major 'revolutionary' organisation, the MIR, to adopt this perspective, in fact its uncritical position in relation to the UP, has meant that in its small way the MIR has contributed to the defeat. It also means that revolutionaries must criticise this organisation mercilessly as well as the UP.

The IMG blurs the criticisms of the MIR and by implication the MIR's relationship to the UP just as the refusal of certain centrists in the 1930s to criticise the POUM led them logically to endorse its policies.

The major criticism presented by the IMG is that the MIR was bureaucratic (i.e. it expelled Chilean supporters of the USFI, didn't hold conferences, etc). But such criticisms do not describe the worst aspects of the organisation's politics.

The correct characterisation of the MIR is as a bureaucratized centrist organisation. From its pre-UP days, when it carried out bank raids and land occupations, it did a complete about-turn after the Allende election victory (which took it by surprise) and put itself at the disposal of the UP government.

This opportunist move was promoted by desire to put pressure on the UP government to move it further to the left. The MIR agreed to abandon mobilisations for land seizures soon after May 1971 (a fact that the IMG seems to be unaware of). Sacrificing these mobilisations for the sake of a 'dialogue' with Allende was justified by the MIR on the grounds that "government control, the use of part of the state apparatus and the neutralisation of the

See next page

other, give rise to a favourable condition for the mobilisation of the masses and can permit the change of the strength relationships in view of the final showdown of both camps!

But the MIR's opportunism did not stop there. They also made no attempt to break the rank and file members of the SP from reformism. As a comrade of Hugo Blanco's has said: "... just as they did not seek to win the masses from reformism in the first phase (i.e. the ultra-left period, when they regarded elections as irrelevant) so they did not seek to do so in the second. They tended in fact to support the left wing of the Socialist Party, helping it to keep the most militant workers from going beyond the framework of the UP."

WORSE

Apart from their uncritical quoting of Altamirano's statements such as "people in overalls and people in uniforms are one", the MIR's work among the troops was hardly a model of Bolshevik practice. As one MIR writer put it in 'Punto Final': "Various MIR activists have been detained for sticking up posters saying 'don't shoot down the masses' or 'soldiers, disobey the officers who incite you to a golpe (coup)'. The right unanimously describes them as calls to military subversion. Nothing is further from the truth! They (the posters) only ask the soldiers not to obey officers who incite them to a golpe, that is to say, those who don't obey the authority of the Executive and what they are obliged to do by the law and constitution."

If the comparison of the MIR and the POUM is justified, it is because in many ways the MIR is worse than the POUM was; at least the POUM tried to explain the Marxist analysis of the state, even when failing to be guided by that analysis in practice.

At no time did the MIR denounce the class treason of the UP. They contented themselves with being a left cover for the UP, playing the role of security men and "socialist revolutionary advisors", rather than attempting to build an alternative revolutionary leadership. We should denounce this attitude as did Trotsky.

"The POUM leaders view themselves as 'revolutionary advisers to the leaders of the popular front. This position is lifeless and unworthy of revolutionaries. It is necessary to openly and boldly mobilise the masses against the popular front government. ... It is necessary to hammer away mercilessly at Stalinism as the worst agency of the bourgeoisie. It is necessary to feel yourselves leaders of revolutionary masses, not advisers to the bourgeois government."

EXPLAIN

Doubtless, the members of the MIR will be in the forefront of the fight against the junta, but this in no way implies that we must be uncritical, or confine our criticisms to minor aspects of their politics.

To quote Trotsky again on the POUM:

"Do not tell me that the workers of the POUM fight heroically, etc. I know it as well as others do. But it is precisely their battle and their sacrifice that forces us to tell the truth and nothing but the truth. Down with diplomacy, flirtation and equivocation. One must know how to tell the bitterest truth when the fate of a war and of a revolution depend on it. We have nothing in common with the policy of Nin (POUM leader) nor with any who protect, camouflage or defend it" (our emphasis).

