

# EVERY WORKER IS A SPECIAL CASE



**LESSONS OF THE MINERS STRIKE**      **NIXON-MAO SUMMIT**  
**IRELAND - SEIZE THE TIME!**      **U.S. WORKERS STRUGGLES**  
**MAURITIUS**      **RACIST EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**

In an editorial which appeared in *The Red Mole* at the beginning of the miners strike, we noted the precise importance of the miners' strike. We noted, "In their plans for an attack on the strength and living standards of the working class, the government has two long and medium term measures. The first was to enter the Common Market..... However, competition in the Common Market would be tough and the attack on their standard of living might lead to a revolt by the working class. To prevent that, the organisations of the working class had to be weakened so that any fight back would prove ineffective. The weapon for doing this was the Industrial Relations Bill. However, the IRB would take time to have an effect." It was for this reason that the government decided to adopt the policy of direct confrontation with the unions. This was made particularly urgent by the need to re-expand the economy in a drive to reflate profit margins and labour productivity. As we noted, "Now however a real dilemma was faced. High unemployment might not have cooled wage militancy, but in an economy that was expanding, even slowly the bargaining position of the trade unions would improve. The economy might be hit by a real round of wage rises. The government and the employers were desperate to find some way of preventing this.....Only the State machine had the resources in terms of finance, publicity etc. really to weaken the power of the unions. The State was only too willing to oblige". This was what made the strike of such importance. What occurred was that the government's plans received a severe setback. How do the various forces in the situation stand now?

1. THE RANK AND FILE OF THE TRADE UNIONS—Before the strike Heath had almost succeeded in convincing a considerable section, even a majority, of the working class that it was impossible to defeat the government. After the failure of the UPW strike, although resentment and hatred of the Tories was higher than ever, a certain fatalistic feeling that nothing could be done stood a chance of seeping in. UCS and the various factory occupations had already reversed that tide. Now the best organised sections of the trade unions will have had their confidence greatly raised. A series of severe individual struggles in key sections of the economy can be expected. This tendency will be increased by the decision of the Engineering unions to go in for a policy of local agreements. We can clearly, therefore, expect some quite large settlements or struggles in the economically decisive sections of industry. What happens to the workers outside these key sections, however, depends to some extent on what policy the ruling class decides to adopt.

2. THE SITUATION INSIDE THE RULING CLASS—What the miners' strike has quite clearly produced is an acute crisis within the ruling class. For the first 18 months of his government Heath had quite clearly succeeded in gaining the acceptance of his policy by the decisive sections of the ruling class. He had achieved this even more clearly than Wilson had in the pre 1964 period. Previously one section (of the ruling class) was looking for a deal with the unions so as to cool militancy. Another section was looking towards a more desperate solution. What Heath seemed to have succeeded in doing and which he would have done if he had smashed the miners would have been to rally the ruling class round the second alternative. Now this aim has received a severe setback. The sections of the ruling class looking for a deal with the trade union bureaucracy have been immensely strengthened.

## back to square one

In order to understand what has occurred it is necessary to make a clear distinction at this point between the interests of the ruling class, and the interests of the present dominant sections of the Conservative Party. The past policies of Edward Heath would make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for him to actually turn back to the policy of trying to do a deal with the trade union bureaucracy. The only road open for him therefore, and the section of the Conservative Party he represents, is an abrupt switch to the right. But the present situation takes him back to square one. At his election he had more or less four years to rally the ruling class completely behind his policies. If he had achieved this he could have gone into any general election in 1974-75 with great confidence as to the outcome. Now however he has very little time. It will clearly take, even if the hardest line possible is taken, at least many months, probably a year at least, to whip the working class back into the shape it was in before the miners strike. In the short term his economic strategy is severely dented. That takes him to 1973 and leaves very little time to re-unite the ruling class in time for a General Election. Nevertheless Heath will probably be forced to try for this option in order to maintain his own position.

What this means in concrete terms is that he is going to have to desperately to salvage his economic policy. The British bourgeoisie simply cannot afford to try to expand the economy while strong trade unions exist to put up wages. That is a recipe for disaster inside the Common

Market. This means almost certainly an effort to hold the 7 per cent norm against claims by other sections of the working class. This means the demand of—Finish the job the miners started—SMASH THE 7% NORM—must be in the forefront of all agitation. It will also mean tougher measures via such things as cutting Social Security payments to strikers, tougher laws against picketing, and the use of the Industrial Relations Act. Indeed on this last score, the Act *must* be used in the coming period or it will be reduced to the status of farce. Not to use the Act in a situation where the unions may wreck the entire economic policy of the government means abandoning any real hope of permanently altering the balance of forces by hamstringing the unions. We must therefore expect in the coming period a whole series of struggles in which demands for the defence by working class action of victims of the Act will be needed.



3. THE INTEGRATIONIST PERSPECTIVE—The outcome of the miners strike will have greatly strengthened that section of the ruling class whose basic strategy is to do a deal with the trade union bureaucracy. Stokes and his ilk must be cursing and swearing at Heath at the present time because of the trouble he has now made inevitable for them within the motor industry. However, any policy of cooperation, in particular to a formal incomes policy, would need a complete change in strategy by the Conservative party. Indeed this change would be so abrupt that it is probably incapable of accomplishing it. In any case the logical party of government if the basic strategy of the ruling class is a deal with the trade union bureaucracy, is the Labour Party. This opens up completely new perspectives for the Labour leadership, and indeed one of the people to gain most from the miners strike has been Harold Wilson. He has been able simultaneously to offer to the ruling class an alternative policy to that of Heath, and in a certain demagogic way, to give verbal support to the miners. His way forward now quite clearly lies round that of an incomes policy.

