

# The Red Mole

Paper of the International Marxist Group No. 55 13th November 1972 Price 5p.

## NIRC vs AUEW

The National Industrial Relations Court has fined the Engineering Union for refusing to re-admit a member who scabbed on his fellow workers during a strike. If the union fails to pay the fine, its funds will most probably be seized. If it pays the fine but refuses to re-instate the scab, then it will simply be fined again. Mr. Scanlon's policy of 'neither war nor peace' with the NIRC is being put to the test.

At the TUC Conference, the AUEW proposed that unions should refuse to attend the court under any conditions and that a TUC fund should be established to pay the fines of unions under attack. Scanlon may be tempted to argue now that the union could have fought the fine if only his resolution had been passed and the TUC fund had been established. When the T&GWU was fined in the Heaton's case last summer Jack Jones used exactly the same argument of lack of TUC backing to justify his capitulation to the court.

The issue is quite elementary. The working class knows only too well what to do with scabs: you get rid of them... by the easiest and swiftest means. If persuasion does not work, then force becomes necessary. And when the scab brings in friends to assist him, then you have to deal with his friends too - with equal firmness. But for the trade union bureaucracy, this case, when the scab's friend is a state institution, becomes apparently impossible to deal with.

The Court's chief, Sir John Donaldson, tries to present himself as a man in the middle. In his speech on the case he declared that "the referee's decision is seldom popular with both sides". This is a dangerous analogy for Donaldson to make. He may consider that the workers' struggle against the capitalists for a decent standard of living is a game, but it is a pretty nighmarish one when the employing class is able to make up the rules through Parliament as the game goes on; where the employing class chooses the 'referee', and where that referee insists that a worker who has been trying to 'throw' the game by scabbing cannot be thrown out of the team!

The AUEW leadership has declared its desire to smash the Industrial Relations Act and the NIRC. The great mass of trade unionists have already shown their readiness to struggle on this issue in the repeated stoppages against it before it became law and in the great struggle to free the five dockers imprisoned by the NIRC. The issue in this case is equally clear cut: by lining up with scabs the NIRC has again revealed its true purpose and has thrown down a challenge to the entire trade union movement.

The AUEW leadership has had at least three months in which to prepare its own membership and the trade union movement for this fight. So far, Scanlon has done nothing to prepare the fight. What is now required is for the Union to lead industrial action by the mass of workers to smash the Act. This is the task that faces the Union executive when it meets on 14 November. Given such an initiative from the engineers, every militant in every branch of industry must be immediately prepared to generalise the struggle against the Act.

If the engineers' leadership fails to move onto the attack, the consequence will be a very serious setback for the working class. No one should have any illusions on that score. And any talk from Mr. Scanlon about his defeat at the TUC conference and lack of support from the TUC must not be allowed to obscure the truth: that unless the working class gains a leadership which is prepared to stand up and defend employer or from a court, from the newspaper barons or Parliament, then it is not going to be able to defend its own living standards and organisations.

# PAY FREEZE HEATH'S LAST GAMBLE

By BOB WILLIAMS

The TUC has denounced the Government's pay freeze and refused further talks on incomes policy while the freeze is on. With this action, Victor Feather has noisily slammed the stable door just two days after the horse has bolted.

He and his friends on the General Council no doubt hope to regain some credibility within the trade union movement by this show of opposition. But the fact is that the single most important factor opening the door to any form of wage restraint was the TUC leadership.

In the Government's darkest hour after the freeing of the five dockers, it was Mr Feather who came forward to offer the hand of friendship, and begin a three month publicity campaign for an incomes policy. Without Feather's support the Government would not have been able to carry off its massive public relations exercise. This must not be forgotten in the months ahead when the General Council proclaims its opposition to the present freeze.

## SHREWD

The effects of the TUC's policy on working class living standards were felt even before the freeze was introduced. Terrified at the prospect of having to stand-up to the Government or lose the support of their membership, the trade union bosses fell over each other in their rush to settle before the freeze became law.

Faced with claims outstanding from more than a million workers, the Government's tactics were quite shrewd. They first put a brake on all public sector negotiations, getting their lieutenants in the nationalised industries to say that nothing could be agreed until the pay talks between the Tories



Mr Heath and Mr Feather in relaxed mood after the introduction of the pay freeze

the CBI and the TUC had been concluded. Then when the Government came out with its proposal of a £2 limit, this was declared to be the ceiling by the management negotiators. Outcry appropriately followed from the trade union side. Then, at the 'last minute', before a total freeze was slapped on, the Government allowed its lieutenants to settle wage claims at levels slightly above the previously proposed £2 limit. The union bosses leapt at the offers with enthusiasm, seeing that they could tell their memberships that they had won more than the original government limit by settling before the total freeze stopped them getting anything!

The resulting picture is very much below what even the TUC considered to be the suitable limit for wage increases (£3.50):

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| ASTMS University Technicians . . . . .  | £2.71 |
| Electricity supply workers . . . . .    | £2.65 |
| Local government workers . . . . .      | £2.40 |
| Government industrial workers . . . . . | £2.60 |

The government is praying that the working

class will spare it another version of last year's miners' strike. A repeat performance of that victorious upsurge would break the last vestige of Heath's credibility, as the *Financial Times* made clear the other day. It pointed out that "ministers are making such frantic efforts to create a climate of opinion in which an incomes policy will have a chance of holding because the government will not have a chance of winning another election unless it achieves it." And after explaining that the government did not feel strong enough to resist a determined challenge from the working class, the paper concluded that "a real crisis of nerve is in progress." At present the government's one chance lies in the union leaders' refusal to fight.

## THE FRONT LINE

With the leaders of the strong sections of the working class running for cover, the full weight of the struggle against the pay freeze is at present falling on 250,000 hospital workers. The hospital ancillary workers are amongst the lowest paid in the country. They lie 127th out of 129 in the national pay ladder. Many of them take home only £14 a week. In the past they have accepted the local government manual workers agreements as a standard for their own settlements. This would have given them a miserable £2.40 before the freeze. Now they are to be outlived in a struggle even for that.

But there has been strong opposition from the rank and file to the £4 claim put forward by the union leaders. Strike action in support of an £8 claim has already occurred in Bristol and Gloucester, and this has found support elsewhere leading to the creation of a national Alliance of Stewards for Health Workers.

If the hospital workers do join battle with the government (officially or unofficially) then solidarity action must transform the struggle into a united working class upsurge with the objective of smashing the pay freeze. Such a policy, which must be applied to every wage struggle from now on, will start the death agony of the Tory government.

## RED BERETS, GREEN PAPER

By GERY LAWLESS

As the fourth British strategy since 1969 for dealing with the Irish problem grinds to a halt, Whitelaw's position as Gauleiter of the North becomes more and more insecure, the need to build a solidarity movement in support of the Irish struggle more and more urgent every day.

## MAJOR CHANGE

Whitelaw's speech on television in July which preceded the invasion of Free Derry was the announcement of the fourth major change of course for British imperialism in Ireland.

Since the establishment of Free Belfast and Free Derry in August '69, British imperialism has used a number of different policies for dealing with the crisis. All the policies were calculated in different situations and at different periods to serve the same strategic end - to protect British interests in Ireland. But exactly because it was dealing

with a real living crisis, different methods have had to be tried at different times to achieve this end, and have failed.

From August '69 until August '71 - despite some diversions, particularly with the introduction of the Public Order Act in 1970 and the invasion of the Lower Falls in July 1970 in the immediate aftermath of the 1970 return to power - the basic policy was one of Containment and Reform.

To avoid provoking a Southern backlash, and therefore endangering British interests in the South, the British policy was, not to smash militarily Free Derry and Free Belfast, but to use the British Army to contain the revolt in these two areas while the Stormont regime was nudged onto the road to reform. The theory was that the further Stormont was pushed towards reform, then the quicker would the contained revolt in the Catholic areas ev-

## INDOCHINA WAR

See pages 4 and 5

(To page 8)

# THE MONDAY CLUB IN TRANSITION

Richard Neubauer on an alternative option for the ruling class

Amid considerable anguish and confusion, the Monday Club – the organised right-wing within the Conservative Party – is starting a slow transformation. Gradually turning aside from its original role as a 'genteel' pressure group inside Tory circles, the Club is stumbling towards the development of new tactics. The Club has begun a *factional struggle* within the Tory party aimed at eventually overturning the Heath leadership. This turn reflects the emergence of a current within the Monday Club championing the heresy of open disloyalty to the Conservative Party.

## INTERNAL CONFLICTS

In May this year, the Monday Club Economic Policy Group broke with custom by publishing a harsh condemnation of the Government's Industries Bill. It attacked the proposed state aid to capitalist investment as being "in stark contrast" with the Party's election manifesto. The Bill was "dishonest" and represented one of the Heath leadership's many broken pledges on nationalisation and the size of the civil service. The Government, it concluded, should repudiate the measure or "seek a fresh mandate from the country". The Monday Club Chairman declared that the statement had been issued without authority and protested that "while critical of the Government", the Club did not call for an election and "in principle supports the Government".

Internal dissension re-surfaced publicly in August, when Club member and Cabinet Minister Geoffrey Rippon accepted government policy on the Ugandan Asians in opposition to the Monday Club. Leading members of the Club's Executive Council openly and bitterly

clashed on the basic issue of whether cabinet loyalty should override Club loyalty.

## TORY CONFRONTATIONS

The Monday Club emerged from a pressure group set up to rescue the banner of direct colonialism from being trampled under-foot by Macmillan's strategy of neo-colonialism. The Club itself was formed in 1961 as a wider grouping favouring a return to the politics of British imperialism before World War Two: above all emphasising "laissez-faire" values. Membership soon went beyond the Club's original aristocratic social base grouped around Lord Salisbury, and encompassed sections of the professional and commercial middle class in the constituencies. The "Monthly Newsletter" reported a continuous round of Women's Group Luncheons, Annual Area Dinners and tours to Johannesburg ("Only £290 per head, single room with bath") accompanied by a steady diet of semi-political and utterly respectable drivel about the menace of socialism and atrocities in Zanzibar.

But the Club's great leap forward came in 1969-70 with the Tory party's adoption of *confrontation* policies against organised labour. The Club set up a branch structure to harness the flood of new members and became the largest Conservative grouping, supported by 35 MPs<sup>1</sup>. Its brand of "true traditional conservatism" was selling like hot cakes.

The present internal struggles in the group stem from the Heath government's tactical retreat from confrontation in the wake of successive working class victories and its return to traditional Labour Party industrial and prices and incomes policies. The new rebellious trend reflects impatience with "pressure" tactics at such an hour of crisis for the ruling class, when its government is demoralised and open to potential challenge and replacement.