Instead of indulging in a public binge of self-congratulation, the IMG leaders should explain why they gloss up the MIR, which expelled the Chilean Section of the USFI. It seems that the pathetic urge to have another big brother overseas is so strong that they are willing to pay for it by trading the road of those centrists in the 1930s who "protected, camouflaged and defended" the POUM.

Bas Hardy

Oppose reactionary campaign against Abortion

ON NOVEMBER 20th, the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) is to hold a mass lobby of Parliament to try to get the Abortion Act made even more restrictive.

As was shown in Liverpool and Manchester earlier this year, they are capable of pulling out thousands in their support, through the active collaboration of the churches and such reactionary moralising organisations as the "Festival of Light"

(whose leading lights include the Dowager Lady Birdwood who has close connections with the National Front, and self-appointed Public Censor Mary Whitehouse).

THE WOMEN'S ABORTION AND CONTRACEPTION CAMPAIGN (WACC) is planning a motorcade from the South London Women's Centre (14 Radnor Terrace, S.W.8) as a counter demonstration. This will be leaving at 12.30 on November 20th.

In addition to this, local women's groups are planning activities during the week ending November 23rd, to draw attention to the issues posed by the threat of the Abortion Act being repealed. For example, there will be wreathlaying ceremonies in memory of all the women who have died as a result of backstreet abortions.

And there will be leafletting to explain the abortion issue clearly, to counteract the emot-

ional and mystical claptrap of SPUC, picketing of local anti-abortion meetings, etc.

It is vital that WACC gets all the help and support we can muster, and we suggest that readers should contact their local Women's Liberation group, find out what is being planned for that week, and rally in active support of the demand for the right of women to choose for themselves whether to have a child or not.

Sue Arnall

'We are Prisoners of War' SAY 8 HUNGER STRIKERS

"IRELAND UNFREE shall never be at peace" shouted 19 year old Gerard Kelly, who was then forcibly removed from the dock as the 'London bombs' trial ended at Winchester on November 15th, and the judge prepared to pronounce sentence on the 9 found 'guilty'.

Kelly was one of 10 people from Belfast charged with causing explosions in London last March on the day the British government carried out a referendum in Northern Ireland which blatantly denied the right of the Irish people as a whole to control their own affairs without British interference. The other accused were Dolours Price, Marion Price, Hugh Feeney, William Armstrong, Robert Walsh, Martin Brady, Paul Holmes, William McLarnon and Roisin McNearney.

Before being sentenced, Marion Price said: "I consider myself a prisoner of war. I ask no quarter of you and doubtless none will be given". None was. Judge Sebag Shaw, a hanging judge without the rope - the same who sentenced Noel Jenkinson last Autumn to 30 years' imprisonment - condemned eight of the defendants to 20 years and also life imprisonment, and William McLarnon, who had pleaded guilty, to 15 years.

Silenced

The tenth, 18 year old Roisin McNearney, was acquitted on the Judge's direction, as a reward for her part in helping convict the others.

Thus ended the Winchester trial of the 'Belfast Ten', in a courtroom guarded and fortified as if to withstand assault from a conventional army. It was presided over by a vengeful but incompetent judge who began by sentencing Dolours Price and Hugh Feeney to thirty years in jail each and had to be reminded that 20 years was the maximum. Nonetheless, he handed down murderous if legal sentences against these Irish youngsters,

who remained quite uncowed.

They bore themselves with the courage of their anti-imperialist convictions and according to the proud tradition of the Republican movement.

They had finally admitted to being Provisional IRA volunteers, and Gerry Kelly summed up their political position when he insisted, before being silenced by the police on orders from the Judge, that only the people of Ireland have the right to control the destiny of Ireland.

Until that is achieved, he said "I shall fight as I have done in the past in every way I can." Robert Walsh's mother shouted from the public gallery as he was being sentenced: "If you give them a hundred years we shall still fight for them on the streets of Belfast."