## key to wilson's strategy

The key to Wilson's strategy all along has been the 'special case' argument and the urging of the government to negotiate with the TUC. As we noted in the last strike broadsheet produced by *The Red Mole*:

"Harold Lever said that the task of the government was to get round a table with the TUC. In week five of the strike Roy Mason repeated the same idea. Wilson attempted to put the integrative line of Labour into practice. His trip to Fisher-Bendix to have the occupation called off, had a far greater significance than merely the fact that he does not like having occupations around his constituency. What he attempted to show was that while the confrontation policy of Heath produced factory occupations and immense strikes with considerable risk for capitalism, the policy of Labour was a better way of dealing with the trade unions and involved far less risks. These intentions now key in fairly exactly with the motives of the leadership of the trade unions. If the Labour Party wishes to rekindle the policy of integration, then there is nothing that the trade union bureaucracy would like more than to go back to the situation of cosy chats with Labour leaders, rather than open confrontation, strife and struggle. This can be seen in the policy which is being put forward that the miners are a 'special case' as far as the 7% norm is concerned. What this means is that while the pressure of the rank and file is too great at present to accept openly that the miners must be content with what they are offered, nevertheless they are prepared to accept, in principle, the idea of a norm for wage increases, i.e. of an incomes policy. This provides the open door for an agreement between the Labour leadership and the trade union bureaucracy, and for an alternative policy to be presented to the ruling class if Heath fails. This is what explains the bellicose nature of some of Wilson's recent statements. In a certain sense he sees that it is in his interest if the miners win a limited victory. If Heath defeats the miners then he will be able to present himself as the man who kept his nerve when others panicked. He will appear as a bourgeois leader of real stature. Wilson will be unable for years to convince the ruling class that Labour's policy was the correct one. Labour would be marginalised in terms of the plans

of the ruling class. Of course Wilson cannot accept an outright victory for the miners either. In the first place he must dread the thought of an early general election putting him in charge of the present economic, social and political problems of the bourgeoisie. And, secondly, he cannot be seen by the ruling class to be actually supporting the trade union fight against the 7% norm."

The correctness of this analysis has been entirely confirmed in the event, leading to the ending of the strike. Wilson has lost no time in telling the ruling class that when it came to the real crunch Heath was forced to adopt Labour methods in their entirety—right down to the midnight dash to 10 Downing Street. If Wilson can now only gain the agreement of the Trade Union bureaucracy for an incomes policy, only acceptable under a 'humane' Labour government of course, then he would have an apparently viable policy to sell to the ruling class. As long as Heath was successful, Labour was being moved towards being marginalised to the main stream of British politics. Now Wilson has the chance to move right back into the centre of the stage. It may be that the ruling class is too acutely aware of the seriousness of the economic crisis, and in any case does not trust Wilson and the Trade Union leadership to keep the rank and file under control. In that case Wilson's policies will not win the support of the ruling class. Nevertheless they will define the main line of his strategy in the coming period.

4. THE TRADE UNION BUREAUCRACY—The outcome of the strike will place large sections of the trade union leaderships in very difficult positions indeed. For example the leaders of the power workers look really idiotic accepting £1.80 a few weeks before the miners get £4-£6. We can confidently therefore expect a crisis within the right-wing unions including such groups as the NUR, the NUT etc. All these have claims in the pipe-line and all the leaderships of these unions will be under severe pressure from the rank and file. These unions would be only too glad to do some sort of deal with the Labour Party, especially as they know that in order to defeat the NCB & Tories the miners unleashed forces going well outside the control of the TU bureaucracy. They would, roughly speaking, like to be able to argue that Heath was too strong in the economic field to be challenged and therefore while the trade union struggle could not be pursued, the main aim must be for the return of a Labour government. In a few cases this would even be served up in a little 'Leninist' rhetoric about raising the economic struggle to a political level. This would also suit the left wing of the constituency Labour party who are looking for a way of regaining some credibility. In these circumstances we could get everyone from Harold Wilson and Lord Cooper to Hugh Scanlon to Gery Healy, lined up on the slogan of 'Labour to Power on a Socialist Programme'. The effect, of course, would be to counterpose the 'political' struggle to the 'trade union' struggle thereby effectively ensuring that there would not in fact be any struggle at all. In these circumstances it is precisely the continuation of the trade union struggle which is the *political* policy, for it is this which cuts across the policies of both Heath and Wilson. **NO TO ANY FORM OF INCOMES POLICY** must become an absolutely central slogan of the coming period.

Whether the whole of the trade union bureaucracy could in fact do a new deal with Wilson is a difficult point to answer. Certainly the TUC will try. However, given the resentment, building up inside the working class, and given the encouragement to the militants given by the miners strike, it is extremely doubtful if, for example, Scanlon could actually promise an incomes policy.

## likely outcome

What appears to be the most likely outcome of the present struggle therefore is a simultaneous increase in confidence amongst the best organised rank and file, a severe and relatively prolonged crisis of the bourgeoisie, an inability to solve even temporarily the economic problems of British capitalism, and renewed attempts by Labour, in consort with the trade union bureaucracy, to move to the centre of the political stage. In this situation the three immediate slogans of the moment, which cut across the policies both of Heath and Wilson are:

**FINISH THE JOB THE MINERS STARTED—SMASH THE 7% NORM!**

**NO TO ANY FORM OF INCOMES POLICY!**

**NO COMPLIANCE WITH THE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT, NO UNION REGISTRATION, FOR IMMEDIATE SOLIDARITY STRIKES IN DEFENCE OF VICTIMS OF THE ACT!**

In particular it is the second of these slogans that is vital in what may now become the most dangerous political tendency within the working class organisations—the move of the trade union leaders towards an agreement on an Incomes Policy with Wilson.