## THE NEW REBELS

The 'disloyal' elements now gaining ground within the Monday Club come from many different sources. The extreme right outside the Conservative Party, including the National Front, has infiltrated the Club over the last four years. The Polish Prince Michael Grouzinski has supplied links with East European emigre groups in the West, and Rhodesian and South African racists have provided connections. Several constituency parties have been brought under extreme-right control and some of the 'rebel' elements have publicly dabbled in neo-fascist theories in the Club's official quarterly, *Monday World*. Spanning an enormous range of right-wing viewpoints, all these forces have nevertheless been coming together and increasingly making the running inside the Club, undermining its former respectability. A recent newspaper report even stated that "detectives are investigating allegations that a faction in the Monday

Club is running guns through a small Lancashire port to Protestants in Belfast".<sup>2</sup>

## RACISM AND REPRESSION

What then is the Monday Club turning into? It has sought to withstand the new currents, has declined to take any public position on E.E.C. entry despite heavy membership pressure to declare opposition, and has kept just clear of embracing the Tory right's 'prima donna', Enoch Powell. Powell currently remains a non-member, maintaining certain ideological differences with the Club over economic and 'defence' policy, but he clearly enjoys the overwhelming support of local Club membership.<sup>3</sup>

The Club has responded to the alarming problems of the ruling class by moving into the position of rivalling the present Tory leadership on an "anti-capitulation" line. Yet it has not elaborated an alternative ruling class strategy, not getting further than advocating the aggressive use of *racism* and of the *state repressive machinery*. If the Heath leadership suffers a real humiliation in the coming months, the Monday Club will not stand back. It will move in the direction of trying to impose a 'strong state' solution to the class struggle, through a wave of repression against the organised labour movement.

The Monday Club is not a fascist organisation, but neither is fascism the short-term option for the ruling class. What is much more immediately offered for the leaders of British capitalism is to use the Monday Club's brand of reaction against the working class in the event of a total collapse of the Heath Cabinet's tactics. Such a threat can be dealt with by the working class on one condition: that working class militants see their role as going beyond militant trade unionism; that they give no quarter to racism and educate their class to oppose every act of repression on any section of the working population by the agents of the capitalist class, whatever uniform they wear.

## NOTES

1. *The Story of the Monday Club*, a pamphlet published by the Club in April, 1972.
2. *Sunday Telegraph*, 20 August 1972.
3. Ninety per cent prefer Powell to Heath, according to the *Christchurch Star*, New Zealand, of 11th April 1972, reporting on a confidential Club questionnaire.

There will be a national conference of university Monday Clubs in Oxford on Saturday, 18 November. Speakers will include William Craig and Enoch Powell. A large counter-demonstration is being organised; comrades should phone Oxford 62955 for further details of assembly point, etc.

# INDIAN WORKERS STRIKE SPREADS

Red Mole Reporter

200 workers, most of whom are Indian, have come out on strike in support of a wage claim of £5 at the Mansfield Hosiery Mills Ltd. in Loughborough. The strikers are also demanding equal treatment in the factory: Indians are banned from working as knitters – a better paid job kept exclusively for white workers at the behest of the union (which is currently before the race relations board over this matter). The management has sacked all the workers who are on strike.

Both the white workers and the district secretary of the union (the National Union of Hosiery Workers) have refused to support the strike and the union is demanding that the strikers return to work.

Nevertheless, the struggle is spreading. Two more Loughborough factories belonging to the company (Nottingham Manufacturing Company) have come out in sympathy, and workers in Leicester and Shepshed will be coming out in support if the dispute continues for a further week.

The solidarity committee in Nottingham has played a crucial role in the development of the struggle. It was set up during a strike at Crepe Sizes Ltd. involving Pakistani workers. The committee is a united front of revolutionary groups – the Black People's Freedom Movement, The I.M.G. and International Socialism. The committee's aim is to organ-

ise support for workers in struggle and its ad hoc basis enables it to intervene quickly with leaflets, collections, solidarity meetings of local trade unionists, help on the picket lines, and obtaining social security benefits for the strikers. At Crepe Sizes, the committee's action helped force the union officials to back the strike and bring it to a successful conclusion. In the present strike, the solidarity meetings arranged throughout the East Midlands are playing an essential part in breaking down the strong racial overtones in the dispute.

Although the nature of the solidarity committee's activities are partly produced by the peculiarities of the area – textile factories employing many black workers at rates far below the average, with union refusal to aid struggles against these conditions – yet this form of united front activity is of wider significance.

The Loughborough strike continues and the government's 90 day pay freeze has not weakened the workers' determination to continue the struggle until victory. Despite the opposition of the union, solidarity is spreading and attempts are being made to win over the white workers. Support and financial contributions should be sent to:-

The strike committee,  
31, Station Street,  
Loughborough,  
Leicestershire.

# LCDSU Dissolves in Unity Move

The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Students Unions, formed at the November 1971 conference of the NUS to unite all revolutionary forces to fight for a revolutionary line amongst students, particularly on the autonomy issue, formally dissolved at its conference on 29 October. This was well attended with representatives from some 40 colleges. The burning need for some such structure as the LCDSU was underscored time and again, not only in relation to the autonomy struggle itself – Stirling being the latest and most blatant example of the need for generalising support – but also in relation to the struggle against various aspects of the capitalist rationalisation, particularly the current rent strikes.

However, what had to be admitted was that the split off of the IS group was actually a big defeat for the whole of the revolutionary left and that these vital tasks could not be fulfilled by the forces left inside the LCDSU. In order therefore that the revolutionary fight would not be completely lacking and in order to retrieve something from the situation, it was decided to go for a new unity. Here is the text of the letter that it was decided to send to all socialist groups and all affiliated organisations of the LCDSU.

Dear Comrades,

The LCDSU Conference on Sunday, 29 October 1972, passed the following resolution:

"The LCDSU recognises the fragmentation of the forces of revolutionary socialism amongst students and its serious consequences, and the disagreements which various of these forces have with the LCDSU.

"We therefore call for a meeting of these forces before the NUS conference for wide ranging discussion which would aim for principled unity in the task of winning students to the struggle for working class power. In the first instance, this would be to work out a common basis for a fight within the NUS Conference.

"The forces within the LCDSU suggest the following as a basis for discussion, whilst not in any way wishing to limit discussion to these points:

"1. **Autonomy on the basis of winning SUs as instruments in the class struggle.** To actively oppose any moves to re-integrate SUs into the college bureaucracies or any other attempt to link SUs to the capitalist State. Equally, to attempt to break all those fetters – constitutional, financial and political – which at present tie SUs to college and state bureaucracies.

"2. **Capitalist reorganisation of higher education.** To attempt to develop the struggle in the colleges on the basis of a struggle against capitalism. Specifically, on the basis that neither students (nor workers) will take any responsibility for the effects of the reorganisation and rationalisation of higher education. In so doing to seek to develop the line of mass struggle to effectively veto any changes which adversely affect, in whatever way, students (or workers).

"In particular:

i) Views the present accommodation crisis in the colleges as a direct result of the inability of capitalism to solve the question of social expenditure. The solution being promoted directly at the expense of students (and workers). Consequently, fully supports the present rent strikes and will seek to turn such struggles directly against the policy of the bourgeoisie. At the same time sees the necessity to centralise the, at present, fragmented struggles into a national movement through heightening the struggle in the colleges and promoting the involvement of the mass of students.

ii) To take as a special responsibility the defence of workers in the colleges who suffer from the effects of the capitalist rationalisation.

"In the interest of a broader unity, this conference formally dissolves the LCDSU."

In pursuance of the terms of this resolution, a conference is to be organised in Margate on the first day of the NUS Conference, Friday 24 November at 1.00 p.m.

To avoid any possible misunderstanding, we would emphasise that the points which the forces in the LCDSU have privileged are absolutely non-exclusive. We do believe that these should be the basis of any specifically student alliance, but other questions and issues can be raised. Indeed, the IMG as the main force in the LCDSU would itself want to raise questions relating to the general class struggle, e.g. around the outcome of the present Tory-TUC talks, the struggle in Ireland and so on.

In order therefore to prepare the conference at the NUS, and explore on which issues unity in action can be forged, we invite a representative of your organisation to a preliminary meeting on Friday, 17 November, Clare Building, London School of Economics, Room SO67 at 2 p.m.

Yours fraternally,

Brian Grogan  
pro-tem Conference organiser.

## £10,000 FUND DRIVE FOR WEEKLY PAPER

# The Red Mole



The response to the appeal launched in the last issue of *The Red Mole* has evoked a healthy response from I.M.G. militants and *Red Mole* readers. Money has begun to trickle in and the fund drive now stands at:

**£1,612.50p.**

If you would like to contribute, please fill in the form below.

Fill in this form and send to: **FUND DRIVE, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.** (Cheques should be made out to *The Red Mole*).

I am enclosing £.....p..... for the Fund Drive.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

I know the following who may also wish to contribute:

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

# C.A.V. - THE FIGHT BEGINS

A report from Liverpool by Pete Cresswell and Brian Slocock

On 2 October workers at the CAV factory in Fazakerley, Liverpool, received a statement from management informing them that production was to be discontinued and that the factory was to be closed by the end of April 1973. This step was to be taken, so management claimed, due to the inability of the factory to maintain supplies to overseas customers, and because of a sharp reduction in demand for their products at home.

## OCCUPATION

Although it had stated in black-and-white that the factory would stay open until April 1973, all outstanding orders were cancelled and management started persuading key production workers to leave immediately by offering them redundancy pay plus 8 weeks pay in lieu of notice. This was obviously an attempt to split the work-force, as the offer was made two days after a mass meeting of shop-floor workers had unanimously rejected all redundancies and agreed to occupy the factory at a moment's notice. As a few of the key workers had accepted the management's offer, mass meetings were called to explain what the company was up to, and, on the 9th shop-floor workers occupied the plant.

On 16 October, the clerical workers also joined in the occupation, in spite of management's offer to pay them full salary up until April 1973 (which was later changed to full salary "for the time being"). The men and women in the factory have repeatedly said that they are prepared to negotiate with management. To use their own words: "The door of negotiations is wide open to the company. We will negotiate any time, anywhere, but *not* in terms of redundancy."

Since the firm declared the 1200 redundancies they have managed to find 13 new jobs - none of which is in Merseyside and one is as far away as France!!

The CAV workers have now stepped up the struggle by closing down the Lucas Industrial Equipment factory. This they did by preventing the flow of materials in or out of the LIE factory, which is on the same site. This blockade was immediately followed by the other three Lucas factories in the Liverpool area.

