

# The Red Mole



**MANY FRONTS  
ONE FIGHT**

# APRIL 26

## PRESS LIES

After April 26th's united action demonstration against U.S. imperialism in Vietnam and Trinidad, and the press lies which followed it, the VSC issued the statement which we reproduce elsewhere in this issue. None of the press published it: neither the *Guardian* nor the *Morning Star*, nor, of course, the *Workers Press*, whose account of the demonstration, with snide references to "soul brothers", etc., was amazingly similar to the *Daily Express*'s. We must surmise that the press reports were largely based on police accounts of the demonstration, whose purpose, as usual, was to drive a wedge between the black organisations and the "peaceful" and mainly white VSC marchers.

## POLICE BRUTALITY

The demonstration was the occasion for a dramatic illustration of police brutality and racism. The police made few arrests during the march itself, when the demonstrators were united. But once the marchers reached Speakers' Corner and began to disperse, police moved in and attacked, pushing and jostling groups of black and white militants, barring the way to some who were trying to leave Speakers' Corner, sending their "snatch squads" into groups to pick out their victims, arresting and beating many of those who attempted to resist, who were provoked into expressing their anger or fighting back, or who simply happened to be around. The police ferocity was directed against the black demonstrators, and most of those arrested were black. Some of the police were red in the face and appeared demented; one of them, no doubt deprived of other "outlets" was seen systematically tearing a banner into small pieces and breaking up its pole, observed by five or six other pigs; others made brutal use of their truncheons. They gave the impression of having run amok; on the other hand the "snatch squads" must have been organised and directed from above.

## TEN STILL IN JAIL

The police made at least 20 arrests, with such "charges" as assault, obstruction and/or possessing offensive weapons (including a comb!) Some of those arrested were eventually let out on bail, a mockery having been made of the supposed right to telephone solicitors and friends and to arrange for immediate bail.

We are told of a sequel: the next day the police followed about 10 Panthers and their

supporters when they left the Great Marlborough Street court, according to our informant, pushing and jostling them from behind, and pursued them down into the underground, where two policemen were injured and another nine or so arrests were made, including a girl with an Afro haircut who happened to be passing by (the police are not very good at telling blacks apart).

As we write, at least 10 people, of whom at least 9 are black, are still in jail, having been refused bail, although most of them have no previous offenses and sureties have been found for them; the Judge in Chambers is too "busy" to hear appeals for bail; information on who is in and who is out is extremely hard to obtain, since they are moved from place to place, the police will not give information, the prisoners are not allowed to telephone, and their solicitors are not allowed in to see them unless they know who they are, which they can't unless they are allowed to telephone...

## SOME GOOD POINTS...

The demonstration itself was militant. There were a lot of anti-police slogans, as well as calls for victory for revolutionaries in Vietnam and Trinidad. About 1,000 people came on the march. The militancy of the black comrades in particular, together with the experience of the police riot at Speakers' Corner and police victimisation of black comrades, were very educational for white militants and others on the march. This was good and useful. But there are also lessons to be learnt from the demonstration, and criticisms to be made.

## SOME CRITICISMS

First, the demonstration was not very big. Most of those on it already understood what the police were like, although they may not have had personal experience of their behaviour. The demonstration took place in front of locked doors and blank walls; the main observers were police and a few reactionaries on balconies; the public at large learnt of the demonstration through the lies of the press.

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF FORCES

Second, many of the black demonstrators were disappointed with the lack of solidarity from so-called white revolutionaries in resisting the police victimisation, and also in making any attempt to break through the police cordons at Belgrave and Grosvenor Squares. On the

second point, however, there was agreement between white and black leaders, at any rate after the demonstration had failed to take any effective action outside the Trinidad High Commission, that the relationship of forces between police and demonstrators was such that attempts to break through would be incorrect; at Grosvenor Square a black leader spoke to the march and said that we should attack when we were strong and withdraw when we were weak, and that therefore we should continue the march rather than starting a confrontation with the police in Grosvenor Square.

On the question of solidarity against police brutality, individual white militants behaved very heroically, and joined in the struggles of the black militants. But the resistance was not massive, and it was very unorganised; hence the cry, reported in the *Times*, that "we must reorganise"—not to attack the police, but to get together to protect ourselves against arrests, and if possible to disperse in organised groups. Nevertheless the experience of black organisations is that fewer arrests are made when they demonstrate in their own communities, for instance in Brixton, because of the solidarity of local communities. Previous attempts to demonstrate in the West End, for instance, the Bobby Seale demonstration, have also led to large numbers of arrests; and in the demonstration against the British invasion of Anguilla, the police again used the technique of arresting the demonstrators as they attempted to disperse. There is the additional danger, for communities which are seriously under attack, of leaving the local communities exposed when the leaders and militants go up to the West End; this is one of the reasons why some militant Pakistani and black organisations decided not to support the Pakistani Workers' Union demonstration in the West End on May 3rd.

## NIPPED IN THE BUD

One of the results of these demonstrations has been that militants have been victimised for things which they have not done; for shouting anti-police slogans, but not for actually attacking the police. The police are apparently trying to pick off the militants before the movement gains strength, and before they have engaged in effective action. The result is that many militants are saddled with "previous offences" and/or suspended sentences whose effect is intended to be, and may actually be, to

inhibit them from demonstrating, or from undertaking more militant forms of action, in the future. The arrests at demonstrations are part of a general wave of arrests and arbitrary injunctions. The effectiveness of this police tactic was evident in, for example, the failure to occupy LSE, where paranoia about the police played a clear inhibitory role. And of course, arrests, court cases and imprisonment are very wasteful of time and money.

## CAREFULLY THOUGHT-OUT POLITICAL OBJECTIVES

The conclusion for revolutionaries is that we should be more serious about what we are doing in this period of incipient repression. When we engage in confrontations with the "law", they should be real confrontations, for real and carefully thought-out political objectives, and when we consider that the political effects of such action would be positive. When we demonstrate in future, we should be quite clear about what we are doing. We should not engage in useless and token defiance of the police. We should organise our marches and stick together for our own defence. We should consider demonstrating together in areas where there is a large and potentially sympathetic local population. We should attempt to avoid arrest. We should, in addition, organise supporting groups who can attempt to ensure that police and authorities do not get away with arbitrary arrests, imprisonment, and infringement of bourgeois "civil liberties".

Finally, of course, we should have a sense of proportion about the brutality and racism of the police towards demonstrators. Those who go on demonstrations are supposedly politically conscious and they go, or should go, with their eyes open. Much more serious allegations of brutality and racism have been made against the police in the East End and in other black communities. It must again and again be emphasised that Pakistanis and West Indians walking the street at night are not safe from attack from white hooligans or in some cases the police. Our main priority must be not the protection of demonstrators, but solidarity with those who are organising to defend the black communities against attack, even though many of the black militants demonstrating on Sunday were there precisely because they had themselves been subjected to unprovoked attack and harassment in the past.

# INDOCHINA

The extension of the war into Cambodia was not to be unexpected. It was a logical extension of the twisted logic within which the imperialists operate: the military requirements of the logic of capital. It does, however, underline the fact that there is no national struggle against imperialism in the age of capitalist decline. The fight must be on a world scale. Guevara's slogan: "Create two, three, many Vietnams" has now materialised. He saw that an imperialism divided and over-extended could only be a weakened imperialism. The invasion of Cambodia will only extend the quagmire that the Americans find themselves in: they have again succumbed to military and technical logic. In true dinosaur fashion, they have been unable to comprehend the most important factor: the consciousness of the risen people. They know that defeat in Vietnam means defeat in S.E. Asia and another sphere of the world taken out of the clutches of imperialism. Nevertheless Nixon has been forced to make noises about troop withdrawals. If he stays in Cambodia, his forces will be that much thinner on the ground. Having failed to contain the situation in Vietnam, Nixon can have little expectation of success in the larger area. The logical end of this policy would be for the Americans to find themselves in a quagmire that had its borders in Burma, Thailand and further afield.

The advance of the Vietnamese and the Red Khmers across Cambodia shows that they were well prepared for the invasion. What little indigenous toehold capitalism had in Cambodia crumbles before them, leaving the Americans nakedly opposing the people, just as in Vietnam.

The extension of the war is a useful object lesson for those who still had illusions about the

possibility of peaceful coexistence with imperialism. Since the historical task is the destruction of the bourgeoisie as a class, it is not surprising that it is fighting for survival. A defeat in S.E. Asia may not quite be the final blow but it brings that prospect considerably nearer. The boundaries of the imperialist world will draw a little closer and the chill at the heart of the bourgeoisie grow a little colder. Peaceful coexistence should be seen for the fraud that it is: the ideology of a soviet bureaucracy, with little interest in pursuing the international victory of the proletariat. Unwilling to risk losing all influence in the area and to be displaced by the Chinese, the Russians supply aid. They must, however, remain condemned by history for allowing the Americans such an easy ride into S.E. Asia in the first place. In the long term their unwillingness to prosecute the struggle cannot even help themselves. The proletariat must either advance or retreat: there is no room for bureaucratic havens of peace in the course of the struggle.

*The stooges of the bureaucrats throughout the world still mouth about "Peace in Vietnam". Revolutionary militants should have nothing but contempt for this defeatist and pacifist idea. We must fight for full solidarity with the fighters of Indochina, who are in the vanguard of the world struggle against imperialism.*

**FOR THE VICTORY OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISM IN INDOCHINA!**

**VICTORY TO THE VIETCONG!**

**VICTORY TO THE RED KHMERS!**

**VICTORY TO THE PATHET LAO!**

**Press Statement from Vietnam Solidarity Committee—27/4/70.**

The Vietnam Solidarity Committee would like to clear up some errors of fact in the press reports of the April 26th demonstration.

First, the demonstration was not "taken over" by Black Panthers or "diverted" to the Trinidad High Commission. In fact the demonstration was a united action in solidarity with the Indo-Chinese and Trinidadian peoples and was supported by a number of groups including VSC and the Black Panthers. There were discussions prior to the demonstration in which the route, including the march to the Trinidad High Commission, was agreed.

Secondly, the hostility of the police towards the demonstration was evident from the start. At the rally prior to the march the Ad Hoc Committee was denied the right to use loud-speakers and leafletting was arbitrarily prohibited.

Third, the main trouble with the police took place not in Belgrave or Grosvenor Squares, but at Speakers' Corner. Up to the time the march went to Speakers' Corner to disperse the demonstration, it had been cohesive. But as the demonstrators were dispersing, the police moved in, using, as the *Guardian* uncritically but correctly put it, the technique of "snatch squads". It was here that people attempting to defend themselves from unprovoked police attacks were arrested.

The VSC is in full solidarity with the militants arrested on Sunday and with the black people's organisations, and strongly condemns the brutality and racist behaviour of the police on the April 26th anti-imperialist demonstration.

For further information, contact VSC, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Telephone: 01-278 2616.



# the toronto dunlop case

**A Vital Movement for International Trade Unionism**  
 The Toronto (Canada) plant of Dunlop Ltd., which manufactures industrial rubber goods, was threatened last February with closure by May 1st. The management made this announcement by informing the press, radio and television agencies at a time when 600 employees were still at work in the plant. All telephone links from the factory with the outside world were cut off, so that workers were unable to call wives and families, who heard the news on the radio; some experienced severe shock as a result. The Government of Ontario and planning bodies had been informed some months previously that the plant was likely to close. Unemployment in Toronto runs at a figure of 60,000, and in Canada as a whole it exceeds half a million. The situation is an increasingly familiar one for workers throughout the western world, dominated as they are by remote decision-making centres of the super-giant international companies.

Dunlop International Ltd. is a British-based company but, although it conducts sizeable manufacturing activity in Britain, 60% of its business is done outside the U.K. It employs 100,000 workers in its 120 plants, which are spread across 26 countries and five continents. The company ranks 49th out of the top 200 countries with headquarters outside the USA. This was before the merger with Pirelli of Italy, which doubled the size of Dunlop. The new combine is the second largest rubber manufacturer in the world, outranked only by Goodyear of the USA.