# MINERS STRIKE INTERVIEWS

The interviews on this and the next page were carried out before the latest offer accepted by the NUM executive. They are printed because they illustrate clearly some important lessons of the strike.

## JIM CLARKE, RUGELEY

How do you feel about the role of the NUM, particularly with its instructions to pickets and its instructions about safety coverage?

I think the NUM leadership must accept responsibility for the decline in real living standards that the mine workers have suffered over these past ten to fifteen years. However in the last two years there has been a marked change in leadership. I know there has not been a revolutionary change or anything like that, but at least they are prepared now to stand up and

only be described as justified wage claims. So I think it is true that the NUM leadership had been put into the position where they had to take militant action.

How do you feel about the coverage of the strike by the national press?

I think as far as this strike is concerned the national press have not been so bitter towards the NUM in recent weeks—however, they are very shrewd people and very clever. Take the *Sun*, for instance, last weekend, "Stuff the Norm"—the headlines, and they



say that's the finish and they are prepared to use industrial action to enable their members to achieve a decent living standard. So as far as the leadership is concerned, I am quite satisfied with the general running of the strike. But I am dissatisfied about the instructions that have been sent out to picket lines. I feel that it is necessary and important that any people such as yourselves, from political groups and other trade unions should meet and get together. I am prepared to go anywhere and meet people who give their support—one has only to look at your publications and those of other political groups to see where the support is coming from. This is the sort of information that should be getting across to our members.

How far do you think this change in leadership was the result of rank and file discontent?

Yes—there is no doubt that the unofficial action that developed, particularly in Yorkshire and S. Wales in recent years has given the impetus to the NUM to be more militant and to press ahead with what can

went on to outline the tremendous case that the mine workers had. And in one of the main paragraphs in deeper print, they came up with the conclusion that three wise men should be appointed—Adamson, director general of the C.B.I., Vic Feather and a non-voting judge and they said that if these three men should get together they would reach a settlement of £3.50 extra for the lower paid. Well this is the sort of thing we can expect from the press—from the Tory sponsored press, the Tory dominated press and a press that only has the ruling class's interest at heart.

Do you think that enough is being done by the miners leaders to explain why the miners are in the forefront of working class action against the government's economic policies?

With regard to the NUM informing people of the case—the leaders are probably restricted in their ability to get the miners case across, but I must say that the last thing I want to do is to attack the leaders in this situation now that we are involved in a dispute. I think it is important that we close the ranks but at the same time—I think *The Miner* (the official newspaper) could have been used better to present the case in the way for instance that some of your publications have.

Have you any opinions on the NUM's instructions in general that groups such as ourselves have to be blacked from having any political discussions with striking miners, in particular the fact that we were not allowed into the strike meeting and there was no discussion of this at the meeting. It was just an instruction from the officials?

The local officials have seen the instruction that came out from Euston Road, saying that strike leaders or people in charge of picket lines should try to ensure that there



## GRIMETHORPE PICKETS

Can you tell us what happened here last Friday with the police?

We were here picketing deputies. There were about forty picketers and about three police at first, then a 40-seater bus arrived full of police and several vans bringing more police and there turned out to be about 90 to 100 police to 40 pickets. A superintendent started picking people out saying "keep your eye on him" and "keep your eye on him". After a time the superintendent himself went and arrested a young lad for disturbing the peace. All he'd done was shout 'scab' and 'blackleg' to a deputy trying to push his way through the pickets. Within two to three hours he was arrested, charged and convicted. When he came back in the afternoon the superintendent said, "that's what we want, swift justice".

This got one or two of our backs up and we started shouting at the police, but nothing physical. Then the superintendent started all the bother. He went wading in with the fist and boot, and one or two inspectors joined in. One sergeant, he started on two of our lads who were just walking up beside a wall, he was shoving them against the wall, putting the fist in. There was none of us using a bit of violence bar that superintendent, the two inspectors and a few police. They arrested one bloke saying he was going to throw a brick. He went to court and they said he ran up behind the picket

line picked up a brick with his right hand and was going to throw it. But everybody in Grimethorpe knows he's a leftlander, the best leftlander in Grimethorpe, he can't throw with his right hand. He was convicted on both charges. That's the type of attitude the police were taking. There were several people hit by the bobbies. It was this superintendent Story and one or two others who started all the trouble round here.

Has there been any other trouble with the police here?

The superintendent has only been here twice with his heavy gang; on Friday and the time that chap killed at the coalite depot. Both times there's been some knuckle thrown and some boot dished out by the police. When he's not been here everything's been run orderly and run in a decent manner. They have caused all the trouble in our opinion. The police were well respected by the majority of us in Grimethorpe, but after a situation like that, they have lost a hell of a lot of respect round here.

This seems to be a national situation with the police trying to break pickets.

Yes. I didn't think the police would do anything like that. I'm in the specials, I'm a sergeant in the specials, and I'm resigning after this situation. I wouldn't have anything at all to do with them.

is just NUM people there, not to be infiltrated by the political fringe groups. I can't answer for the NUM but only for myself—I think it is an appalling situation because I have come into contact with lads from political groups for a long time now and I have found that whenever the lads have come onto the picket lines and have been able to enter into discussion with the actual rank and file members who are manning the picket lines, they have had quite an impact and made quite an impression. There is nothing that impresses people in mining communities more than talking to people who are in command of the subject. The lads have always been able to make a good case out as far as I'm concerned. The miners have accepted them.