8 of the convicted 9 intend to fight for themselves too. Raising their hands in the clenched fist salute from the dock, they declared that from that moment they were on hunger strike and would remain on hunger strike until their demands (below) were met. (William McLarnon is reported to have joined them in this.)

- * The immediate return to serve their sentences in Ireland with other Republicans in Armagh and the Crumlin Road;
- * For political status;
- * For the right to wear their own clothes. In the meantime all prison clothing will be refused, with blankets as their only garment;
- * For an open visit every week;
- * For one food parcel per week;
- * For the right to send and receive any amount of letters;
- * For the right to be together;
- * For the right to refuse to do prison work.

Despite the acknowledgment by the prisoners that they are members of the IRA, there are still many extraordinary features to the police investigation that led to their conviction.

The head of the Bomb Squad Roy Habershon, admitted on the BBC TV News on November 15th that the police did indeed "cut



Dolours Price

corners" in their investigations. He meant the holding of the prisoners incommunicado for 72 hours after they had been taken off the plane to Belfast, and, presumably, the more or less admitted assaults on them.

But what about the other 'comers' they cut - both the police and Judge Sebag Shaw?

The judge himself, in the way he instructed the jury to find Roisin McNearney not guilty of conspiracy, inadvertently made plain how arbitrary was the conviction of the others, for which same charge they received 20 years. Indeed, it showed how arbitrary is the charge of conspiracy in any circumstances, and how much a threat it is to the British labour movement - as the building workers' trial in Shrewsbury has already shown.

Broken

Equally disturbing are the roles of Roisin McNearney, who was acquitted, and William McLarnon, who pleaded guilty thus prejudicing the case of the others. (McNearney had obviously pleaded not guilty because a deal had been made to let her off).

These two, aged 18 and 19, were broken by the police, by what precise means we don't know, in the first days, and were then used to create a case against the others.

Writing in the Guardian on November 15th, Peter Chippindale summed up as follows after a detailed review of the case: "The Defendants still maintain privately that some of the evidence - especially the half Jay cloth found in Marion Price's handbag and the Green Shield stamps found on Feeney - had been planted by the Police."

But basically it became increasingly evident at the trial that the really damning evidence against them was their lack of credible explanation for all being in London".

Much of the evidence was planted, full use was made of the two who were broken in four days of continual interrogation,

especially McNearney, and thus it came down to a case where the burden of proof was really on the Defendants to prove their innocence - a total reversal of normal judicial procedure.

Concocted

The Guardian has consistently supported Tory policy in Ireland, including internment without trial. If it gives credence to the fact that the Police planted the vital 'evidence', that is, some indication of the methods the police have used. Whether or not they did plant the bombs, it is clear beyond doubt that the actual case brought to court was concocted by the Police. And of course, they do concoct cases..

This, no doubt, is Sir Robert Mark's idea of modern police work: the police decide on guilt, and then manufacture the evidence, and/or turn some of their victims into broken-spirited tools to help convict others.

"Guilty" or not, they are indeed prisoners of war. Billy Armstrong was forcibly removed from the dock for saying that Sir Peter Rawlinson, Tory Attorney General and Chief Prosecutor, was a member of the Government whose "murderous thugs" in the SAS and the Army were terrorising the Catholics of Northern Ireland.

But that is just the point. The criminals in this trial were its organisers, those they represent, and the savage and malevolent judge who presided over it - not the defendants.

As a statement on the 8 from the Provisional IRA says, "their heroism will inspire thousands more to drive home the struggle for freedom to a victorious conclusion."

Support Them

Their own struggle has hardly yet begun. It will most likely be a long a bitter one. The vengeance of the ruling class has not at all been satiated by the mere sentencing of these republicans. It demands that they be broken as well.