## A FIGHT FOR THE WHOLE WORKING CLASS

Quite clearly, the proposed closure of CAV Fazakerley is based on rationalisation plans that are geared to entry into the Common Market. In the company statement issued in April 1970 it was announced that £13m was to be spent on developing the diesel business at home (that is, in the South-East) and abroad - production at Condiesel in Barcelona, Spain, was to be increased by 30 per cent. Since that statement, production has gradually been shifted from the Fazakerley plant to the plants in the South-East and to the Spanish subsidiary.

The real significance of the CAV occupation for the British labour movement is that it is just one of the first of what will be a long series of such struggles in the near future. CAV is not being shut down because the company is going out of business or cutting back on its operations: on the contrary Lucas' is booming and can be expected to expand very rapidly with British entry to the Common Market. CAV work-

being shut down as part of the process of rationalizing and reorganizing British business so that it can take the best advantage of, and make the most profits from, the new possibilities of European trade.

This process of rationalization means that more and more firms will be moving to those areas that are best located for exporting to the continent - the South-East and the East coast - and away from regions where working-class militancy has in the past been able to win wages and working conditions better than the national average. However even in areas which do benefit from a common market "boom" the picture will be far from rosy - for there the employers will be eager to guarantee their profits by using the most modern automated production methods and paying the lowest wages practical. Certainly the number of jobs wiped out by rationalization will be considerably more than the number created through any growth in production that comes with entry to the Common Market.

The issue in this fight will be: who pays for the crisis of British capitalism? Entry into the Common Market is one device by which the employing class hopes to solve its economic problems - but the price will have to be paid by the working-class through redundancies, reorganization of work, speed-ups, etc. The fight at CAV is one of the first attempts by the British working-class to prevent the ruling class from dumping the burden of their problems onto the backs of the working-class. As such it is a fight that is of direct concern to every member of the working-class, whose own future is being fought out at CAV's today. CAV work-

# LUCAS

## C.A.V. WORKERS SIT-IN

### OUR FIGHT IS YOUR FIGHT!!

### PROTECT JOBS ON MERSEYSIDE

### Please Support Us

ers must win . . . or the whole British working class movement suffers a major defeat.

## SOLIDARITY BUILDS . . .

A ready many groups of workers have expressed a basic understanding of what is at stake here and have come to the aid of the CAV workers. Liverpool dockers and workers at the airport have agreed in principle to black all Lucas products - as soon as the exact mechanisms for this can be worked out. Money has been coming in from other workers in the Lucas combine and through the AUEW. A call from the occupation committee for a one day stoppage of all Merseyside Lucas workers on 10 November has been agreed to by stewards from the four other combine operations in the area (Girtings Victor Works, Rotax, & L.I.E.) and endorsed by the Liverpool District Committee of the AUEW. The Liverpool Trades Council has called a meeting of all shop stewards on Merseyside for the 7th to discuss extending support for this stoppage. Students at Liverpool University have held a meeting with representatives from the factory after which a support committee was established.

## . . . BUT MUST BE EXTENDED

All of these measures are excellent. But the task facing all socialists and trade union militants is to make this just the beginning of a big nation-wide campaign to ensure that the fight at CAV is won for the working-class. As a first step trade union militants should make sure that the entire trade union movement is aware of the struggle at CAV and understands the importance of the issues involved - this is not something the working-class will find out from the capitalist-controlled press or television. They should pass motions of support through their branches and stewards' committees and raise money for the struggle at CAV. At the same time every group of workers should discuss ways in which they can use their particular industrial power to aid the CAV workers and prepare the ground for a campaign of industrial action against the Lucas combine. This is not the kind of struggle that can be won through gentlemanly negotiations or by the industrial action of an isolated group of workers: victory will require the mobilization of the full industrial strength of the British working-class.

Activists in the student, women's liberation and black power movements, and those involved in tenants committees, should immediately begin to discuss the ways in which their own struggles relate to capitalist rationalization for Common Market entry and thus the fight at CAV's. Money and motions of support should similarly be raised; and every effort should be made to contact local groups of workers who may not be fully informed about the situation at CAV. The establishment of support committees throughout the country should be considered as a possible step for the very near future.

In the interests of creating such a broad movement of trade unionists and others who suffer from the oppression of the capitalist system, in support of the fight at CAV, *The Red Mole* will be carrying regular information and analysis about this key struggle in coming issues.

Requests for further information, messages of support and financial contributions should be forwarded to:

Treasurer,  
CAV Sit-In Committee,  
AEU House,  
Mount Pleasant,  
Liverpool 1.

# 'Much More Than A Housing Question' AN EXCHANGE

Dear Comrades,

Comrade Jack Lewis' article on the Housing Finance Act, 'Much more than a Rent Rise' (*The Red Mole* 52), is a much needed analysis.

However there is a central flaw to Comrade Jack's analysis, that is that the central aim of the Housing Finance Act is to ameliorate the crisis of social expenditure under monopoly capitalism. This is to fall into the trap laid by Tory spokesmen on Housing. In fact attempts by the ruling class to solve the crisis of social expenditure can only be seen within the context of the immediate problems of the bourgeoisie: to increase the rate of profit at the expense of the working class. It is the role of the H.F.A. within that context which is central for revolutionaries. Whilst Jack is correct to say that the H.F.A. is not merely a rent rise, he fails to relate this aspect of the problem to the struggles of the working class as a whole. What for example is the connexion between the H.F.A. and the 'anti-inflationary' package agreed by Heath, the CBI and the TUC? As I see it the H.F.A. is precisely designed to be the flip side of the wage freeze coin. That under precisely the same rhetoric about the plight of the low paid workers the state is attempting to attack the working class through the Housing Act, whilst holding wage increases down to £2 a week.

Thus it is no accident that the Tories are prepared for a struggle on the Housing front, because it is these sections of the working class's fighting ability which are weakest. Because social democracy defines politics as fighting elections for local and central government, and economic struggles as organising in Trade Unions, the working class relates to the struggle over the H.F.A. by putting pressure on the Labour Party. In fact since tenants have no economic strength and no common interests (as Jack explained) what rent strikes do take place will be localised and fragmented. Meanwhile the Trade Union bureaucracy is left off the hook by being allowed to bleat that problems over housing should be taken to the Labour Party!

It is this situation which gives the state its room for manoeuvre. Seeing the confusion in the working class it is attempting to inflict a defeat on the working class by meeting opposition to the H.F.A. in a determined way - hence the elements of a trend towards a strong state contained within the H.F.A. Whilst the imprisonment of 5 shop stewards provoked a massive response inside the working class the imprisonment of 50 rent strikers will not produce anything like the same response.

If tenants are left to fight it out on their own they will surely be defeated overwhelmingly. The suggestions as to the role of the local gov-

ernment workers must be seen as a springboard into the trade union movement. The job of revolutionaries is to show how the H.F.A. can only be smashed through a united struggle of the working class on the question of rents and wages; against the state. A slogan such as: SMASH THE FAIR RENTS! SMASH THE £2 NORM! seem to be precisely the type of idea that needs to be advanced since it embodies both the idea that the working class does not take responsibility for the problems of capitalism be they of social expenditure or inflation, and the idea that the co-ordinated attack of the ruling class must be met by a co-ordinated response from the working class.

Yours Fraternally,

J. C. Clore.



JACK LEWIS replies: Everything that the ruling class does is in one way or another related to the desire of the bourgeoisie to maintain its profits, but to make this central to every analysis of every act of the capitalist state is to travel the path of economism.

It is, of course, true that the ruling class faces a crisis of profits and it is also true that a whole series of government measures are designed to

reverse this trend. Whether the Housing Finance Act was introduced as a result of the Tory Party worrying about the general problem of declining profits or not might be an interesting subject for academic speculation, but it has nothing to do with the problems of fighting the Act. Nor has it even got anything to do with the propaganda we should be concentrating upon around the Act. Unless, that is, one wants to argue that if it was not for the general decline in profits such a vile Act would not have been introduced? Such a notion would be very misleading since the practical conclusion might just as well be that we should try as tenants to help the ruling class get over its conjunctural problem so that the Act would be removed.

What the article tried to do - and what anything useful as a guide to action must do - was to place the Act in the context of the real social crisis which it is supposed to help solve. Not 'the crisis of capitalism' which every socialist propagandist can speak about in complete ignorance of the complex problems of the masses: such general truths mean nothing to everyone but the converted and do not tell them anything about how they can relate to the real world. Instead I tried to deal with the more 'modest' task of pointing out the real problems producing a crisis in the housing conditions of the masses in British cities today.

Secondly, the article points out why it is impossible for the bourgeoisie to resolve these problems and what effects the Act will have upon them.

It is of course true that elements of the Housing Act have a bearing on the wage control plans of the Government. In particular the increased rents of the higher paid workers to finance rebates to the lower paid is paralleled by Heath's use of wage differentials against the higher paid. But to call it 'the flip side of the wage freeze' is to miss the point. In the first place, the 'coin' has dozens of sides, and in the second place a far more powerful and flexible weapon for boosting profits than a cumbersome Housing Act is quite simply the taxation system. So one is still left with the problem of explaining the meaning of the Act for the mass of working people in this country.

If comrade Clore is saying that the bourgeoisie lives off profits and that this is the heart of the matter then again he is missing the point. Of course there is a huge profit element in housing and perhaps that should have been mentioned (but I suspect that this would not be news to most workers). But the bourgeoisie is not a decadent class merely because it makes profits. It is decadent because it cannot do anything as well as the workers' state will. And the mass of people will overthrow the bourgeoisie for this reason, not out of Christian outrage against profiteering.

# VIETNAM: STRUGGLE NOT OVER

By Joan Stott and Juliet Sumner

Despite the fact that Nixon has so far refused to sign the settlement, there can be little doubt that the recent negotiations have been taken very seriously by the North Vietnamese and the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (PRG). While it would be naive to ignore the fact that the revolutionary forces have been compelled to make some concessions, it would be equally facile to assume that the revolution has been defeated.

The proposed settlement comes almost five years after the NLF's Tet offensive of 1968 made it impossible for the United States to continue the ground war in Southern Vietnam with its own troops. The repercussions of the offensive within the United States also compelled LBJ to order a halt to the bombing of North Vietnam, and made it impossible for him to be re-nominated as the candidate of the Democratic Party.

Under Nixon, the more expendable Saigon troops had to be substituted increasingly for G.I.'s. But this meant a shift towards a massive concentration on the use of air power. The heavy bombing was aimed at destroying the physical and social environment within which the Liberation forces operated. The murderous intensity with which this electronic and aerial war has been pursued, only illustrates the desperation of the United States. Imperialism had decided that even though it was being forced to withdraw from Indochina without scoring a military victory it would nevertheless make the Vietnamese people suffer for their gains. In other words it was increasing the cost of social revolution in order to modify the impact a withdrawal would have on other puppet regimes in the colonial world.