**Management Excuses**  
 The official reason for the closure of the Toronto plant has been given as an inability to match competition from imports of rubber products from Japan and Western Europe. The company claims that it has lost money in Toronto for several years, and that the success of a Japanese company in securing a contract with a public utility Board, for supplies to a Hydro-Electric project, was given as "the last straw". An Ontario M.P., Mr. J. Renwick of the New Democratic Party, believes that the Japanese company may turn out to be a subsidiary of Dunlop! In any case, the \$80,000 which the Hydro-Electric Board saved by accepting the Japanese tender is a trivial sum compared with the social costs of the Dunlop closure, or with the generous financial assistance which Dunlop is receiving from public funds to expand and automate its activities elsewhere in Canada.

The Board of Dunlop's Canadian subsidiary company which authorised the closure is made up of nine people, five of whom are non-Canadian; they have addresses in England or the USA. The head of Dunlop Canada was transferred from Nigeria last year, where he had been operating the company's activities on behalf of the British Board, and the chief manager was sent over from Britain to organise the closure only a few weeks ago. Economists and trade unionists in Toronto are convinced that the decision to close the plant was

Chairman of the International company, has specifically endorsed the decision in his reply to a protest cable from the Canadian union Local.

**The Workers Fight Back**  
 All of which makes the reaction of the workers and their union entirely logical and appropriate. Nevertheless that reaction must go down as a major pioneering venture in the struggle to evolve a trade union strategy to cope with the problem of the international companies. The Union concerned, the United Rubber Workers of America, Local 132, has a 100% organisation of the Toronto plant, and consists of workers many of whom have records of long service—15, 20, 25 years—with Dunlop. The President of the Local is Philip Japp, a 42-year-old worker in the plant. He and his committee, supported by NDP members, students, Professors of Economics at Toronto and York Universities, and the entire work force of 600 have conducted a remarkably effective campaign against the closure.

First they protested against the manner in which the closure was announced to the workers. Secondly, they demanded the suspension of the closure "for a few lousy weeks" (Japp) so that a feasibility study of the plant and its finances could be carried out. They applied to the (Tory) government of Ontario, asking them to institute such a study. This would have required the company to "open the books" and whilst the government expressed a vague willingness to conduct an enquiry, it backed down quickly and endorsed "managerial prerogative" as soon as the company indicated its displeasure at the idea. The workers at the plant then proposed that they should buy out the plant (though they wanted first to see the books and participate in the feasibility study) and run it as a cooperative. "We are not convinced that the plant is dead. We could run it if we get rid of some of the clowns up there," said Japp. In fact the workers strongly suspect that the plant is perfectly viable, and that the closure is not the result of losses, but of a profit which is inadequate when compared with alternative centres of employment open to a company like Dunlop throughout the world. Dunlop and the Ontario government have refused all appeals and proposals from the Local, despite the wave of public support behind them. In a classic statement of Tory respect for the rights of property, the Prime Minister of Ontario, John P. Roberts, told Philip Japp in a letter that, whilst he understood the feeling of the workers, "At the same time, I believe that a businessman must have the right to decide what is best for his company."

**The New Democratic Party**  
 The New Democratic Party spokesman for the workers in the Ontario parliament, Mr. J. Renwick, has made a first-class contribution to the workers' cause. In a most detailed and documented speech to the Ontario Provincial parliament, he paid glowing tribute to the work of the Local. Describing a meeting of the

# stop press

The recent sacking of Haughey and Blaney from the Fianna Fail cabinet on suspicion of helping gun-runners to the North shows that all is not well in the southern Irish state. So far the more dramatic events in the national liberation struggle have occurred in the north. We should not assume that this will always be the case, however. Fianna Fail's pose as the inheritor of the anti-imperialist mantle is increasingly shaky. Lynch and his friends are finding it difficult to have it both ways. They find that their interests bring them closer to British imperialism and look for some federal solution that will drown the Irish problem once for all in a capitalist united states of Europe. However, to seek this road puts them at odds with the vast majority of the Irish population whose interests are objectively anti-imperialist. They have to contend with the remnants of the capitalism in one country school in their ranks, the small capitalist who would not have welcomed the moves toward free trade with Britain; with the peasantry and small farmers who would be the first to suffer if the common market gets their way. In August last year it was just possible for Fianna Fail to make militant noises while rushing elastoplast to the border and appealing to the U.N. This time, however, the actions of Blaney and Haughey put them on the spot and Lynch was forced to come out in his true pro-imperialist colours. Lynch, however, has a far from free hand. The hegemony of the Green Tories in the south has been achieved only because, after the defeat of the republicans, they were able to pose as the defenders (and in 1932 extenders) of the gains of the struggle against Britain, particularly for the small farmers. As sections of Fianna Fail attempt to accommodate to imperialism, their ideological hold will grow progressively weaker, and the chances for a genuine thorough-going anti-imperialist movement will increase.

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May 9th saw the biggest Anti War demonstration in London since 1968. 10,000 marched to the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square. Against the police reacted strongly. 100 were arrested and the fine for 'threatening behaviour' has risen from somewhere around £5 to nearer £50 over the space of a year or two. Many of the arrests occurred at the end of the demo. when police became confused by a departure from the usual pattern as demonstrators split up in a number of different directions. The demonstration was organized at extremely short notice and represented a considerable organizational success. For details of future militant activities contact VSC at 01-278-2616.

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Played down by the bourgeois press, the Anti-War movement in the U.S. has reached a previously unsurpassed dimensions after the invasion of Cambodia and the murder of the Kent State Four. The national student strike met with a massive response: 73 campuses struck in the New York area alone; rallies of 10,000+ are reported from the University of Washington, Arizona State, Boston, Southern California. In Colorado, Giant Colorado Springs Air Force base was sealed off by the military after over 400 airman and other GIs marched through downtown Colorado Springs. Massive actions plan for the end of the month to coincide with the Memorial Day actions (May 30th). An appeal for solidarity action is being considered, ring our office 01-837 6954 for details.

attending this meeting. There was a representative at all levels of the government on the platform—though why we were on the platform I will never know, but we were. And I just want to say as an aside to the Speaker that I as a politician do not intend to be the olive oil or the lubricating machinery by which this plant is going to be shut down. It is all very nice for politicians to appear at meetings and express their concern, but I assure you that I am certain that those of us who appear at meetings—as we are not only obligated to, but as we chose to do—have a determination that we will achieve our objective in the short term of the feasibility study, and I think that goes for the members of the Federal Government that were present, the members of the Provincial Government that were present, the members of the City Council of the City of Toronto who were present. We are not going, if I may use the term, we are not going to be patsies to allow time to go by which will make this arbitrary decision irreversible... (Ontario parliament; Proceedings, 16th March 1970).

The New Democratic Party is, in effect, a Labour Party with unusually strong ties (for the North American continent) with the unions. Since Renwick's speech, the Party organisation in Toronto has joined forces with the workers to conduct what amounts to an election campaign on the single issue of the closure and the Union's programme, which now includes a demand for a general new Law which would forbid arbitrary closure of plants and would insist on the accountability of companies towards their employees. A door-to-door canvass is being conducted in the City, to collect 100,000 signatures in support of the campaign.

**International Labour v. International Capital**  
 This is a far from academic matter for trade unionists in Britain, or for the workers' control movement. The Institute for Workers' Control has been corresponding with a Canadian counterpart, the Praxis Corporation for Social Change, for over a year. The Praxis Workers' Control Group recently held its first, and very successful, weekend conference on Industrial Democracy in Toronto, to which several prominent trade union leaders, and several hundred rank and file members contributed. When the closure of Dunlop and the workers' campaign broke into the news, Philip Japp made immediate contact with us, as part of the general campaign to match the internationalism of the company with an international response by Labour. The need for, and appropriateness of such a move, will be well appreciated by workers in Fords, GEC, Roberts-Arundel, Lytton Industries, MGM, etc., etc. It corresponds precisely with the work which IWC has pioneered in the car industry, and which has been followed up by the unions not only in that industry, but in the docks (Tilbury container dispute) and elsewhere. But the strategy is in its infancy, and every contributory experience is vital. In the Dunlop case, British unions are at

using the international telegraph service, Philip Japp was able to make a start on closing the communication gap which exists between the workers in two continents—a gap which hardly exists for the wealthy giants of the world of international corporations. That elementary lesson requires careful but speedy digestion by international Labour.

**Action in Britain**  
 Apart from their cable to IWC, the Canadians have appealed directly to Jack Jones and Lord Cooper—whose unions organise the rubber workers in Britain. They have already received a cable of sympathy and support from the Dunlop convenor of the T&GWU in Liverpool. Their approach to Charles Levinson, secretary of the Chemical Workers' International Secretariat affiliated to ICFTU, produced a sharp response. Levinson has cabled to Sir Reay Geddes demanding a stay of the closure, and threatening action by workers in Pirelli plants unless he receives a satisfactory reply.

In order to demonstrate that industrial relations do have precise location, and that the British labour movement had understood the significance of the Toronto case, the IWC and the Socialist Charter organised and carried out a picket of the London offices of Dunlop International on Friday, April 17th. Philip Japp cabled the support and the thanks of the Toronto workers to the organisers and participants. A most significant moment during the picket occurred when Alan Sapper, general secretary of the Cinematograph, Television and Allied Technicians Unions, came to carry one of our banners. He had no doubts about the relevance of our campaign for his union's members, who, he told us, face the self-same problem of organising effectively on an international level to meet the remote powers of the international film companies.

**Trade Unionism in the Seventies**  
 It is hoped that representatives of the Toronto workers and the NDP may visit Britain shortly to follow up all these new contacts and to cement the experience through which they have been working. If they do come, the British trade union and labour movement owes it to them and to itself to give them a most attentive hearing. For they and the six hundred workers of Dunlop Canada have begun to explore a vital area of trade unionism in the seventies. They have done this with extra-ordinary openness and breadth of vision. Philip Japp expressed the view, in a letter to the author of this article, that the "heart and guts of the trade union movement are in Britain". That is a moving and generous tribute to the pioneer country of trade unionism; by responding in kind to the spirit and the intent of the new pioneers of Toronto, the British trade union and labour movement will acknowledge the tribute in the only effective way. For on this occasion it is our turn to learn, and to express our appreciation to our teachers from Toronto.

Tony Tonham





# SPORT

# THE OPIUM OF THE PEOPLE

## RIOT CONTROL AGENTS, FLAME, SMOKE, ANTI-PLANT AGENTS AND PERSONNEL DETECTORS

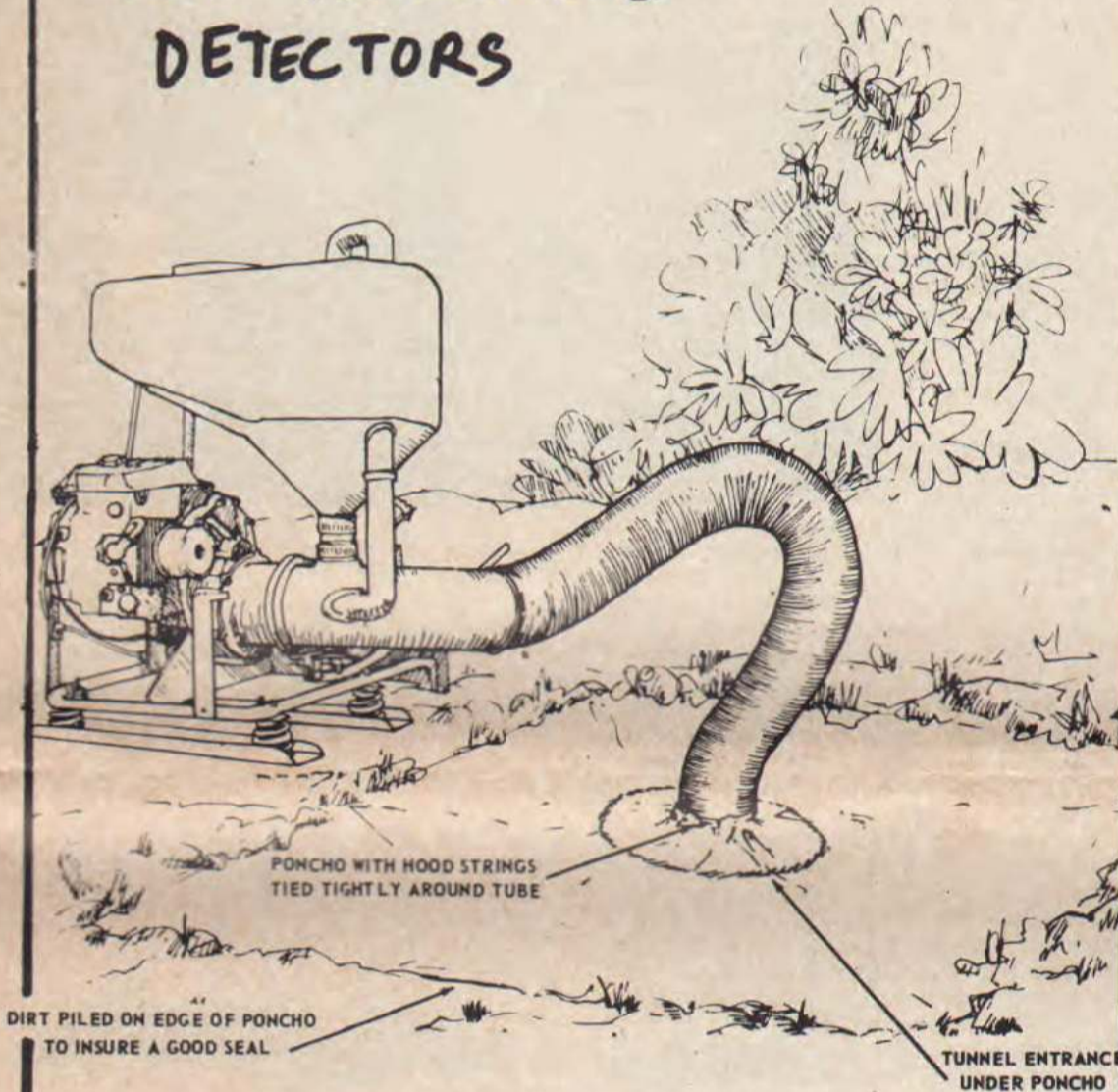


Figure 21. Use of poncho with M106 riot control agent disperser.

