

The Red Mole

No.40 17 April 1972 Price 7½ p

VIETNAM: SPRING OFFENSIVE SHATTERS U.S. STRATEGY



BUILDING WORKERS CHARTER SCARMAN REPORT
MANCHESTER OCCUPATIONS TENANTS FIGHT BACK
LANCASTER UNIVERSITY/ARMED STRUGGLE IN ARGENTINA
T.& G. DEFY INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT

Red Mole

VIETNAM: SPRING OFFENSIVE SHATTERS U.S. STRATEGY

It is still too early at the time of writing to know the real tactical and strategic importance of the offensive that the Indochinese revolutionary forces have launched.

What is already clear, however, is that attacks have been carried out with powerful forces not only south of the 17th Parallel, in the Quang-Tri area, but also in the Central Highlands, in the provinces of Kontum and Pleiku, as well as nearer Saigon, in the province of Tay Ninh, and also in the Mekong delta.

Once more the joint American-puppet High Command—though expecting such an attack—seems surprised by the size of the forces involved, and even more so by the extent of their deployment. But this time the surprise is the reverse of what it was at the time of the Tet offensive in 1968.

At that time, the joint American and South Vietnamese deployment was based on concentration, in large units and in powerfully protected bases. In that way, the NLF forces were able to control the countryside, get an implantation in it without large-scale resistance, and from it were able to prepare—besides a few spectacular central actions—an offensive consisting of hundreds of different guerrilla operations. For many reasons (including the lessons of '68), the imperialist war machine has been seriously modified since then. Four fifths of the U.S. active service units have left Vietnam. The logistic support to the puppet forces lies exclusively—since the ground troops cannot or do not want to fight—in the air. The puppet army must itself patrol the countryside, carrying out raids, and forcing the population to regroup in concentration camps or in the towns. In this way, they become vulnerable to the present concentrated actions, supported it would seem by heavy and semi-heavy weaponry of a classic but seemingly widely used type.

This is the price that must be paid for 'Vietnamisation'. All the more so as the operations in Laos a year ago exposed the weak operational value of the big puppet units—even the so-called elite ones—when they are facing equivalent revolutionary forces.

One can also foresee without much trouble that these operations in Vietnam will be followed very soon by important operations in Laos and Cambodia. It is difficult to see—especially in Cambodia—how the local puppets, already severely tried, are going to be able to put up any effective resistance to the forces of the FUNK without the support of the Saigon troops, who are now involved elsewhere.

If one wants to try to evaluate the general situation, a number of factors have to be taken into account:

1. THE POSSIBILITY OF RESISTANCE BY THE PUPPET FORCES

On a purely tactical level, the behaviour of the Saigon forces is of course important to determine, since both south of the 17th Parallel and in the Central Highlands there are no more U.S. ground forces and the puppets are alone. The extent of the successes of the revolutionary forces will depend—it is obvious—on their capacity to resist.

In the long term, it is the whole policy of 'Vietnamisation' which is at stake. If the puppets, especially their best units, collapse and allow big gaps to appear on the fronts where

the revolutionary forces are engaged, then the entire Nixon plan could rapidly collapse. The gamble on the (now effective) withdrawal of the ground troops was based on a confidence—entirely relative and dependent on the air support—in the development of the combative capacities, of the morale, and of the social support of the puppets. But a total collapse is not very likely. To think that the revolutionary forces are going to converge towards Saigon and liberate at a go the whole of the Indochinese peninsula is totally utopian. And the Vietnamese comrades have often warned against such illusions. The recent declarations of Colonel Ha-Van-Lau to the *New York Times* show this very clearly. But even a limited tactical success for the Indochinese revolutionaries would assume at the present time a considerable significance.

2. THE PLACE OF THE SPRING OFFENSIVE IN THE OVERALL STRATEGY OF THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES

It seems very clear. The game played by Nixon is to 'erase' the Indochina war by insisting only on its 'consequences' (campaign on the prisoners, etc.). The war is finished since the ground troops are coming back home, since the American losses have diminished almost to the point of disappearing, since 'Vietnamisation' has been a "success", since the leaders of the workers' states, even those who were denouncing Nixon most violently, receive him, negotiate with him, and talk hardly or not at all about the war. The war is 'de facto' finished, and it is no longer necessary even to maintain the fiction of the Paris 'peace-talks', the holding and regular sessions of which were intended to give the deliberate impression that American imperialism had something to negotiate. Of course, the Indochinese Revolutionary Front is attempting to demonstrate the contrary and this is why—in passing—we must protest with our Indochinese comrades against the suspension of the talks. The battlefield and the diplomatic struggle are one and the same front. In the same way as the Tet offensive of '68 sounded the death toll of one particular U.S. strategy in Indochina, the April '72 offensive could very well throw into question the whole 'Vietnamisation' policy, or at least certain important aspects of it.

It is going to be difficult for Nixon to continue to deny the continued existence of the war. It is going to be even more difficult for him to withdraw another 30,000 men between now and the summer.

Moreover, the new operations are a striking proof of the determination of the Indochinese revolutionaries not to accept any 'freezing' of the situation, any 'Geneva' where their independence and their freedom of action would be subject to bargaining.

In this respect, the date of the offensive is instructive. We do not think that it is only for meteorological reasons that the U.S. air force is reluctant to leave the ground. It takes place right in the middle of Nixon's two trips: to Peking and to Moscow. Once more, our Vietnamese comrades have kept an equal balance in their relations with the two big workers' states, even to reminding them of the continuing aggression of U.S. imperialism in Indochina.

But the reminder that no settlement reached around the negotiating table will count for much without the agreement

of those fighting on the ground comes at a very opportune moment. It is a stinging indictment of all those who were suggesting—wishful thinking, perhaps—that everything was settled in Indochina, and that behind the suspension of the Paris talks secret contact was being maintained which would settle what remained to be settled.

3. THE U.S. REACTION

If, as some correspondents maintain, the vigour and extent of the Vietnamese offensive has taken the U.S. high command and its puppets by surprise, it is very likely that they had already planned their methods of counter-attack and escalation in the event of such a situation.

Of course, Nixon is faced with a serious problem. By continuing to evacuate U.S. ground forces from Indochina, he aggravates the local relationship of forces which is not at all favourable to him in any case. The morale of the puppet troops can be affected, not to mention that of the U.S. troops still present. But can he stop this evacuation or even reverse the trend and bring back elite service units? It is very unlikely in this election year, when he has gambled heavily on a 'pacifist' image to return him for another four years. Already in the States it seems that the euphoria of the silent majority is giving way to much anxiety. There is therefore one and only one possibility: the use of air power and eventually the resumption of massive bombing raids against the North. Obviously the U.S. military command have been preparing for this for some months. The arrival of new B-52 bombers, and the recent arrival of two new aircraft-carriers show clearly that this eventuality has been planned for and that the imperialists have given themselves the means to carry it out. It seems that the puppets are evacuating the population of Quang-Tri, south of the 17th Parallel. Maybe one should see in this the moment of realisation of an old plan which dates back to '68 and the days of MacNamara: the creation, by every means possible, of a dead zone on both sides of the 17th Parallel.

SOLIDARITY

Revolutionary marxists, however, are not taken aback by these developments in the situation in Indochina. For many months now the Fourth International has been stressing the need for international mobilisations this spring, in response to a situation which was known to be reaching boiling point. In particular, in the U.S. through the National Peace Action Coalition and in France through the Indochina Solidarity Front, our comrades have taken the lead in mobilising on a large scale for the International Day of Solidarity on 22 April, realising that the spring of 1972 would be an important period in the developing Indochinese revolution. In Britain what we can do is relatively small, both because of the lack of internationalism of most left groups and also because for us the major task must be the building of a solidarity campaign in support of the struggle of the Irish people against our own ruling class. However, it remains as necessary as ever to take even limited actions, as is happening in both Glasgow and London on 22 April, in support of the struggle of the Indochinese people; and it will remain necessary for as long as that struggle retains its central importance in the process of world revolution today.



As is well known, the engineering industry has—with the exception of the car industry—been severely depressed for the past fifteen months or so. This is because there is little demand for capital goods either in the domestic or in most foreign markets. Consequently, there has been relatively little overtime, many plants have been working short time, and as everyone knows there have been big redundancies. By and large, these developments have put the engineering workers in a weaker bargaining position: if the employers can't sell the goods they produce, a strike is hardly likely to be as unwelcome as at other times.

Developments outside the engineering industry as such have also had an important effect. Obviously, both the general crisis of British capitalism and the specific policies adopted by the government to solve that crisis have contributed to the difficulties facing the engineering employers, and to the very different problems facing the engineering workers. But they have also contributed to the development within the working class of a willingness to undertake new forms of struggle, and among sections such as the miners long-standing resentments have been brought to a head.

Thus the miners' victory prompted the government's concessions to the UCS work-in. This came at a crucial time for the Manchester claim. Originally, after the claim was referred to plant level by the union leaderships, 'carbon-copy' claims were submitted by stewards at all plants in the Manchester District of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions. That is to say, the same demands—for £4 on the consolidated rate, for a 35 hour week, for extra holidays, and for substantial progress towards equal pay for women—were submitted at each plant in the district. 200,000 workers were involved, at about 1000 plants, of which approximately half belonged to firms in the Employers' Federation.

The employers response paralleled that at national level. They proclaimed their refusal to negotiate on hours and holidays—except at national level—and the federation firms were organised into sixteen groups, in each of which (it was generally understood) there would be a lock-out of all workers if selective strikes hit any member of the group. In short, there was a very tough response from management.

The reasons for this are threefold. Firstly, many of the smaller firms would—and here the employers' claims are true—go out of business if even the Manchester claim (still less the national claim) were won. Secondly, the depressed state of the industry means that the employers have, both economically and so far as morale is concerned, a relatively strong position (certainly stronger than for a long time past). And thirdly, the firms in the federation are, with individual exceptions, following the national policy of the EEF, which seeks to replace the now-abandoned York procedure agreement with another one that can, in the framework of the Industrial Relations Act, permanently shift the balance of forces in the industry in their own favour.

The effects of the miners' victory have in many ways disorganised this tactic of the employers. Besides the UCS concessions—which have very effectively popularised the sit-in (and, paradoxically, not the work-in) among large groups of workers—the other changes in government policy have weakened the cohesion of the bourgeoisie and of its political representatives, while simultaneously there have been noticeable improvements in the morale of key sections of the working class. Thus, the rejection of the 'carbon-copy' claim by the Manchester employers led to lock-outs and thence to widespread sit-ins. The policy that was adopted for pursuing the claim by the ESEU Stewards Meeting on 13 March was an embargo on piece-work and overtime, and a work-to-rule. Whether a strike would have been preferable is arguable: there would certainly have been big problems in carrying that line on many shop floors. In any event, the ban on piece-work was accepted at most plants in the Manchester and Stockport areas, though little action has been taken in the traditionally less militant Bolton area.

Once the ban had been accepted, the only question was: who would strike the first blow. At the present time, management could not in many cases afford to let unit costs take another big jump upwards. Nor could they consider without undermining the negotiating position of the EEF. So their obvious tactics were: stockpiling until the ban took effect, and then: the LOCK-OUT.

The first action came at the Bredbury steel plant, part of the GKN combine. Here management began stock-piling, whereupon the

So far 20 factories have been occupied by workers in the engineering industry in the Manchester area, in pursuit of a claim for improvements in pay and conditions submitted last January by stewards throughout the district.

ENGINEERS' PAY CLAIM: OCCUPATIONS SHOW THE WAY

work-to-rule and bans on piecework were imposed immediately. The employers' response was to threaten a lock-out: the occupation took place Thursday 16 March. In the next few days similar events took place at other factories: Davies and Metcalfe (in Romily), E. Peart and Co. (Hyde), Mirrlees Blackstone (in Hazel Grove, part of the Hawker-Siddeley group), Sharston Engineering (Cheadle Hulme), and Lawrence and Scott Electromotors (Openshaw). Significantly, all these firms except LSE are in the Stockport area: Stockport has long been the most militant and best organised part of the engineering industry in the Manchester area and is a solid base for the CP.

Roughly speaking, after the first round of occupations in the period 16 to 26 March—before the ban on piecework and work to rule were instituted generally—there have been three distinct phases in the struggle. During the first two days of the action, the level of struggle continued to increase: British Steel, Openshaw and other plants were occupied on Tuesday 28 March. On 29 March, however, a set-back occurred at Sharstons.

This firm was the only one affected that did not belong to the EEF. Unlike the other firms, Sharston's management dismissed the occupying workers and took legal action to have them evicted as trespassers. Whether the EEF regarded this as kite-flying, or as a backwoods eccentric messing up their own plans, is not clear. What is certain is that on the 29th the Court at Preston did grant the writs. Unfortunately, the occupation ended the next day with the men re-instated but with no substantial progress on the claim.

From the granting of the writ at Sharston's until almost a week later, there was something of a temporary downturn in the struggle. But on Wednesday 5 April, following a toughening of management's attitudes six further sit-ins took place. These included Hawker Siddeley Aviation at Woodford, near Stockport, and both plants belonging to the Francis Shaw plastics machinery firm (in Openshaw and Salford). Two days later a further three plants, including the Metal Box Company in Altrincham, were occupied.

Currently it looks as if in almost all cases the fight will be a long one. Besides the sit-ins already mentioned, there are lock-outs at HSA Chadderton (near Oldham) and GEC-AEI Trafford Park. Despite the replacement of the manager at GKN-Bredbury negotiations on Wednesday 5 April broke down. In about twenty cases settlements have already been reached: on most of these secrecy is being preserved, but in two cases firms that made concessions on hours and conditions have had to leave the EEF.