They deserve the full support of the British labour movement to back their demands. They must not be left to struggle alone, trapped in the coils of the British penal system. Socialists and militants must help them. We must recognise that they have brought the fight for the rights of political prisoners to Britain itself. And it is time the labour movement took a stand on the question.

Telegrams - preferably from organisations of the labour movement - should be sent at once to the Home Secretary, insisting that their demands should be met

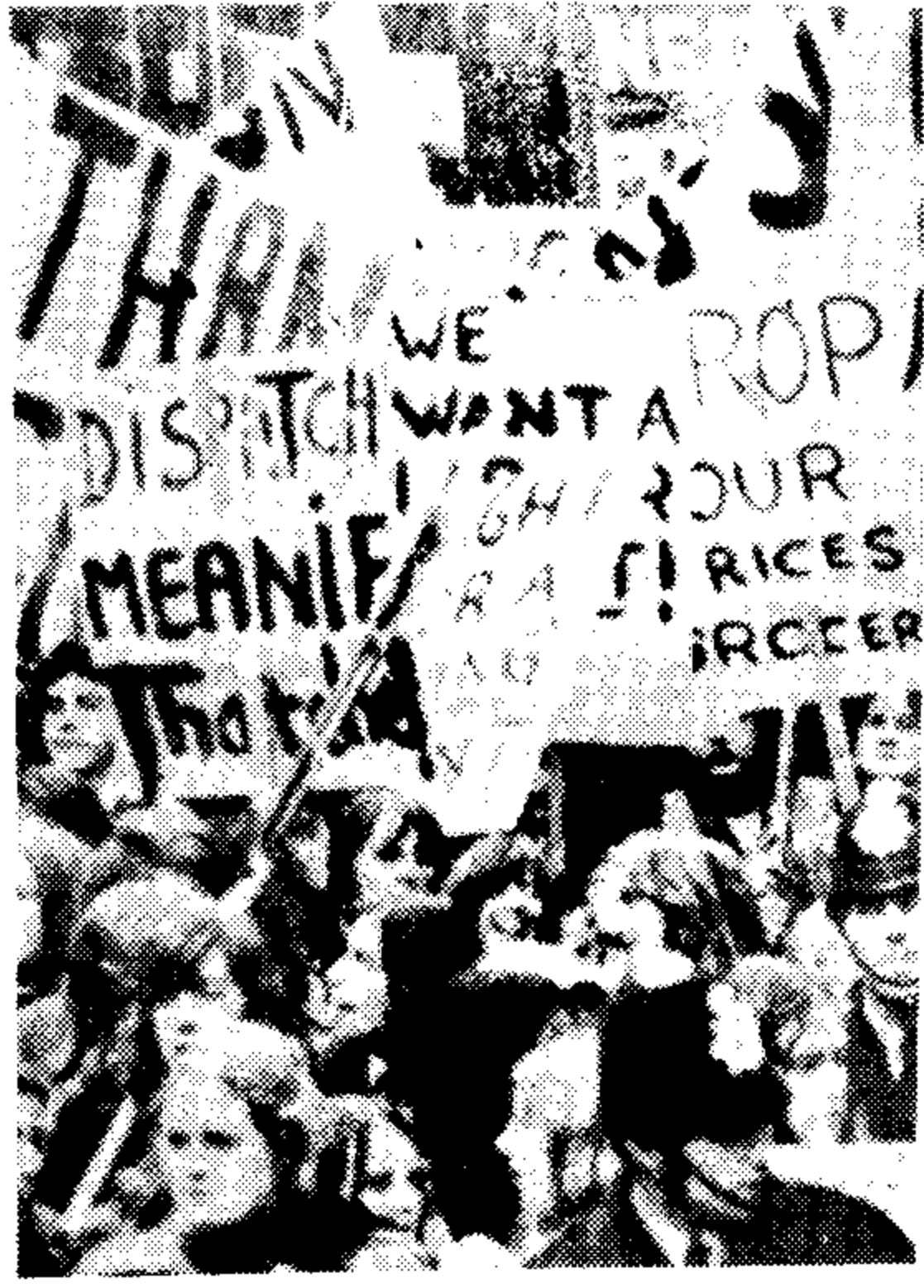
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or: Sean O'Briain, 54 Elderfield Road, London E.5