The appearance of an extremely documented U.S. army manual entitled "Employment of Riot Control Agents, Flame, Smoke, Anti-Plant Agents and Personnel Detectors in Counter Guerrilla Operations" could possibly be of more than esoteric interest at a time when mass struggles against the ruling classes in advanced capitalist countries was an objective possibility. At this stage, however, its only value is to confirm already established facts and to expose for the nth time the reactionary nature of imperialism the world over.

Of especial interest to this latter point are the limits the U.S. military impose upon the application of the manual: the introduction states, "The manual is oriented to the environment and combat conditions of S.E. Asia", but is applicable to "internal defence", and "without modification to both nuclear and non-nuclear warfare." To paraphrase this: whether the circumstances are fighting communist "subversion" in S.E. Asia, cleaning-up operations after a nuclear war or stemming internal dissent, the practices outlined in the manual can and will be applied without modification. This lack of discrimination, or could one call it discrimination par excellence on the part of the U.S. authorities, is inseparable from that which produced the massacres at My Lai and elsewhere in Vietnam, and is reinforced as official policy by the following quotation from the manual dealing with gas warfare: "CS munitions may be employed as a most effective weapon directed against a target area containing mixed friendly, hostile or neutral populations where casualties are to be minimised."

Experience of the use of an inferior kind of CS gas in Ulster confirms that serious effects have been suffered by those exposed to the gas for long periods and that those most affected are the young and physically weak. Bearing in mind the action of anti-plant agents that have effectively introduced malnutrition as an environmental condition, the employment of gas among mixed populations and in the quantities proposed, far from minimising casualties, hits hardest those least likely to be

involved in the actual struggle.

As an example of quantity, the E158R2 cluster of CS canisters "provides an incapacitating concentration of CS over an area of approx. 6,500 sq. metres" and it is stated that with a little ingenuity the use of smoke and gas agents in flushing out tunnels "may cause asphyxiation to personnel in the tunnel."

We are told that flame-throwers, some with ranges of 200 metres, should be employed "principally to counter mass enemy attacks", that their employment "costs very little in time and labour" and as if a further inducement were required, that their application is "only limited by the imagination and need of the individual employing them."

Clearly the danger in reading a manual of this kind is getting lost in the welter of detail and reacting empirically as each new horror is unveiled. It is well-known that U.S. soldiers are put through a training routine that breaks down their individuality and injects them with the ideology of the master race. Recruits are beaten to test their resistance to interrogation, and are made to subscribe to the idea that killing in the name of the U.S. is the greatest privilege afforded them under the system. This manual goes a long way towards substantiating the above initiation to barbarism.

The use of euphemy and jargon often hides a variety of ills, and calling poison gases "riot control agents", flame-throwers "flame field expedients" and crop-destroyers "anti-plant agents" is hardly likely to awaken an already dulled conscience.

It is as impossible to separate the message that goes with this manual from the society that generates it as it is impossible to separate the brutalisation of marines and the individuals "responsible" for the recent massacres from the U.S. military machine.

The barbarity exhibited by imperialism in its open war against the world revolution is only a more blatant expression of the ideology that the ruling class is at great pains to ram down our throats at this time of capitalist crisis.

John Suddaby

Some have recently written about sport (more precisely, about football—*Black Dwarf*, No. 33, 10.5.70). Their premise is that football is a working-class game with some revolutionary potential, one of the points to support the argument being the aggressiveness involved in a football match. ("We should look on this aggressiveness as a real [but displaced] form of working-class militancy.") But what phenomenon of life in this world is not aggressive? All relationships whether between people, or between people and nature, are in essence aggressive, since they are part of a system of aggression which they reflect. As any social reality, sport is not an abstract phenomenon, a "supra-historical" part of culture. It finds its place in the framework of definite relationships of production which determine its internal structure and very nature. Present sport is determined by capitalist society, therefore it has a class nature and a class function. To take up the example of football again, one should ask oneself for instance why it is that it is so much a working-class "privilege". At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the ruling class invented sport to meet with a new need. Modern sport rules were laid down by Thomas Arnold as a new means of education. What was needed for imperialist Britain was an army of strong, capable, bold men; men of action who, if necessary, would be ready to act as one man (in other words, men used to teamwork); but the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy wanted to keep this means of education for themselves. Nothing was easier: money and the notion of amateurism would keep away anyone who was "a worker, a craftsman, a day-labourer" as it was described in a text of 1866. Although this situation lasted until 1880, workers succeeded in joining some clubs. The bourgeoisie was then faced with only two solutions: creating a professional sport, an entertainment and a source of profit (and possible work for working-class people) and sport, an educative leisure activity practised for its own sake. This split brought out a radical division: the working class was refused a right to leisure. Working-class clubs were turned into professional sport clubs, football was to become a professional game... This is the price the working class has to pay to possess its own "culture". [If we went into this rather long though schematic historical background, it was to show that football is not a working-class gain such as holidays or national insurance (though we also know that these latter-mentioned gains are necessary for the better running of the capitalist system; the point is that they are things which have been fought for, therefore which should be defended). Football has been a cultural imposition.]

So much for football. We would like now to try to analyse the sort of ideology sport, in general, reflects and, according to the laws of dialectics, reinforces.

The common denominator of the economic and game system is competition. As it is in the capitalist world where the motor of production, far from being the search for the satisfaction and welfare of all, is profit in the framework of international competition, so it is in the game, the motor of which, instead of being improvisation, spontaneity, physical liberty, is performance (individual or collective) in a competitive structure. In other words, the aim is to strive to be the best one, the quickest, the strongest, the most skilful... "the most". It follows from this that the framework of sporting activities has as key concepts: training, productivity, measure, record.

In a competitive world, the first requirement is to continuously improve one's means of production in order to increase one's result. This process in sport is the daily training. But not any kind is sufficient enough. It has to be the most efficient in the least time. Thus, constant work, order, rapidity and rationalisation are the golden rules. As soon as sport is set in the competition structure (and thus the best production from the body is demanded), one sets in front of oneself this specific form of work, which is first and foremost an enormous amount of work. One can't even defend it for its developing the body harmoniously. Is it necessary to point out how specialised all true champions must be? Their morning exercises can be the endless repetition of one single gesture.

Surprisingly enough, the total work is not all physical. An enormous amount of the whole enjoyment is spent on bureaucracy. Records,

figures, tables, quotations, etc... are carefully kept and part of the ritual. In most cases they are considered as the aim. Indeed what else could the aim be? If the incentive is to have one's name on a Club board, in a newspaper (oh! climax!) that of a medal or cup was not the target, one would certainly not deliberately mark out a piece of ground and kick the ball run around within a set amount of time. In any way, who can look more alienated and "robotised" than those athletes or players repeating the same movements within the same amount of space and time. Is he different from a machine from which maximum productivity is expected (in this case by the manager, audience and himself)?

Given this structure and these rules, we can easily see how sport spills over with bourgeois ideology. It might sound superfluous for those who overlook the whole question by mere brackets (I am again referring to the article on football, which reads: "the anti-authoritarianism of the game [which] has been mentioned [though the discipline of the team under the manager is another matter] spills off...), but should not fail to spell out the key concepts inherent to competitive sport and to the ruling class morality.

This morality is all concentrated in the notion of fair play, which leads directly to that of collaboration of classes. Among the thousands of quotations at hand, we chose what the French director of UNESCO has to say on the subject: "Yes, sport is a noble game for it is an ethic and an aesthetic, but one who recruits from all classes and from all peoples and fraternally mixes them together all over the world." Pacifist coexistence on the one hand submission to one's superior and to one's work on the other. The players are involved in a system of hierarchy at all levels: between the ruling and the ruled, between the values attributed to different games, between the participants themselves. This training under authority, discipline, hard work and well-done work is just the useful ideological support the ruling class needs.

But bourgeois themes are certainly at their peak in the spectacle which practically all sporting activities constitute.

Sport does not escape the laws of the market. Industry has found an enormous source of profit by turning all games into spectacles usable as commodities. The players, the motifs of these spectacles, are merely showmen valuable for their exchange value on the market of sport. The interesting thing is that the bourgeoisie did not content itself by having a kind of spectacle. It turned them into real rituals very often assuming the character of a military parade, if not of a pre-fascist ceremonial. The military bands, the parades, the teams, the "awe-striking" national hymns, all this display of colours and stirring sounds means much more than mere delight for the eyes and ears. It is just what a patriotic mobilisation is.

This ideological and physical mobilisation provokes a tremendously deep depoliticisation of the public atmosphere. Added to that you have the newspapers filled with comments, results, competitions (not to mention full colour supplements on the wives of our champions!) which completely dominate everyday life.

These are the broad lines along which the ideology of sport articulates itself. At all times if one wants to talk about and analyse sport, one has to consider the conditions of the birth of modern sport, its relations to precise historical needs which determined its aim and its internal nature.

As a point of fact, it is England which launched its main thrust, and it is interesting to note that the French bourgeoisie, which knows how to learn from the experiments of other bourgeoisies, is now (roughly since May '68), after recognising what an efficient tool sport has been in keeping youth on the right tracks, theorising on the virtues of sport, and introduces it massively wherever youth is "a bit" out of control.

All this is to suggest that when analysing England's revolutionary backwardness, sport and its effects should be taken into account.

The debate is open...and will be entered into we hope.

Marie-Therese Weal

# LENIN-THE THIRD IN



## 1. INTRODUCTION

We are printing below some extracts from Klara Zetkin's *Reminiscences of Lenin*<sup>(1)</sup> and from the proceedings of the Third Comintern Congress of 1921<sup>(2)</sup>. Both deal with the question of women's liberation. Now that there are signs that a Women's Liberation Movement is on the move in Britain, it is instructive to look back at the position that both Lenin and the Communist International took on the question of women's oppression. Three theses stand out most clearly: 1) the liberation of women is an inseparable part of the revolutionary process; 2) the communist party, as an organisation, draws no distinction between men and women members; 3) there is, however, a need for a separate mass movement of women and for a specific propaganda effort in order to politicise women and bring them into the revolutionary struggle.

There is, all the same, an uncertainty about how specific the women's movement really is. This is shown in the first conversation that Zetkin had with Lenin on this subject, during the course of which Lenin said: "There are not a few points of contact between women's and youth movements. Our women comrades must work systematically with the youth. That is a continuation, extension and exaltation of motherliness from the individual to the social sphere." Lenin is wrong here and this must be said, particularly when one looks at the legal system of the "socialist" countries where women are consistently lumped together with youth. There is, however, no doubt that Lenin's Russia went further than any other society in liberating women from oppression by the State and the family. The property basis of marriage was abolished and marriage became a purely individual affair. Men and women divorced at ease (a postcard to the Registry being often sufficient), monogamy was made unofficial, there was no legal differentiation between legitimate and illegitimate children. Tremendous effort was put into political work among women and into liberating them from household drudgery for productive work. And this in a country where 80% of the population were peasants.