If the struggle is drawn out, then two aspects are going to be crucial. The first is the ability of the unions to extend the struggle to other plants, and to make big breaches in the employers' solidarity. So far as this is concerned, it would be simple insanity to delude oneself that '200,000 engineers are ready to occupy'. Unfortunately, the extension of the struggle will require real effort on the part of militants within the unions, including action by the union officials. However, it cannot be denied that both on the shop-floor and at official level considerable effort is being put into involving new factories and groups of workers: the AUEW-TASS (DATA) claim is being treated as part of the general claim, and at key plants that are weak pressure is beginning to tell.

Revolutionary groups, provided that they adopt a correct approach, can make a contribution to the extension of the struggle which would be out of all proportion to their size. Obviously the national and local press are not going to do anything they can to help spread the sit-ins: there is therefore a big opportunity for revolutionaries to do

so through giving widespread publicity to the sit-ins already going on, and to new developments as they take place. The Manchester branch of IMG assisted the Manchester *Free Press* (a local 'alternative paper') in the production and distribution of its second supplement on the dispute for precisely this reason.

The same supplement also dealt with a sphere in which only the revolutionaries can assist: the utilisation of the Social Security system as a strike fund. Because it is only revolutionary groups, and at that mainly the IMG, which have been active in the Claimants Unions and in organising claimants and the unemployed for a whole period, they and they alone have the information and the expertise to ensure that the SS can be beaten. In Manchester, the IMG has produced a 10-page pamphlet, selling for 2 p, explaining in detail the rights of strikers, and how to get them. So far 350 copies have been sold, not to mention thousands of leaflets being distributed and wide circulation given to the joint *Free Press-IMG* broadsheet. In several cases IMG members are working in close co-operation with Claimants Committees which have been set up in occupied factories to organise the battle with the SS.

But if the role of revolutionaries can be crucial on that particular front, and if they

can further get across some very important ideas concerning the significance of the strike, their influence can only be limited. The present struggle, despite the fact that it takes a very advanced form, and that the whole experience and self-organisation of the engineering workers is concentrated into it, is still a fight for better wages and conditions inside a bourgeois-democratic framework. And the most stupid mistake revolutionaries could make in this situation would be to *counterpose* some other form of activity by the Manchester engineers to that they are engaged in now. To say, "you are involved in an economic struggle but what is needed is a political struggle (against the Tories)—build the Party!" does not help at all. On the contrary, we must do everything to support the existing struggle.

But it is precisely because a struggle whose objects do not go beyond that of wages and conditions is incapable of solving the basic problems facing the working class that revolutionaries need to stress the importance of linking that struggle to a general struggle for workers' control and for a government which permits the working class to struggle for workers' control through its organisations. Not 'counterposing' but 'linking', basing one's explanations on the actual living struggle of the working class.

Manchester IMG.

Engineering workers occupying the Metal Box Co. factory at Timperley, Manchester



SCOTTISH TENANTS FIGHT BACK

All over Scotland tenants and trade unionists are organising themselves to fight the latest attack on the working class of this country by the capitalist class under the guise of the Tory government—the Housing (Financial Provisions) Scotland Bill, now going through the committee stage in the House of Commons. The Tory government launched this attack on local authority tenants back in the summer under the predictable name of *A Fair Deal for Housing*, a curious name for a document designed to introduce mandatory increases which will make nonsense of any Tory claims to impartiality, fair mindedness, or indeed with any concern for “galloping inflation”.

Two of the provisions of this particular bill show this very clearly—section 29 of the bill compels all local authorities and development corporations to raise rents by a minimum of £24 per annum in the year '72-'73 and £50 per annum the following year. Thus, rents will be rising a statutory minimum £1.50 per week within two years. But this bill is a double edged weapon. Section 27 specifically forbids the housing authority to take into account “the personal circumstances of the tenant”; in Scotland this means an end to the graduated rent scheme (which some local authorities were operating) based on income. This bill means that most rents will almost double in the next two years, and in Scotland, where most working class families are housed in council houses, this will mean a devastating cut in real wages for the wage earners of these families.

The main protests coming from council house tenants are aimed against the increases and the new (to new towns) rent rebate scheme which is just another means test to go through. Rent rebate schemes have been in operation in a number of towns and cities since the Labour government introduced them in 1968. They form part of the general move towards selectivity in the social services. Clearly the reasoning behind this move is that if you make people feel that the benefits won for them by the struggles of their predecessors are in fact a kind of hand out charity, and if you further obstruct them with a maze of red tape before payment is made, then the take up rate will be very low, as witness the Family Income Supplement.

The Labour Party have been very vocal in their condemnation of this “anti working class bill” as they call it. What hypocrisy! What downright lies! It was the Labour government who did the ground work for this bill; as they did the groundwork for the Industrial Relations Act. The 1965 Rent Act was the precedent. This act established rent assessment committees, who decide what is to be a fair rent; needless to say the Tories will not hesitate to use these to great effect, and as mentioned it was also the Labour government which brought into being the rent rebate scheme in 1968. Therefore this act must not be seen as the wicked Tories pinching money from the workers, but as a capitalist way out for a capitalist problem. Both the Labour party and the Tories protect the interests of the capitalist class, both pass bills and acts to do so, e.g., *In Place of Strife* and the Tories' Industrial Relations Act, or the 300,000 rise in unemployment under the Labour government and now the one million total under the Tories. This act forms only part of the general attack on the working class to get British capitalism out of a deep crisis and restore its profit margins.

One sure way of doing this is to cut real wages and what better way than to raise prices and rents while the trade unions cannot fight back for a corresponding rise, or are to be bogged down in rules and regulations to be effective. The Fair Rents Bill must be seen in this context and must be fought as such. In Cumbernauld the fight has already started, public meetings and rallies have been well attended and the call has gone out for a massive withholding of the rent increases when they come into effect at the end of May. The local trades council have called for a total withholding of the rents and the formation of an action committee consisting of tenants, trade unionists and unemployed. This committee was formed on 20 March.

As yet, no clear strategy has been laid down as to how the fight will be conducted, but one thing is clear from the speeches that trades council members and trade unionists have been making at the public meetings, “if any tenant who is on rent strike is evicted then strike action will follow automatically until the tenant is reinstated.” This is what the trades council say, it remains to be seen if they will



carry it out. But it is clearly only this sort of action which will ensure victory and rank and file trade unionists must take up this call if the rents bill is to be defeated.

But at the same time it is necessary to go beyond the rents bill and to link the fight against it to the fight against the Industrial Relations Act. The Tories are reeling from punches from the miners and the UCS workers, now is the time to put in the boot. A massive national rent strike, with massive national strike action if the authorities evict; this, if conducted in the proper manner, could defeat the rents bill and the Industrial Relations Act. Committees of action to fight the rents bill must be set up all over the country, committees of workers, unemployed and tenants who can plan and co-ordinate. Street or area defence committees must also be set up to ensure that no one is evicted or victimised—these must have links in the local factories to ensure instant strike action if any evictions are carried

out. The unemployed have a part to play here, they will form the bulk of these defence committees while the rest are working. Housewives too can play an important part by organising themselves to protect their homes and the homes of their neighbours. The fight must not be left to the working class elite, such as Labour councillors and trade union bureaucrats, this is a fight for the rank and file and only the rank and file can win it, and only if they are organised in committees of this nature will they be able to do so.

The working class of Cumbernauld have not been slow in the past to take action to protect their interests. Only last year the workers of the local Burroughs factory conducted a victorious 16 week strike, the local youth employment office was occupied by unemployed teenagers in protest against unemployment and in solidarity with the U.C.S. workers, an unemployed action committee was formed to fight unemployment which managed to or-

ganise various demonstrations and other actions. When one considers that Cumbernauld only has a population of just over 30,000 then this is not at all a bad record. We of the rent strike action committee are confident that once again we can show a good example to the working class of Britain as a whole by being the first to initiate a massive rent strike against the fair rents bill.

FOR A 100 PER CENT EFFECTIVE RENT STRIKE. INDUSTRIAL STRIKE ACTION IN CASE OF EVICTION. COMMITTEES OF WORKERS, TENANTS AND UNEMPLOYED TO FIGHT THE RENTS BILL. AREA AND STREET COMMITTEES TO DEFEND THE STRIKE.

—P. McKenna
Cumbernauld I.M.G. and Rent Strike Action Committee.

PRESTON TENANTS ORGANISE

In Preston, like many other towns, council house rents are going up *this month*, before the Housing Finance Bill becomes law. Tenants are being asked to pay an average of 50 p more rent until next April, when there will be another rise. Other towns will begin to pay £1 in October.

The Housing Finance Bill is but one of a number of recent cuts in the social services aimed at bringing about a decline in the standard of living of the working class—but it is the one which will hit the working class hardest. Its aim is to end subsidised housing, making a profit from council tenants. At the present time people buying their own homes get £727 million in subsidy when council tenants get only £302 million (figures from *The Times*, 27 February). In three years time council houses should have reached a ‘fair rent’ which will be the market value and about double the present rent. Accompanying this fair rent is a means test which at first will decrease the rent of some tenants and let others pay a reduced increase. However, even those who do get a rebate will eventually be paying more rent since in three years the basic rent will have doubled. Despite all the machinery introduced to deal with the rebate system, money given in rebates will not be large enough to affect the profits made from council housing. And the large majority of council tenants

who will not be affected by the rebate system will be even worse hit.

In fact, council house tenants will be in a position where they will be subsidising the owner occupier while receiving no subsidy themselves. This is bound to mean a great reduction in council housing, and goes hand in hand with attempts to encourage council tenants to buy their houses. Property dealers, of course, recognise that one effect of the bill will be to drive tenants from the council houses. Property prices can therefore be expected to rise steeply with this new market.

What can tenants do to fight this bill? The Labour Party has promised to repeal this bill but in Preston as elsewhere their only answer in the meanwhile is petitions, sending deputations to local Tory councillors, and advising the electorate to vote Labour. The Labour Party's record on housing shows that tenants cannot rely on the Labour Party for radical change. The tenants must organise themselves to fight the bill by a refusal to pay the increase.

In January the Socialist Woman Group in Preston began a series of open air meetings in Council Estates in Preston. After the response of the first few meetings other groups joined Socialist Woman to form the Tenants Action

Group proposing the same course of action. From these public meetings tenants estate committees were set up to spread information about the rent increases, discuss what sort of opposition would be most effective, and organise the estates against the bill. Most tenants considered that the only way to fight the bill was to refuse to pay the increase and have nothing to do with the test.

On Saturday March 25 there was a march of about 150 tenants through Preston. This was followed by a public meeting addressed by May Hobbs, of the London night cleaners and a militant tenant. A local tenant also spoke. After discussion a resolution was passed that tenants should withhold the rent increase and support a picket of the rent office. The Tories have already threatened eviction, but tenants have begun a rent strike this week, the first week of the rise. A rent strike is a difficult fight to maintain but the refusal to pay the increase by tenants all over the country, allied to industrial action if necessary, is the only way to defeat this bill and to defeat any further attempts at increasing council house rents.

—Cath Ryde
Preston I.M.G. and Socialist Woman Group.

MINERS CONFERENCE

The undersigned wish to protest at the running of the miners conference held in Barnsley on 26th March. This conference was supposed to discuss the programme put forward in the paper *The Collier*. However, in order for such a conference to be a success then every viewpoint which was in general agreement with the aims of the paper should have been represented. Either the conference should only have been open to members of the NUM or all political organisations should have been represented. However, no other organisations other than the International Socialists were informed of the conference or invited to attend, and representatives of other political viewpoints were in fact excluded from the conference. If all this is justified by a claim that this was an I.S. conference, we would ask why it was in this case that the membership of an editorial board of a paper supposed to be run by rank and file miners was changed at an I.S. conference. In the light of all this we protest at the exclusion of other viewpoints from that of I.S. from the conference, and the fact that other organisations were not invited and told it was taking place. The right wing, in order to cover up its own lack of democracy is always going on about 'manipulation' and 'control'. Socialists should therefore give them no examples, such as this conference, which play into their hands.

David Wilson, NUM Barnsley
Barry Thornton, NUM Barnsley and Editorial Board, *The Collier*
John Cotter, NUM Barnsley and Editorial Board, *The Collier*
Peter Thornton, NUM Barnsley
Jimmy Miller, branch secretary, NUM Kellingley, and Yorkshire C.P. District Committee
Malcolm Ball, NUM
Ian Taylor, NUM Seafield, Fife, and Editorial Board, *The Collier*
Terry Ellis, NUM Coventry
Dave Douglass, NUM Hatfield (Main Branch) and Editor, *The Mineworker*
J. Shipley, NUM Hatfield (Main Branch) and Convener, *The Mineworkers Internationale*

In *The Red Mole* of 30 March, 1972, the IMG declared that it completely supported the initiative taken by members of the International Socialists in writing up the rank and file miners paper *The Collier*. At the conference held in Barnsley on 26 March approximately 20 per cent of the NUM members present were either members or supporters of the IMG. However, the lack of workers democracy shown by the I.S. at this conference was such that it could seriously endanger the chances of establishing a worthwhile rank and file paper and movement. In particular:

1. If the conference was supposed to be a rank and file miners conference, then why was there no clear criterion laid down for admission? A satisfactory basis would have been either only members of the NUM admitted, or a stated, and strictly limited, number of observers without voting rights to have been admitted from all political organisations supporting the conference. However in fact I.S. National Committee members such as Chris Davidson and Tony Cliff were admitted while members of the IMG and others were excluded.

2. Why did the chairman refuse to accept, without ever putting it to the conference, any alternative programme to that put forward by the I.S.?

3. Why did the chairman refuse to accept a vote on a constitution for the paper?

4. Why were no other political groups than I.S. contacted about the conference?

5. Why although a preliminary meeting of miners in Barnsley had voted to have the subject of workers control on the agenda was it in fact removed by the I.S. from the agenda?