What do you think of the support students have been giving to the strike?

I can say as a rank and file member of the NUM, I am delighted that student bodies in universities up and down the country have got the common-sense to invite NUM speakers along in order that they can outline the case. The fact that the students have been active in their support for a group of workers is a good sign for the future. The NUM and other groups of workers should make sure that the links that have been forged should be strengthened and maintained in the future. I think that the rank and file members of NUM are aware of where they are getting the support from, *The Red Mole*, *Socialist Worker* and *Morning Star* etc.

The miners will in the next few years make sure that the message of 100 per cent support from these groups gets across.



# INTERVIEW WITH ARTHUR SCARGILL



The following interview with Arthur Scargill, member of the Yorkshire executive of the NUM, leader of the flying squad of Yorkshire pickets, and in charge of the picketing at the Saltley coke depot in Birmingham, was carried out immediately after the miners had succeeded in closing the depot on Thursday, 10th February.

Could you say what you think you have achieved at Saltley?

— Well we have achieved a number of things. I think that firstly of course we have achieved the closure of Saltley depot which was the main object of the exercise. But I think we achieved several things more. First of all I think we achieved a lesson, a classic lesson in working class history. I believe that the events of today will go down in the history of the British working class movement as a historic day when not just individual unions but British trade unionists decided that they had had enough of police brutality, they had had enough of intimidation by the police in obtaining passage through the picket lines for scab labour, and they decided to do something about it. I firmly believe that on this day it was not individual unions but it was the British working class movement as a whole that demonstrated clearly that they are no longer prepared to put up with Tory Government dictation in political matters and they

demonstrated to the Government quite clearly that as far as the miners were concerned, and the rest of the British trade union movement, Saltley would be closed. In fact we had a lesson in workers control, for the time in many many years the workers of this land decided that the nation would be defied, that the state system would be defied, and the gates of Saltley depot would be closed and at 10.45 those gates were indeed closed. So I think that was an extremely important lesson for the boys. The third thing, and I think it's extremely important, in the course of this struggle two things have emerged, one from the miners point of view and the other from the rest of the Birmingham trade unionists. Both have become aware of each other's problems and we have made it perfectly clear that we do not accept the Tory Government's proposals or even Vic Feather's suggestions that the miners are a special case. We are not a special case. We are fighting the Tory wages policy. We are in the vanguard of the struggle against that policy.

Could you say something about the press coverage of the struggle, particularly the role of the police?

I think the press coverage of the situation and the television coverage of the situation is exactly what one would expect. The people that take the film on the site, the press reporters

that take the statements on the site send these press reports back to the newspapers and the television boys send the films back to the studios where the editors and cutters get to work and inevitably try to produce a biased report. But I believe in this particular dispute what has happened is that irrespective of the cutting that has been done no one could obliterate the police brutality that took place on the picket lines in the first four days.

There was a lot of talk in the press about people using the miners' bitterness for their own ends. They talked about Maoists, students and building worker strikers channeling the miners' militancy for their own needs. Could you say whether this had any effect on the miners?

I believe the only effect it had on the miners was to increase their political awareness that the enemies of the British working class movement will use any tactic possible to try and turn public opinion against the struggle that's taking place at that time. It's ironic but every time a strike takes place the people on strike cease to be members of the general public; we always have a series of infiltrators and if it wasn't for the Maoists, the Trotskyists, the Communists or any other organisation I'm sure the Tories of this nation and the capitalist press of this nation would bloody well invent some.



A lot of rank and file trade unionists both amongst the miners and the power workers thought that the power workers should have taken solidarity industrial action with the miners. Could you say something about the decision of the power workers to accept the 7 1/4 to 9 per cent increase?

A bloody sell out, I believe that the power workers should, quite frankly, have achieved complete success with the miners in a wages struggle that was a wages struggle against the Tory government. The Tory government have clearly laid down their policy on the wages question which is harmful to the entire working class movement. It is not a policy designed to defeat the miners or the power workers but one to register a defeat on the entire working class movement and I would have thought that the power workers themselves could have recognized the dangers in accepting the percentage norm laid down by the Tory government. In spite of that, however, I believe the working class movement will have setbacks, continual setbacks, we've had setbacks ever since we've had a trade union movement. I don't think this should deter us from the central struggle which should be first of all to defeat the Tory government, secondly to establish a socialist system of society that will be in the interest of the British working class movement. On the road to that society what we have to do is to fight the individual battles that take place on wages conditions and other questions that affect the individual trade unions. It would obviously be ideal if all the trade unions could come together and demonstrate solidly that they were intent on defeating the Tory wages policy but of course, if that could happen it would mean sensibly that the Tory Party itself would be defeated and we would have a socialist system of society. So what we have to do is

work towards that end but in working towards that end achieve victories in battles that take place on the individual wages question and other questions.

What's your attitude towards Chapple's statement, which has been echoed a lot by other trade union leaders, that the trade unions mustn't create serious enough industrial crisis or industrial damage to the nation's economy to cause a crisis which could topple the Heath administration?

Chapple's arguments and statements are the classic statements of a collaborator with the Tory Party and capitalist system. It's clear from the past experiences of other people, particularly in the A.E.U. when we had the blokes who lead that who became knights of a certain order, that we'll only have these people trotting out the arguments in support of the capitalist system in order to defend and maintain a system of society that in many ways retains the kind of bureaucracy they live in and retains the kind of status quo they think is ideal for them but which is indeed against the interests of the working class and the members of their particular trade union.