## 2. LENIN AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION

The first conversation on women between Zetkin and Lenin occurred in autumn 1920. Communist work among women was in its infancy. The 1920 Second Comintern Congress had been supposed to issue some directives but this had not happened. Zetkin told Lenin what great importance Luxemburg had attached to this question, and how she had urged the newly-formed German Communist Party<sup>(3)</sup> to publish a

woman's paper. She also defended their theoretical work on sexuality and the family against Lenin's suspicions. Lenin was ready to be persuaded—provided that all the propaganda was based on a correct ideological basis. This talk resulted in Zetkin being entrusted with the task of drawing up proposals for Communist work among women. Lenin's position is clearly shown in the following extracts:

**To Arouse the Masses of Women Workers**  
"There can be no real mass movement without women. Our ideological conceptions give rise to the principles of organisation. No special organisation for women. A woman Communist is a member of the Party just as a man Communist. With equal rights and duties. There can be no difference of opinion on that score. Nevertheless, we must not close our eyes to the fact that the Party must have bodies, working groups, commissions, committees, bureaux or whatever you like, whose particular duty is to arouse the masses of women workers, to bring them into contact with the Party, and keep them under its influence. I am thinking not only of proletarian women, whether they work in factories or at home. The poor peasant women, the petty bourgeoisie—they, too, are the prey of capitalism, and more so than ever since the war. The unpolitical, unsocial, backward psychology of these women, their isolated sphere of activity, the entire manner of their life—these are facts. It would be absurd to overlook them, absolutely absurd. We need appropriate bodies to carry on work among them, special methods of agitation and forms of organisation. That is not feminism, that is practical, revolutionary expediency.

**Feminism?**  
Zetkin told Lenin that his words had encouraged her greatly. "Many comrades, and good comrades at that, strongly combatted the idea that the Party should have special bodies for systematic work among women. They 'taboo' it as feminism, and a return to social democratic traditions. They contend that the Communist Parties, on the principle of affording equal rights to men and women, should work as a whole among the working masses as a whole, without differentiation. Women have to be included the same as men, and under the same conditions. Any attention, in agitation or organisation, paid to the circumstances adduced by Lenin, were characterised as opportunist, as surrender and treachery by the upholders of the other point of view."

**Why So Few Women in the Party?**  
"That is neither new nor proof," said Lenin. "You must not be misled by that. Why have we never had as many women as men in the Party—not at any time in Soviet Russia? Why is the number of women workers organised in trade unions so small? Facts give food for thought. The rejection of the necessity for separate bodies for our work among the masses is a conception allied to those of our highly principled and most radical friends of the Communist Labour Party<sup>(4)</sup>. According to them there must be only one form of organisation, workers' unions. I know them. Many revolutionary but confused minds appeal to principle whenever ideas are lacking. That is, when the mind is closed to the sober facts, which must be considered. How do such guardians of "pure principle" square their ideas with the necessity of the revolutionary policy historically forced upon us? All that sort of talk breaks down before inexorable necessity. Unless millions of women are with us we cannot exercise the proletarian dictatorship, cannot construct on Communist lines. We must find our way to them, we must study and try to find this way."

## Lenin and Opportunism

Zetkin warned Lenin at this point that his views might be seen as opportunistic. "Nonsense!" said Lenin, almost bad-temperedly, "that danger is present in everything that we do and say. If we were to be deterred by fear of that from doing what is correct and necessary, we might as well become Indian Stylites. Don't move, don't move, we can contemplate our principles from a high pillar."... "Our national sections still lack a correct understanding of this matter. They are still idling by while there is this task of creating a mass movement of working women under Communist leadership. They do not understand that the development and management of such a mass movement is an important part of our entire Party activity, indeed, a half of general Party work. Their occasional recognition of the necessity and value of a powerful, clear-headed Communist women's movement is a platonic verbal recognition, not constant care and obligation of the Party."

## Scratch a Communist...

"Agitation and propaganda work among women, their awakening and revolutionisation, is regarded as an incidental matter, as an affair which only concerns women comrades. They alone are reproached because work in that direction does not proceed more quickly and more vigorously. That is wrong, quite wrong! Real separatism and feminism *a la rebours*, as the French say, feminism upside-down. What is at the basis of the incorrect attitude of our national sections? In the final analysis it is nothing but an under-estimation of woman and her work. Yes, indeed! Unfortunately it is still true to say of many of our comrades: scratch a Communist and find a philistine. Of course, you must scratch the sensitive spot, their mentality as regards women. Could there be a more damning proof of this than the calm acquiescence of men who see how women grow worn out in petty, monotonous household work, their strength and time dissipated and wasted, their minds growing narrow and stale, their hearts beating slowly, their will weakened?"

## International Women's Congress

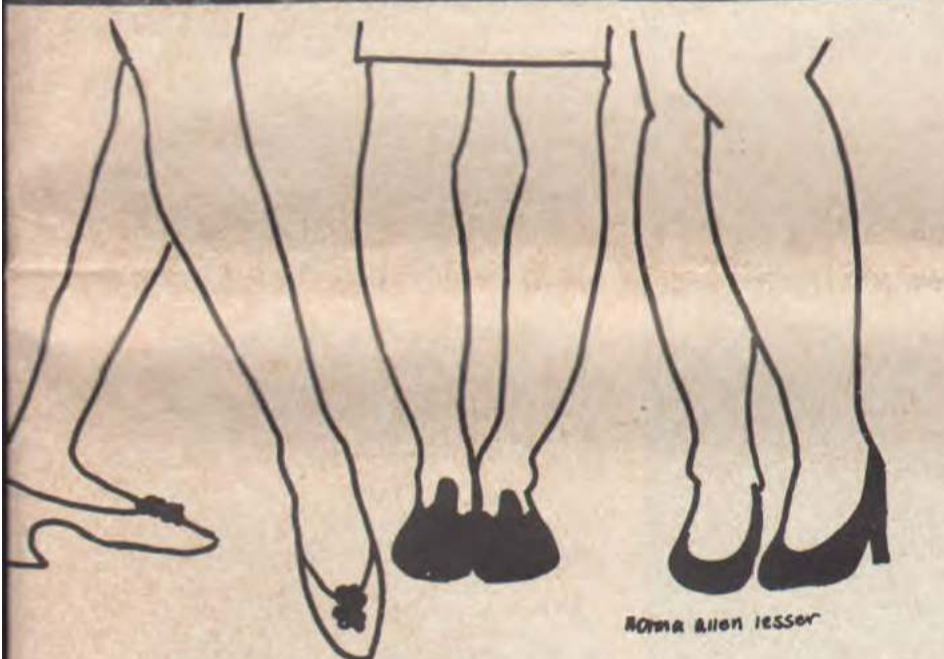
Zetkin's idea was to set up a non-Party International Women's Congress, which would deal with the social, economic and legal aspects of women's exploitation. This plan, however, in spite of Lenin's support, did not materialise because of the opposition to it from the German and Bulgarian women communists, who, at that time, had the best Communist Women's Movement outside Russia.



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# INTERNATIONAL AND WOMEN'S LIBERATION



Norma Allen Iesser

looks like she'd make a good secretary."



### 3. THE THIRD CONGRESS THESES ON WOMEN AND COMMUNISM

The Third Congress of the Communist International voted, for the first time, a whole series of theses supporting the need for special forms of organisation and propaganda among women. The Congress, which was held in June 1921 in Moscow, decided to set up a Central Women's Section, an international body, with the International Women's Secretariat as its ruling council. The following are extracts from the Congress's *Theses for Propaganda Work Among Women—General Principles*:

\* \* \*

"Starting from the premise that the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat is on the agenda in all capitalist countries and that the construction of communism is the immediate task in the countries where the dictatorship is already in the hands of the workers, the Third Congress of the Communist International declares that neither the conquest of power by the proletariat nor the achievement of communism in countries where the bourgeois oppression has already been overthrown can be accomplished without the active support of the mass of proletarian and semi-proletarian women."

\* \* \*

"On the other hand the Congress once again draws the attention of women to the fact that without the help of the Communist Parties, attempts to liberate women or to realise their complete personal equality and proper emancipation cannot succeed."

\* \* \*

"At this time, the interest of the working class demands with particular force that women should enter the organised ranks of the proletariat in its fight for communism; it demands this because world economic ruin is becoming ever more intense and intolerable for the poor, because the working masses of the bourgeois countries are faced with the inevitable imposition of a social revolution, while on the other hand, the task of reconstructing the national economy on a new communist basis faces the working people of Soviet Russia. These two tasks would be much more easily accomplished if women were to take a more active, conscious and voluntary part in them."

\* \* \*

"Whenever the conquest of power presents itself in a direct way, communist parties should be aware of the danger to the revolution which is presented by the inert masses of female employees and peasants unemancipated from bourgeois ideas, or from the Church, and not aligned in any way with the great liberation movement which is communism. Both in the East and in the West, the masses of women outside the movement must inevitably constitute a support for the bourgeoisie and an object of counter-revolutionary propaganda. The experience of the Hungarian revolution, where the low consciousness of the female masses played such a sad role, should serve as a warning to the proletariat of the backward countries entering the process of social revolution."

\* \* \*

"Experience in the Soviet Republic has shown how essential it is in practice that female workers and peasants should participate, whether in defence of the Republic during civil war or in all the areas of Soviet organisation. Their role in the organisation of defence, as reinforcements in the rear, in the struggle

against desertion and all forms of counter-revolution, sabotage, etc. is well known."

\* \* \*

"Other countries should learn from the experience of the Soviet Republic and make use of it."

\* \* \*

"From all we have said above it follows that the immediate task of Communist Parties is to spread the influence of the Party and communism among the vast layers of the female population in their countries by means of a special body functioning within the Party and by special methods suited for propaganda aimed at combatting among women the influence of bourgeois ideas and the actions of the coalitionist parties and in this way at turning them into fighters for the total emancipation of women."

\* \* \*

"By entrusting the Communist Parties of East and West with the immediate task of strengthening the work of the Party among the female proletariat, the Third Congress of the Communist International shows to the workers of the world that their emancipation from centuries of injustice, enslavement and inequality cannot be realised except by the victory of communism."

\* \* \*

"The right to vote does not abolish the primary cause of the enslavement of women in the family and in society and it does not provide the solution to the problems of relations between the sexes. Real, not merely formal, equality is impossible except under a system where working class woman becomes the mistress of the means of production and distribution, taking part in the administration and carrying the same obligations of work under the same conditions as all working members of society; in other words, this equality cannot be realised until capitalism has been overthrown and replaced by the communist form of economy."

\* \* \*

"What communism offers to women cannot be provided by the bourgeois feminist movement. As long as the domination of capital and private property exist, the emancipation of women is impossible."

\* \* \*

"Only communism will create a state of affairs where the natural function of women, maternity, will not be in conflict with social obligations and will not hinder their productive work for the collective benefit. But communism is at the same time the final aim of the proletariat. Therefore working men and women should, in the interests of both, struggle inseparably together towards that common aim."

Branka Magas

#### Footnotes

- (1) Klara Zetkin: *Reminiscences of Lenin*, Modern Books Ltd., London 1929.
- (2) *Les Quatre Premiers Congres Mondiaux de l'Internationale Communiste 1919-1923*, Maspero, Paris 1969.
- (3) The KPD was formed in Berlin on 1st January 1919.
- (4) The Communist Labour Party (KAPD) was a German workers' party affiliated to the Third International. Formed by a split to the left from the KPD, it soon declined in strength.

# AN IRISH REPUBLICAN

## INTERVIEWED

The following interview with Northern Irish civil rights leader Malachy McGurran was obtained by Gerry Foley of Intercontinental Press and Susan Lamont of the Young Socialist Alliance in New York on March 18. Malachy McGurran is a representative of the Irish Republican movement, an all-Ireland anti-imperialist organisation, and has been active in the leadership of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

—Mr. McGurran, does the nationalist population of the Six Counties feel that they have won a victory in the August fighting?