If, on the other hand, the I.S. attempt to evade these problems by declaring that the conference was an I.S. conference, then we demand to know by what right do they alter the editorial board of a paper which is supposed to be controlled by the rank and file of the NUM at an I.S. conference.

If the I.S. continues on this present course, then the chances of getting a real rank and file movement off the ground in the NUM, and in other industries, would be greatly damaged. There is nothing the right wing would like more than a few juicy scandals which they can use to talk hypocritically about 'lack of democracy'. The I.S. actions at the Barnsley conference completely play into the hands of the right wing, and we completely support the letter from members of the IMG, the Communist Party, the paper *The Mineworker*, and other rank and file members of the NUM which is printed above.

Liverpool dockers are standing firm in their determination to protect their jobs by preventing the extension of "stuffing" (filling) and "stripping" (emptying) of containers by anyone other than registered dockers. They are blocking the lorries of firms which pack containers at inland sites. In particular, they refuse to handle the lorries of three firms, Heaton's, Bishop Wharf and Craddock's. Heaton's went to the Industrial Relations Court and obtained an injunction to end the blocking. At a subsequent hearing of the court on March 29th a £5,000 fine was imposed on the TGWU for breaking the original court order. Sir John Donaldson, president of the five-man court, said the contempt was "aggravated" by the refusal of the union to attend the hearing. The court also decided that if the TGWU did not pay the fine it would issue writs of sequestration enabling it to take over the assets of the union.

The decision by the National Industrial Relations Court to impose the fine was matched by the decision of Liverpool's 5,000 dockers on April 10 to continue the blocking of the haulage firms. The dockers took their decisions against the advice and wishes of the local TGWU officials. *The Times* of April 11th reports Mr. Lew Lloyd, Liverpool district docks secretary of the TGWU as saying, "I advised against 'blocking' because of the law of the land".

The aim of the fine and the whole action was made very clear in court. Counsel for Heaton's Transport said: "The bone that the company has to pick is not with the union as a whole but with this particular action in the Liverpool docks". What is being attempted is to force the TGWU leadership to police its own militants.

In line with TUC policy, the TGWU has refused to recognise the National Industrial Relations Court. However, if it pays the fine or attempts to force the militants to lift the blocking it will be *de facto* recognising the validity of the Court.

It seems unlikely that the Government "arranged" this confrontation at this particular stage. Just now, in the aftermath of its defeat at the hands of the miners, its general tactic is to gain time. Its basic strategy in industry, of course, remains unaltered: it is endeavouring to emasculate the trade union movement in its

CRUNCH TIME FOR THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT?

as T.&G. defies Industrial Relations Court

drive to increase profit margins so that an investment boom can be underpinned. However, the miners' strike taught the Government that direct confrontation before the militancy of the workers had been tamed or eroded is very risky.

If it did want to make an example of a section of the union movement to compensate for its humiliation at the hands of the miners it is unlikely that it would have chosen the giant TGWU for the operation. However, such things do not always go according to plan. Even the machinery of the Industrial Relations Act has some small relative autonomy. The Government, regardless of its general tactic at this stage, may well have set into motion processes it cannot control.

If the bluff of the National Industrial Relations Court is called, the IRA will be virtually unviable. This would be a major defeat for the Government, a gigantic loss of face and tremendous blow to its credibility in the eyes of British big business. *The Economist* of April 1, put it like this: "If the Government itself does not take early action against a union under the new Industrial Relations Act, it is likely that union militants will be encouraged to flout the act pretty much from the start." Whitehall has intimated that it would like such cases "to be settled out of court", *The Economist* added.

An additional reason for the Government not wanting to have the court's bluff called is the effect on the so-called moderate union leaders. If it can be demonstrated that it is possible for the Court to be flouted then the last argument the "moderates" have for the necessity of registration and cooperation with the Industrial Relations Act machinery falls. The stakes on both sides are very high. If the Court climbs down, the Government's strategy suffers a

huge set-back. If the TGWU pay the fine (even if by some sophisticated formula) the trade union chiefs will be exposed as paper tigers, and it would be the thin edge of the wedge to a general acceptance of the Industrial Relations Act.

With the present mood of the working class any attempt to impose the fine by the seizure of the TGWU's property would set the scene for a really large-scale confrontation. It is not only the Government which is afraid of this outcome—the trade union bureaucrats have a dread of mass struggles which they cannot control. Thus a real challenge faces the whole trade union movement. Revolutionaries must argue that everything must be done to ensure that there is no climb down by the TGWU leadership, and in the event of the stakes escalating the whole movement must be used to force defeat on the Government and its Industrial Relations Act. It is especially important to ensure that there is no retreat on the policy of non-recognition of the court. The one-day strike called by the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions for May 1st will give a focus of activity for this policy.

However, much more than a defensive response is called for. What is at stake in this struggle is the right of workers to exert a veto. Far from retreating on this issue we must argue for the right of all workers to take whatever steps they consider necessary to stop redundancies, attacks on working conditions and increase wages. The rights which the Liverpool dockers are defending should be extended to the whole working class and developed to take in all aspects of the work situation.

—Pat Jordan

LANCASTER-MAKING THE UNIVERSITIES SAFE FOR BUSINESS

Authorities attempt 'final solution' to radicalism in Lancaster University

Charles Carter, Quaker Vice-Chancellor of Lancaster University, has explained that the University is to become the largest centre of post-graduate business studies in Britain. The University specialises in departments serving the needs of capitalism—'Financial Control', 'Operations Research', 'Behaviour in Organisations'—several of which have set up private companies with the encouragement of the University to capitalise on their 'skills'. Through Carter the University is intimately linked into the international business community, as a new Lancaster IMG pamphlet carefully documents (*Capitalism and the Integration of Higher Education—A Case Study*, available Red Books, 5 p).

However, the provision of a screen of liberal arts and social science departments to provide an academic image has brought with it its own problems. A considerable minority of staff and a large majority of students have become uneasy at the trend in the University, as well as generally sympathetic to working class struggles; and the University, following its autocratic-manipulative view of the world, has attributed this unease to a small nucleus of left wing staff and revolutionary students who, they think, pull the strings which bring the passive mass to life.

By eliminating the hard core, and intimidating the remainder, the administration hopes to be able to eliminate the pink taint, which embarrasses them in their search for ever closer integration into the business community. The appropriate bludgeon for this task has been found in the Professor of the English Department, a burly ex-colonial administrator in the Malayan war, well suited to dealing with academic terrorists.

The campaign began in the early summer with the demotion of a left wing English lecturer, David Craig, by his removal from courses he had designed. Craig, a very popular figure among students, fought back, gaining the support of many staff, but repeated protests

have failed to secure his reinstatement to his courses. At the same time the university administration forced through a disciplinary code providing them with almost unlimited powers.

Feeling that the first round had been won, and still concentrating on the English department, the administration then moved against three staff without tenure and gave them (genteely) the sack. This provoked a much more powerful student response in the shape of a massive boycott of lectures and seminars, which spread department by department before the end of the term until over 2,000 students were involved (out of nearly 3,000 at the University). Many departments organised alternative classes (e.g. Financial Control students organised seminars on 'Financial Control in a non-capitalist society'), and the idea of setting up a 'Free University' began to be discussed. This could have been a major weapon in the struggle against the administration, bringing students from all over Britain and even Europe to Lancaster during the vacation and providing the basis for a major defence in the summer term, but a combination of opposition from the student union bureaucracy (led by the C.P.) and confusion among its supporters, many of whom had utopian ideas about a Free University continuing indefinitely in an otherwise capitalist society, led to its defeat at a mass meeting. (On the credit side, the meeting unanimously voted solidarity with 450 strikers against victimisation at the Heysham nuclear power station site, and to link the struggles, a move to which the strike committee at the site responded in like manner.) This defeat, and the total weakness of the Association of University Teachers, which called on the students to end their boycott, gave further confidence to the administration. They next moved actually to dismiss Craig at a Senate meeting at which the Professoriat almost literally bayed for blood, intimating that the removal of up to 20 staff and 200 students might be acceptable in order to en-

sure 'peace' on the campus. The result was a 24-hour occupation by a very large number of students on the last day of term.

The struggle is by no means over, and further attempts at victimisation are almost certain next term. The atmosphere on campus is one of intimidation and fear. At the mass meeting calling the occupation, attended by over 1,000 students, there was hardly any discussion because of fears of victimisation of those who spoke. Lancaster is very much a test case. If the administration succeeds in taming this campus we may be sure that the same process will be repeated elsewhere. Support for David Craig and his colleagues in the English department thus involves something much more than the defence of four jobs. One of the forms by which the continuing crisis of British capitalism is expressed is by a more repressive atmosphere. The position of the left in the higher education system is under heavy attack, as a whole series of cases has shown. David Craig is a marxist, but also an academic with a scholarly reputation that puts him well within the traditional liberal image of the bourgeois university. The attempts to remove him indicate the degree to which the remoulding of the University to serve modern industry is destroying that image.

Lancaster IMG members

FOOTNOTE: Since this article was prepared, the university authorities have asked the Director of Public Prosecutions to prefer charges of "conspiracy to trespass" against nine randomly selected left wing students. An iron gate has been erected at the foot of the stairs to the Administration building and steel doors are being put on the computer building, where a glass viewing wall is being bricked in. The authorities are clearly preparing for what they regard as a 'final solution' to radicalism in Lancaster University.

MILITANCY GROWS AMONG BUILDERS

Since the previous article on the building industry in *The Red Mole*, 30, there has been a major change. The A.S.W. has completed its 'transformation' into the U.C.A.T.T. A new wages agreement has been reached, with a demand for £30 for a 35 hour week. The Building Workers' Charter, the rank-and-file initiative, is now nationally-hand in hand with the expanding T.U. recruitment. Birmingham's struggle has sparked a series of struggles in N. Wales, Chester, Wigan, Manchester, Stoke and other areas. A new law supposedly against lump labour has come into operation. All these points are discussed in this article.

The new act is designed to cut out a large tax fiddle. It has been estimated that out of a total labour force of about 1.3 million only 500,000 are on union books. Because the lump is a tax dodge it is difficult to find out exactly how many workers are involved, but the figures for unionisation give some clue. The worker in the union is more likely to be on an organised site and not on the lump. The terms of the act call for all sub-contractors to register and pay a registration fee to an accountant. All other site workers will have one third of their total earnings taken back for tax in the absence of any tax rating and social security card. To register as a sub-contractor it is necessary to be up to date on previous tax payments. It is unlikely that most lump workers could get up to date on tax payments by 5 April; therefore to avoid getting taxed of a third of their income most have taken up cards. In many cases the larger firms are telling workers to get union cards. But small firms will still rely on lump labour to make a profit, requiring workers to have registered individually as sub-contractors and perhaps paying their registration fee. All this boils down to a sharpening of the tendency towards a national levelling of conditions of labour, decreasing the uneven state of the industry.

THE CHANGING BUREAUCRACY

In the building industry—like other industries—rationalisation is a driving force. Besides labour being cut (new building techniques, etc.) a push for equality of conditions was on the agenda because of the much greater dominance of a few large firms (Laing, MacAlpine, Wimpey, etc.). Workers in Stoke could compare conditions, with the same boss, as those in Merseyside. The regional differences were being reduced; nevertheless the gulf between skilled and unskilled is encouraged by wage differentials and the old system of wages based on craft divisions. Faced with these new conditions, it appeared that limited local struggles were less important as the main sort of dispute in the industry. The importance of Birmingham (see *The Red Mole*, 30) lies in its city-wide fight, and joint site actions. This growing need for greater national representation was recognised in the trade unions at many levels. In a sense the bureaucracy had never been established in the A.S.W. in the same way as in other large unions, because the struggle in the building industry went along on the basis of local initiatives.

National needs brought the chance for the A.S.W. leadership to establish its own set of national policies for the building trades unions. Centralisation and the growing union membership has given the bureaucracy a base but is also changing its politics. National leadership, particularly in the A.S.W., were now involved in some sort of continual confrontation with the employers, because of the general political climate, and because they had to have (for the first time) a real set of national goals—broadly against the employers' interests.

The bureaucracy is shifting left. This shift is uneven, and some sections (e.g. local officials and the General Council) tend to go faster than others because they have a more immediate contact with the rising militancy and the growing membership. All these changes were represented in the old A.S.W. by two

things: firstly the change to becoming the U.C.A.T.T., and secondly the wage demand now being negotiated. (The previous national agreement was in 1965, and was recognised as virtually a complete sell-out.) The U.C.A.T.T. has the same internal structure as the old A.S.W. The top heavy officialdom remains, but its use as the means by which the bureaucratic policies of the leadership are 'given' to the enlarged membership, is lessening. It is cut off from the rank-and-file needs and wishes. With the new wave of militancy this layer is regarded unsympathetically by the workers. Taking their place are new men, organising around slogans for a more democratic union, who are speeding up the national shift to the left. Some of the regional officials in Birmingham are an example of this group. They are represented in the General Council of the U.C.A.T.T.—who are engaged in a fight with the Executive Committee bureaucrats over the new rules reducing the status of the Council. As yet this group's future is not completely clear, but it must be said that it is in the best position to make gains both from the new needs for national direction and its strong links with the rank-and-file.

THE CLAIM

As stated, the claim for £30 for a 35 hour week is part of the changing national scene. The employers' latest offer was rejected by the National Joint Council for the Building Industry on 8 February. This offer is for the basic craft rate for a 40 hour week to be increased by £1.40 from June 1972, and the labourers' rate by £1.20 (again an attempt to increase the differential). Holiday stamps to be increased in August 1972, so that holiday pay would increase. Sick pay to be increased in June 1972 from 50p to 75p for each day lost. This adds 3½ per cent to craft rates and 3 per cent to labourers' rates, while the rest of the package represents an offer of about 7½ per cent. This offer is therefore in line with the Government's (pre-miners) wages norm. The employers have made it clear that they want to force a new wage structure onto the industry, embodying grading and job evaluation to replace the present agreement that ends this June. The claim is important because (through the efforts of the union) there is a good chance that the labourers on unorganised as well as organised sites will receive a substantial increase in basic rates. Basic rates are low in the industry—and the worker only manages to exist on his bonus. This gives the employer tremendous power over him, as anyone who has tried to organise an overtime ban on a site will explain.