## "VIETNAMISATION"

The crucial importance of the offensive launched by the NLF several months ago lies in the fact that it cut through the whole policy of "Vietnamisation." The only way the United States could stave off total disaster was to escalate the war to new heights. It blockaded the ports of North Vietnam and increased the bombing of both the North and South to an extent unparalleled in the annals of war. It has been this escalation which has prevented a collapse of the Thieu regime, and not the fighting qualities of the puppet armies. It is vital to grasp this fact if we are to understand the meaning of the settlement which the Vietnamese are prepared to sign. A recent issue of the *Scientific American* revealed:

"In the seven years between 1965 and 1971 the U.S. military forces expended 26 billion [milliard] pounds . . . of munitions in Indochina, half from the air and half from weapons on the ground. This staggering weight of ordnance amounts to the energy of 450 Hiroshima nuclear bombs. For the area and population of Indochina as a whole it represents an average of 142 pounds of explosive per acre of land and 584 pounds per person. It means that over the seven-year period the average rate of detonation was 118 pounds per second. These average figures, however, give no indication of the actual concentration; most of the bombing was concentrated in time (within the years from 1967 on) and in area. Of the 26 billion pounds, 21 billion were expended in South Vietnam and 2.6 billion in southern Laos. The bombardment in South Vietnam represented an overall average of 497 pounds per acre and 1,215 pounds per person; the major part, however was focussed on two regions; the five



American G.I.s in Vietnam, 1968: repercussions of Tet offensive in U.S. led to replacement by Saigon troops.

northern provinces and the region around Saigon."

And this estimate does not take into account the bombing in 1972 which has exceeded all previous levels.

## THREE FRONTS

From the beginning of their offensive the NLF have made it clear that they were fighting on three fronts:

- (1) Militarily, to destroy the effectiveness of the armed forces on which the Thieu regime depends internally.
- (2) Diplomatically, to bring pressure to bear on the Americans to withdraw their support for Thieu on which he banks externally.
- (3) Politically, to build up to the point of seizing power the coalition of forces envisaged in the 7-point Peace Plan of the PRG.

They expected victory to be a process involving advances on all three fronts. There can be little doubt that from the beginning of the offensive they were able to throw the disposition and logistics of the Saigon troops into complete confusion. The Thieu regime was forced to respond to the challenge which confronted it and thus repeatedly exposed its limited corps of dependable troops. This meant that the Saigon troops had to be withdrawn from "pacification work", i.e. from acting as permanent jailers of the civilian population. This enabled the NLF to reestablish its control over wide areas on the Coastal Lowlands, in the Mekong Delta and on the outskirts of Saigon itself. The offensive thus enabled the NLF to extend its control, but the scale of the bombing prevented it from scoring any spectacular victories.

Nevertheless the credibility of the Thieu regime was weakened even further both inside the United States and in Vietnam. But, as we argued in *The Red Mole* at the time, the offensive was directed not only against the Thieu regime, but also meant as a warning to Moscow and Peking. Here it failed miserably. The blame for this does not in any way lie with the Vietnamese militants. The finger has to be pointed at the real capitulators who put their own narrow bureaucratic interests before those of the Indochinese revolution. It is the ossified bureaucrats in Moscow and Peking who are responsible for the diplomatic reverses suffered by the Vietnamese.

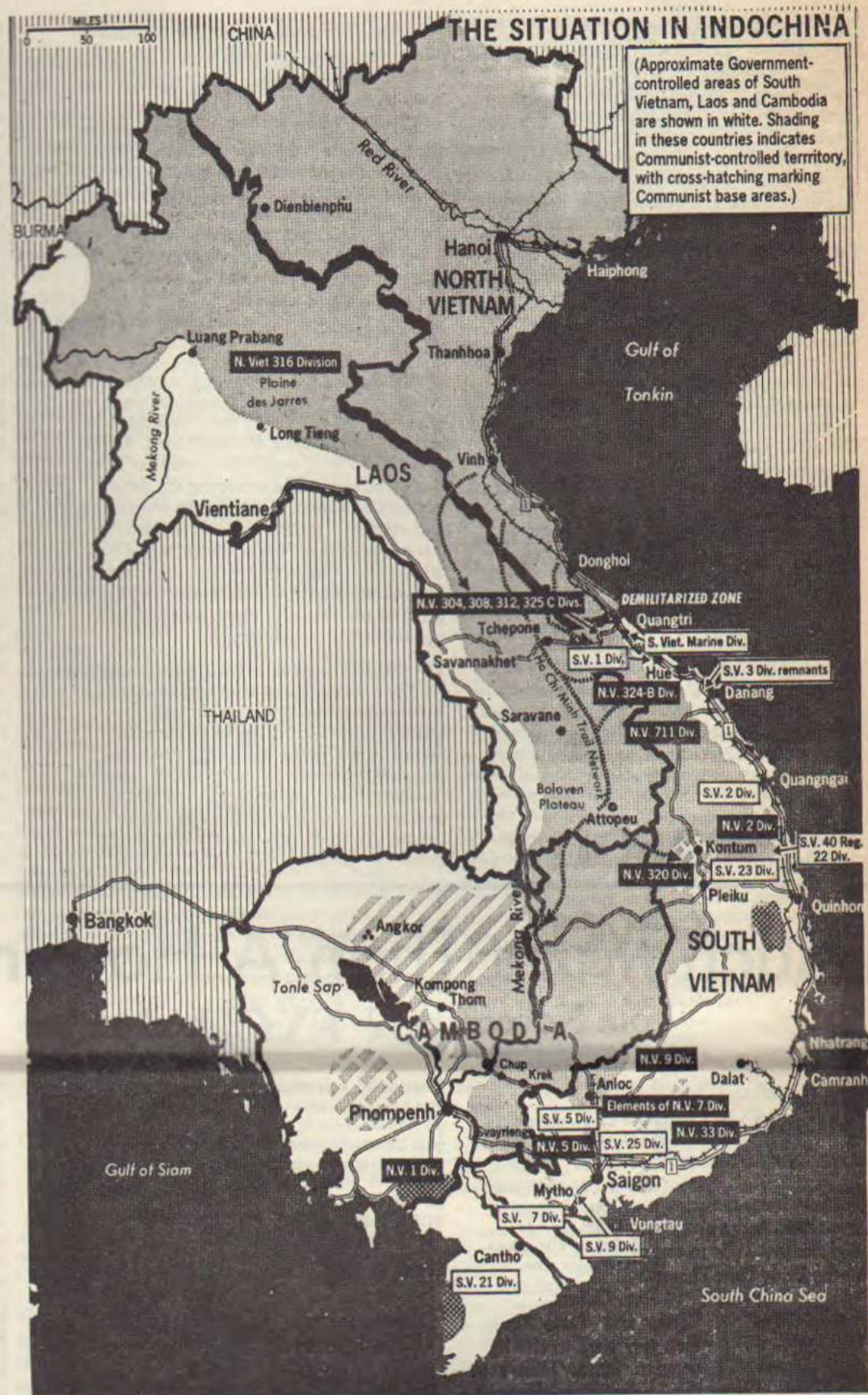
## MOSCOW AND PEKING

What has been the role of Moscow and Peking? In brief they have:

1. Made it possible for Nixon to stay in office by coming to terms with him at a time when the collapse of "Vietnamisation" had seriously damaged his standing within the ruling class, already divided on the war. The Peking visit, in particular, was a big gain for Nixon's election campaign and a tremendous blow to the Vietnamese struggle. At a time when the bombing of Northern Vietnam had been resumed at a greater intensity than even before, Mao Tse Tung and Chou en Lai proposed toasts to the representative of a government responsible for this crime. There are not many examples of cynicism of this sort even on the part of bureaucrats. The visit to Moscow a few weeks later was a grotesque re-run. Here Brezhnev and Kosygin, determined not to be outdone by Mao, clinked champagne glasses as they proposed toasts together with Nixon to world peace. The agreements reached in Peking and Moscow were sealed with the blood of the Vietnamese workers and peasants. Far from putting pressure on Nixon to withdraw immediately there is growing evidence which suggests that it is the Vietnamese who have been pressured by Moscow and Peking to accommodate Nixon.

The most obvious Chinese statement in support of the deal with Nixon at the expense of the Indochinese revolution came last July, when Chou en Lai praised the Korean armistice as a model of international relations. For the Soviet bureaucracy the well-known KGB "journalist", Victor Louis, wrote in June that the North Vietnamese had tried to "undermine" the Nixon-Brezhnev summit with an offensive in North Vietnam.

2. In making sure that Nixon won the Primaries in Moscow and Peking the Russians and the Chinese virtually reassured his re-



New York Times map shows military situation in Indochina based on information from Washington. Areas both shaded and white represent disputed land.

election. This is somewhat odd since McGovern was pledged to end the war, was the most 'left' candidate from within the bourgeoisie, clearly had the approval of the Vietnamese and was being supported by the American Communist Party. While for revolutionists the question of supporting bourgeois candidates is not even raised, there is no reason to disbelieve McGovern's insistence that he would have ended the war as this is undoubtedly the view of an important though not decisive section of the American ruling class.

While the Vietnamese were clearly outraged by the attitude of Moscow and Peking they were far too reticent in making their views public. Certainly a number of *Nhan Dan* editorials made it clear that they were displeased with Peking and Moscow, but this was not sufficient. If the Vietnamese had privately threatened the Chinese with a public denunciation if the Nixon visit took place, both Moscow and Peking would have had second thoughts. The prestige of the Vietnamese revolution within the world workers' movement is such that a threat from the Vietnamese could have been devastatingly effective.

## BALANCE OF FORCES

The actual terms of the agreement can only be properly understood if we understand the real balance of forces within South Vietnam. While the detailed and precise information is probably available only to the Vietnamese, nevertheless the map which we publish clearly reveals the enormous possibilities which remain

open for the revolutionary forces. This is what explains the failure of Nixon to sign. An immediate ceasefire would have left only the major cities in Thieu's control and the impending withdrawal of the American presence and its purchasing power would have begun to disintegrate the puppet administration. The release of the NLF prisoners would have further weakened the morale of the Thieu regime and its narrow base of support.

It should be remembered that the South Vietnamese economy is no longer what it was at the beginning of the war. Agriculture, trade and industry have been hopelessly disrupted and wealth is now based on U.S. aid, speculation, smuggling, crime, prostitution and the black market. Thieu's power therefore does not rest on a distinct social class, but on the army. A ceasefire and a release of prisoners coupled with the withdrawal of all US troops would lead to an enormous demoralisation within the ranks of this army.

Thus the withdrawal of all American personnel and a stop of the bombing would in itself represent a significant gain for the armed forces of the liberation. Another important fact is that the terms of the settlement as revealed by Hanoi indicate that the United States has not made any demand for the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops. This means, in effect, recognising that there is one Vietnam.