STUDENTS: GRANTS CAMPAIGN REOPENS

THE NATIONAL day of action — lecture boycotts, sit-ins, teach-ins, strikes and other actions — by the National Union of Students on November 14th, was estimated by the NUS to have involved 80% of the 750 college unions encompassing a membership of 135,000 students.

The Day of Action was in support of the NUS's grants campaign, whose main points are:

Higher grants all round with a yearly review.

An end to discretionary awards — the system by which local authorities are not obliged to give a grant.

Full grants for married women, who at present get just over half the full grant.

And end to the means test; at present most students depend to some extent of a 'parental contribution' — which sometimes does not get paid and which in any case ties the student to his family financially.

Other demands were for better accommodation and for nursery facilities.

In some colleges and universities sit-ins were already in progress. At Bristol University and Oxford University occupations have been going on for over a week.

Militant though the grant campaign is, and popular though the demands are, there is still a big gap between the mass of students and the militants. Ironically, the greater political interest among many students has led in some cases to a self-confident insensitivity towards the mass of students.

This day of action highlights that fact. It was a token. But a token not because the Executive do not want to fight, but because all action will be token action until much greater numbers of students give vigorous support to the grants campaign. When that happens, the possibility of all-out strike action will be at hand — and so will the victory of the grants campaign. **A.H.**

SUMMONSES ON RENT STRIKERS

DESPITE the general downturn in the tenants' resistance nationally to the Housing Finance Act, tenants in Tower Hill, Kirkby, are keeping up their total rents and rates strike begun in October 1972. The new increases last month have seen many tenants rejoin the 400 who have been keeping up the fight.

The council are now refusing to publish any arrears figures. They have been attempting to use the weapon of earnings attachment orders against the strikers.

The tenants' reply to this has been to refuse to appear in

SHREWSBURY WITNESS SAYS: "It's a bosses' trial"

SENSATIONAL evidence was given at the Shrewsbury trial of building workers' pickets the direct connection between the employers and the bringing of the charges.

One of the prosecution witnesses, a journalist, told how he and other journalists were in-

cluded to a meeting with heads of the local police after the strike. They were asked to supply any information they had about the action of pickets.

Then, under questioning from Defence Counsel John Platts-Mills, this journalist admitted that he knew that local building

employers had compiled a dossier on picketing and were pressing the Government to take action. He thought that it was likely that the Government then contacted the Police and urged them to bring charges.

This evidence, although not conclusive in itself, points yet

again to the conspiracy that the Defendants allege, between the bosses, the Tory government, and the police.

Certainly, it explains the long time-gap between the events of the strike and the time the charges were brought — nearly six months.

Platts-Mills has also continued to bring out the nature of the building industry. In the course of questioning by Platts-Mills, Police Superintendent Salisbury stated that he "believed it to be true" that the reason one of the Defendants, Des Warren, had given a false name was "that his name was on a blacklist".

As in the Mold trial, the Prosecution seem to be at pains to show that the pickets were not carrying out normal trade union activity. They have now issued Subpoenas (official Court requests to give evidence) on George Smith (UCATT Gen. Sec), Ken Barlow (Birmingham UCATT organiser) and T&G Building Section organiser Kemp, and this is most likely to be a move to prove that the Union had 'nothing to do with the flying pickets' officially.

At Shrewsbury, the police continue to harass people coming to watch the trial. All those in the public gallery must give the Police their name, age and date of birth, they may not take notes of the proceedings, and relatives of witnesses are not allowed into the public gallery at all.