Employers are aware that upping the basic rates by a large amount will increase the combativity of large numbers of workers. We can expect a bitter struggle because of this. The claim is also a vehicle for the more militant officials and representatives; theirs is a key task. They must organise the new ground swell trade union membership around the claim, and will use it to seek national office in the U.C.A.T.T.

THE LUMP

The lump remains an important issue for U.C.A.T.T. and building worker militants. Des-



Building workers at a Bryants' site in Birmingham vote to march through the city in protest against the new Act.

pite the cut back of numbers on the lump, while any lump labour exists it can only serve to bring negotiated conditions down. It will not be easy for lump labour to scab any longer, but the Industrial Relations Act protects scabbing anyway. As long as the lump exists, trade unionists are not secure. The problem of the new "rash" of sub-contractors, discussed in the interview, is clear. The new Act gives official status to the old lump for these people. This group will probably increase the difficulties of organising on a national scale—acting as a legalised buffer for the employers. In the long term this issue could be the central one in any campaign to

democratise the unions in the building industry.

THE CHARTER

Trade union bureaucracy exists because the rank-and-file leadership are bureaucratic, not just the hierarchy at the top. The rank-and-file worker also has bureaucratic ideas about the function of his trade union, despite his potential to struggle against it. This idea is clearly illustrated in the day-to-day practice of most trade union militants. Specific to the building industry, the *Building Workers' Charter* nevertheless demonstrates this truth. The Charter is the product of the same conditions that have produced the left shift in the

ING WORKERS

ve been important developments. The title is taking place around the initial rank and file paper, is increasing its influence. A successful struggle against 'lump labour' has taken place in other places. Finally since 5 April, the Charter must be examined.



ments, like the Charter, show this very clearly—they struggle against the current leaderships, but at the same time inevitably provide an election platform for the left bureaucratic strata growing up in the regions. Men like Bert Smith on the Regional Executive of the U.C.A.T.T. have no difficulty in supporting the Charter. Rank-and-file militancy does not inevitably mean a conflict with union bureaucrats but, if handled correctly, can often be a product of their initiatives. This does not stop the Charter from having a larger potential than a mere election platform. It certainly represents the wishes of building worker militants, unites them and gives them a public face.

The Charter, then, represents two things, not by any means in conflict with one another. First, it is a genuine grass-roots movement for militancy, but secondly the only way it can express this militancy in the union is through support for a left bureaucracy. Its struggle for democracy within the union is real enough and it deserves full support from any building worker for this. However, the Charter cannot come to grips with the real reasons for bureaucracy, without challenging the gap between politics and day-to-day militancy. The nature, then, of the trade union bureaucracy in the building industry (and other industries) is such that they can live with, and indeed sincerely support and encourage trade-union militancy in certain circumstances.

FUTURE OF THE CHARTER

Broadly the tendencies outlined will continue. There remains, however, the problem of how revolutionaries must work within the building trade. The first point is that our work begins with and revolves around the *Building Workers' Charter*. Wherever we could we have set up "Charter Groups" around the demands in the paper. In such groups we are trying to develop a tendency representing the rank-and-file movement, but also moving away from total dependence solely on the demands of the Charter. In this way we can try to distinguish the movement from left office seekers. Practically, this means presenting demands of more than just greater militancy—demands which introduce the idea of the politics of trade union struggle. These centre around the platform of workers' control as a day-to-day issue. This means working within Charter for the addition of certain demands, for instance, raising the issue of the union's right to stop job loss. This would involve more than a campaign for five days work for five days pay, but also link up with the issue of decentralisation. By raising these points we can show that building workers bear no responsibility for how the bosses run their industry, and should accept none. The Charter conference of April 29th in Birmingham promises to be the biggest rank-and-file conference ever held in the building industry. And it will be the best opportunity yet to present the above ideas in an organised way.

—Paul Smith

Glossary:

A.S.W.: Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers.
U.C.A.T.T.: Union of Construction and Allied Technical Trades.

The following interview with two IMG militants in the building trade in Preston underlines the points brought out in the article, i.e., the growth in union membership and militancy, and the difficulties that the 'lump' poses to that growth.

—What is the present situation in the building trade here?

S. —Well, there were no organised sites till two years ago. The men are now organising. But there is no tradition here—no tradition of militancy like Merseyside. Preston is still largely unorganised—I'd say about half the sites are organised. By organised, I mean they have recognised shop stewards.

—What about 'lump' labour?

S. —There is 'lump' labour in the town. The site opposite us was 'lump'. We put pressure on, and the organiser called round. Now it's social security cards in. But they are still receiving their wages with no wage slips—the organiser is going to sort that out. 'Lump' is mainly with private developments and in the suburbs.

J. —Some of these sites are fairly large, about 200 to 300 houses.

S. With the 'finishing' of lump, I can see two things. First, everybody will now be sub-contractors. They will register as that.

J. —You can get cards to exempt you until 1976. I know blokes who have already done this by paying a fee to register.

S. —But the "labour only" merchants will carry on. They have no office or business, and don't supply materials—all they supply is labour. They will still get their cut. This is nothing but "glorified" lump. The men will face cards in, plus a tiered system of profits, as the labour only merchants will take their margin of profits as their 'wages'. Second, many of the men on lump will join the union. Many are behind in their tax and cannot register.

J. —I can see an increase in sub-contracting, like in brickworking and steel fixing. Then you are working side by side, but are paid by different employers. With the Industrial Relations Act outlawing sympathy strikes, this could mean trouble.

—What are the unions like in the town?

S. —They are in no way militant in this area. But there are signs that this is coming to an

end—at least on the larger sites. And especially as many have worked in Merseyside—they come back with some militancy in them. The two main labourers' unions are U.C.A.T.T. and T.G.W.U. The T. & G. have over 110 building workers but they are hedging on setting up a separate branch. They are putting off the militants all the time. The U.C.A.T.T. are no better. My branch—it's a labourers' branch—shows what the area is like. If you get ten men that pay their subs regular, you're lucky.

—How strong is Charter in the area?

S. —Preston Charter was set up in February. Nationally, Charter is usually organised on the bigger sites. Here we have two large sites, and men from both sites are in Charter. There is a good potential for Charter as there are new city developments coming up.

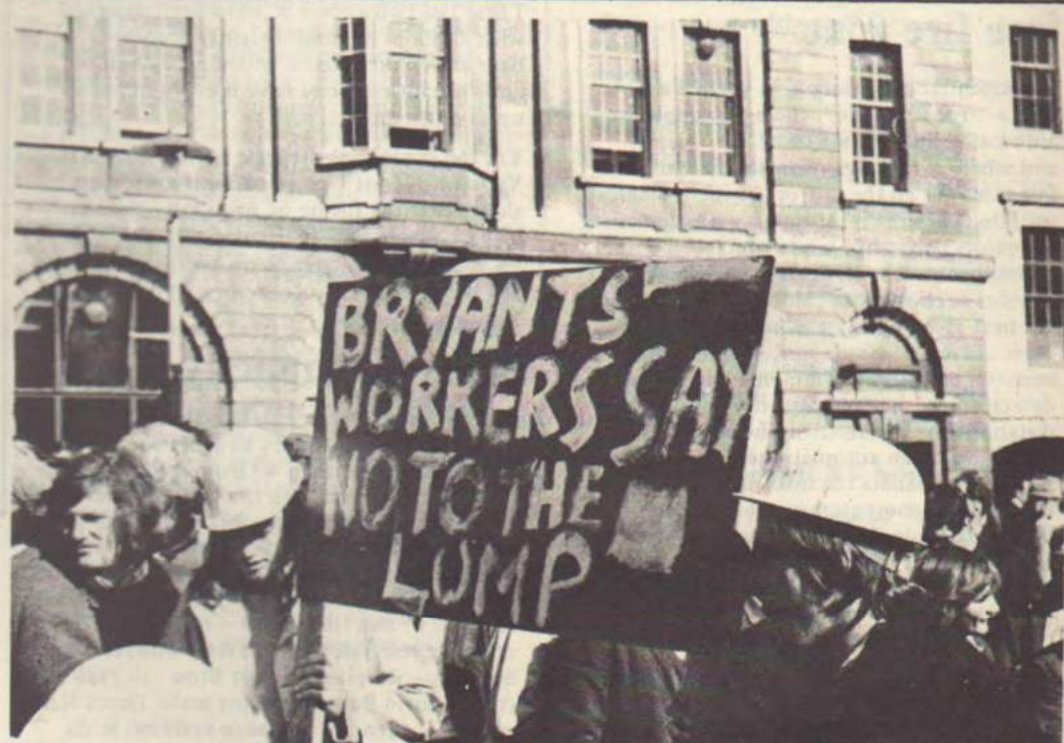
J. —So far, we've invited speakers up from Merseyside and Manchester. We sell 200 *Charters* an issue, and have got a local bulletin going. The two sites S. was talking about participated in the recent Manchester march and token strike. Both sites stopped for half a day and about 60 men went down to the march.

S. —The potential for Charter is good but it will be difficult. For example, most blokes are not even in the union when they come on the job. They are not even at the stage where they can see the failing of the union and be able to support Charter. They don't know what it's supposed to be doing.

—What do you think of U.C.A.T.T.'s pay demand?

S. —The official demand is £30 for 35 hours. The Charter's demand is £35 for 35 hours. It seems to me the union has picked on what the Charter is selling. The union is now showing some signs of militancy. For example, one regional councillor is now supporting Charter.

—Martin Doyle
Paul Smith
Steve Donnahay
John Riley



Part of the march against the 'lump' in Birmingham last year

BUILDING WORKERS' CHARTER

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Saturday 29 April, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Mayfair Suite, Smallbrook Ringway, Birmingham.

Delegates to be welcomed by Ken Barlow, Midlands regional secretary of U.C.A.T.T. All building workers welcome.

U.C.A.T.T. leadership, at a different level. The left felt the need for some sort of rank-and-file platform within the industry with its own conference, which has been linked from the outset with a series of successful struggles in Birmingham, London, Merseyside, Manchester and North Wales. The Charter has developed demands which are the platform of most militants in the industry. (These were described in the last article in *The Red Mole*, 30). Militancy in the rank-and-file, however, cannot halt the bureaucracy of a union by itself—and never will be able to, without changing the conditions in which unions have to operate. Rank-and-file trade union move-



Wounded soldier is carried away as South Vietnamese forces retreat.

VIETNAM Socialism or barbarism

The fierce battles now erupting in Vietnam could provide the final curtain in the charade of 'Vietnamisation'. Thieu's puppet regime is splitting apart at the seams under the hammering it is receiving, and remains held together only by the massive U.S. air support flying in from Laos, Guam, Thailand and the Seventh Fleet.

What happened with 'Vietnamisation' and the rapid reduction in the number of U.S. ground troops was simply that computers moved in as the troops moved out. Automatic warfare has taken over the battlefields, turning South East Asia into the largest 'test range' in the history of the world. A quarter of a million square miles where U.S. militarism experiments on millions of human guinea pigs.

In 1968 the U.S. forces began the wholesale destruction of the Vietnamese environment. Ten million bombs dropped on southern Vietnam, including the monster 'daisy cutter' (a bomb of record dimensions which destroys all life, human, animal and plant, in an area of 770 acres). Over 15 million gallons of defoliant, the U.S. Engineering Command with its giant bulldozers and tractors clearing forests at an infernal rate. The result of this destruction is not only to 'rob the NLF of cover', but also that the cleared areas are taken over by bamboo, the topsoil is lost, and the area rapidly degenerates into a dust-bowl.

free fire zone

The essential procedure is to declare a wide area a "free fire zone" where all people are automatically assumed to be the "enemy", and where every man, woman and child is fair game for all the horrors of technological warfare. The area is saturated with a network of sensors of various kinds which can detect relevant sounds such as the human voice, tremors such as those caused by footsteps, the heat given out by the human body, etc.; there is even a 'people sniffer' sensitive to minute quantities of ammonia which can detect human perspiration at a considerable distance. The signals from the sensors are picked up by an automatic pilotless plane which re-transmits the information to two IBM 360-65 computers in the Nakhom Phanom base in Thailand. The computer may explode mines on the ground or else activate a strike from an airbase where the plane is given the course automatically and the bombs released automatically. At present up to 600 airstrikes a day are being ordered.

new weapons

The new anti-personnel weapons developed over the past few years are diabolical in design. Those we know about include:

1. The spherical 'guava' bomb weighing slightly under one pound contains 300 balls. These are not effective against military installations but are deadly against people. The balls are ejected at high velocity and pierce the flesh, perforate the organs and badly mutilate the victims. It is often impossible to take all the pellets out of the body.

This bomb is not primarily designed to kill but rather to injure a large number of people so as to remove them from the processes of production and defence, as well as generally lowering the morale of the population.

2. Shrapnel Balls are shells fired by 155mm and 203mm cannon. When they explode these shells shoot out about 100 small balls, each ball bounces off the ground and explodes at a height of five feet, projecting hundreds of sharp fragments towards the neck, head and chest.

3. The dum-dum bullet, banned by the Hague Convention and never used against the fascist forces - "too inhuman" - reappears as a 20mm shell fired from aircraft, exploding after it strikes the victim.

4. The Dragon Tooth Mine, a very light device with a small but very powerful charge and a minute detonator, and a small plastic wing; it is carried by the wind like the seed of the sycamore tree.