No. No one won any victory. All that arose out of the August troubles was probably to help re-establish more strongly British imperialist control and influence in Northern Ireland. It gives the Wilson administration an opportunity to re-establish itself as a kind of protector of the "warring Irish".

—What alternative to direct British rule do you propose to protect the rights of the nationalist minority in Northern Ireland from the Orange machine?

The British government claims the ultimate authority under Article 47 of the Government of Ireland Act for all that happens in the North of Ireland. Therefore they can and must legislate directly from Westminster on the demands of the civil rights movement. Aside from the question of democratic rights, however, we basically believe that direct rule can in no way help the situation.

Our alternative both for the mass of the Catholic or nationalist population, and for the Unionist or Protestant population is not to ask them to come into the present political set-up in the Twenty-Six Counties, which we are as much opposed to as the set-up in the Six Counties. We are asking them, in fact, to disestablish the whole of the Establishment in Ireland, to re-establish the Irish people in the ownership of Ireland. This can only be done through a direct conflict with both British imperialist and native capitalist interests—which are predominant in the Twenty-Six Counties.

—Does that mean that you consider the Republican movement a socialist movement?

Yes, very much so. Going back ten years ago, the Republican movement—particularly the Irish Republican Army—was only concerned with the national question. Basically, it was a para-military organisation which concerned itself with attacks on the established British in the North of Ireland.

But in the last four years it has come to a very radical standpoint. We realise that what is needed in Ireland is not just a military campaign against British occupation forces in the Six Counties, but a revolution in the whole of Ireland.

We in the Republican movement believe that a revolution must eventually come about by the establishment of some organisation, particularly on military lines, but also on social, political, and economic lines, with all of the radical and left-wing organisations in Ireland merging in the fight to disestablish the capitalist overlords.

We hope within a short number of years to see the establishment of a form of national liberation movement that will encompass the whole of the revolutionary groups that now exist in Ireland into one united mass organisation.

We have plans afoot to bring this about and we hope that it can be accomplished within the next twelve to eighteen months.

—Can you give us some idea of what you understand by socialism; do you want to establish a socialist system with central planning; would there be any role for, say, small capitalists within the socialist system that you propose for Ireland?

We believe that at least in the beginning we would have to be able to take these people some way along the road with us. To a large extent they make up the backbone of the population in the rural parts of Ireland, and eventually they must be brought to a point of seeing that their interests as individuals lie in the establishment of workers and cooperative control of both industry and agriculture. This would be in a context of a cooperative form of state structure, all the way from what we term a rural or county level right up to provincial and national level.

—Who do the people in the nationalist ghettos in the North look to for leadership?

The organisation that had the most contact with the people prior to this was probably the Civil Rights Association itself, but it was recognised by the mass of the people that the backbone of the association was the Republican movement.

We were able to give some form of lead and

guidance, particularly in the areas where up to 100,000 people were barricaded in after the August troubles, in relation to the setting up of defence committees which to a large extent the Republican movement controls.

The Catholic Church attempted to use their influence to win back the leadership and control of the people, in their attempt to remove the barricades at a time when Republicans were being searched for and hunted for by the police to be arrested under the Special Powers Act. We had to, at that stage, have a head-on collision with the Catholic Church which for hundreds of years has had the strongest influence over the mass of the Irish people.

Various other organisations attempted to lead the movement. The members of the People's Democracy are an example. But what they had, probably, in theory, they lacked in the question of the practicalities of being able to give guidance and deal with the people, because a lot of them were students who had little or no connection with the masses of the working class in areas like Belfast, and Bogside in Derry.

These people have traditionally looked to the IRA anyway in the stand against authority and particularly the stand against the police. We were unfortunately in a position where a lot of our leadership both on a local and national level during the August period had been imprisoned.

—Do the Citizens' Defence Councils still exist, and if they do, how are they selected?

The Citizens' Defence Committee is still very much in existence because we are expecting a lot of trouble in the coming five or six months. There is a definite right-wing move within the Unionist party for control of the Unionist Association which, in fact, would be the group to decide what form of government we would



have in Northern Ireland.

The committees are elected on a parish system where the local people get together at public meetings. They elect a chairman, a vice-chairman, and a guard-duty officer whose job is to get members of the defence committee out on guard duty.

The whole system aims at controlling and defending the area, not even so much against extremist Unionists who come in buring and shooting, but against infiltration by members of the Special Branch, of the RUC [Royal Ulster Constabulary], and particularly more so now,

members of the Special Branch of the British army who are trying to integrate themselves into and with the people by holding functions and all this type of thing.

The Citizens' Defence Committee has been able to prove to the people that the British army are not there in their interests, that they can only depend on themselves and their own structure.

—Have there been arrests of civil rights activists in the recent period?

There have. I myself was arrested and spent four and a half months in prison under the Special Powers Act without charge or trial. This is probably one of the most obnoxious pieces of legislation in operation in any part of the world today.

They have a maximum law in relation to the Special Powers Act which can cover detention for an unlimited period at the discretion of the minister of home affairs of the Unionist government. Thousands of people have spent some ten, fifteen, twenty years in prison without charge or trial at various times in the history of the state of Northern Ireland.

There is another piece of oppressive legislation which is to my mind even more oppressive, and that is the Offences Act Against the State Act operated by the Twenty-Six Country government. I have also spent three and a half years in prison in Dublin under this act without charge or trial for Irish Republican activities.

—How would you compare the Republican movement and the People's Democracy in the North in regard to their respective strength and their approach to the civil rights movement?

Well, the People's Democracy started about two years ago out of a purely students' demonstration that was held in support of the civil rights demands and as a reaction against the repressive activities of the police on the streets in Derry City on 5th October 1968.

Within six or seven months they grew to around 600 or 700—at least this was how many came to their meetings, and anyone could come. There was no real organisation, no committee was elected, and no one was responsible, really, for anything. They believed that this was the best system and that the Civil Rights Association should adopt this attitude. They looked on the association with disdain because of its "bureaucratic" insistence on elections and an executive to coordinate and plan activities of the civil rights movement.

We differed with them because we felt that there must be central coordination within the Civil Rights Association because it was made up of a large number of organisations, some very much on the left, some in the centre, and some on a kind of quasi-chauvinist nationalist stand very near the right.

They have tried in the last six and a half months to form themselves into an organisation with card-carrying membership and a central executive. To a large extent I believe they have failed in this because they have had no roots or contacts with the mass of the ordinary people.

—Are there specific political differences of analysis and approach between the Republican movement and People's Democracy?

Basically we accept and believe in the same objectives: the establishment of an Irish socialist republic, a workers' and small farmers' republic. There is little or no difference in political analysis from that standpoint.

People's Democracy disagrees with our whole attitude of abstentionism from parliamentary representation in either the Westminster parliament, the Stormont parliament, or the Twenty-Six County parliament.

They believe that you should be able to use the whole parliamentary system to disestablish the Establishment. We believe that from a revolutionary standpoint if you tell people you want to destroy the Establishment which is represented by these parliaments, then you can't ask the people to elect you into them. Some members within our own movement feel that you can destroy these things from inside. This is a contentious question within the Republican movement itself.

But our main difference is over our approach and our tactics in involving the people in all forms of agitation. They believe that it is a question of just standing up and saying it at public meetings and in handing out leaflets. We believe that you must show it a practical sense and be working with the people and giving them lead and guidance, and proving to them by example that they are a power and that their interests require an Irish revolution and an Irish revolutionary organisation.

—Are there other socialist forces involved in the civil rights struggle in the North besides the Republican movement and People's Democracy? And if there are, would you describe them?

The only other influential left-wing organisation in the struggle in the civil rights movement is the Communist Party of Northern Ireland. This is a very small organisation that would not number any more than, I suppose, 150 to 200 active people. They are based mainly and solely in the Belfast city area.

What can be said for them is that they have large influence in the trade union movement. They have been able to avoid sectarian clashes and programs in areas like the Belfast docks.

They originally were purely a branch of the Communist Party of Great Britain. They have since attempted to come to grips with the national question of Ireland. They are attempting to amalgamate with the Irish Workers Party, which is their Twenty-Six Country equivalent, to form themselves into the Irish Communist Party, which will cover the whole of Ireland. They are reasonably active in the civil rights struggle and have been one of the co-founder organisations, if you like, of the civil rights movement in the North of Ireland.

But a lot of them and much of their leadership are rather conservative in relation to the possibility of a national revolution in Ireland as a whole.

—What is the attitude of the Republican movement to the labour parties in Northern Ireland; both the Northern Ireland Labour Party and the Republican Labour Party?

Well, the Republican Labour Party is basically led and controlled by one individual, Mr. Gerry Fitt. It is even smaller in a numerical sense than either the People's Democracy or the Communist Party of Northern Ireland. It hasn't really got a social programme or political programme either. Its membership is made up to some extent of ex-Republicans and ex-political prisoners who got together after they came out of prison after the last war and who felt that the Republican view on parliamentary participation was wrong. They have two MPs at the moment. Basically they have little or no support among the youth in the greater Belfast area, and outside of that they don't exist.

The Northern Ireland Labour Party really has looked upon itself as a branch of the British Labour Party and attempted, in fact, at their annual conference this year to merge directly with the British Labour Party. Again, they have two representatives in Parliament.

—What kind of activities does the Republican movement carry on on a day-to-day basis in an attempt to involve the nationalist masses in Northern Ireland?

We work through the Republican Clubs, which you must remember are banned in the North of Ireland under the Special Powers Act. It is punishable by a five- to fourteen-year term of imprisonment to be a member of a Republican Club.

Rather than knuckle down under the ban, our attitude has been to operate in public.

We have in the rural areas become involved in the land question. Native and foreign capitalists are involved in land speculation, coming in and buying up landed estates. The movement's activity at the local level is to get the small farmers involved in defence. We have formed Defence Associations, agitating for the control of these estates to be given to local cooperative organisations to be distributed among the people.

In some cases we are forced to take direct action. This means the destruction of some of the large estate houses by one means or another



# TRINIDAD

to make it as awkward as possible for these people who own large tracts of land to exist within the community. We have also organised boycotts, getting even the local small business firms who supply these people with food or farming equipment to join in.

In the urban areas we have carried on housing agitation, to get the people formed into tenants' organisations to refuse to pay rents as a form of civil disobedience until the whole question of rent rises and proper amenities in large building sites are gone into by the government, particularly in Belfast.

The Republican movement has been very active with the Bombay Street Tenants Association in Belfast in getting the people to build their own houses through cooperative activity and voluntary labour. We hope to have finished sixty-odd houses by the end of this year. We have had to put members of the Republican army under arms to protect these houses because the British army, the city council fathers, and the big building companies have attempted to stop them being built.

—What do you see coming in Northern Ireland in the next six months or a year?

Well, I think the struggle will be on two levels.

Within the Unionist county associations there has been a definite move to the right. The right wing has been very active; to a great extent, they have already picked most of the candidates for the next national elections to Stormont and to Westminster.

We believe that the next election will see a direct attempt to take over the control of the government and the whole state structure in Northern Ireland by these people.

They are people who are opposed not only to the basic reform demands of the civil rights movement but to granting even the reforms that are on the statute books, like one man, one vote, and the end to business votes. Since votes are in proportion to your property, some business concerns have up to thirty or forty votes.

In addition to confrontations with the right-wing Unionists, we can see a strong possibility that the mass of the people will come into direct physical confrontation with the 12,500 British troops who are representing British imperialist interests in the North of Ireland. This is one of the reasons we hope to get support not only from Irishmen's organisations but from any of the radical, progressive organisations in America for the struggle that is coming soon.

It is significant that in the highly Protestant areas of Belfast where they fly the Union Jack in every home and practically worship the queen, people had a seven-hour fight with the British troops. I would say, having met some of these people in prison, that in those Protestant working-class areas of Belfast there is more hate for the British government and the British armed forces than there is even in the nationalist Catholic areas.

This creates an important opening for the Republican movement, and unless we are able to get through to the mass of the Protestant working class, then the revolution in Ireland cannot be a success.

—Do you feel that the Vietnam war and the worldwide resistance to it has had an effect on the struggle in Ireland?

The Republican movement has not been really all that actively involved in forms of anti-war demonstrations. We have pushed a pro-Vietcong line directly through our newspaper, the *United Irishman*. There is an anti-war organisation in the Dublin area, but there is none in the Belfast area.