## CONCESSIONS

The areas where the PRG and the North Vietnamese have made concessions are to participate in a coalition government with Thieu,

# ER YET

to agree to the Americans handing over their military bases to the puppet regime and to accept a ceasefire before a political settlement. This evades the central question of the destruction of the apparatus of the imperialist-created state, i.e., the army of the Thieu regime. This could well be a tactical concession as the North Vietnamese press has itself warned many times against the view that bourgeois elections can solve the question of which class rules the country. However what is dangerous in this concession is the fact that it politically disarms the revolutionary forces. That is why Lenin and the other Bolsheviks even when they were forced to make compromises and offer concessions never concealed the nature of these let alone tried to present them as victories. Brest-Litovsk was a case in point. As long as the militants involved in the struggle and the masses are told the truth and it is made clear that the struggle is not over we have nothing to fear.

If this is not done it is Thieu and the imperialists who will take advantage by carrying out a pogrom of all oppositionists and political prisoners in the cities. There is evidence that this has already begun and there is every indication that it is going to increase in scale and magnitude. From this to the resumption of a full-scale civil war is only a short step. Thieu certainly has no illusions about co-existing with NLF and knows perfectly well that any peaceful political process will result in more areas being taken over by the guerrillas. As a result he will unleash a wave of repression to prevent these processes from unfolding. Diem did the same thing in 1954-55 and got away with it for five years, killing thousands of communists in the process. The reason he succeeded in murdering so many militants was because while Hanoi was scrupulous in sticking to its part of the Geneva Agreements the imperialists and their partners openly and blatantly flouted them. The result is that the war still continues. It does not need pointing out that a repeat performance at the present stage could result in a major reversal.

## STRUGGLE FAR FROM OVER

Of course the key point to be grasped by the solidarity movement is that the struggle is far from over and that any negotiated settlement will provide at best a temporary breathing space. Till the puppet army is destroyed there will be no peace in Vietnam. What this means is that the solidarity movement must retain its independence from the settlement and also be extremely vigilant in the coming period. The role of Peking and Moscow, the non-existence of a mass revolutionary international means that the whole burden of providing solidarity falls on the forces of the extreme left.

However whatever our reservations on some of the points of the settlement we must understand that the Vietnamese cannot be denied the right to negotiate especially if by doing so they can save their land and themselves from further devastation. We must also understand that the only existing revolutionary leadership inside Vietnam is the NLF. If groups on the extreme left actually believe that after leading the most heroic and determined struggle in the history of capitalism, the NLF will now simply disarm its cadres and "sell-out", they must understand the full logic of that statement. It means a severe defeat for the Indochinese revolution from which it would take decades to recover. It also means a grave setback to the colonial revolution and the world revolution as a whole.

In the absence of any real evidence it would be extremely impressionistic to jump to conclusions of this sort. While we must continue to analyse seriously all future developments, our essential task remains one of providing solidarity to the embattled militants in Indochina, isolated from the rest of the world by the tactics of Nixon and the betrayals of Moscow and Peking. The projected Indochina Solidarity Conference which is being supported by the IMG is therefore even more important than ever before, not only to discuss and analyse the present situation, but to project actions in solidarity with the Indochinese people.

**SOLIDARITY TILL THE FINAL VICTORY!  
FOR THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF  
ALL IMPERIALIST TROOPS FROM INDO-  
CHINA!**

**ALL POWER TO THE PRG!  
FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST VIETNAM!**

## "The national officials acted as strike-breakers" – Thornycroft worker STRUGGLE ENDS IN 'SELL-OUT'

By PAUL HUNTER

On Friday 27 October, a mass meeting of Thornycroft workers voted 2 to 1 to accept a recommendation from Bill John, AUEW executive council member, for a return to work on the basis of BLMC's York proposals (see *The Red Mole* 54) plus a "once and for all payment of £100 or four weeks pay (whichever is the greater)" within six weeks.

As shop floor militants pointed out, this vote represents a defeat for the Thornycroft occupation and therefore an important set-back in the struggle of all BLMC workers against the rationalisation policies of the Combine. Not only does the acceptance of the 8-point deal mean the loss of hundreds of more jobs, but it guarantees nothing for the workers who are kept on the pay roll. For BLMC's "commitments" under the terms of the deal are all "subject to market conditions". And even on purely monetary terms, workers have lost out heavily.

Writing in *The Spark* (bulletin of the Basingstoke LCDTU) one Thornycroft worker summed up the situation in the following way: "The guarantees of future employment by Eaton in the proposals are so hedged around with reservations as to be meaningless. So what does the Thornycroft worker gain? Taking the Thornycroft production worker averaging about £30 per week, on five weeks work-to-rule he loses about £75, and on eleven weeks sit-in he loses about £330 — a total loss of about £400 . . . . By selling himself to Eaton for an extra £100 — and that is what he has done — he loses the support of his fellow workers in BLMC. He is isolated. Eaton's record in this country show them to be a ruthless anti-union employer. The Thornycroft workers could be in for a rough time on their own. It must be faced that they have not gained a victory — they have suffered a defeat."

### A POSITION OF STRENGTH

There is no question but that the Thornycroft workers were in a position of strength. It is true that the amount of support (both financial and industrial) was still only a fraction of what it should have been, but the five week work-to-rule followed by 3 months (2 weeks holiday and 11 weeks sit-in) with no production whatsoever was posing enormous problems for BLMC.

For the last few weeks in particular — in order to avoid massive lay-offs which would have provoked widespread strikes and sit-ins throughout the combine — BLMC had been paying full pay to the Bus and Truck Division workers although there was virtually no work for them to do (due to the supply of gear-boxes drying up).

And in the course of the struggle the workers were learning new lessons on how to struggle — with the development of flying "pickets" to raise money and support from other factories in the combine in the face of what they called the "apathy" of union officials, and their insistence on subjecting any agreement reached by the national officials to a vote inside Thornycroft's.

In addition they had successfully withstood every direct approach from the management — including attempts to "bribe" individual strikers with offers of high severance payments and offers of other jobs. And they weren't moved by the witch-hunt started in the local press against the "communist-inspired" occupation and the so-called "un-democratic procedures" in the mass meetings of the Thornycroft workers occupying the factory.



Earlier jubilation after a previous attempt to sell out the occupation had failed.

So why the sudden collapse, with the acceptance of proposals which had already been rejected by two mass meetings?

### THE ROLE OF THE NATIONAL UNION OFFICIALS

The local leadership began the struggle with many weaknesses. They were a new and untried leadership in their first struggle, and it was a major struggle of great significance on issues of vital importance to the working class. They were challenging the right of the owners of capital to dispose of that capital and the jobs that went with it as they pleased. In the last analysis, they were challenging the property rights of the bourgeoisie.

This is why David Mitchell, the local Tory MP, said that their struggle to "unscramble" the Eaton-BLMC deal would require "major changes in the whole economic and political organisation in Britain".

But although the majority of the occupation committee did not understand the full significance of the fight at Thornycroft's in this class way, the major blame for the sell-out settlement must be laid firmly at the door of the national union leadership. It was they who accepted advances from BLMC's Pat Lowry at the Labour Party Conference in Blackpool to open negotiations on a "compromise" settlement, and it was they who agreed to the BLMC proposals made at York which amounted to a demand for surrender on all the major questions at stake. And then they proceeded to try to ram this settlement down the throats of workers in Thornycroft's, with Scanlon, for instance, making press statements to the effect that the deal was as good as could be got and should be accepted.

When a mass meeting at Thornycroft's on October 8th rejected the "offer" by 312 votes to 8, the national officials insisted on another meeting open to workers not taking part in the occupation — a move which the local press were quick to seize on as "proof" of their allegations of "ballot-rigging" etc. When this second mass meeting also rejected the York proposals by an overwhelming majority, the national officials merely went back to bargain with BLMC for a bigger "bribe" with which to make the 338 redund-

ancies more palatable. They did not take up a fight for the 1000 jobs demanded by the Thornycroft workers.

These manoeuvres led to some confusion. Leyland workers, for instance, had been sending regular financial support to Thornycroft's, but because someone put it about that the fight was only about the amount of severance pay, they ceased this support in the crucial week before the sell-out.

But in spite of this, just before the sell-out took place, an important decision was taken by the Bus & Truck Division of the Combine Committee: they would bring all their 16,000 members out on strike in support if the occupation rejected the "new" deal made by the union officials.

### THE £100 BRIBE TO SURRENDER

As soon as BLMC made their offer of the "once and for all payment of £100" on top of the York proposals, Bill John rushed down to Basingstoke to try to push it through. The first thing he did was to persuade the occupation committee to allow him to "report back" on his negotiations with BLMC at a meeting on 27th October. There was to be no recommendation and no vote.

But on the morning of the 27th, he pressed the shop stewards committee to allow a vote on his recommendation (to accept the deal) after all. This proposal split the committee 12 — 11 with 7 abstentions. If it had not been for the 8 staff representatives (some of whom represented only themselves), who voted for Bill John's proposal and tipped the balance, he would now be smarting from another slap in the face from Thornycroft workers. But having only just won the vote on the unrepresentative occupation committee, Bill John then insisted that every one of them must "go out there and sell the proposals" to the mass meeting.

As a result, Len Smart, the chairman of the occupation committee, put the recommendation, and to most workers there it must have seemed as though the shop stewards committee were united in accepting the deal. *The Bus & Truck Division's decision to strike in solidarity was not brought to the attention of the meeting.*

Faced with this confusing situation, and deliberately kept ignorant of the crucial new factor in the situation which would have immeasurably strengthened their position, the mass meeting voted for the recommendation for a return to work, and the sit-in ended.

### LESSONS

The article in *The Spark* drew out two lessons to be learned from the defeat. "The first is that the national officials acted as strike-breakers. They were not afraid that the Thornycroft workers would lose. They were afraid that they would win by rejecting the proposals and therefore bringing out the rest of the Bus & Truck Division. The second is that in a dispute the shop floor workers must maintain control."

We would add one more. That in order to be able to successfully fight the strike-breaking efforts of the union bureaucracy and in order to maintain or rather develop some real workers' democracy in a dispute, it is necessary to draw out the class issues involved. For workers' democracy (or even shop floor control in a dispute) can only begin to exist on the basis of a struggle against the social dictatorship of the capitalist class — represented in this case by BLMC's decision to throw 338 workers on the scrap heap.



Above: Militants of the Ligue Communiste and other groups demonstrate in solidarity with the Vietnamese struggle at the Hilton Hotel, Paris, during a U S embassy election party on Tuesday night

# REVIEWS

## Students and the Struggle for Socialism

### The Incomparable Fanny

The fact of a women's rock group is rare enough to deserve mention. When the group is as excellent as Fanny, even the revolutionary left should take notice.