Do you think that the return of another Labour government would be sufficient to solve the problems of the trade union movement?

If I believed that, I would be an idealistic dreamer. I think the only thing that can help to bring about a socialist system of society is the working class movement of this nation bringing about a united front of all the political organisations on the left to create the necessary conditions to establish a socialist system of society. All the things we have been talking about previously in this interview obviously play a part and when they can be channelled into one central point of struggle, whether it be one on the wages question or any other, then and then alone will the Tory government be brought down and a socialist system of society established. It will never be established by a Social Democratic Party which believes in collaboration with the system under which we live and only having slight reforms within it. What we have to do is take down the system as it stands and rebuild a completely new system of society when the workers of this nation will truly take their place in the sun.

The Red Mole has advocated a struggle towards the democratisation of trade unions and a workers government based on those democratic trade unions; what do you think of that?

Well as I've been advocating the same sort of thing for the past 15 years including writing pamphlets on it about five years ago then I'm in complete agreement with it.

Do you think that this can be achieved?

I think that the previous answers to the questions you've put to me indicate that it can be achieved but it will not be achieved by taking many things out of context. There are a number of things I'd disagree with *The Red Mole* upon and some of these are on tactics and application of policy. I believe that the end product is right, I believe that we both want to see a socialist system of society, the mechanics of achieving it may be different from the point of view of *The Red Mole* and from the point of view of myself, but I honestly believe that we can achieve this. For example, at the dispute we've been having here this week. Out of a miners dispute that would seem a central issue for the miners and the miners alone it could have turned into a completely different issue. What could have taken place there was a situation of confrontation with the Tory government which would in fact have involved the whole of the British trade union movement. I think that people in high places saw that this confrontation could take place, and as they did with the sell out of the power workers, avoided it. It is a situation like this I suppose, in the future, which will bring about the kind of unity in the trade union movement that is necessary to combine the whole forces of the British labour movement to bring about a socialist revolution.

Interview by Mike Archer and Chris Pailthorpe.

## TROUBLE AHEAD FOR UPW?

The next few weeks could prove to be of crucial importance to the 28,000 telephonists of the U.P.W. Next week the Telecommunications Staff Association (T.S.A.) goes before the National Industrial Relations Court (N.I.R.C.) in an attempt to gain recognition that will give it an agency shop in the Post Office and hence the sole negotiating rights for the telephonists.

At present the situation is as follows: the TSA has registered under the Industrial Relations Act, the UPW has not, however, the Post Office has rejected the TSA's claim for recognition and state they will give evidence on behalf of the UPW before the NIRC. If this is to be believed and at present there is no reason not to, then the chances of a TSA success are slim indeed.

The TSA claim to have a membership of 9,000 (with 14,000 promised, depending on the court's decision!) but how many of these are employed by the Post Office is not clear as the TSA also recruits from commerce and industry. The bulk of their membership consists mainly of ex-UPW members disillusioned by the scant treat-

ment given to telephonists by the UPW, ex-members of the now defunct Telephonists Guild and 'scabs' of the 1971 strike who rather than obey the call to strike resigned from the UPW and joined the TSA, who recommended their members to work during the strike.

Even though the chances of a TSA success look remote, the UPW is taking the challenge seriously. Whether they suspect double dealing by the NIRC or the Post Office is not known, but at a recent meeting of telephonist shop stewards, the executive urged them to boost membership by reinstating 'scabs'. Despite bitter and at times emotional protests from the delegates, it was finally agreed to 'invite' the scabs back, in principle at least.

If the UPW emerges victorious from this struggle, let us hope the union leadership learns a lesson from it and instead of neglecting the telephonists as in the past, put all their support behind local branch officials, and help them build a strong and militant membership equal in spirit if not members to that of the postmen.

# U.S. WORKERS STRUGGLE

## GENERAL MOTORS SPEEDUP BACKFIRES AT LORDSTOWN

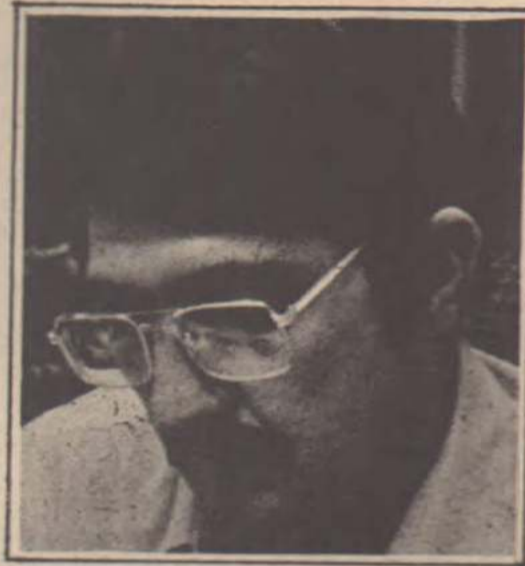
When General Motors opened their new 'superplant' in Lordstown, Ohio, it was designed as a major weapon against low-priced imported cars. To offset the low labour costs of the foreign car makers and still keep the quality high, the plant was highly automated, and the Vega cars that were to be built there were greatly simplified by using 42 per cent fewer parts than a typical American car. The assembly line was thus to be the fastest in the world, turning out 100 cars an hour instead of the normal 50 to 60.