In a recent leaflet issued by the Defence Committee, they once again call for pledges of action if anyone is found guilty. It is important to stress this point, as there is a lot of talk about striking 'if they are jailed'. But the likelihood is that jail sentences would deliberately be avoided, for fear of provoking militant action.

ANY PENALTY should be met with strike action — the trade union movement must make it clear that it will not allow its members to be penalised in ANY way by a Tory court for actions undertaken in the course of working class struggle.

THERE IS STILL TIME to contact the Defence Committee for a speaker or leaflets. Write to: Mike Williams, 1 Ford Centre, Ocean View, Carmel, Holywell, Flintshire. **CYNTHIA BALDREY**

SOLIDARITY GROWS AT MERIDEN

WITH A determination that has upset the bosses' plans, the Triumph Meriden workers continue to occupy their factory.

The first test of their unity was passed with flying colours when most of the workers turned up to a meeting in the canteen on Monday 12th November. This was a test because the first trickle of redundancy payments had filtered through and many were worried about the effect this would have on the solidarity of the fight against the sackings.

Another danger to this struggle is the 'workers' cooperative' plan which is now being vigorously peddled by the newspapers. Ideas like using redundancy payments to buy the factory, friendly overtures from the American motorbike dealers and even suggestions of Dennis Poore selling the factory for £600,000 along with an arrangement to lease land that the factory stands on, have all combined to present a glowing picture of a 'workers' cooperative' keeping the banner of Triumph flying.

Both the Observer and the Coventry Telegraph have carried such stories, but it is not at all clear on what authority these statements were made, or exactly what is being promised. But the worst aspect of such ideas is that they are all aimed to strike at the independence of the workers and thus cut off any real struggle to save jobs.

The interest of at least one of these would-be benefactors can be pointed out easily enough. Bob Myers, an American motor cycle

dealer, is promising money to set up a distribution network in the USA. If the cooperative gets off the ground, but his offer was combined with a veiled threat. "We must have continuity of production" he said, hinting at the possibility of another UCS deal whereby Meriden workers would be prevented from maintaining their standard of wages and conditions through industrial action.

The Meriden workers have committed themselves to making the cooperative work if it gets off the ground; but they have also committed themselves to a long and hard struggle to keep their jobs, and in this struggle the continued occupation of the factory is the strongest weapon they have.

Because they were prepared to use this weapon they rallied around them the support of many local trade unionists who turned up in force on a mass picket on November 9th. Also, promises of money on a regular basis have come from Chrysler Electricians, Triumph BLMC and Rolls Royce.

This solidarity has come from workers who understand that Triumph Meriden is being selected for attack because its high wages have become a goal for other factories. If these attacks are to be beaten off, if the jobs are to be saved without a humiliating cut in wages and loss of independence, then the solidarity movement must be spread outside the Coventry area, and this can only be based on a determined, independent struggle at Meriden itself. **TOM RAMSEY**

JOE McCARTHY RIDES AGAIN

UNDER THE TITLE 'Red Under the Bed' — a misleadingly self-mocking one at that — Anglia TV on Tuesday 13th trotted out all the hoariest of the old withering chestnuts.

The ETU ballot-rigging case was the centrepiece, and around it Woodrow Wyatt built up the familiar old image of the Communist Party as a super-organised, well-oiled mechanism for "infiltrating trade unions" (it's funny that trade unionists never seem to join the CP; they just appear from the CP, and infiltrate), "inciting strikes" and pushing wicked "extremist" resolutions through half-empty trade union branch meetings.

There was one new element, along the lines of the News of the World 'dossier' on violent flying pickets (and in fact it

featured the little rat that perpetrated that particular atrocity) Such picketing is, you see, all part of the CP's plot to subvert the British way of life and bring about Revolution. How better to isolate the 24 men now on trial in Shrewsbury — a trial the programme was well aware of, as one of the demonstrations it photographed was in Shrewsbury.