Until very recently female singers have been persuaded to sing songs which reinforce ideas of female passivity and subordination. Almost all their lyrics present women as mere sex objects.

#### BLUES

Only within the Blues and in Gospel music has there been any resistance by women. Although very few women have been able to break the musical sex bar (Memphis Minnie, Georgia White), women blues singers, while accepting the general sexual reference of most blues have asserted their own independence ("I've got a man upstairs, one downstairs, one across the street - you've got your eyes wide open, daddy, but you're sound asleep"); or observed supposed male sexual prowess with a cynical eye ("You're like an old ship that has sprung a leak; you ain't young no more and your lovin' is weak. Now I'm through with you and I hope you don't feel hurt.") Women's gospel groups have indicated the potential of female small group singing, on a very restricted set of mystified themes.

Many of the songs of the more recent female singers - Joni Mitchell, Melanie and Janis Joplin, for instance - take up similar themes to the blues, suggesting women's sexual and personal independence. They combine them with the other incessant theme of modern pop music - an exploration of the impermanence of relationships, helping to undermine the romantic idea of permanent love which is one of the ways of sanctifying the family.

#### BREAKTHROUGH

Fanny's music contains both these themes in its lyrics ("Oh, baby, I can make you come to me; oh, baby, I can make you run - I'm cold as ice and hot as the sun". "Once I thought that love was magic, I'd grow up, my Prince would come... But the world doesn't end, you were only a friend, that I loved 'cause I needed to"). But they have done more than this. Modern group music depends on an intricate blend of group vocal and instrumental sound - thus the significance of the guitar, an instrument very responsive to the voice. The subordination in music of women has meant that these combinations have always involved male voices for the vocal parts, and that a whole musical area involving female voices has been denied. Fanny have broken this bar, and that is why their music is so important. To make such a breakthrough is equivalent to that which the Beatles themselves made some years ago.

Fanny's music is superb. It is also a blow in the struggle against the oppression of women. They have two L.P.s released here so far, *Charity Ball* and *Fanny Hill*.

Carol Riddell.

**Students and the Struggle for Socialism** by Susan Buddle, Richard Noss, and Colin Sparks (I.S. pamphlet, 15p.)

This is a well produced and well argued pamphlet and should raise the level of debate on the left about the role of students in the class struggle. Clearly the International Socialism group has learned something from its sojourn in the LCDSU, and a number of this pamphlet's ideas first saw the light of day in the pages of *The Red Mole*. The first part, an analysis of the developments and function of higher education under capitalism, is, apart from the genuflection at the altar of the permanent arms economy, quite unexceptionable. It is in the second part, more particularly in the elaboration of the underlying theme that things begin to go wrong.

#### BASIC ARGUMENT

Their basic argument is that students are an intermediate group which "may be capable of spontaneous revolts or of acting as agents of the ruling class; they are not themselves capable of resolving historical problems. In the last analysis the intermediate classes are forced to choose between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Their consciousness is determined by the balance of forces between the two classes who are capable of forming an independent consciousness" (p20) "The key task for socialist students therefore is to win the student movement to an understanding of its objective nature - to win wide layers of students to the recognition of the need for a political alliance with the working class." (p34) So far so good. But what is the content of this 'political alliance'?

The authors of the pamphlet put it this way: "Student-worker solidarity means more than either passing resolutions or being drafted onto picket lines. The synthesis of these two aspects, through an understanding of the political perspectives on which they are based, is the essence of the concept." (p38) It is a big step forward that the IS begin to pose the question in this way. As they themselves now admit, an alliance between whole social groups cannot be forged through mere recruitment to the revolutionary organisation; such a course is not an immediate alternative for the mass of students (or workers) and in no way amounts to any kind of perspective for struggle. Unfortunately, this still leaves the most basic questions unresolved.

#### COMMON POLITICAL AIMS

Clearly an alliance between different social groups cannot be based on an appeal to immediate common interests. It can only be understood on the basis of common political aims. Such an alliance can clearly only be forged in struggle. Now, the content of the British class struggle today is not that of a conscious fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. No, the struggle of the working class, although occurring outside the organisational control of social democracy, is by and large within and under its ideological control. On the other side, however, we have students, who, because they are a focus of a whole number of specific contradictions, at the level of the college as well as at the generalised ideological level, because of the weakness of the student bureaucracies, etc., can respond to and fight behind revolutionary slogans and organisations. In other words, the consciousness and struggle of students develops unevenly in relation to that of the working class.

It is only in the last analysis that student struggles are determined by the balance of forces. Between now and the last analysis, the problem is to seize on the deep going radicalisation of students and develop the potential of a politicisation outside the hold of the reformist bureaucracies. In this way, the struggles of students may in themselves contribute to the final balance of forces.

The point to understand is, how the mass of students can come to such a political consciousness. This is not likely to happen on the picket line. It is not going to be resolved by reading books, nor even by listening to the revolutionaries put up motions at Union meetings. Revolutionary consciousness is not reducible to the ideas that are acknowledged, but refers most importantly to actual practice - how people struggle and in general relate to the world. It is how the contradictions which arise in the colleges are dealt with which is of the essence in this respect. It is here that our authors most badly fall down.

#### STUDENT STRUGGLES

As the IS pamphlet documents quite well, the changes in higher education are produced by the needs of capitalist industry on one side and from the inability to solve the problem of social expenditure on the other. Unfortunately, this analysis is nowhere linked to a strategy for struggle in the colleges. For instance, on the question of "comprehensivisation", they make a withering attack on the CP's advocacy of this as a solution to problems in higher education. Then instead of offering a strategy against this solution of the big bourgeoisie they conclude weakly with the absurdity that "In so far as the demand for comprehensive higher education is a reform in the interests of the working class, and is fought for as a real reform, we give it our support." (p45) What does this position actually amount to?

Are we being asked to work out a blue-print for a reform of higher education which is actually in the interests of the working class, i.e. raises its technical competence, cultural standards, etc., and eradicates the segregation and divisions which disunite and demoralise the working class? This would only be an immediate policy if the working class was actually struggling on the issue. In the present situation, prioritised as it is by the IS, it would actually be a diversion from the actual struggles in the colleges. But not only that, it becomes a cover for the present day reformist currents in higher education, the big bourgeoisie itself. The technocratic reforms of these latter, as Maggie Thatcher made plain at the NUT conference, do indeed include a policy of comprehensivisation. It is not our concern to put trivial conditions on this policy, whether it be the "democracy, participation and egalitarianism" of the CP or the "in the interests of the working class" of the IS (both these policies being in the correct sense of the word 'petty bourgeois'). This project is as utopian as those which would transform the colleges into 'free' or 'anti' institutions. What we have to say is that we are not necessarily opposed to changes and reforms, that we don't uphold the reactionary past of higher education. But what we do have to argue is that none of these changes should be at the expense of workers or students. But, of course, this latter condition is precisely what the bourgeoisie would not be prepared to accept. They have always sought to develop education at the minimum possible cost - hence the binary and other divisions which justify unequal expenditure. Moreover, at the present time they have a very pressing need to cut back social expenditure in all fields - hence the rationalisations on financing higher education, with for instance the present accommodation crisis.

#### NO RESPONSIBILITY

On this last point, it is of no value whatsoever for the IS to say that "We must join with the labour movement and demand the nationalisation of the land and building industry and give our support to the building of strong and militant tenants associations." (p45). Our immediate task is to take up the struggle and draw in the mass of students

on the basis that students (or for that matter workers who might be affected) should not take any responsibility for the problems of capitalism. It is this line which is the content of the veto, which the IS give verbal support to. It is through such struggles that the real contradictions in the colleges can be deepened and extended; that students can be brought to an understanding of the way that capitalism works and reproduces its social relations - precisely through struggling against the effects of these social relations in the colleges. In this way students will come to see the practical necessity both of solidarising with workers' struggles and of winning the support of the trade union movement for their own struggles in the colleges.

Clearly, students cannot defeat the policy of the bourgeoisie as a whole. Although it might be possible to effect this or that victory, the bourgeoisie can raise the stakes in such a way as to defeat even the most militant and politically conscious students, so long as these struggles remain isolated from the support of the working class. But that isolation needs to be broken in struggle. The alliance with the working class in a genuine struggle against capitalism can only be forged against the reformist leaderships of the class. It is the high level of student struggle, its combativity and clear slogans which can effect this. Such was the case at the university of Kent in the struggle against the 10 per cent rent rises and 50 per cent redundancies at the end of last term. This kind of juncture is the real content of a political alliance with the working class forged against the reformist leaderships and, by consequence, a real contribution to the development of the consciousness and struggle of the class itself.

#### SEE-SAWING

But the IS don't ever come near such a perspective as this. For all their abundant and tricky use of marxist phrases, a closer look shows them to have meaning only at the most general, historical level. They provide us with an understanding of the fact that those who wish to make a revolution must base their strategy on the social force of the proletariat rather than students. But they don't tell us the tasks of socialists who work amongst the mass of students. On the one hand we have revolutionary socialists with their integrated programme for transforming the whole of society. And on the other we have the mass of students with their day to day concerns. If the general historical statement that students' "consciousness is determined by the balance of forces between the two classes who are capable of forming an independent consciousness" is taken as an immediate guide to action, it can only mean one thing. That is that socialist students should work amongst the workers since their action alone can change the consciousness of the mass of students. If the logic of that position is then abandoned in practice and the immediate concerns of students taken up, willy nilly these immediate concerns become an end in themselves. This latter is the practical meaning of student trade unionism.

This is all quite ironic because one whole section is devoted to a very good knock-down of the 'Theory of Student Trade Unionism'. But, as a matter of fact student unionism is separable from a story about students being some sort of worker and NUS being a trade union. Student trade unionism is a political practice which approaches student issues in a sectoral way. In as much as this pamphlet says anything about student issues which isn't abstentionist (e.g. 'Nationalise the building industry' as an answer to the accommodation crisis), they recommend a sectoral practice ('Alternative courses', 'collective work').

It is this uneasy see-sawing between abstentionism and injunctions to 'join the party' on the one hand, and student trade unionism on the other, which informs this pamphlet and the general practice of the IS group. However, the task of revolutionaries is to develop all the struggles of the masses in an anti-capitalist direction. This is just as much a duty in the colleges as in the factory. Unfortunately, this pamphlet doesn't help us in that task.

J.R. Clynes

### ANTI-INTERNMENT LEAGUE NOVEMBER DEMONSTRATION

Sunday, 12 November - assemble Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, at 2.00 p.m.



## Red T-Shirts

I enclose £1.25 + 5p. p&p

- Large  
 Medium  
 Small

Name.....

Address.....

Bulk order: 4 or more 20% discount. Payment in advance. Post free.