But the plan backfired from the start. A dispute with the construction unions delayed the building of a companion plant to supply parts, the national General Motors strike in 1970 hampered the commencement of full production, and then machinery cracked under the strain of the ultra-fast assembly lines. Equipment that was fine in other auto plants at speeds of 50 or 60 cars an hour tended to destroy itself at the faster pace. For example, a gate system that swings body panels into position for automatic welding was constantly breaking down simply because it was being jerked in and out of position so fast. Engineers had to modify the system to reduce the strain on key parts.

The speed of the line itself has also tended to cause a loss of production. A minor failure in the body-building operation doesn't necessarily stop the assembly line at the other end of the plant because there is normally a reserve supply of bodies ahead. But the line siphons off that reserve so fast that it is sometimes all but gone by the time a repair man gets from his station to the trouble spot.

Now the workers too—who were supposed to be motivated by the import challenge, have reacted against the speed of the assembly line in what promises

to be one of the bitterest disputes ever known in the American motor industry. The United Auto Workers Union claims that since the plant opened over 700 workers have been made redundant in order to cut costs, and the remaining 5,300 Vega workers and 2,400 truck-line workers have been forced to take up the slack.



Gary Bryner

Photo by Bruce Cline

"They passed the work around among those that are left while keeping the line at the same speed—in effect, a speedup", says Gary Bryner, president of UAW Local 1112. "This is the fastest assembly line in the world. A man has less than 40 seconds to do his job."

At the beginning of October a new management team headed by Alvin B. Anderson was brought in by General Motors to make the Vega plant pay off, one way or another.

Since then, grievances filed by the Lordstown workers have soared from 100 to 5,000. More than 1,000 of these complain of violation of work standards—or overwork. General Motors concedes that it has juggled the assignments of some workers, and has given extra duties to others, but insists that no man is being asked to do more than "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay". Mr. Anderson agrees "that there are increases in the amount of work some are doing, but in these cases it is overdue".

Gary Bryner, though, says that "if there is any feather-bedding going on, I'd like to see it". He says he simply "can't believe" that General Motors intentionally hired 700 too many workers (9 per cent more) for the plant to begin with. He draws many parallels between the present dispute and the problems of the early UAW pioneers, and accuses General Motors of putting profits ahead of human values. In his stand he is supported by the entire membership of the local which, with an average age of about 25, is the youngest in General Motors. Says Bryner, "These guys have become tigers. They've got guts". One assembly line worker is typical of the rest when he says, "I actually saw a woman in the plant running along the line to keep up with the work. I'm not going to run for anybody. There ain't anyone in that plant that is going to tell me to run."

The company has responded to this militancy by drastically increasing disciplinary layoffs. These layoffs, which last usually for one to five days, are handed out for alleged infractions ranging from non-performance of an assigned task to arguing with foremen. Now General Motors have posted new notices making non-performance of an assigned task grounds for dismissal. The company claims that failure to complete assembly

line tasks is often intentional; but union members insist that work isn't being performed because workers can't complete their jobs in the 40 seconds allotted (workers in the typical assembly plant have about 60 seconds).

The workers, however, have refused to be intimidated by these threats. As a result the McCarthyite practice of red-baiting and guilt by association has been introduced into the dispute. "Subversives by the carload" have been accused of exploiting the labour-management dispute by the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*. The same newspaper has also attempted to use the fact that Bryner and J.D. Smith, secretary-treasurer of the local, endorsed the October 13th demonstrations against the war and the National Peace Action Coalition convention in Cleveland in December. The paper quotes the notorious House Internal Security Committee as identifying NPAC as "an affiliate of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party" which "favours the overthrow of the American system through a workers' revolution".

In face of such tactics the workers at Lordstown are continuing to stand firm against the management. In a poll conducted by UAW Local 1112, 97 percent of those voting were in favour of authorising the union to call a local strike if necessary. A long and bitter dispute seems to be on the cards now, and it is one which will be watched with anxiety by the American bourgeoisie, for the Vega's ability as an import fighter hangs in the balance and Lordstown is at the moment the only source for the car. What is equally clear, however, is that the dispute will be watched with the same close attention by other workers in the American car industry, as a microcosm of the developing national struggle against speedup and the accompanying disciplinary layoffs and dismissals.

## WEST COAST DOCKERS TIGHTEN STRIKE

Striking West Coast longshoremen and ship clerks have been backed into a corner by a combination of enemies—the shipowners, the federal government, and an ineffectual strike strategy. But they have come out fighting, with greater prospects of winning than before. At the same time, President Nixon's attempt to get Congress to pass legislation to break the dock strike is bogged down in the House Subcommittee on Labor.

There are two important developments here. The strike is being tightened up along the coast, and in the Bay Area a conference of the labor movement is being called.

Bending to persistent rank-and-file pressure, at long last the Coast Strike Strategy Committee has finally cut off the flow of strike-diverted cargo from Canadian and Mexican ports. The committee is headed by Harry Bridges, president of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU).

On the political level, ILWU Local 10 (San Francisco), on its own initiative, has called for an 'Immediate Emergency Conference of all labor organisations, regardless of affiliation'. The announced objective of this conference is to plan concerted action to defeat the attempt to break the ILWU strike.

Delegations headed by Local 10 officials went to the San Francisco Labor Council, the San Francisco Building Trades Council, and the Alameda Labor Council (which represents the labor movement of Oakland and neigh-

oring cities across the Bay). In all three bodies the call was passed unanimously. As soon as delegates from the unions are elected, the conference will be held.

In the meantime, Local 10 is engaged in a massive propaganda effort to acquaint people with the strike issues. Pickets from Local 10 are now to be seen all over the Bay Area, handing out leaflets and talking to people at union meetings, supermarkets, and in working-class districts.