The piece had been carefully put together, with even a couple of rather glib "Trotskyists" and an anarchist thrown in to make up a picture of the 'extreme left' into which the viewer could slot the CP in his imagination (and only there — all the pushing and prodding couldn't drag so much as an 'extremist' syllable from Ramelson or Reid).

Hopefully few workers will fall for this ancient mouldering clap-net. First, because it is a vicious, right-wing, boss-sponsored witchhunt — a fact not exactly camouflaged by the stars of the show: John Boyd; Beeching; Robens; Alf Allen of USDAW — whose members live on a pittance and could well do with some incitement to strike — and, doing most of the talking, one of the most hated scabs in the business, Frank Chapple.

And, second, because it's precisely this sort of idiotic rubbish that misleads thousands of good militants into the CP, convinced that it is in fact an effective revolutionary organisation and not a reformist shambles.

All the same, against this sort of muck, all militants must defend the C.P. — whatever we think of its politics. **Spilki**

£1,000 FUND TWO WEEKS TO GO!

REACTIONS to the larger Workers Fight have been very encouraging. Typical is the comment that the paper is now a much more effective weapon in the factories.

But many more technical improvements are necessary to transform the paper into as useful a weapon for socialism as the bosses' papers are for capitalism.

We need to regularise Workers Fight as a 12-pager appearing on the dot every fortnight: that is priority number one. At the moment the paper is produced almost entirely by voluntary labour by people who also have to earn a living.

To really improve the paper's appearance we need a better typesetting system. We need a great increase in resources to invest in improving live coverage in the paper.

All of which comes down to the fact that we need more money. Quite apart from improvements we need £100 a month to cover expenses. You, our readers, must provide it.

The £1000 10-month fighting fund closes at the end of November. So far, we have had £910, leaving less than three weeks to raise £90.

Think how useful the paper would be with only a fraction of the resources of the Daily Mirror or the Sun. Think of the improvements so far — even without the completion of the fund.

Rush donations to: Workers Fight, 98 Gifford St, London N1 0DF.

Ambulancemen strike

HARD ON THE HEELS of the Glasgow firemen another section of hitherto ignored and poorly paid workers are now in a fight against phase 3. Ambulance men in County Durham are out on strike and in other areas a work to rule is being operated.

As with the firemen, the action of the Durham ambulance men has come up against the opposition of the trade union

leaders and many drivers have held back from strike action (while going ahead with overtime bans and working to rule) because NUPE has promised to organise a conference to discuss the dispute.

The dispute itself is over a complicated proposal which phase 3 has upset. This proposal stems from the recommendation of the McCarthy report on restructuring pay and efficiency schemes. Phase 3 however will not permit the ambulance men to be classified as a "special case" and thus the move towards a new NHS structure will bring in nothing for the ambulance men.

In one area (Bolton) the men will actually have lower Manning scales and work more hours!

As with the hospital workers' strike, last year, the press have been quick to pounce on scare stories. The Medical Officer of Health accused pickets of holding up a patient with heart trouble for 10 minutes whereas in fact the patient had to wait because there were not enough porters available.

Like the Glasgow firemen, the ambulance men work irregular hours, the pay is poor and the conditions are bad. Like fire-fighting, the job is vital and because of this the ambulance men are open to all sorts of hypocritical blackmail. In such a situation the solidarity of all sections of workers is paramount.

FROM PAGE 1 BY-ELECTIONS

for a Labour campaign to force the Tories out round the following demands, and fight for them in their own activity —

Smash the Industrial Relations Act and the NIRC, and compensate its victims.

Defend the right to picket — organise physical defence against the state.

End all government interference with the trade unions, no incomes policy under capitalism, demolish Phase 3 and the 'counter inflation' legislation of which it is part.

For a guaranteed £30 minimum wage tied closely to the cost of living.

Scrap the Housing Finance Act. Equal pay for women NOW.

Abolish all racist immigration Acts.

Unconditional and immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

JACKIE CLEARLY

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