5. The Gravel Mine is a small flat three inch square of brightly coloured cloth, which can be mistaken for a folded handkerchief or wound dressing, containing about 20 grammes of explosives. It also contains plastic pellets which fragment on explosion and may be the source of the plastic fragments reported by Vietnamese doctors which are virtually undetectable by X-rays.

6. The 'Smartie' bomb, a small brightly coloured ball which explodes when activated by the heat of the human hand.

These last two appear to have been designed with children in mind. Brightly coloured balls are unlikely to be collected by adults, and the cloth squares have been found sewn up as doll's dresses.

Yet the continuing struggle by the people of Vietnam against U.S. imperialist aggression shows that the future of mankind - socialism or barbarism - will be decided not primarily by technology or weaponry but by the will of the people and their tenacity and purpose in struggle.

british complicity

In addition to the British Government's diplomatic and quasi-military support for the U.S. in Vietnam more than 40 British firms have or have had contracts with the U.S. Defence Dept. Exact details are hard to obtain, and the research contracts with universities virtually impossible to determine, but the following firms are known:- Westland Aircraft - Sioux helicopters; British Hovercraft - river patrol aircraft; Bristol Siddeley - barbed wire; Hawker Siddeley - jet planes; Short Bros - Skyvan aircraft; Martin Baker - ejector seats; Decca Navigation - helicopter guidance systems; Rolls Royce and General Electric - engines and computer equipment.

**END BRITISH COMPLICITY!
WITHDRAW ALL U.S. FORCES FROM
S.E. ASIA - NOW!
SOLIDARITY WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY
STRUGGLE OF THE INDOCHINESE
MASSES!
VICTORY TO THE VIETNAMESE REVOLUTION!**

J. Peters

ARGENTINA

Increasing support for armed struggle in working class

Sallustro, enemy of the Argentinian people, is dead. The manager of the Argentinian subsidiary of FIAT was captured on 21 March by the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army), six months after he had brought in State police to occupy the factory, arrest trade union leaders and impose sufficient terror to sack over 250 men. The ERP hearing convicted him of this, of conniving in the assassination of 3 Peronist guerrillas, and of monopoly operations to the detriment of the Argentinian nation. This was not the first time the ERP had intervened decisively in FIAT since it was founded by the PRT¹ a short 18 months ago: last February Cordoba units occupied and disarmed the internal police post of the plant there to enable a factory meeting to be held.

Sallustro was now condemned to death, but his reprieve was offered if certain demands were fulfilled: the bourgeois press here has most emphasised the demands for the release of 50 ERP comrades, and for \$ 1 million from FIAT in the form of clothing and equipment for Argentinian schoolchildren, bearing revolutionary messages from the ERP. In addition, though, the ERP demanded the release of the imprisoned FIAT trade unionists, and the reinstatement of the total of some 500 men sacked in recent months. In their communiques, widely published in the press, the ERP denounced the repression by the military regime, the severity of the emergency courts, and the holding and torturing of hundreds of political prisoners. Sallustro was shot only when the intransigence of the Lanusse regime prevented concession of the demands.

The significance of the action is the greater because it comes at a time when the reformist leadership of the working class is exposing its bankruptcy to more and more workers, so that there is increasing support in the organised working class itself for uncompromising forms of struggle for socialism and national liberation. The Lanusse military regime is faced by an acute aggravation of the economic crisis - in recent months there has been 50 per cent inflation, and unemployment is soaring. This increases Lanusse's difficulties in engineering the facade of 'democratic' elections planned for March next year. Already the CGT, the main trade union federation, has been forced to call one 48-hour general strike against the regime (29 February-1 March). Even such action, the bureaucracy's forced response to the spontaneous movement of the working class, has brought it into conflict with the Peronist leadership. Shortly afterwards Peron himself wrote from Madrid to the CGT, urging it to suspend demonstrations against the military government for now. The 2-day strike he said, had been inopportune: "The time is not ripe for actions which could lead to violence and risk endangering our main objectives". Peron is, of course, manoeuvring for a 'peaceful' return to power (for his appointed successors if not for himself) through the 1973 elections. To do this he of course has to accept the military's terms for the elections. In February he hastily retracted an attack he had made on the army in an article, for which it was suing him. His attempts to cool down the militancy of his popular support are part of the same process: but in fact for the first time since he went into exile they are beginning to alienate important sections of his support. The Peronism of the Argentinian Trade Union movement stems from the period of the late '40s and early '50s when the Peronist regime and the Argentinian industrialists

relied on mass support against the landowners and British imperialism, and the working class was able to make very substantial economic and organisational gains. In the present crisis of imperialism and of the Argentinian economy such a situation is unrepeatable. This is becoming apparent to the left wing elements of Peronism as they see Peron manoeuvring for power.

If Peron has some problems with the CGT bureaucracy, the militants at the base and the Peronist guerrilla forces are much further outside his grasp - many of the latter have now dropped the slogan 'Peron will be back'. Despite some initial confusion when elections were first announced, the Peronist armed forces (Montaneros and other groupings) have reformed for joint action, and accepted a line similar to that of the ERP and PRT: if there is a possibility of 'democratic' elections and the mood in the mass of the working class makes it possible to use this, there will be intervention by the forces which stand for the armed struggle for national liberation; if not, there will be active boycott.

As struggles arise which the regime is forced to suppress, the latter eventually becomes increasingly likely: and as Peron engages more closely in negotiations with the regime (though a last minute retreat should not be ruled out), the logic of workers' struggles is to break with the illusions of Peronism. The conjunction of events of the past few weeks demonstrates the importance of the intervention of the revolutionary armed forces in this process. Because of the nature of the ERP demands in the Sallustro case, and their denunciation of the repression which the trade unions and reformist parties had been unable to challenge by purely verbal protest, it was difficult even for the bureaucracy of the labour movement to denounce the kidnapping.

Very shortly after the expiry of the Sallustro ultimatum, in Easter week, the events of Mendoza demonstrated once again the need of the mass movement for armed defence. Police fired on a workers' demonstration in Mendoza against rising electricity prices, and two died. The events also demonstrate the widening gap between the spontaneous activity of the working class and the reformist leadership. The response to the shootings by the working class was an immediate political strike against police repression, with sympathetic actions starting up in the rest of the country. When the CGT gave official backing to the strike and the funeral demonstrations, the Lanusse regime immediately froze all trade union funds. The response of the CGT, after anxious all-night consultations, was to back down and reverse their decisions.

The present situation, then, offers the possibility of a great advance in the armed struggle in the working class and the Argentinian masses, and in the building of a revolutionary army. The process is the more urgent as the situation in Chile draws nearer to confrontation: a confrontation in which the counter-revolutionary regimes of Brazil, Bolivia and Argentina would undoubtedly be all too ready to intervene. A leadership of the armed struggle in Argentina with a base in the working class and the masses, and an international consciousness, will have an important role to play in the next stage of the continental war.

- J.W.

1. Revolutionary Workers Party, Argentinian Section of the Fourth International.

Part of the base of Gio-Lingh, captured by the liberation forces.



Despite the fact that Justice Scarman's Report was signed on 4th February 1972, two months later it is above all appropriate to the present conjuncture of British imperialism's strategy in Ireland. Its subject is the history of the civil disturbances in the north of Ireland in 1969 which exploded in Derry in August and resulted in the large scale deployment of the British army to keep "law and order" on the streets. In accordance with ruling class historiographical tradition it is essentially pragmatic and ideological. 'The facts' appear sacrosanct, but are garnished according to the needs of the moment. This is evident from its main lines of argument and conclusions. It is designed to please everyone and blame no-one who is part of the present attempt to inch towards the political settlement that Heath hopes will emerge eventually from the recent 'initiatives'. Thus the middle class Catholic leaders are exonerated—the SDLP completely, while the Civil Rights movement gets off with a reprimand—from any serious responsibility for the violence. Naturally enough, 'extremists' and socialists like Bernadette Devlin have little to commend them to Scarman as they are clearly outside the consensus that the Hon. Justice wishes to encourage.

The role of the police is at once obscured by the verbosity of the narrative, and by euphemistic descriptions of extremely concrete events. The murderous rampages of the police and 'UVF' style mobs—an "unhappy affair"—are regarded as incidental, the "excess" of an individual or an "error" of judgement. One such "error" of the RUC officers during August '69 was that in nearly every case of indiscriminate shooting by the Ulster Special Constabulary they had directly contravened official police orders that the B's were not to carry fire arms on riot control duty.

When you add up all these apparently isolated cases of flouting orders and breaches of discipline by the police, their generality rather than their episodic nature becomes apparent. The relationship between the police and the Protestant mobs is similarly dealt with. It is boldly asserted at the beginning of the report that "... the general case of a paramilitary force cooperating with Protestant mobs to attack Catholic people is devoid of substance, and we reject it utterly". But as one reads the report of each town and incident once again, in nearly every case of major disturbance the report reveals the Protestant gangs behind the RUC/USC in the streets.

This is not the case only in Derry and Belfast where it was already well established that the Protestant mobs combined with the police in crowd assaults as well as baton charges, petrol bombings, burnings etc. The picture is similar in the small towns. The example of Dungannon will suffice. In dealing with the relationship between the police and the Protestant mob there it quotes the evidence of County Inspector Landale faced with a "Protestant crowd in ugly mood": "With great luck I got them turned and got them to follow me into the Square. I shouted 'Back to the Square quick' and I ran towards them and to my amazement they turned and they followed me". The Protestant mob had good reason to think that the Inspector would not lead them astray, because earlier, as the report is forced to show, the USC had opened fire on an unarmed crowd of Catholics injuring three of them. Landale's testimony demonstrates very well the relationship that existed between the police and Protestant mobs. Scarman, instead of referring to this evidence points to examples of police refusing to unite with the Protestant mobs and even restraining them from attacking Catholics.

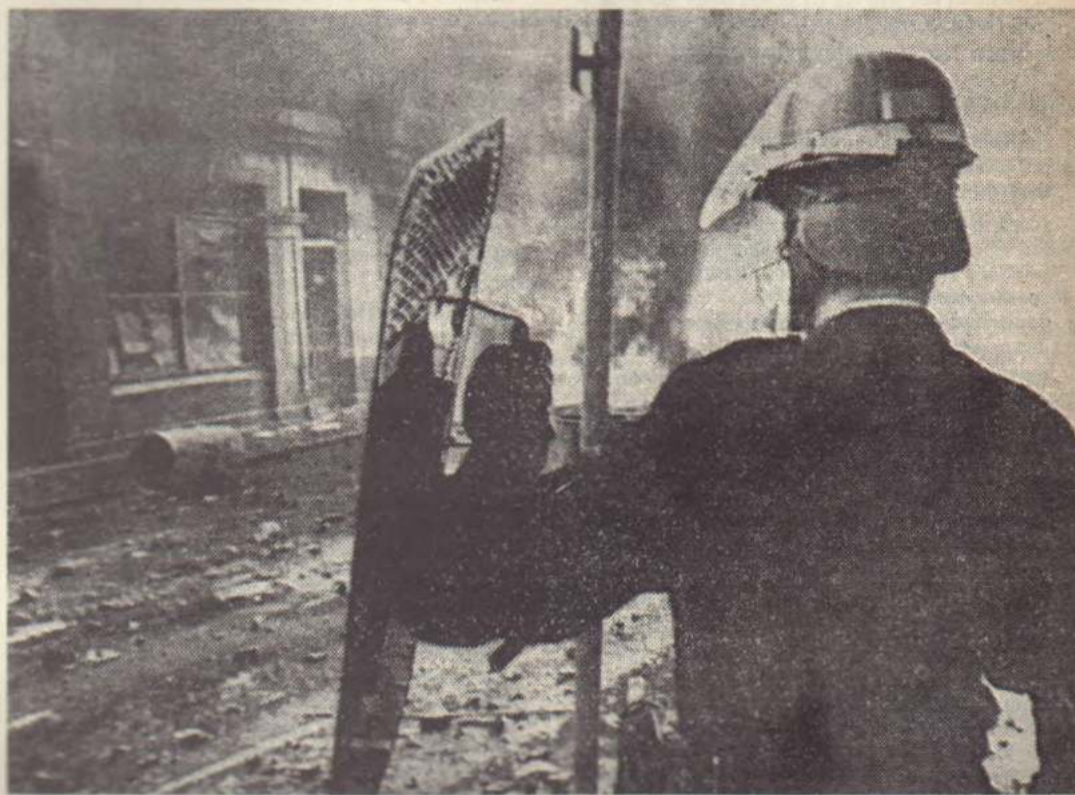
The point however is not that the police always urged the mobs on or only sometimes, or the majority of the time—although it is certain that restraint by the police against the Protestants was the exception rather than the rule. The central explanation lies in a realm which Scarman does not touch on at all—the common position of the police and the Protestant mob. This was not only a common hatred for the Catholics as such, but a position of defence of the statelet of Northern Ireland itself, and the various social and political privileges this endowed on the Protestants. Thus the bulk of Scarman is devoted to obscuring this political reality under a mountain of detail about what is largely 'keeping up appearances' by the RUC establishment. The study of the 1969 events is made in a complete social and political vacuum. Rarely are the fundamental differences in aspiration of the religiously divided people raised and never as a contextual basis for understanding events. Absolutely no light is shed on the social grievances that lie behind the Catholic resistance to the armed bodies of the Orange statelet.

The Scarman report on 'Violence and Civil Disturbance in Northern Ireland in 1969' has just been published. Its consensus-type approach ties in very well with the present 'initiatives'.