The Local 10 leaflet being distributed is headed 'Our Longshore Strike—Look Out, you and your union may be next'. The leaflet continues: "Our employer—The Pacific Maritime Association—has failed to bargain in good faith. Phase One of the PMA's plan was to force a long and grueling strike with the intention of starving us into voting for a substandard contract. Failing in that attempt, Phase Two of the PMA's scheme is to sit back and await a pro-employer legislated settlement. In either event, their master plan is to break the back of our union, and they have pursued this plan in complete disregard for the public....."

The final two paragraphs of this leaflet read: "We are being asked to accept a set of PMA demands that would destroy the system of job-despatch, which has always prevented discrimination and favoritism and ensured an equal opportunity to all of us.

"Since these demands seriously jeopardize our

immediate economic welfare and long-term job security, while threatening the bare existence of our union, they are in fact a *basic issue* in our strike!"

This paragraph refers to the "steady man" issue. Section 9.43 of the contract, which gives the employer the right to bypass the union's job-rotating hiring hall.

This leaflet was well received everywhere.

For the time being the question of merging the ILWU and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters has been shelved. But the two unions are at present collaborating in a picket line at the California-Mexico border. They have succeeded in stopping strike-diverted cargo from the Mexican port of Ensenada from entering the United States. It's quite simple. Union Teamsters just refuse to drive the loaded trucks from the border to their United States destination, and will not allow non-union men to take their places.

For 100 days, from July 1 to Oct. 6, when the striking ILWU was forced back to work by a Taft-Hartley injunction, cargo diverted from struck West Coast ports was worked by union longshoremen in Vancouver, B.C., and Ensenada, Mexico, as part of the strategy developed by the ILWU Strike Strategy Committee.

During the 100-day strike, Vancouver's inbound tonnage increased 75 percent, and Ensenada handled 60 ships in the first 60 days of the strike, the Sept. 18 *Christian Science Monitor* reported. The ship of companies belonging

the PMA ran what the longshoremen call "the strike-breaking triangle." That is, first they would bring inbound cargo to Canada or Mexico, with US cargo discharged for transshipment by truck. Second, the ships would sail empty to West Coast ports. Third, military and other outbound cargo for Guam, Cambodia and Vietnam would be loaded by striking ILWU members.

This fancy game has now ended. From the negotiations between the ILWU and the East Coast International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) came two positive things. The two unions will honor each other's picket lines if pickets are flown from coast to coast to stop diverted cargo. The ILA and ILWU also agree that they will go back on strike if their wage agreements are not approved by the Pay Board. Further, both insist that contract-cancellation clauses to that effect be included in their contracts.

Things have changed. On the picket line morale is high, and the consensus is that the strike will be won, no matter what. According to an ILWU official, "if necessary we will just keep on voting down contracts and striking till the PMA and some of our so-called leaders know we mean business".

—Ed Harris

The above is reprinted from the 14th February issue of *The Militant*, newspaper of the Socialist Workers Party and Young Socialist Alliance in the

# SEIZE T

An analysis of the present situation by re-unification of Ireland must now become a reality and looks at the present strategies of the



Padraig Pearse once said:

"A French writer has paid the English a well-deserved compliment. He says that they never commit a useless crime. When they hire a man to assassinate an Irish patriot, when they blow a Sepoy from the mouth of a cannon, when they produce a famine in one of their dependencies, they always have an ulterior motive. They do not do it for fun. Humorous as these crimes are it is not the humour of them, but their utility, that appeals to the English."<sup>1</sup>

The Derry massacre demonstrated that this characteristic has not altered. The place, time and tactics were carefully chosen.

The place was Derry—Free Derry Corner to be precise, since internment Free Derry, consisting of Bogside, Creggan and Brandywell has thumbed its nose at Stormont and Westminster alike. Behind carefully constructed barricades of scrap steel, welded into place, and abandoned vehicles concreted into trenches sunk in the roadways, the minority has organised its life. Armed sentries from the Provisional and Official IRAs, and the Catholic Ex-servicemen's Association check everyone in and out. Within the district the people are in control, houses are allocated, disputes are sorted out, and educational and cultural activities organised. They have taken passive political and armed resistance one step further, to the creation of the first stages of a Workers administration. Of course this exists at present mainly because of the layout of Derry, which makes possible the barricading and defence of these areas in a way that would be impossible in Belfast (as the British Army has discovered on the two occasions in which it has been ignominiously driven out). But it provides an example which Stormont and Westminster dare not permit to spread.

The time was a political rally, just as Bernadette Devlin was about to speak, and after thousands of people had shown their contempt for Stormont, the British Army and their repressive laws.

The tactics were the deliberate killing of unarmed civilians, and the shooting of any who went to the help of the wounded.

The purpose was to turn a successful act of political resistance into a rout, to demoralise the minority, and to turn the tide of their resistance.

## resistance and strategy

Unfortunately for the British Government the crime at Derry did not achieve its objectives. It has deepened the resistance, and has made it more difficult to establish control over the situation. More than that, it has laid the basis for a new development in the struggle, its spread to the South. The Irish vanguard is faced with the possibility of opening a new front—the re-unification of Ireland must now become an open objective of the struggle.

This is necessary because of the limitations of a fight solely in the North; although the minority has gone a good way towards its most important objective—the smashing of Stormont—and shows no signs of flagging, the fact remains that it is only one-third

of the population. The mass marches have been impressive, but their efficacy as a tactic is strictly limited, their appeal could quickly become 'stale' and a drop in numbers would produce a downward spiral. The opening of a fresh offensive, with fresh forces is needed to bolster the nationalist minority in the North.