We believe that probably the best way that we can support the struggle in Vietnam is by bringing about a realisation in the minds of the Irish people that there is an equation between the struggle in Vietnam and the struggle for the liberation of Ireland. We have had some success in this.

Probably our greatest opponents have been a lot of Irish so-called American Republicans who could not see that the situation in Vietnam is related in any way to what has been going on in Ireland. We have lost some people over this but our feeling is that we're as well off without these people.

—Do you feel that the August explosions in Northern Ireland produced a comparable radicalisation in the South?

The Southern government is not stable in relation to the August trouble. It's ironical in a sense, but a lot of the rank-and-file members of the Fianna Fail party in Dublin are so right-wing in the national sense toward the removal of British troops that they exerted a strong pressure on the Dublin government to march directly with the Irish army across the border in one last gallant drive to disestablish the British occupation forces.

Needless to say, the Irish government came to terms very quickly with the British government. They did not want to be put in the situation of having to shoot down their own people in the streets of Dublin for demanding weapons for the defence of the people of the Six Counties.

That situation still exists. It is not in the interests of the Dublin government to see it continue, because as long as it does, they are threatened with overthrow by the people's anger at their inactivity.

There is also the danger, for them, that the civil rights movement might spread into the South. This is another reason why they would dearly love to see an end to the struggle in the North.

ICP.

The March rebellion in Trinidad is a direct result of imperialist exploitation and oppression of our people. Historically, the people of the Caribbean were at one time the creation and, at a later date, the victims of Western capitalism and imperialism. A Caribbean novelist, V. S. Naipaul, came very close to the truth when he wrote of the Caribbean: "Once, because of their wealth, a people had been enslaved; now because of their beauty, a people was being dispossessed." For "beauty", we should substitute "natural wealth". Naipaul's consistency in avoiding the issue could be put down to his failure to come to terms with the dibasic nature of the culture of the Caribbean people. Therefore, anyone who recognises the Caribbean reality will find it very difficult to engage in this type of idiosyncratic romanticism. This novelist, who in many ways has recorded a good deal of truth, finds it extremely difficult to confront the imperialists and their lackeys. Naipaul's failure to identify himself with the peoples of whom he writes leads him to see the mushrooming of hotels as the main threat to the Caribbean people's existence. In a curious way, despite Naipaul's belief that his domicile in London preserves his "impartiality", he often voices the most banal ideological aspects of the local lackeys of Yankee imperialism. Still, the subjectivism of the novelist is only a minor factor within the totality of the colonial situation. Fanon demonstrates very beautifully in *The Wretched of the Earth* the reactionary attitudes of these quasi-intellectuals. Their nostalgia, their longing for the past, their quest to resurrect dead customs and traditions is their trade. Naipaul and many others like himself add yet another dimension. People are being dispossessed because of the abstract beauty of their countries! The imperialists do not think so, neither do the masses of people who rebelled against the Williams puppet clique.

The only surprising thing about the March rebellion is that it did not occur much sooner. Trinidad had a population at the last census (1960) of 828,137, giving a density of 418 per sq. mile, similar to East Germany. It is made up of the following racial groups:

RACE	No.	% (approx.)
Negro*	358,588	42%
East Indian	301,946	38%
Mixed	134,929	17%
White	15,718	3%
Chinese	8,361	
Lebanese/ Syrian	1,590	
Other	6,714	3%
Not Stated	291	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>828,137</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Census term not mine.

Out of every 100 people, 46 are the descendants of Africans; 35 are the descendants of East Indians; 14 are mixed; the remaining five are Europeans, Chinese, Lebanese, Syrians etc. In purely racial terms, then, Trinidad and Tobago is a black country. Rather, we should say it as it is, black people live there. It is not their country! Despite the fact that out of every 100 people, 95 are black, the land does not belong to them. The land belongs to Tate and Lyle, Caroni Ltd., Booker Bros. and many other absentee landlords. The area of Trinidad is 1,864 square miles; Tobago is 116 square miles, giving a total of 1,980 square miles. Yet one-fifth of the land space is under virgin forest. And \$72m. (£1=\$4.80c.) is spent on importing food. The land is not being efficiently used.

Of a total working population of around 270,000, agriculture is the biggest field of employment, engaging about 60,000 persons. The government service comes next. It is evident therefore that the vast majority of people work for absentee landlords. But despite the purely numerical importance of a backward agriculture, its contribution of a mere 9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to national life is pitiful.

Everyone knows this, but I am going to say it again. The source of the March rebellion is to be found in the imperialists' exploitation of our country. The demands of the monopoly capitalists for an increasing rate of profit have led to an insoluble contradiction between themselves and the bourgeois nationalist puppet regime of Eric Williams and the people. On the one hand Williams and his clique recognise the great importance of diversification of the national economy. But this is not in the interest of the monopolists. As a result, the puppets offer a number of economic concessions to manufacturing industries, such as duty-free imports of tools, machinery; relief of the payment of income tax on profits for a period of five years, etc. But these so-called incentives without a guarantee of high profits are meaningless to a capitalist pig. Capitalists invest because they hope to receive surplus value—they call it Marginal Efficiency of Investment (MEI).

country. Oil and asphalt account for 25% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Manufacturing accounts for a mere 16% of Gross Domestic Product and oil and asphalt account for 80% of the country's exports.

We have also to remember that the production of petroleum does not demand a large labour force. Between 1957 and 1967 the labour force in the oil industry has been reduced from around 17,000 to around 14,000. Yet it is the oil industry which attracts the capital investment. Texaco since 1957 has been expanding "its" oil refinery in Trinidad to the point where it has become the company's largest refinery outside the USA. In 1958 a Rexformer plant was erected at the cost of \$12 million, and in December 1961 Texaco began plans for a further investment of \$90m. Texaco showed a net profit of \$835,000,000 for the last financial year. Contrast this with Tate and Lyle's £8,000,000! Do remember that this is a poor country, where 62% of the total population are under 25 years of age, and 30% are unemployed.

Williams' puppet regime may as well cry for the moon. In these conditions manufacturing is bad business. However, Trinidad manufactures banks—foreign banks!—Trinidad has manufactured the Canadian Bank of Commerce; Barclays D.C.O.; Bank of Nova Scotia; Bank of London and Montreal Ltd.; Olds Discount Co. (T.C.C.) Ltd.; Trinidad Cooperative Bank; Bank of Trinidad (Geddes Grant) Ltd.; Swiss West Indies Bank Ltd.; New York City Bank; Chase Manhattan etc. etc. The steadily rising rate of unemployment and the growth rate of bank manufacturing compete with each other for the place of honour in the national economy. Here are the two growth areas; both favour imperialism.

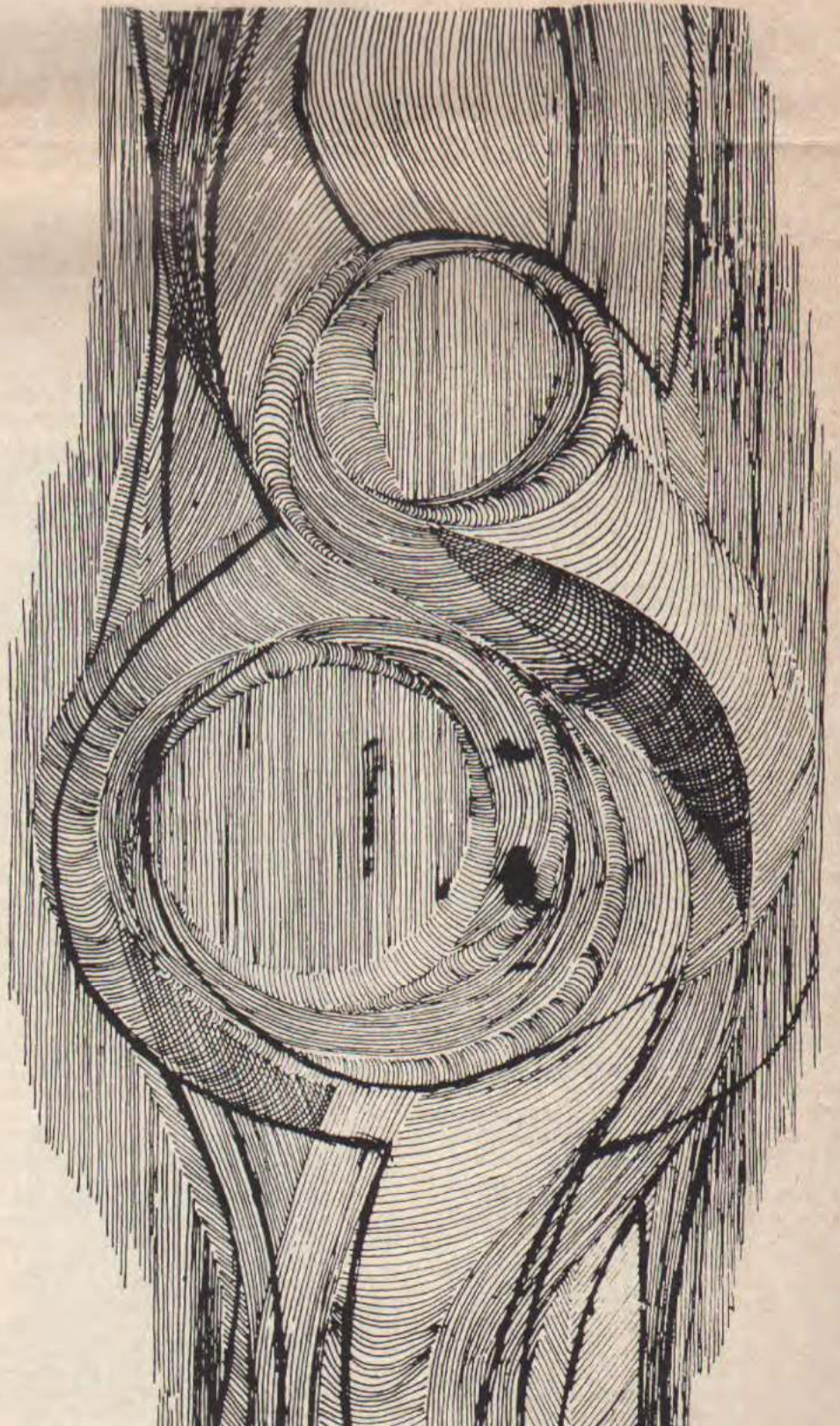
This brings us to the militant demonstration in March, which began as a protest against the trial of Trinidad students in Montreal, Canada. Promptly, the banks were singled out for attacks. Booker Bros. also received their just share of the people's wrath. The people see foreign control of our economic life. And since Trinidad is a "black" country, in order to counterpose this "white" economic stranglehold, the slogan of Black Power is raised. Is race involved? Yes! Race is the new dimension of imperialists' ideology. For better or for worse, those who perpetrate racial humiliation on black peoples must bear the full consequences for their actions. They humiliate black peoples at their peril. However, the people of Trinidad and Tobago recognise the main enemy—capitalism and imperialism. Indeed, Eric Williams himself played a great part in initiating the attack on capitalism. The heroic attacks on the bastions of imperialism—the banks—make this absolutely clear. At least three Canadian banks received their fair supply of Molotov cocktails.

The protest movement is led by the National Joint Action Committee. This is a coalition of workers, students and unemployed. Several factors—the army mutiny, the resignation of a high-ranking cabinet minister, and above all the intervention of the agricultural workers—all testified to the potential revolutionary situation which existed. One notable element, i.e. the Revolutionary Party, was missing.

With time, Caribbean revolutionaries will respond to their historic role.

All Power to the People of Trinidad and Tobago!  
All Power to the People of the Caribbean!

George Joseph



To understand the latest changes in the Lebanese political situation, we must put them in their global context: the contradictions resulting from the armed Palestinian presence on Lebanese soil.

The appearance of Palestinian bases in south Lebanon confronted the Lebanese bourgeoisie with a tragic dilemma: if they liquidated these bases they would arouse reactions from the "progressive" Arab states and the revolt of the Lebanese Moslem masses; but if they failed to liquidate the cancerous intrusion, it would menace the very foundations of Lebanese capitalism, supported by an emerging Lebanese revolutionary left which called in question the long-established status quo of which the Lebanese Communist Party had formed a passive left wing.

The events of April and October 1969, like those of today, were attempts to resolve this dilemma for the benefit of imperialist interests in the area.