SCARMAN TRIBUNAL REPORTS

However, none of these things make the report politically significant, and it has rightly been given little notice in the bourgeois press. It merely confirms accepted government and middle class opinion rather than suggests any initiative. However, one lesson that emerges from the report is worth repeating, mainly because it is a lesson for some of the left, who during those days in the middle of August 1969 abandoned fundamental anti-imperialist positions and joined in the chorus of approval for the intervention of the imperialist army. It is clear from the report that troops were deliberately kept out of the streets until after the USC had been let off the leash for a time. The troops were thus to appear as the saviours of the Catholics from a massive pogrom. This was the deliberate policy of the Wilson government, to make the troops more credible as a 'peace keeping' force. Thus, far from being responsible for stopping the threatening build up of armed attacks on the Catholics it was the British government itself and Wilson in particular that must largely bear the responsibility for unleashing these forces.

—Ben Joseph



An RUC man, with helmet and shield, watches a fire at the Bogside barricades in 1969

APPEAL FROM LONG KESH

Comrada, bhur chairde,

We, the Martin O'Leary Republican Club, Cage 3, Long Kesh Concentration Camp, wish to appeal to our fellow-socialists through the column of your paper.

Our appeal is for socialist literature of any shape or sort, books, pamphlets or periodicals or even records of working-class songs and music.

We are determined to educate ourselves in Socialism, despite the efforts of the Camp-apparat to prevent us, indeed, to prevent us, it seems from learning anything other than to loathe this gray monstrosity.

Despite Mr Heath's neatly packed 'initiatives' (?) we feel that anyone with even a lukewarm attitude to socialism need not be in any great hurry to pack their bags.

You will realise that at this time many people, specially in the ghettos, will be inclined to drop their guard. Stormont has disappeared, but, of course, all the other evils will remain.

The establishment is depending on this euphoria to put the lower orders in their places again, and socialist counter-propaganda is urgently necessary, to expose the realities of this situation.

Aonthaighthe,

Sean Mag Shamhrain L. K. 250,
Hut 22,
Cage 3,
Long Kesh Concentration Camp.

P.S. Please ask your readers to send their gifts to us through the Central Citizens Defence Committee at 39, Falls Road, Belfast 12.

MANCHESTER ISC

Dear Comrades,

I am writing on behalf of the Manchester Branch of the International Marxist Group to dissociate us from the letter purporting to deal with Manchester I.S.C., and particularly the role of I.S., that appeared in *The Red Mole* of 13 March 72 (No. 38).

Now our opinion is that the role of I.S., in relation to solidarity activity in Manchester with the Irish national liberation struggle, has been extremely bad. But its faults are not those ascribed to it by your correspondent. For example, it is not true that I.S. as an organisation ever took part in I.S.C. It is not true that any agreement with them was reached to use both 'Victory to the IRA' and 'For a 32-County Workers Republic'. For our part, we consider the latter slogan to be a cop-out from the present concrete tasks facing revolutionaries in Britain, and we would not have accepted such an 'agreement'. We do, of course, abide by a rote according to which Manchester I.S.C. has adopted the slogan 'For a Workers Republic'. But that slogan was proposed by Workers Fight, and we both spoke and voted against its adoption.

Your correspondent is also wrong to claim that the 'Socialist Women's Action Group' had affiliated. There is no such organisation. The Women's Action Group held a meeting with an I.S.C. speaker shortly after the Derry killings. There is no such organisation as the 'Gay Action Group', and contrary to your correspondent's suggestion neither the Gay Liberation Front nor the College of Commerce Students Union had affiliated. The Socialist Society at the latter institution has done so.

Thus there would have been no need for the national organisation of I.S. to worry about one of its branches using the 'Victory to the IRA' slogan. Nor did I.S. leave I.S.C. after an A.I.L. was set up: their real crime was that (during the week after Derry) they decided to set up an A.I.L. with Clann and Sinn Fein, and not to support I.S.C. This decision was taken at an open I.S. meeting (in the case of the Manchester branch of I.S.), against strong opposition from individual members of I.S. Characteristically, I.S. did not see fit to enforce the line of conduct which it had decided on, but chose to let those of its members who wished to continue to work in I.S.C. From the above account it can be seen that the letter you published previously was almost totally inaccurate. Such errors in fact, make it more difficult to explain to I.S. members what is, in practice, really wrong with the activity of their organisation.

Fraternally,

G. Elliot
p.p. Manchester IMG.

We have received a letter from Gerry Doherty of Clann na hEireann, about the article 'IS Hypocrisy in Glasgow' in *The Red Mole* 38. Due to lack of space we have had to hold over this letter to our next issue, where it will be published together with a reply by Bob Purdie.

—Editor

the PLOUGH

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IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Public Meeting

Speakers: Bob Purdie on 'The Aims of I.S.C.'
Gerry Lawless on 'The Current Situation'.

Thursday 20 April, 7.30 p.m. at the Irish Centre, Murray Street, off Camden Road (nearest tube Camden Town).

BUILDING THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IN BRITAIN

The following article is part of the Tasks and Perspectives document submitted by the Tendency, a minority of the International Marxist Group, for discussion at the May, 1972 National Conference of the IMG. The Tendency rejects the general line of the main document submitted by the National Committee of the IMG to the conference, a compressed version of which appeared as the four page special supplement of the 30 March, 1972 issue of *The Red Mole*. The amount of space allocated to the Tendency only permits the presentation in a condensed form of the main tasks which the IMG would undertake if the Tendency became the leadership of the IMG. The sections of the document giving an entire analysis of the current situation in Britain and the generalisation of the method used in the analysis and the formulation of the tasks have had to be omitted from the article.

We hope readers will discuss this article and comment on it. All those in general agreement with the ideas expressed are invited to write to the IMG for details of the IMG conference. Visitors to the conference will be able to obtain the complete documentation.

THE TASKS OF THE IMG

Our central responsibility in the coming period is the development of a mass campaign in defence of the right of the Irish people to self-determination.

Given the objective openings and the size of our forces, major efforts must be made in our student work and in the development of a mass action abortion-contraception campaign as the central focus of our work in the women's liberation movement.

We have few forces in the labour movement but the receptivity to our ideas is increasing and the opportunity to attract a small but important number of militants to us is the greatest it has ever been in the history of the IMG. We should take advantage of every opening we have in the labour movement to put forward our fundamental political programme around which a class struggle left wing will be built.

We must restructure a framework to carry out mobilisations in defence of the Vietnamese revolution.

VIETNAM SOLIDARITY

It is as important now as ever for Trotskyists to shoulder their responsibilities in defence of the Vietnamese revolution. The capacity to defend the Vietnamese revolution remains a revealing test for all those who consider themselves internationalists and revolutionaries.

The most effective strategy for mobilising broad support in defence of the Vietnamese revolution is through the building of a non-exclusionary united front solidarity action campaign around the central demands of immediate withdrawal of American troops and material, and an end to British complicity. This is based on our fundamental principle of unconditional support to the right of the Vietnamese people to self-determination. The initiative taken in Glasgow by the April 22 Indo-China Committee to organise an action on April 22 in response to the international call of the American anti-war movement should be emulated. It is an indication of what could be done in major cities throughout the country if the solidarity appeal of the Fourth International was responded to with initiative on our part.

FOR A MASS SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN ON IRELAND

The building of a mass campaign in solidarity with the Irish struggle for self-determination is the key task before us. It should be the central axis of our work in the coming period. Such a campaign must be on-going, have a mass-action perspective and make concrete demands on the British government. The principled basis of all our activity, as revolutionaries within the imperialist oppressor, is unconditional support of the right of self-determination of the Irish people. It involves building a united front type mass action oriented coalition of all organisations and individuals prepared to work for the following demands: (1) Withdraw British Troops Now; (2) End Internment; (3) Release all Political Prisoners. The key demand is Withdraw British Troops Now.

The objective situation makes it possible for a mass campaign to be built with sufficient power to force the government to withdraw its troops from Ireland. This would mean a gigantic step forward for the Irish people in their struggle for self-determination and change the balance of forces in the class struggle in Britain. Trotskyists should therefore be active in the Anti-Internment League, helping to build it and giving leadership to the efforts to turn it into a powerful united front type organisation fighting for and able to win the above three demands. Our goal is an action coalition based on non-exclusion, oriented toward mass mobilisation, imposing no restrictions on the banners carried by participants in the actions.

We must make every effort to convince the united front coalition of its responsibility to propagandise and agitate amongst the British troops on the fight of the Irish people to self-determination and draw them toward the mass movement of solidarity. We must also do this work in our own name. This is the application of a revolutionary socialist policy towards the British troops being used in Ireland.

Failure to do these things will mean that the campaign in solidarity with the Irish struggle will be diverted into the dead ends of reformism or ultra-leftism. We should propose this perspective to the members of the Irish Solidarity Campaign and move the dissolution of this group. We should present our full analysis of the Irish revolution under our own name in our own paper.

This is a necessary principled component of our responsibility to the Irish revolutionaries and the British working class.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

The permanent threat of large scale unemployment and rampant inflation are symptoms of decaying capitalism. Productivity deals, factory mergers and closures, laws restricting the independence of the trade unions, and incomes policies are all weapons of the ruling class that the workers confront more and more.

The ruling class has decided that a confrontation with labour is an economic and political necessity. Massive defensive struggles will have to be waged by the labour and trade union movement to win decent living and working conditions and the right to a job. The demand for a *sliding scale of hours*—for the work week to be reduced in proportion to the work available with no reduction in pay—along with the slogan for an extensive and bold public works programme, is fundamental in the fight for jobs for all with the continual threat of increasing unemployment.

With the increasing cost of living, the trade unions must demand collective agreements which guarantee automatic wage increases—a *sliding scale of wages*—geared to the real rise in the cost of living. This is the key demand in the fight for protection of income under the permanent inflation of capitalism and is always advanced as a complement to, not a substitute for, demands for periodic increases of wages with no strings attached. The popularisation and sensitive application of the transitional demand for a sliding scale of hours and wages must be at the centre of our propaganda and agitation in the labour movement. No ceiling on wage increases. Capitalism, not the workers, causes inflation.

When the capitalists argue that the economic situation cannot justify wage increases and better working conditions, the workers must demand an *end to business secrets* and that *the books be opened*, thereby posing the question of who actually controls and owns industry. The workers or the bosses? In the face of factory closures, we must aim to win the labour and trade union movement to demand *nationalisation under workers control*. To defeat the industrial relations act and the strategy—which the ruling class must try to implement in this epoch—of integrating the trade unions into the state apparatus, we must take up and fight for the slogans: *Hands Off the Trade Unions, Repeal the Industrial Relations Act, For the Independence of the Trade Unions*.

It is in the process of directly fighting the ruling class for demands such as these that workers will come into conflict with bureaucratic misleaders and build a new and revolutionary leadership in the labour movement. Thus, the fight for *rank and file democracy* is inseparable from the fight for a class struggle line.

We must explain the need for the trade unions to support the progressive struggles which are taking place as part of the deepening radicalisation and are helping set the example of independent mass extra-parliamentary action against all forms of capitalist oppression—full support to the campaign to get the British troops out of Ireland, to the student struggles, to the action of the women's and Black liberation movements, against British complicity in the imperialist war in Vietnam.

Our teachers caucus is almost as large as all our other union caucuses combined. Our teacher comrades should utilise the trade union avenues open to them to popularise and promote our fundamental transitional programme for the creation of a class struggle left wing in the unions. This can be a valuable testing ground for the concretisation of our slogans and a transmission belt to other industries where we as yet have no significant forces.

At this stage in the development of the class struggle and given our relatively small number of cadres, we should not see the Claimants Unions as major work areas or take responsibility for organising them. Where there are unemployed comrades in areas where viable CU's exist, and it doesn't cut across our priority campaigns, we may decide to participate in them. If we do so, our main responsibility is to fight for the CU's to become affiliated to the organised trade union movement, and for unemployed workers to remain or become union members with full rights. We must raise the key transitional demands, especially the sliding scale of hours and wages and a massive public works programme. We must fight to orient the CU's toward independent mass actions to win these demands and force the trade union movement to use its power to organise the unemployed.

These are the next steps in our battle to propagandise on and agitate for a class struggle left wing in the trade unions, the first step towards their transformation into revolutionary instruments of struggle by and for the working masses.

LABOUR PARTY

Without a clear understanding of the dynamics of the relationships between the trade unions, the working class and the Labour Party, a Leninist orientation able to win the leadership of the proletariat, is impossible. We must clearly understand that the loyalty of the working class to the Labour Party represents both the strengths and gains as well as the limitations of the working class movement. The loyalty of the working class to the Labour Party represents a gain in working class consciousness, a recognition of the necessity of the workers having their own party independent of the capitalist parties. Working class loyalty to the Labour Party indicates that the workers understand that their problems cannot be solved solely at the factory or local level. At the same time loyalty to the Labour Party is an indication that the working class has not come to the realisation that policies of class collaboration cannot answer their pressing problems. The working class will only break with policies of class collaboration and their class-collaborationist leaderships in the process of struggle for the realisation of demands which the capitalist class and its state—regardless of government—will not grant.

In the next general election, when the electoral choice before the workers is that of Tories or Labour, we must be unconditionally for the defeat of the Tories and for the return of Labour. The three major ways in which we intervene should be:

1) To say unequivocally that we are for returning Labour to power and at the same time put forward our series of class struggle demands which will offer the workers a programme of struggle—not class collaboration and dependence on parliamentary reformism.

2) To struggle against the Labour Party bureaucracy we call:

(a) for the Labour government to carry out Labour Party conference decisions.

(b) for the recall of any MP who fails to carry out these policies.

(c) for an end to all bans and proscriptions—freedom for organised political groupings.

3) To look for openings to enable us to enter the electoral arena. We should put our own candidates forward in selective safe Tory constituencies that will get our ideas and organisation maximum publicity (e.g. Tariq Ali against Enoch Powell). The purpose would be to make use of the opportunities thus afforded us to put forward our ideas and popularise our transitional programme to thousands and possibly millions of workers.