Money orders to *Red Mole*, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

### RANK AND FILE TEACHERS

'Crisis in the Schools'

Speakers: A teacher, a parent, and representatives of the S.A.U. and the N.U.S.S.

Friday, 17 November, at 7.45 p.m. in the NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields, London WC1.

**SOUTH ASIA RED FORUM** - next meeting Tuesday, 21 November, on 'Social Classes in South Asia' (speaker: Brian Davey). Room 2D, University of London Union building, Malet Street, London W.C.1. For further details contact J. Singh, 27 Gap Road, London S.W.19.

# PAKISTANI WORKERS CONTINUE TO DEFY REGIME - 7 KILLED, 36 WOUNDED



View of the 'battle ground' in Karachi where Pakistani workers (left) and police (right) clashed. The workers' meeting was held on the hillock in the background.

From JAVED HUSSEIN

Karachi, 6 November: The last week of October saw all the country's bourgeois parties getting together and agreeing on a draft proposal for the country's new constitution. Whilst they were still congratulating each other on this tremendous achievement, the police in Karachi, the country's largest industrial centre, opened fire on striking workers killing seven and wounding thirty-six others. It was a symbolic rendering of Mr Bhutto's democracy and a terrible indictment of the country's pro-Moscow "communists" who have been tailing both Bhutto and the bourgeois National Awami Party (which holds power in two provinces).

Over the last few months more than 200 workers and peasants have been killed by the police in different parts of Pakistan while hundreds more have been seriously

## Gulf Committee Declaration

The revolutionary war in the Sultanate of Oman is now in its eighth year. Under the leadership of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arab Gulf it has inflicted a series of defeats on the British-officered Omani army and on the detachments of British Special Air Services commandos sent in to crush the revolution. Three quarters of the populated area of Dhofar province have now been liberated. In July 1970, the British tried to split the revolution politically by deposing their old client Sultan Said and putting in the new "modernist" son Sultan Qabus. Last October, in a campaign codenamed "Operation Jaguar", they launched an all-out military attempt to smash the liberated areas.

All these political and military attacks have failed, but, at the start of the dry season, a new offensive has now been launched. On September 23rd, helicopter-borne troops with British officers and pilots attacked the eastern province of Dhofar. Three days later, on September 26th, anti-communist forces launched an attack on the borders of the People's Republic of Yemen, backed by Saudi Arabia, Iran, Libya, and the United States.

The imperialist desire to smash the revolution in Oman and in People's Yemen is derived directly from their knowledge that this movement threatens their hold on Gulf oil, the richest single object of imperialist plunder in the world. The continued exploitation of this oil on which Europe depends for 50% of its supplies depends on keeping in power those agents who will guarantee western control.

Despite the attempt by Britain, Iran and Arab reaction to impose a blackout on news from Oman and the Gulf the heroic struggle of the revolutionaries is gaining support throughout the world. Recently, a delegation from the NLF of South Vietnam was in the liberated areas of Dhofar, and we recall the important Popular Front statement of February 1970 in which they declare their support for the struggle of the British people against their own capitalist ruling class.

At a time of increased imperialist attacks on the revolution in Arabia, we call for an end to all British support for the reactionary regimes in Arabia. We take this opportunity to declare our support for the revolutionary movement in the Gulf led by the Popular Front and to condemn the attacks on the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

October 18 1972.

The Gulf Committee, c/o Russell Foundation, 3 Shavers Pl., London S.W.1.

injured and thousands are languishing in Mr Bhutto's prisons. It is a telling commentary on Pakistan's first "serious" experiment with "bourgeois democracy" that there are more political prisoners today than there were in the period of the two preceding military dictators.

### CONTINUED STRUGGLE

But despite the oppression the working class of Karachi has refused to be cowed and continues to struggle despite the lack of a political leadership. The recent explosion has its roots in a number of factory occupations which were ended when troops attacked the factories and expelled the workers. The following day thousands of workers came out in solidarity and industrial life in Karachi was virtually paralysed. Last July the police killed nearly forty workers, hoping thereby to defuse the struggle. The fact that nearly half a million workers are out on strike today against the "evils of the capitalist system which exploits us" shows that despite the lack of any overall political co-ordination the objective conditions constantly impel the workers towards militancy.

The recent clashes which claimed the lives of seven militants took place in the Landhi Industrial complex, the largest in the city. The workers were holding a mass general assembly when a force of over 300 armed policemen led by senior police officers arrived. The police were in seven trucks. They attempted to ambush the 4000 workers, but the latter broke up into small commando units and hit back. Messengers were sent to other factories and soon more workers began to arrive. Karachi's leading daily newspaper *Dawn* takes up the story:

"The workers shouted slogans against the police and raised massive barricades to prevent the police force either from moving forward or retreating towards the City. The workers took full advantage of the hilly landscape, which provided them natural shelter from police action. In a short while the workers managed to dig up the kutcha road at many points and erected barricades with big stones, telephone poles and wooden logs.

Many a time the tired policemen retreated to their trucks to take shelter and rest. But they had to abandon them as the workers pelting stones tightened their encirclement of the vehicles.

During the clash one worker of the Paris Textile Mills, Saleh Mohammad was killed on the spot when he was directly hit by a tear-gas shell on his head. His body was removed by the police and was later sent to the Civil Hospital mortuary."

The battle raged for several hours till finally the police were forced to retreat with all the police trucks badly damaged. The only real weakness on the workers' side was the fact that they were not armed. The creation of workers' militias thus becomes an important priority for the entire working class in Karachi today.

### LACK OF LEADERSHIP

The day following this clash a leading revolutionary trade-unionist, Usman Baloch, President of the Sind United Workers' Federation, was arrested together with 500 other militants. Meanwhile eleven trade-union federations have called for continued solidarity strikes. At the time of writing Karachi is engulfed by a gigantic strike wave. But the workers' militancy exists in the absence of a recognised revolutionary party. The extreme left forces which do exist are heavily influenced by Maosim. This has meant that they feel uneasy and unsure of themselves in the cities and unable to provide the working-class with any serious political direction. Ignorant of the traditions of the proletariat in Russia, Germany, Spain, France, etc., they are incapable of understanding the need to create working class organs as a counter to the institutions of a weakened and debilitated bourgeois state and providing them with methods of self-defence.

The brutality with which the ruling People's Party has dealt with working class militancy has finally compelled the Maoist minister in Bhutto's government, Mairaj Mohammed Khan, to resign his post in protest and a number of dissident M.P.'s have been expelled from the People's Party. Earlier the Minister of Law, Mahmud Ali Kasuri, had also resigned. However all that Mairaj, and his friends have so far been able to offer the workers is talk, talk and more talk. This is clearly not sufficient. The growing casualties sustained by the proletariat puts armed self-defence on the order of the day. Strikes, mass mobilisations and demonstrations are simply not enough. These are the lessons to be learnt from the recent upsurge in Karachi.

## 'Unity' with Military in Chile

By JUDITH WHITE

Allende has chosen his way out of the crisis forced by the lorry owners' boycott, which began on 9 October. Bowing to the imperatives of the armed forces and the ruling class parties, on 31 October the entire Cabinet resigned, and the military were brought into a new administration.

The government's response to the crisis scarcely lived up to the 4 September promise to organise against the fascists. Rather, the military gained control of the situation, with a curfew in the main urban centres, and a ban on all demonstrations, left and right.

### CONTINUED STRUGGLE

In the face of this the Chilean working class has continued to struggle. In Concepcion, liaison committees have been set up to organise solidarity and self-defence; and both there and in Santiago, the workers have forced the nationalisation of several firms, including Dow Chemicals, which is protected by OPIC, the U.S. government agency to guarantee foreign investments.

While locally Popular Unity has been forced by the workers to take action in these cases, it has completely betrayed at the government level. On the same day as the government dissolved the Lorry-owners Confederation, the Christian Democrat and National Parties, which still have a majority in Parliament, brought a case to indict four ministers for violating the constitution: Chanchol (Agriculture), Suarez (Interior), Matus (Economy) and Palma (Education). Allende conceded victory to the Right.

In bringing the military into the government, Allende was supported by the Radicals and the Communist Party - whose line in the recent crisis was that the workers should 'produce' more (for their capitalist employers) to ensure economic stability. So the Stalinist Figueroa is now Labour Minister in the same Cabinet as the commanders of the Army, Navy and Air Force.

### DECISIVE CHANGE

The most important military figure is the Commander-in-chief of the Army, Carlos Prats Gonzalez: trained at Fort Leavenworth, US, promoted by former President Frei after the attempt on General Schneider's life, instrumental in persuading the American military mission not to leave Chile when Allende came into office, on 'good terms' with the leadership of Christian Democracy. No wonder he has been able to persuade the lorry owners to go back to work (with suspension of all charges, dropping of nationalisation plans, and guarantees to the private sector).

Prats Gonzalez, bourgeois commentators happily declare, is 'no gorilla'. Nor was Velasco when his regime first installed itself in Peru: which has made him very effective as a defender of the interests of the bourgeoisie, as it has disoriented the workers' movement he is now viciously repressing. In Chile too, the military now takes on the task of ruling for the bourgeoisie. The nature of the Popular Unity government has changed decisively. The workers and peasants of Chile, to prepare against the counter-revolution, face the need to take up the struggle against the Generals, and against further treachery on the part of the social-democratic and Stalinist leaderships.

### 'PROVOS AND PROTESTANTS'

In the introduction to the interview with Sean Mac Stiofain and Joe Cahill published in our last issue, we claimed to reprint the full text of the interview. In fact, we were forced at the last minute to omit for reasons of space a final exchange in which Mac Stiofain declared his support for the Palestinian struggle.

### Special Introductory Offer INTERNATIONAL MARXIST PRESS

A WEEKLY JOURNAL specialising in political analysis and interpretation of international events of particular interest to the labour, socialist, colonial independence, Black and women's liberation movements.

10 AIRMAIL ISSUES - ONLY £1  
(regular - 13 issues for £2)

Airmailed from New York and mailed first class from London.

Send cheque/postal order for £1 (made out to Pathfinder Press) to: Pathfinder Press, 47 The Cut, London SE1 8LL. Sample copy free on request.



### INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP

(British Section of the Fourth International)  
182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

I would like more information about the IMG.

Name:

Address:

Occupation:

# WOMEN'S LIBERATION CONFERENCE

The 4th National Women's Liberation Conference in London last weekend (4 - 5 November) was the most important and constructive conference so far. It was attended by about 1,700 women, three times as many as on previous occasions. The conference also reflected the significant political changes taking place in the movement over the last six months.

## SELMA JAMES

Selma James and her radical feminist supporters were hoping to find acceptance of the anti-Marxist positions in her pamphlet, *Women and the Trade Union*. This argues that the way forward to the socialist revolution is for women to demand payment as housewives, and organise with the 'wageless' outside the trade unions. In her eyes unions are the enemy of women and of the working class. This bourgeois socialism was rejected decisively in most of the major workshop discussions at the conference, including that in which Selma James herself participated. Its supporters rightly judged it inopportune to put the '6 points' to the conference for voting.