#### IN APRIL 1969

The Lebanese state found an ingenious solution for the problem: exploiting Lebanese revisionism and presenting the liquidation of the fedayeen bases as an armed struggle against Syrian Baathist plots to infiltrate Lebanon through Saida (the Syrian regime's "Palestinian liberation organisation").

The Lebanese petit-bourgeoisie, Moslem as well as Christian, applauded the government's actions, believing they were dealing with the expansionist plans of a country whose economic level is not to be envied and whose citizens look for seasonal employment in Lebanon.

Nasser, very embarrassed by his losses on the Saudi front, had to remain an impartial observer. Syria, isolated, protested in the most vehement terms, thus only giving credence to the official theory.

On every level the conjuncture seemed propitious for carrying out the plan. But that was to forget the Palestinians of the refugee camps and to miscalculate the influence of the Lebanese revolutionary forces on the masses.

In reply to the army's massacres of the fedayeen, the population of Saida—first to learn the true nature of events—rose up. In the afternoon of the same day, in spite of a rapidly imposed curfew, a demonstration organised by the Lebanese Left took place. The state, if it was to keep to its plans, could only suppress it. The resulting massacre of April 23rd outstripped even the government's expectation's in its horror! The anger of the masses rose and Fatah's radio, another unforeseen element, exposing the plot, called on the people to revolt.

The tendency of the state was to compromise. The government, having failed in its task, collapsed: Moslem ministers, especially President of the Council Rachid Karame, to avoid being compromised and discredited in the eyes of the electorate, dissociated themselves from the repression and resigned.

The liquidation of the local presence of the Palestinian revolution was postponed. The outcome was a return to the status quo which, while it marked the defeat of the state, allowed it to prepare a new offensive.

#### THE FOLLOWING PERIOD

Summer 1969 was catastrophe for the U.S. imperialists. The "progressive" coups d'état in Jordan and especially in Libya (a rising oil power and imperialist military base) made the solution of the problems created by the Arab aggression urgent, for it had become the catalyst and axis of political transformation in the Arab world. Implementation of the U.N. resolution of 22nd Nov. 1967—providing a peaceful solution most favourable to American imperialism—was necessary.

Israel, military base of the U.S., was very interested in such a solution but wrangled over the forms of diplomatic contact—an incomprehensible temporisation if Israel did not wish to save the Hussein from a direct, and possibly fatal, confrontation with the fedayeen.

The implementation of a "peaceful solution" presupposes the liquidation of the Palestinian revolution which is the principal stumbling block on such a path. The decaying kingdom of Hussein would incur grave risks in taking such an initiative, so the Lebanese state, stronger through its ability to exploit the religious tensions in the country, was to be the sounding board, the experimenter.

In October, April, or at least the Syrian farce, repeated itself. The plot was threadbare, the army acted without taking the trouble to disguise its acts. Why this unaccustomed courage?

After the blow of the "Mirage" (1), an American-inspired attempt to discredit the Soviet Union and a brilliant operation of the army, and after a propaganda campaign cleverly coordinated with the help of declarations by government agents in the south protesting against the presence of the fedayeen who were presented as criminals and hooligans, American assurances, made known to the public through the communiqués of the U.S. Embassy, allowed the army to act fearlessly. It did, but came to grief as well.

This time the difficulties came from outside: Arab reaction was much stronger than foreseen. Syria and Libya, working in the framework of a counter-offensive by the Soviet Union, took up strong positions, and what was much worse, took action as a result. Syria closed its frontiers; Libya recalled its ambassador; Cairo radio, very influential with the Moslem Lebanese masses,

## THE LEBANON TRAGEDY & FARCE



Lebanese capitalism, intermediary between the imperialist west and the Arab interior, and then tributary of the second as well as the first, risked extinction, all the more since the attitude of the Arab countries could bring about a popular insurrection far more important than the comedy of the barricades raised in Beirut by the henchmen of the Second Bureau (2) with the sole opportunist aim of keeping the political initiative to be able to encapsulate the masses. The second attempt fell to the ground.

The same ministerial picture: Karame presented his resignation after five months of fruitless approaches for the formation of a ministry.

Egypt offered its good offices. The Lebanese state, up against the wall, sent a delegation to Cairo to sign the famous agreement, the consecration of a smarming defeat, for it legalised the action of the Palestinian resistance in Lebanon.

The Lebanese government temporarily resigned itself to its failure, but very temporarily, since a scrap of paper never prevented the bourgeoisie from defending its interests. But this time it was a matter of changing tactics.

The military coup d'état, an extreme solution recoiled from so far because it was in contradiction with the liberal nature of the Lebanese economy, must be more seriously contemplated.

To begin with it was necessary for the military bureaucracy holding the reins of power to strengthen its position in the state apparatus. A ministry of "national unity" was created whose name deceived nobody: its "Nahjist" domination was obvious (the civilian nickname of the military bureaucracy). Then faced with the growing popularity of General Boustany (3), making him a rival of the actual army chief (4), one of the most classical lines of action was used: purging disguised as retirement. Boustany tried to protest, but was rapidly quietened by some dollars accompanied by "friendly advice". Another classic method. Then the preparation of the new plan began.

Joumbat (5) was not in a post as important as Minister of the Interior by democratic wish or pure chance. He had been put there to be used. With his "national" and "progressive halo" Joumbat could do what done by others would have sparked off general uproar: to put shackles on the action of the fedayeen. That's what he did and he did it well.

The "progressive" and "socialist" Joumbat restricted the movements of the fedayeen in the south. His personal clown, the Communist Party, applauded.

The progressive and socialist Joumbat tried to introduce police into the refugee camps. His personal clown applauded.

The progressive and socialist Joumbat mercilessly dislodged the southern refugees of Mkalles in the name of the integrity of the state. His personal clown applauded louder.

All this happened without arousing any popular protest; the organisations of the resistance, essentially Fatah, were the first to be fooled. The CLAP occupied itself less and less with the assembling of the revolutionary forces and more and more with Joumbat, thus isolating itself from the Lebanese masses.

of Moukhtara" in chorus.

In this general apotheosis Joumbat began to play his own game. Progressive "Arabist" personality, popular among the Moslems and applauded by the Christian right, he filled ideally the requirements for a governor of the country.

Verbally supporting the fedayeen, backed by the Lebanese Communist Party, while organising the repression of the fedayeen, applauded by the Christian right, Joumbat gave free rein to his personal ambitions.

He brandished his demands: abolition of the denominational principle, election of the President of the republic by universal suffrage.

"The Constitution does not prevent me from canvassing for the Presidency," he declared. Moreover hadn't *Newsweek* promoted the future President? Joumbat saw himself already as Bonaparte in triumph, but the spectre of the military Bonaparte rose up: the man of the Second Bureau...Chehab the diabolic. Brought to the ministry by the military bureaucracy, Joumbat playing at his own game was going to betray it. He thwarted the plans of the men of the Second Bureau in the Mabassed business, so reinforcing his new image as a man above parties and classes, capable of striking in every direction. This betrayal was badly digested by the men of the Second Bureau: the joke was in bad taste.

It was necessary to act.

A new step in the escalation of repression against the fedayeen was taken: the unsuccessful assassination of Riad responsible for Fatah in the south. Joumbat found himself in a bad position: beginning a series of expected outrages against the Palestinian organisations. But the CLAP resolved the problem by breaking off its relations with the government, then with Joumbat himself: presenting its self-criticism before the Lebanese revolutionary left, the CLAP started to establish new, more positive relations with it than in the past.

The meeting of the progressive parties decided to organise a demonstration of protest on Saturday, March 21st. It took place and was larger than expected. 25,000 demonstrators from Baathists to the extreme left, carrying in places red flags, and chanting slogans, calling into question the army and the established system.

For the first time such a demonstration took place without the massive compromising attendance as was usual in such cases of the men of the Second Bureau.

The bourgeoisie trembled! It was too much for it. It was urgent to put an end to it.

Furthermore there was the economic crisis which gripped the country and which the revolutionaries magnified.

Saturday's demonstration was the straw that broke the camel's back. The bourgeoisie's reaction would be the same as every frightened bourgeoisie, as described by Marx in his *18th Brumaire* on the subject of the French bourgeoisie:

"Now picture to yourself the French bourgeoisie, how in the throes of this business panic, his trade-crazy brain is tortured, set in a whirl and stunned by rumours of coups d'état and the restoration of universal suffrage, by the struggle between parliament and the executive power, by communist plots...and you will

"Rather an end with terror than terror without end."

The Second Bureau has a decided lack of imagination or perhaps it thinks the memory of the Lebanese people too short. The plot is always so unoriginal that everyone understands it.

The "Phalanges", faithful supporters of the military bureaucracy organised the slaughter of Rahale (7). The place was judiciously chosen: bastion of religious anti-Nasserism, Rahale assassinating the fedayeen, civil war would break out.

The events of 1958 would repeat themselves with their logical consequence: the seizing of power by the army. It seems that in such cases the military takes a leaf out of Hegel. The reading of Marx would have been more useful to them: Hegel made the remark somewhere that all great events and historical persons repeat themselves. He forgot to add: the first time as tragedy, the second as farce.

#### 1958 AS TRAGEDY. 1970 AS FARCE.

As a matter of fact the "spontaneity" of the men of the Second Bureau in the region west of Beirut and that of the "Phalanges" in the Christian districts was completely ridiculous.

The stage setting was too obvious. The lowest point of the farce were the fireworks which the Beirutians had a right to at the Place of the Martyrs. It's necessary to recognise that if the state moves with a frightening slowness over administrative operations, it is rigorously exact over questions of firing. At five o'clock in the afternoon on the stroke of the hour, the farce began.

It would have been very laughable had not innocent people been the victims. ...Bad luck dogged the footsteps of the Second Bureau; the CLAP reacted wisely. Conscious of the plotting, it quickly calmed its troops and denounced the military bureaucracy, avoiding an incensed reaction which would have only profited the army.

Joumbat, the civilian Bonaparte, accused the military Bonaparte of breaking the rules of the game. He denounced him too.

The "National Liberal Party", defender of the liberal economy and enemy of the military bureaucracy, added its voice to the concert.

The whole picture was embellished by the smooth-tongued dramatic announcements of the army on the radio—this great victim screamed of treachery of which it was the object.

The plot had miscarried once again. The Lebanese as the only result are more conscious than ever of the game that is played in the corridors of ministries and palaces.

Bouessir (8), taking his cue from Nasser, played the role of mediator for a fresh return to the previous situation.

The army, pondering its defeat, prepares a new plan. Weapons are sharpened waiting for "the battle of the Presidency".

The Second Bureau has sworn to take its revenge...

#### WHAT ARE THE PRESENT TASKS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

Until now relegated to second place, a spectator rather than an actor, the left must act quickly and effectively:

— in the sphere of organisation. After an open action, hardly clandestine at all, it is urgent for it to prepare a possible retreat in case of a possible coup d'état; that is, to accelerate the process of organisational construction while respecting to the full the rules of clandestinity; — in the military sphere. It is more than ever necessary to create armed militias, the only means of intervening in case of crisis, and more and more an indispensable condition for agitational work among the masses. To rely upon the protection of others can be very dangerous in this sphere.

At the level of politics, the fate of the revolutionary left is linked to the possibility of mobilising the masses. Now such a mobilisation implies clear political bases, a single revolutionary strategy, linking different revolutionary parties.

It is necessary to transform it as a grouping, for the support of the Palestinian revolution, contenting itself at the popular level with pasting up posters of the resistance organisations in a revolutionary front, capable of linking the demands of the Lebanese revolution to the Palestinian revolution, intervening in the framework of its own strategy with its own slogans. The lessons of Mkalles are very useful here.

Today it is urgent to conduct a campaign of methodical propaganda explaining to the oppressed layers of the population the given facts of the situation and preparing them for a future decisive battle.

—For the socialist revolution!  
—For the liberation of Palestine!  
—Long live the workers' struggle!

G.A. J-P.B. from No.1 of "L'Union", political organ of the U.C.L. (Union Communiste Libanaise—Lebanese Communist Union).

(1) Some officials of the Russian Embassy were expelled from the country accused of organising the theft of a "Mirage" of the Lebanese army on behalf of the Soviet Union.

(2) The Second Bureau organised by Chehab after 1958 was for a long time the representative of Nasserite and French interests. In 1969 a reversal of alliances took place: the Second Bureau passed into the service of the Americans.