It is impossible to transform the Labour Party into a revolutionary instrument. The policy outlined above is part of the strategy necessary to win the allegiance of the workers in order to construct a mass Leninist party. It is a key component of the Leninist strategy of party building.

The problem of the Labour Party has confounded the British communist movement since its formation. Despite the fact that Lenin explained this problem half a century ago, the British Trotskyist movement has never surmounted the twin errors of ultra-left abstention on one side and opportunist adaptation to Labour reformism on the other. While there are, at this time, no general openings for meaningful revolutionary work in constituency Labour Parties, it should be the norm for comrades working in industry to be a delegate from his or her Trade Union branch to the appropriate constituency Labour Party.

STUDENT MOVEMENT

The key conjunctural task before the radicalised students is to continue and extend the fight against the Tory attack on the autonomy of the student unions. At the same time the sympathy of the students for the miners strike, and to the Irish struggle, shows that we must be alert to link up any major eruption in the class struggle with the student movement. The National Union of Students has become the main arena for the discussion of contending ideas and political programmes for advancing student struggles and relating them to struggles in other sectors of society. We should organise a class struggle wing of the NUS, projecting a programme to mobilise the students in independent mass actions to win their demands, and organising to draw support from and extend support to other sectors of the population also engaged in struggle.

To take full advantage of the opportunities created by the new upsurge in student struggle which has brought many new forces into action during the last year, a Trotskyist youth organisation must be built. Its main task would be to put forward demands and develop campaigns which would deepen and broaden the youth radicalisation. Its main concentration in the next period would be on the students. Such an organisation would be in political solidarity with the Fourth International and its British section while being organisationally independent. It would be actively involved in struggles around specific student issues and seek to link these struggles with broader social questions through the strategy of the Red University—i.e., to turn the universities into ideological and organisational centres for anti-capitalist struggles.

A Trotskyist youth organisation would be in the forefront of building a mass campaign in solidarity with the Irish struggle for self-determination. It would mobilise women's liberation activists to help

build a massive abortion action campaign. It would help to build and lead campaigns around anti-imperialist struggles such as Vietnam and Rhodesia, and on issues relating to Black liberation. Such a youth organisation would provide radicalising youth with a basic Marxist education. It would discuss the problems confronting youth and work out what to do about them. In this way youth will be educated in our political ideas and organisational concepts, and trained to intervene in and give leadership in all class struggle campaigns. In this way many new young cadres essential to the building of the revolutionary party, will be recruited to the section.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

The initial components of a programme for women's liberation have emerged around several key demands including:

- 1) Free, safe abortion on demand without forced sterilisation;
- 2) Free, safe contraception for every woman;
- 3) 24-hour child care facilities;
- 4) Equal pay for equal work;
- 5) Equal job and educational opportunities.

Trotskyists are duty bound to support all struggles of the oppressed for their liberation. This means that we give support for the demands of the Women's Liberation movement, are active in it, give it revolutionary leadership and help to develop a programme of democratic demands and transitional demands which will bring millions of women into struggle for their liberation. The struggle for women's liberation has a revolutionary dynamic because of the nature of women's oppression and the potential for mobilising masses of women in struggle against the ruling class and its government. The Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign (WACC) has the greatest possibilities for mobilising women in the coming period, and we should see the WACC as the key campaign of the women's liberation movement and actively involve ourselves in it.

This does not mean we would work exclusively in this campaign. We would actively support particular struggles or actions which women organise to fight their exploitation and oppression.

We consider Socialist Woman Groups to be sectarian and would propose that the SWGs orientate towards participating in and helping to build a mass action orientated WACC. Our perspectives would be to merge the SWGs into this campaign. Women members of the IMG would work in the women's liberation movement as a Trotskyist fraction, putting forward a Marxist analysis of women's oppression, and trying to win the best women activists to the British section of the Fourth International. We would publish our full analysis on women's liberation under our own name in our weekly paper.

BLACK LIBERATION

The IMG must solidarise itself with the anti-racist and Black nationalist struggles taking place. Through our paper, meetings, etc., we must explain the oppression of Blacks as Blacks, the character of their struggle as an independent form of the class struggle, the explosive character this gives to their struggles as workers, and the vanguard roles their struggles play in the fight against reaction.

An important educational task we have is to make available to as many black militants as possible the Marxist analysis of Black nationalism, made by the Socialist Workers Party. The writings of Leon Trotsky, George Breitman and Malcolm X especially would help fill an important vacuum in understanding that exists on the British left. They would help lay the groundwork for the basic analysis we must make of the complicated racial-national class struggles of the immigrant and British born Black population.

We must defend the right of the oppressed Blacks to organise along whatever lines they think necessary just as we must give full support to their struggles, for emancipation and liberation, however limited these struggles might be. Where possible we must involve ourselves in and help build defence organisations for victimised Blacks (for example, Davis, Soledad, the Mangrove trial) and find out more about the existing defence committees and militant organisations of the Black community.

In addition we must intervene in the campaigns against the racist government of Rhodesia and South Africa and the complicity of the British ruling class in maintaining them. In the process we will learn from the experiences of the nationalist struggles and win valuable Black militants to Trotskyism.

WEEKLY PAPER AND INTER-CONTINENTAL PRESS

A weekly paper, the essential political organiser of any serious marxist organisation is now possible given our resources and size. It must explain and promote the political line and organisational tasks as outlined in this resolution and the fundamental Tendency documents.

At the same time we must write for and increase the circulation of Intercontinental Press—the English language weekly journal which reflects the viewpoint of the Fourth International.

This will mean the views of the Fourth International will be more widely known and help our membership and periphery to gain a better understanding of world politics, thereby cutting across the insular concepts prevalent in the British left.

REVIEWS

Marx and Keynes—The Limits of the Mixed Economy by Paul Mattick (Merlin Press £2.50).

A serious Marxist study of the limitations of Keynesian economics is an essential tool for combatting the ideology of social democracy—especially today when capitalism everywhere faces mounting difficulties. For that reason alone Mattick's book performs a useful function despite its serious shortcomings on the question of state capitalism. Leaving aside for the moment our objections to his state capitalist position, the book's main value lies in the central role it attaches to capital accumulation. Though Mattick discusses other topics such as price movements, wages, money supply, inflation, balance of payments, etc., he never loses sight of the fact that they are dominated by changes in the rate of capital formation. These phenomena are regarded as reflections and accommodations of the tensions produced in the economy by the expansion or contraction of the means of production.

CAPITAL ACCUMULATION

Competition—the mode of motion of capitalist production—demands accumulation. Accumulation can only be the accumulation of capital goods for what is consumed cannot be accumulated—it is gone. But because the organic composition of capital is rising, profits can only be maintained by an accelerated capital formation. This is the grand tragedy of capitalist production. Thus, capital expansion, not the supply and demand for consumption production, becomes the major determinant of the size and nature of the economy. Progress is measured by 'growth', by increasing the productivity of labour, etc. and not by free time. Indeed, increased leisure for the working class is viewed with alarm by capitalism for it breeds social 'indiscipline'.

Mattick highlights the problems confronting highly capitalised countries seeking to accumulate. The U.S. for example entered the post war period with its productive capacity intact and in excess of market demand. Unlike the other capitalist countries whose capital formations had been largely destroyed by the war, the U.S. was unable to undertake rapid capital formation. But Government intervention in the economy did not break this relative stagnation of capital formation. Despite massive armaments expenditure, which equals in value total net capital formation in all U.S. industry since World War Two, the problem worsened. In despair a symposium of twenty prominent American economists dismissed the Keynesian categories as inadequate and called for a 'meta-Keynesian' approach to discover new permanent sources of demand for business capital. With two thirds of mankind near or on starvation because of a lack of the means of production the solution to the problem should be obvious. The answer cannot of course be found in Keynesian economics, which has very little to say about the irrationality of capitalism as a world system—a system which results in an overproduction of capital (relative to profits) in one area confronting a chronic undercapitalisation elsewhere.

THE LIMITS OF KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS

Keynes himself was pessimistic about the long-term stability of private enterprise to undertake the necessary investment for capitalist stability. But he avoided the issue and sought to save the system—at least until after his death, leaving the labour reformists to carry the can. The operational tools which he left filled the theoretical gaps which riddled social democracy when it abandoned socialism. The U.S. experience however vindicates the Marxists' analysis that Keynes offers a pseudo-solution only; a solution which is inherently inflationary and blinded by pragmatism from an understanding of its predicament. The key weakness of the Keynesians is that they insist only that the volume of production be subject to Government planning

—not its content. Existing class relations are therefore maintained leaving intact the general tendency of capitalist production to accumulate capital for its own sake. The lack of effective demand, which reflects insufficient capital formation, increasingly involves Governments in stimulating investment, either directly or indirectly. But there is a limit to this type of mixed economy. For the capitalist class the growth of the non profit sector must be stopped at the point where it threatens the existence of the private sector. Deficit financing and Government induced production, since they draw on the social pool of surplus value, are a drain on the profit source. As likewise are the subsidies and unemployment benefits which Governments have to draw from the declining pool of surplus value in order to counteract the social consequences of the declining rate of capital accumulation.

We see a good example of the dilemma facing mixed economies in the antics of the Heath Government. The Tories realised that the growth of the public sector indicated the decay of private enterprise and in their early days confidently announced that the State would withdraw from some of its economic activities. Private enterprise was to be revitalised by having to stand on its own feet and so on. Tory ideology however did not conform with reality, for large sections of British industry (notably shipbuilding and aircraft production) were unable to proceed with the capital formation necessary to maintain profitable activity. Hence the Tories were forced to reverse their policy. Fundamentally, however, Government induced production, designed to save capitalism, is limited by private profit production itself. When the capitalists decide that the limit is reached the solution to the accumulation problems can only be found by a return to the traditional methods of destroying capital values by intense slumps and imperialist wars. It is for this reason that Mattick reaffirms that the old phrase 'socialism or barbarism' states the only real alternatives facing the world today.

STATE CAPITALISM

Unfortunately Mattick introduces some unnecessary confusions into his book when he attempts to characterise states by their ability to accumulate capital goods. Quoting *The Economist* (!) in support of this view he makes the assertion that because the USSR engages in capital accumulation it is a state capitalist. He goes on to make the startling claim that since the Bolsheviks regarded a swift growth of the means of production (capital formation) as a key task, the Revolution of 1917 can best be described as a 'Keynesian Revolution'. This is the final absurdity which the state capitalist theory of Soviet Russia leads to. More confusion arises when Mattick states that State Socialism and State Capitalism are the same thing. It all depends, he says, on what point of view one takes. For the worker Russia is state capitalist, for the capitalist it is state socialist. This erosion of the scientific meaning of concepts is, of course, unavoidable for those who adopt the state capitalist position no matter how astute their analysis on other matters. Fortunately however Mattick confines his confusions on this matter to a few pages only and it is not necessary to regard his book as a significant contribution to the Kidron/Harman position.

P. Kneafsey

FOOTNOTE

Economists may find the book somewhat vague and wordy on certain topics—there is a complete absence of diagrams and formulas. Students of economics, in particular, will find it useful to read Lawrence Klein (*Effective Demand and Employment*, J.P.E., April 1947), Fan-Hung (*Keynes and Marx on Capital Accumulation*, R.E.S., Oct. 1939) and S. Tsuru (*Post Keynesian Economics*) for background theory. Finally economics can be made by joining the Merlin Book Club which permits one to purchase the book for £1 only.

ANGELA DAVIS PORTRAIT OF A REVOLUTIONARY

An article in a recent issue of *Time Out* states that, "the Argentinian director Fernando Solanas has made definite steps towards defining the relationship of film, politics and ideology to the individual. For him the film becomes a 'film act' which allows an open and active participation by the audience. The viewer ceases to be a spectator, the film becomes a detonator, an element which provokes a participation in the themes concerned. 'We maintain that an art of the masses should avoid making the audience feel marginal to the experience but rather a participant, and encourage responsibility and conscience' (Solanas)."

If we take his definition as a useful yardstick for a discussion of political cinema, then *Portrait of a Revolutionary* cannot really be talked about in the same way. Produced by Yolande Duluart, a former student of Angela Davis when she was professor of philosophy at U.C.L.A. in California, this hour-long film is a fairly predictable adulatory collection of Angela's speeches, interviews, and related personal background. Insofar as the film raises the question of black political prisoners in the USA and Britain then it has a certain political function, allied to a political campaign here in Britain to secure her release. In terms of a 'detonating' experience, *Portrait* fails on two counts.

Firstly, like the Free Angela campaign itself, the film does not substantially break through the myths which surround Angela Davis and her particular role in the struggle. For all intents and purposes, she is still a brilliant Marxist scholar, 'black and beautiful', fulfilling in every way the liberal desire for perfection and for all criteria to be fulfilled before support can be given. Her academic record is defended by the Head of Department at U.C.L.A. who accords to her the finest scholarly credentials. We see her making speeches on campuses and at public meetings, chatting amiably with students at a seminar,

studying British philosophy at her home to the background of classical music. We do not see her as merely one leading figure in a broad, drawn-out struggle which can boast many intellectuals and courageous leaders, but as the intellectual and the spokesman for a movement which is never shown, never concretised, one which certainly cannot be covered in shots of demonstrators at a meeting, or marchers. Though Angela herself in an interview stresses the need within a revolutionary struggle for individual roles and feelings to be subordinated to the collective unity of the struggle, ironically the film places her own role at the centre of any discussion of the subject. No real visual relationship is ever established with the struggle at the base.