Selma James' intervention has however had the positive effect of stimulating political discussion throughout the movement. Various attempts have been made to produce critiques on a class basis, by local groups such as Bristol Women's Liberation, and individuals in the London workshop. But there have also

## Reported by JUDITH WHITE and LEONORA LLOYD

been contributions which dress up feminist arguments with eclectic elements of 'Marxist' analysis; most notably the paper produced by Ros Delmar and supported by Juliet Mitchell. This defines two areas of social activity, the 'world of production' - dominated by the men - and the 'world of reproduction' - the sphere of women. Despite some correct remarks made later about the economic and social functions of the family in capitalist society, this division is maintained: the theoretical task for the women in the movement (tasks other than theoretical are not proposed) is to develop an analysis of... the 'mode of reproduction' (!)

## RESOLUTIONS

There was virtually no political discussion in the plenary sessions, which were restricted largely to reports - though hopefully it will be possible to discuss all these differences at a conference for all women socialists in the movement called by the Birmingham group for February. Nonetheless some of the resolutions passed at the end reflected advances in the movement. A report from the Irish Women's Liberation movement ended with a resolution calling for British troops out, without which no-one in

Ireland could achieve liberation, and this was overwhelmingly passed. Conference voted to sponsor the forthcoming Indochina Solidarity Conference, and howled down a motion calling on President Nixon to do 'everything in his power to end the Vietnam war', affirming that the liberation of Vietnam would be brought about entirely through the struggles of the Vietnamese people. The black Australian woman who made it clear that the first problem for her people was that of fighting genocide and starvation was thunderously applauded, while cries of 'What about the Palestinian women?' met an Israeli who bemoaned the problems of life in a country with no civil marriage. On other issues considerable confusion was shown - e.g. support was voted to the 'Private members' equal rights bill, while no comprehensive resolution on policy or statement of aims was put to the vote on grounds of lack of debate.

## WHERE NOW?

Where does the movement go from here? Perhaps the most significant thing to come out of the conference was the workshop of about 70 women on 'Women's Liberation and the Trade Unions', called by Bristol Women's Liberation and IMG comrades who

had written the pamphlet *The Choice Before Us* (a reply to Selma James). This discussed the possibility of setting up Women's Action Groups in unions around three main areas of work: (1) to fight against sex discrimination and for democratisation of the unions - the former to include demands enabling women to fully participate in union activities, e.g., creche facilities for meetings, etc.; (2) to ensure that the unions support struggles against women's oppression; and (3) to organise non-union women, especially those traditionally ignored by unions.

Everyone at the meeting will be circulated with a list of those attending, so that they can contact others in the same union. A meeting on 20 - 21 January in Birmingham has been arranged, at which the agenda will include discussion of the political basis and programme of the action groups, the detailed problems of working in different unions, and the ways in which community issue campaigns can be related to industrial organisation and action. It is hoped to have a bulletin out before this meeting, containing information about what is already happening in various unions.

In London on 21 November the Socialist Woman Group is holding a public meeting to assess the work of the conference and discuss the future strategy of the women's liberation movement. The meeting will take place at the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (five minutes walk from Kings X tube) at 7.30 p.m.

## RED BERETS (From page 1)

aporate. Thus Britain would achieve a return to stability in the North without the risk of instability in the South.

### REALISTIC ASSESSMENT

This policy was based on a realistic assessment of the situation within the Catholic community in the North, the situation in the South and in Britain. Its weakness, and the source of its ultimate failure, was its misunderstanding of the effect of the reform programme within the Orange community. The plebeian elements in the Protestant population saw the reform programme as a threat to their economically marginal, but politically important privileges. This stratum reacted by a movement to the right. But, due to Westminster pressure, the main stream Unionists, the Stormont regime, was forced to adhere to the reform programme. In this situation, the hair-cracks in the Orange monolith, the Unionist power block, became clearly visible.

The Orange monolith is structured like a pyramid, combining all classes in the Orange community in a single reactionary power block. The apex of this pyramid was led in one direction by British imperialism, while its base shifted in the opposite direction. The effect of this was seen in the successive tumbling of Prime Minister after Prime Minister, until in August 1971 the position of Brian Faulkner, the last of the Mohicans, was threatened.

Britain realised that the fall of Faulkner would be the beginning of the fall of

the House of Orange: since Faulkner was the last credible Prime Minister, the fall of Faulkner would bring about the fall of Stormont. Stormont was necessary as a cement to bind the block of four classes together. British imperialism's overall plan for Northern Ireland calls for the reform of the Orange monolith, the reform of the Northern Ireland state, but it aims to maintain in its essence this reactionary, pro-imperialist power structure to use it as a lever and a prop to further British interests in Ireland.

### CONFRONTATION

For these reasons, on 9 August, 1971, the policy of Containment and Reform was dropped, and replaced with a policy of confrontation with almost the total Catholic community. Torture, concentration camps, murder, military brutality and repression, and Black Propaganda were used to crush the resistance in the Catholic community.

This policy was continued, despite some misgivings on the part of more experienced British counter-insurgency experts, until, in the aftermath of Bloody Sunday in Derry, it provoked the very danger that Britain most fears in Ireland - a risk to its investment and interests in the South. It also saw the beginning, typified by the 31,000 strong Anti-internment League demonstration in London, of the rise of in Britain of a mass movement in solidarity with the Irish struggle. This has the potential of reaching the same dimensions as the American anti-war movement, which, to paraphrase Spiro Agnew, "threatened to rend the fabric of American society".

To avoid these dangers, Britain changed course again. The policy of confrontation, *au Faulkner*, was replaced with Whitelaw *Mark I*, as the oyster-eyed Gaulgiter instituted a new policy to defeat the IRA.

### SIMPLE CALCULATIONS

The new policy was based on relatively simple calculations. To defeat the IRA - without provoking the danger of an anti-imperialist movement in the South or a solidarity movement in Britain, it was necessary to isolate the IRA from the Catholic population. To isolate it from the Catholic population it is necessary to grant such concessions to the Catholics as to endanger the "privileges" of the plebeian Protestants, and therefore to endanger the Orange monolith (see *The Red Mole*, 42). This risk had to be taken, and Whitelaw proceeded on his balancing act.

A major part of these calculations was based on the belief that the IRA could rapidly be isolated from the Catholic community, forced to the conference table, hoodwinked and split before the complete disintegration of the Orange monolith. The success of the Republican leaders in avoiding this trap, the retreat by Whitelaw in the face of the UDA lynch-mobs on the streets of Belfast, combined to defeat this policy.

Whitelaw *Mark II* was then implemented. As I explained (*The Red Mole*, 47) this policy was essentially one of the carrot and the big stick. In its essence a policy of confrontation, it intended to learn the mistakes of the first confrontation policy, where Faulkner had been so obsessed with the need to maintain Orange unity that he had forced the battle lines in the struggle so as to include virtually the whole Catholic community in the anti-imperialist camp.

Whitelaw hopes to take on the resistance forces one by one, starting with the Provos, and to divide the Catholic community geographically by the implementation of different "profile" levels for the British army in Derry, Belfast and the border areas. After three months of this policy, it is possible to make some assessment of its success so far.

### THE FALL OF WHITELAW

Bearing in mind what the British policy hopes to achieve, and removing from our minds the effect of British propaganda about its success (one of the current jokes in the IRA is that the fastest way to get promoted is to be captured; then the British are sure to put you up at least two ranks in their press statements) what is clear in fact is that the British policy is in a shambles - a shambles of such dimension as to threaten Whitelaw's position.

His failure to deal with the Orange-Ultras has swung the mass of the Catholic population in the ghetto areas back behind the Provos. His policy aimed at the opposite. His attempt to substitute the "detainment" by Special Courts for internment without trial is exposed for the fraud and

the confidence trick that it is. The "Maguire revelations" and the British propaganda campaign, and the phoney peace movement, all of which were designed to split the IRA, have failed.

The Officials, whom Whitelaw had hoped to neutralise out of the struggle by this stage, are now coming under increasing pressure from within their own ranks to take a more positive role in defence of the Catholic ghetto areas.

The local government elections, central to his plan for drawing out the "moderate elements" in the community, had to be postponed. The plebiscite, which was originally intended to be worded in such a way that to vote for the Union meant voting for the abolition of the ascendancy, has now, under pressure from the "Get in or get out" mob in the Tory party, been worded in such a way as to provoke the possibility of Lynch being forced to announce a similar plebiscite.

Bi-partisan policy with Labour, so essential if Ireland is to be kept out of domestic British politics, will also be endangered by this move.

The Provos, reacting from their actual experience of leading a popular movement for more than three years, move steadily to the left, and therefore become progressively a holder organisation for Britain to deal with.

### ONE SUCCESS

When added together, this list of failures would have been enough to have seen Whitelaw follow O'Neill, Chi-Chi and Faulkner into the dustbin of history.

That he hasn't is indicative of his one outstanding success to date. The present policy of the carrot and the big stick - or as it is now known in Belfast, "Red Berets and Green Paper" - has been successful in one of its major purposes. Because it is not an openly repressive policy, large numbers of potential supporters of the Irish struggle in Britain have been confused and disoriented. The potential of a mass solidarity movement which existed earlier this year in the immediate aftermath of Bloody Sunday has not been realised.

### CENTRAL TASK

In Britain, the task of building a movement in solidarity with the Irish struggle has become more difficult; and the very difficulty, instead of acting as an additional spur to sections of the British left to increase their efforts to build such a movement, has in fact been used as an excuse and a smoke-screen for the betrayal of sections of the left.

The central task today for all those workers, students, Irish exiles and socialists who support the Irish struggle is to overcome these problems and in overcoming them to construct a movement capable of giving meaningful solidarity action to the Irish struggle.

At this point in time, this means building the Anti-Internment League.

**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:** Tariq Ali, Robin Blackburn, Peter Gowan, Alan Jones, Martin Meteyard, John Weal, Judith White.

**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

German Distributor: ISP-Verlag, D-2000, HAMBURG 50, Julius-Leber-Str. 32

## INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE

2nd and 3rd December

**Speakers include:** Noam Chomsky, representatives of PRG, DRV, and Cambodian and Laotian organisations, Malcolm Caldwell, Robin Blackburn, John Gittings, Steven and Hilary Rose, etc.

**For further details and registration:** write to *Indochina*, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Registration fee: £1.



## SUBSCRIBE!

I enclose £1.50/£3.00 for 6/12 months.

**RED MOLE**

Name:

Address:

Money Orders to *Red Mole*, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.