(3) Then General-in-Chief of the Army.

(4) General Chehab came to the Presidency after the crisis of 1958 and the American intervention.

(5) Leader of the "Progressive Socialist Party" of

# VICTOR SERGE—LIVE THE REVOLUTION

*Men in Prison* (1929). Doubleday, 1969.  
(A novel of life in a French prison.)

*Birth of Our Power* (1929-30). Gollancz, 1969.  
(A novel of the Barcelona uprising and the early days of Red Petrograd.)

*The case of Comrade Tulayev* (1942). Penguin, 1968.  
(A novel about the purges in the USSR during the 1930s.)

*Memoirs of a Revolutionary* (1942-43). Oxford University Press, 1968.

From Paris to Petrograd  
Victor Serge's life followed one of his favourite mottoes: "As long as social injustice lasts we shall remain in a state of permanent revolution." He was born in Belgium in 1890, the child of Russian revolutionary exiles. His legacy of idealism and intimate experience of poverty led him to the desperate anarchism-individualism of the pre-World War I days in Paris. His comrades saw no solution but to blast their way out of a "world without escape." They died in shoot-outs with the police, by their own hands, and on the guillotine.

Serge was editing an anarchist review, determined to prevail and to resist the temptation of dying for no purpose, but for refusing to inform on his comrades he got five years in prison as an "accomplice". Prison toughened him and refined him and refined his ideals. After his release he worked as a linotypist in Barcelona, joined the syndicalist labour union, Confederation Nacional de Trabajo, and fought in the workers' uprising of July 1917. When the uprising was crushed he set off for Russia to serve the victorious revolution.

Four Exiles: Seven Flights  
After a stay in a French concentration camp he made it to Petrograd, served as a machine-gunner in a defence battalion during the Civil War, helped found the Communist International, and translated Bolshevik writings into French. He joined the Communist Party and then, with Trotsky and others, formed the Left Opposition, which demanded the return of Soviet Democracy. When the Opposition was crushed by Stalin, Serge was not shot, but was expelled from the Party and deported to central Asia in 1933. After three years he was issued a

passport and went to France, where he continued his work as an Oppositionist until the Nazi takeover. He then made his way to Mexico, where he died in 1947.

During his last twenty years: four exiles, seven flights, each time the loss of all his books and papers. And he still managed to turn out some twenty books and pamphlets.

Despite this extraordinary range of experience, Serge never saw himself as having an adventure. Unlike so many writers who report on Revolutionary Experiences, he never places himself above his situation. He rejects the notion of a literary consciousness rising above history to some heavenly place. And unlike that other school, the literary hatchet-men of the revolution, he refuses to dissolve himself into official mythology. He has no fear of saying "I", but he has no need to justify himself, or parade around as someone as who was right when everybody else was wrong. What matters to him is: what happened, and what does it mean to our lives? Because he refuses to play the traditional literary games, he is an absolutely trustworthy writer. You don't have to keep an eye on him to see what he's getting up to behind the facade of words.

The People Take Power  
Serge never romanticises or abstracts his material. The people of Barcelona and Petrograd don't represent any lofty principle beyond the simple and profound respect due to them as human beings. They are being denied the a necessary physical and spiritual conditions of life. They have got to become conscious of their force, demolish the structures which oppress them, and "it will cost whatever it costs". The meaning of the revolution to Serge and his comrades is expressed in sixteen words, a dialogue on the eve of his departure for Russia:

The army?  
With the people.  
The police?  
No more police.  
The prisons?  
Burned.  
The power?  
Us.

Thermidor  
It's hardly news that the October Revolution

didn't continue along these lines. It turned a backward country into an industrial giant, provided work and bread and education. But the democratic impulses of the early days—the direct control of the masses over their own lives, through the Soviets, the giant assemblies, the cooperatives—were usurped by a centralised, nationalistic bureaucracy which has become more and more counter-revolutionary over the years.

In the *Memoirs* and *Tulayev* Serge shows this really tragic process at work more clearly and sympathetically than anyone ever has or will. There couldn't have been a more terrible experience for a revolutionary than watching the revolution being taken over by those who wanted to control it and get fat off it. Or seeing the old "cohort of iron", the giants of October, confess to being paid agents of the fascists, saboteurs, enemies of the revolution. The strong and the weak alike were hemmed in on all sides, and went under. One of the characters in *Tulayev*, just before his arrest, puts it with chilling clarity: "What are the poor people to do? What are we to do?...Marx and Bakunin lived in the age of simple problems; they never had enemies behind them."

Philistinism in the West  
The reactionary phase of the revolution was greeted by a chorus of applause from left-wing writers and intellectuals in the West. These men might have had some influence on the course of events, but when Serge presented them with irrefutable facts, they'd pat him on the shoulder and tell him not to be so bitter, advise him against writing anything. Living in the vulgar and oppressive atmosphere of bourgeois society, they were completely carried away by the spectacle of men who spoke the language of

their own ideals exercising power over a whole country. They needed this so much that they could not bring themselves to take a good hard look at the actions accompanying the words. As Serge wrote in 1937:  
"So many literary men have succeeded in keeping silence, gaily, with a supreme revolutionary elegance. They have found it possible to publish weeklies and monthlies and whole books without letting the truth glimmer through. That is the sign of great artistry. And it is a terrible danger."

The Revolution Need Not Lie To Itself  
We mustn't be afraid ever to admit and discuss the failures of any revolution, no matter how valuable it may be to us. As soon as a word of criticism leaks out, the trained fleas of the existing order take to the air, buzzing, "See! See! Even the leftists admit that revolution is no good!" Let them caper while they can. We don't need to win debates with them. We do need to be so confident of our ideals and insights that we have nothing to fear from the entire truth about any situation. We have to face the fact that the most heroic achievement have, through human weakness and the inertia of events been dangerously corrupted. If we cover it up and try to forget, we're bound to make the same mistakes all over again. But if we are strong enough to grapple with the truth and not lose the courage or the will to fight the things that oppress us, then everything we learn however depressing, deepens and sharpens and heightens the consciousness. Certainly the enemy is behind us too, but that just happens to be an essential fact about this time and place...it's not the nineteenth century any more.

Phil Koslow (LNS)

At long last—Krupskaya's *Memoirs of Lenin* (Panther History series, 8/-).

Send 8/- plus 1/- postage to:

Red Books Services,  
182 Pentonville Road,  
London N.1.

Two new Trotsky pamphlets:

On the Road to the European Revolution (1/-);

The Prospects and Tasks in the Far East (1/6d).

From Red Books Services (add 4d. postage).

## BRITISH SOUNDS - THE MEDIA AT WAR

### How & Why Did It Come Into Being?

Godard's *British Sounds* at The Place. Made for London Weekend TV but rejected. A budget of £12,000, of which less than half went into the film, the rest into other projects.

A crucial film for the militant, as it poses very basic questions concerning its own nature—how and why did it come into being. In Godard's terms, a political film in that it extracts criticism and class identification from the audience, a non-political film in that it merely objectifies the problems, and itself becomes the object of the bourgeoisie, to be consumed in the usual indiscriminate way.

A simply constructed film, evolving through seven stages:

- (i) image—tracking shot along BMC assembly line at Oxford.  
sound—industrial noise plus revamped quotes from the Communist Manifesto.
- (ii) image—naked belly of woman.  
sound—voice of women's liberation militant.
- (iii) image—TV announcer.  
sound—his words—extracts from speeches by Wilson, de Gaulle, etc.
- (iv) image—an assembled group of militants from Dagenham.  
sound—their discussion.
- (v) image—students at Essex making posters and changing the words of popular songs.  
sound—their conversation, plus the theoretical exposition of a Marxist-Leninist film.
- (vi) image—bloody hand reaching through the snow for the red flag.  
sound—revolutionary songs from around the world.
- (vii) image—a fist smashing repeatedly through a paper Union Jack.  
sound—a chorus of voices claiming "solidarity with..." various radical groups in Britain.

### Suspended Between Two Worlds

This is plainly a film suspended between two worlds—one, the past, where the cinema was an end in itself and gauged its success on its means of total dissimulation of reality, the other the future, where the cinema becomes just one more weapon in a frontal media attack on capitalist ideology. Godard's concern seems to be as a propagandist for a popular cinema—a ten-minute tracking shot down an assembly line has little meaning apart from the exhortation to get cameras rolling in factories.

His films are essays, even notes and jottings, on what a militant film might be. As such his failures are more interesting than his successes.

### Militants Playing Militants

The main weakness of *British Sounds* lies in its status as a commodity—to get seventy minutes of film that was "authentic", Godard used militants in a way that prevented them from being true to themselves. Rather than record *British Sounds*, he has created *Godard Sounds*, no matter how self-effacing he tried to be. Again it is the suspended quality of the film which is so uncomfortable—*La Chinoise* was full of actors playing militants (struggle as drama) where their role was to interpret the feelings of others rather than express their own. While *British Sounds* points to a cinema full of militants playing actors (drama as struggle) whose role is to choose a path of self-expression that leads themselves and others to greater political awareness. But Godard's present work has militants playing militants, and neither is really suited to the part.

### Eisenstein's & Godard's Dialectics

If the abstracted subject of the film is Godard unwillingly imposing himself on others, the language it speaks is "autocratically" his own. *Le Gai Savoir* was a first step towards the articulation of images, and in *British Sounds* Godard has formulated a concept of "dialectical struggle between sounds and images", thus forming a revolutionary arena purely in terms of media. Godard's is a backdoor approach—to simplicity via sophistication, to analysis via synthesis. He is experiencing his own Warhol reaction to a montage which does everything in its power to deny the reality it corresponds to. In fact Godard's use of the term "dialectical struggle" is precisely the converse of Eisenstein's: Godard is referring to the clash of perceptive elements on a screen, reflecting a clash of forces in "real life", which are then reconciled in a "higher plane of awareness" in the viewer's consciousness—awareness of the nature of the clash in real life. Whereas Eisenstein's dialectics were concerned with positing a frozen ambiguity, a plane of perception divorced from its contributing elements.

### Who Is It Aimed At?

A fundamental question concerning *British Sounds* is: just who is it aimed at? Godard has now made two films for TV, presumably in an

attempt to reach beyond the art-house ghetto he has been relegated to. But both films have been rejected: two political failures then? Not really, because as expressions of solidarity with the working class made under bourgeois conditions and seen by bourgeois audiences, they are in themselves a political victory. It could be thought that they act only as escape valves for bourgeois guilt, but they are more concerned with exploiting the cinema as an organising force—as catalysts for group discussion leading to group activity. That this review goes on talking all much about Godard as about militant cinema shows just how much imprisoned in a cultural ghetto the man is.



### To Make Political Films Is To Make Films Politically

Godard's new slogan is that we must make political films, and we must make films politically. The slogan is powerful, and seems to contain the following points.

1. The primary distinction underlines the fact that the revolution takes place on the streets, not on a screen, while putting this fact in a new light—for social changes to occur in reality, there must be corresponding changes in mediated reality.
2. This already assumes that our political consciousness is inextricably tied in with our cultural consciousness, as implanted by the media. We thus work within the context of our media conditioning, not against it.
3. If this is true, then it is possible to qualify the class analysis of society. The basis of this analysis is to define a social stratum's common relationship to capital, or its own labour, and now the way is open to defining its relationship to the media. This media analysis must be in terms of access, feed-back potential (capacity to criticise) and audience identification/atomisation.
4. Given this media analysis, the call to make films politically means to create situations where people are able to create their common interest group—TV watchers of the world, united—as much as their common enemy. This would be a start towards using the media as fantastic potentiators of human communication.
5. Class orientation is still the primary factor in exploiting the potential of the media, as underlined in *British Sounds*. The relationship of the working class to the media at present is one of total enslavement—a revolutionary programme would be to smash the outlets of bourgeois cultural and political propaganda and substitute for them a working class media situation. This would then act to reinforce political consciousness rather than debilitate it. The relationship of the middle class is more complex—while ostensibly being fed its own ideals, the bourgeoisie is in fact ossifying itself in rigid cultural facades which only barely disguise the military basis of its supremacy. The yippie tactics seem to be effective here—using the media to smash the facades.

Such assumptions are far-reaching, and involve a complete re-orientation of our view of the cinema. Godard remains one of the most stimulating figures of our time.