Secondly, and related, the film does not break down the alienation between film and audience which we have come to accept as the norm for most cinema in Western capitalist society. We remain a spectator to her cause, and are simply asked to applaud the rightness of her case and her ideas without feeling the need to contribute in any way to the struggle. This is reinforced, as the *Time Out* article points out, by the limited outlet for political films in Britain, which tends to shove them into the 'specialist cinema' category; as such that label contains them and does not make it at all impossible for them to be shown at the National Film Theatre or even West End cinemas. The fact that such films almost never reach the general release cinemas, and thus the audience to which they are most relevant, is crucial when we are talking about the effectiveness of political/revolutionary cinema.

Solidarity with Angela Davis and the struggle for which so many revolutionaries have given their lives is essential as her trial drags on; but her book, *If They Come In The Morning*, is likely to remain the most important expression of that struggle and the significance of her involvement in it. *Portrait of a Revolutionary* does not explode in your face and send you hurtling for cover; it fails ever to explode at all and ends not with a bang, but if anything, with a whimper.

- Phil Cohen

VIETNAM SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

Public meeting on eve of International Day of Solidarity

Friday, 21 April 7.30 p.m. Camden Studios

Speakers on the latest developments in the war plus slides of the electronic battlefield.

IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The second conference of the I.S.C. will be held over the weekend 29/30 April in the Buxton Hall, Ruskin College, Walton Street, Oxford. It is open to all those who support the struggle of the Irish people and their armed vanguard, the IRA, and stand uncompromisingly for the defeat of British imperialism in Ireland.

For details of the conference, please contact: Gus Fagan, 116 Summertown House, Banbury Road, Oxford. Tel. 0865-57883. Or Bob Purdie, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Tel. 01-278-2616.

MILLINGFORDS STRIKE

Ashton near Wigan

This small Engineering Factory has been on strike for 36 weeks. There will be a solidarity

DEMONSTRATION

on Sat. 22 April, 10.30 a.m.

Arrangements are being made to take people from Manchester and Liverpool. Contact 061-224-8292 or 061-226-2664 (Flats 5 or 6) for details.

North London Red Circle meets every Tuesday at 8.30 p.m. to discuss revolutionary politics. All welcome.

General Picton Pub, Caledonian Road, (nr. Kings Cross Station) N.1.

GLASGOW RED CIRCLE

Weekly Discussion Group for Revolutionary Socialists - Thursdays at 7.30 p.m.

Iona Community Centre, 214 Clyde Str.

NOTTING HILL RED CIRCLE

Meets every Monday night at 7.45 p.m. in the Britannia pub meeting room, Clarendon Road (near Ladbrooke Grove tube). Buses 52,7,15.

All Welcome.

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DESIGN: Christine Moore

DISTRIBUTION: Phil Sanders

Published by Relgocrest for The Red Mole, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 01-837 6954.

Printed by F.I. Litho (T.U.) Ltd. 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 01-837 9987

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ENGINEERS IN MASSIVE MERGER?

While all eyes in Britain's key engineering industry are fixed on the fierce, localised pay struggles that have followed the abandonment of the national across-the-board wage claim by the engineering unions, an isolated news report appears. "Mr. Hugh Scanlon, President of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, has offered to resign if it helps to smooth the path towards a merger between his own union and the electricians' union" (*Guardian*, April 5, 1972). This detached news item is a reminder that very important issues in the class struggle, in this instance involving the organisational form of future conflicts in the largest industry in the country, are frequently decided and virtually settled behind the closed doors of union executive meetings. The rank and file has been permitted just a glimpse of the current manoeuvres among their leaderships.

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM

The contest between the notion of a federation of separate engineering unions and the principle of amalgamation into a single organisation for the whole industry is not new. The AUEW's forerunner, the AEU, supported the latter concept to the extent of refusing to affiliate to the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions until 1946. Today, the AUEW consists of four sections (formerly the independent AEU, Foundry Workers', Constructional Engineers' and Draughtsmen's Unions) and a total of 1,300,000 members. Internally, it is now engaged in welding its sections into tighter unity and, externally, in negotiating further mergers. Here, the electricians' union, the

EETU/PTU, has special attractions. A history of genuine militancy in several industries was wiped out when the capitalist press and courts were able to seize upon proof of ballot-rigging by the union's stalinist leadership in 1961. The resultant right-wing leadership of the EETU/PTU today is an embarrassing obstacle to the AUEW and the 'left' union leaders. In engineering the electricians are the fourth largest union in the CSEU and at times have acted as a brake on militancy above the shop-floor level. To give one example, resentment still lingers from the three-week strike at Fords in 1969 when the EETU refused to join the other large unions in making the strike official. Bringing the 420,000 strong EETU into the AUEW might save Scanlon and the reformist 'left' from similar occurrences, and promises greater financial strength and voting power in the TUC. And the EETU leaders are anxious to avoid their growing isolation.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Whether or not this merger comes about, amalgamations of this scale are increasingly demanded to match the intensified monopolisation of sectors of engineering by conglomerates like GEC/AEI/EE. But the organisational unification of the engineering unions offers enhanced efficiency and discipline without guaranteeing which social class will really benefit in the long run. For the new strength to be tuned decisively against the employers, in the present circumstances when the CSEU and AUEW are refusing to lead a national wages struggle, the process of unification must involve the widest discussion and participation of the rank and file to ascertain the practical

advantages for the shop floor, and to put them into effect. Certainly, the research and financial resources of the organisations nationally will be pooled. But will the new structure provide sufficient accountability of union officials to the membership, to allow the exchange of experiences from different struggles permitted by the merger really to influence national union policy? Will the new sections of workers brought under one organisational roof really be called upon to add their industrial strength to other comrades engaged in struggle? The undemocratic structure of the EETU/PTU under the leadership of Frank Chapple, and the current wages strategy of Scanlon and the AUEW leaders render the question of amalgamation inseparable from the fight to destroy bureaucratic control of the trade unions.

CONTROL?

As an advocate of multi-industrial ("general") unionism, Jack Jones of the T&GWU recently quoted in *Tribune* the historic "Amalgamation Call" of 1921 which initiated the modern, unified Transport Workers' union: "The great industries on the employers' side stand together! Labour must do likewise." In fact, that document continued "the new machine... will ultimately not only talk of wages, but exercise greater power and control." Fifty years later, the giant T&GWU is still talking of wages, reminding trade unionists that amalgamation alone is insufficient. As merger rumours are leaked to the membership, engineering workers should bear that lesson in mind.

- J.C.

I.S.C. JOINS EASTER MARCH IN BELFAST

Every year at Easter Republicans North and South march in commemoration of the Easter Uprising of 1916, thereby paying homage to the heroes of the nationalist revolution and affirming their determination to continue the revolution against British Imperialism begun in 1916. This year's Easter march took place at a critical point in Ireland's long history of struggle. The mass resistance over the past two years of the nationalist population of the six counties, underpinned and carried forward by the military resistance of both wings of the Irish Republican Army, had made it impossible for British Imperialism to impose any solution. In other words, they have failed in their tactic of militarily defeating the IRA as a first step towards ending the resistance and bringing in a new period of stability. A new approach was needed, and this was provided by the long delayed initiatives.

By suspending Stormont (though only temporarily) and announcing a "phasing out" of internment the British Government hoped to draw away a significant number of the nationalist population from their support for the military tactics of the IRA. Isolation of the IRA from its base in the nationalist population would be a significant victory for imperialism. The Easter marches provided the first opportunity after the Heath initiatives for the minority to demonstrate openly their response to Imperialism's concessions—peace on Britain's terms or support for the IRA and the continuation of the struggle. In Belfast alone over 12,000 marched in solidarity behind the ranks of the Official and Provisional IRA.

This year's Easter march also saw a 40-man contingent from Britain of the Irish Solidarity Campaign marching in solidarity behind the First Battalion of the Belfast Command of the Official IRA. The Official and Provisional IRA marches took place separately but in close proximity to each other, thus making it difficult for the ISC to take part in both marches. The Irish Solidarity Campaign gives its unconditional support to both sections of the IRA in its struggle against the armed forces of British Imperialism.

The trip to Belfast was organized by the Oxford branch of the Irish Solidarity Campaign so that a contingent of people from Britain who support the Irish people in their struggle for national self determination could demonstrate their solidarity in a very real manner. The Irish Solidarity Campaign realizes that the few concessions won from the Tory government in no way satisfy the just demands of the Irish people. The struggle will continue. In Britain the ISC will continue to give support to the struggle of the Irish people and in a situation where that struggle finds its sharpest expression in the armed conflict between the IRA and the British Army the ISC will continue to build in this country a strong movement of British and Irish workers and students for the defeat of the British Army and in solidarity with the IRA.

-Gus Fagan
Oxford I.S.C.

WAVE OF REPRESSION IN PERU

The Peruvian regime is clamping down on the revolutionary left. After three years in power it cannot tolerate the signs of a new rise of independent activity by the revolutionary left—as the massacre of last year's miners' strike also showed.

The military came into power at the end of 1968, in a situation of crisis for imperialism, and of growing struggle by the masses. The pseudo-revolutionary language of the new government, and its first measures—oil nationalisation and agrarian reform—at first caused confusion among the revolutionary groups, which had no programme for struggle. In Peru, the army had throughout history played a most reactionary role, and this made it more difficult to carry out the necessary analysis to provide the revolutionary vanguard with an immediate clear political line: until then its main demands had been for agrarian reform and oil nationalisation.

Complete inexperience of bonapartism in Peru produced even greater confusion in the working class, led by no party able to put forward a revolutionary programme in this situation. The pro-Moscow CP gave immediate unconditional support to the military, and this was the party which controlled the Peruvian Workers' General Union (C.G.T.P.), the main trade union federation.

Only the F.I.R. (Peruvian section of the Fourth International), escaped the general confusion, and attempted to advance revolutionary demands in the working class, but its small size and the heavy pressure of stalinism have physically prevented it from reaching a mass audience.

Vanguardia Revolucionaria, the biggest and most strongly organized revolutionary organisation, was formed in 1965 by dissidents

of the stalinist parties. At no point did it advance beyond ideological eclecticism, and in this conjuncture a harsh debate developed among the membership, ending in the atomisation of the organisation into four or five factions, one of which, the Natalia Sedova Circle, supports the Fourth International, although the political balance of forces and the weakness of the FIR made it difficult for this group to bring more of the membership to revolutionary positions. Another of the groups, the 'Militarists', has positions close to Trotskyism, and defines itself as anti-stalinist, but has been unable to form a political programme and go beyond eclecticism. These comrades have thrown themselves into direct action with more heroism than preparation, and the government has unleashed a severe repression against them. Ten members were recently taken prisoners, and charged with thirteen bank and other robberies, and the killing of two policemen; though a common criminal had already been found guilty of the murder of one of them. The police will undoubtedly charge them with many more killings and robberies: not to mention the torture to which they will be subjected.

The wave of repression has affected not only the members of revolutionary organisations, but over a hundred worker militants, trade union leaders who have expressed disagreement with the regime and the yellow pro-soviet union leadership: they too are now in prison.

The *Red Mole* calls for the release of all political prisoners in Peru, and expresses its solidarity with all forces there engaged in the struggle against imperialism and its agents, the military reformist government.

CONTINUED ACTION AGAINST MANDEL BAN

Student action against the West German ban on Ernest Mandel continues to mount. Next to the 2,000-strong protest at the West Berlin Free University February 28, the largest rally was the March 22 meeting in Frankfurt. There, some 1,200 young students, workers, and intellectuals met to protest the ban on Mandel, as well as all other repressive measures taken in the last months against the German left.

The high point of the evening was a speech by Mandel himself, played from a tape recorder. Mandel analyzed the objective roots of the current intensification of repression throughout Western Europe. He stressed the necessity for a united front of all tendencies in the workers' movement, aimed at rolling back the slightest restriction on civil liberties. The principal objective of the bourgeoisie,

Mandel said, was not to weaken the far-left groups, but to limit the right to strike, to crush strikes, whether they be wildcat or protracted, and to reverse the relationship of forces between labor and capital.

The bourgeoisie goes after the revolutionary groups because it knows that they will never collaborate in the regime's effort to justify the antiworking-class repression, nor will they passively accept it. The revolutionary groups will instead organize vigorous resistance to the repression, and this resistance has the potential to mobilize masses of people.

The day after the Frankfurt rally, meetings were planned for several other cities, notably Leverkusen and Heidelberg. Teach-ins have already taken place in, among other places, Cologne, Bremen, Stuttgart, Tübingen, and Constance.



Part of I.S.C. contingent forms up off the Falls Road, Belfast.

CEYLON SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Ceylon Solidarity Campaign has in the last two weeks organised two pickets and a public meeting in London to further its aims of publicising as widely as possible the recent and current repression in Ceylon and of exerting pressure to bring about the release of the 16,000 political prisoners and an end to the State of Emergency.

The first picket was on April 5th outside the Ceylon Tea Centre, chosen in order to pinpoint Ceylon's ties with British imperialism. April 5th was an appropriate date, being the first anniversary of the JVP uprising last year.

On Sunday, April 9th, about a dozen people also picketed the White House Hotel in Albany Street, London, where no fewer than twelve Ceylonese Members of Parliament were staying on a joy-ride at the expense of the working people of Ceylon. A number of them were confronted by some of the Ceylonese comrades on the question of the political repression, arbitrary arrest and torture being carried out by their government.

The public meeting on April 7th was addressed by speakers from the Ginipupura, the Unity Movement of South Africa, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and the International Marxist Group. The significance of active mobilisation on the part of British revolutionaries to fight repression and imperialism in Ceylon was discussed in detail and a resolution was passed unanimously opposing the present government in Ceylon for its repressive and anti-socialist policies.

The Ceylon Solidarity Campaign has just published a bulletin which gives a brief analysis of the economic and political background to the repression in Ceylon, with recent information from inside Ceylon. For copies of the bulletin (price 5 p), further information contact the Secretary, Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, 9 Dennington Park Mansions, N.W.6. Enquiries from all who wish to give active support to this Campaign will be welcomed at the same address.

-Sarah Harris