A strategy which limits itself to the North will also be confronted with the problem of the hostility of the Protestants to any change, and the willingness of British imperialism to make concessions to them. If the struggle is fought with the forces of the minority in the North alone, the boundaries of its progress are clearly set, and these boundaries stop well short of any meaningful change in their situation. To counterpose to an all-Ireland struggle a strategy of first winning unity between Catholic and Protestant workers in the North, would be a grave mistake; it is only through the destruction of the institutions of sectarianism that the Protestant workers will see that further reliance on the old form of privilege and domination is useless, and some of them will be detached from their reactionary mythology. It is clear that this cannot be achieved by the minority in the North on its own.

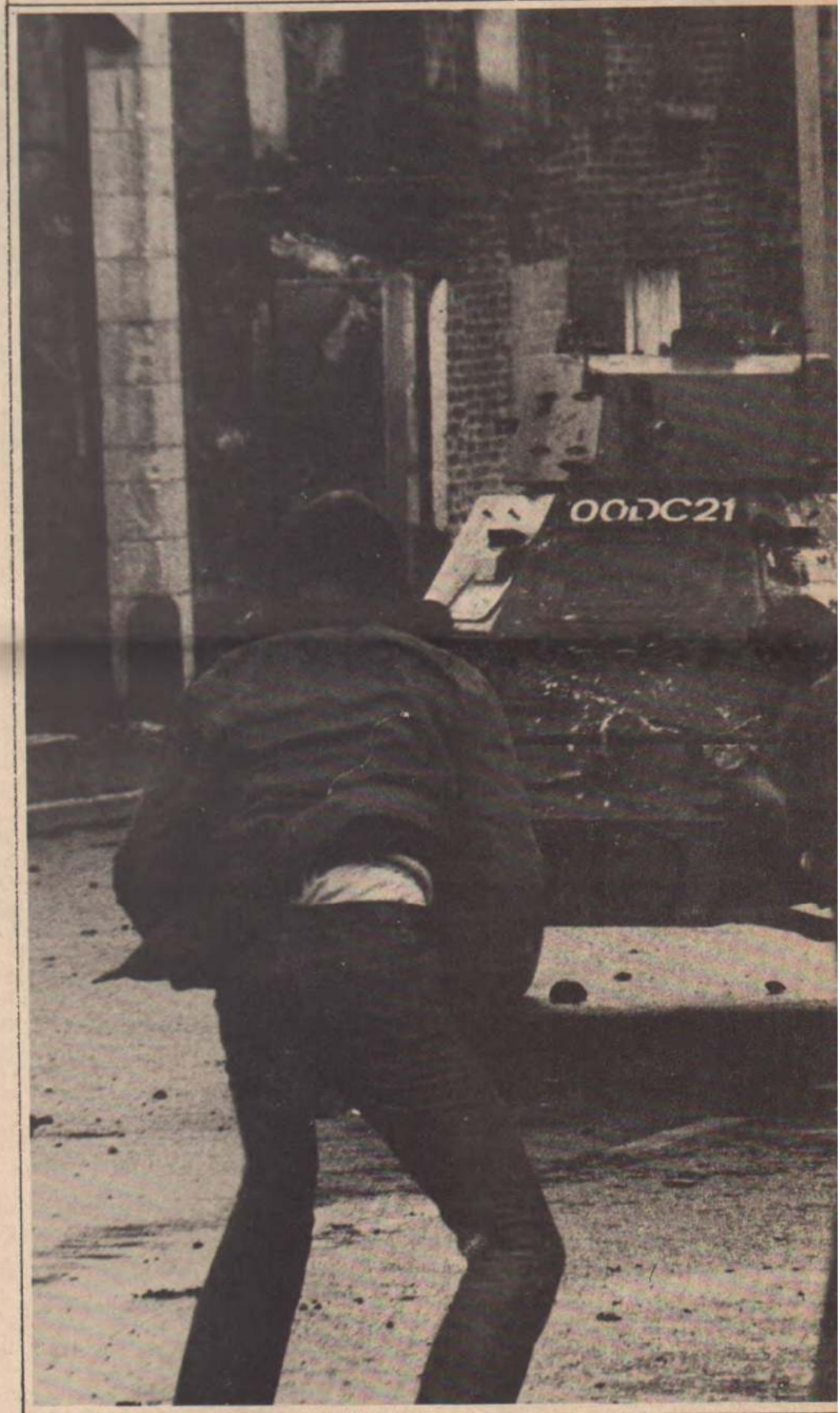
## the south

The response from the South to the struggle in the North has, until recently, been minimal. The long years of partition, the political logjam, which maintained the two reactionary Irish states in existence for fifty years, and the limiting of resistance to armed struggle had meant that there was never any mass involvement. In turn this has strengthened Fianna Fail,<sup>2</sup> and its fake Republican rhetoric.

Fianna Fail was able to come to power on the backs of the Irish people, because they had no political alternatives. Sinn Fein, following the defeat of the Republicans in the Civil War, refused to participate in the Dail, and since there was no possibility of a new military offensive, Republican sympathisers were impotent before the reactionaries of Cumann na nGaedheal.<sup>3</sup> When de Valera split from Sinn Fein, and declared his intention of participating in the treatyite Dail,<sup>4</sup> he won the support of large numbers of Republicans, in fact the IRA was the backbone of his election machine. Fianna Fail subsequently pushed the interests of the 26 County capitalist class as far as they could within the terms of the Treaty: this created a weak and inadequate Irish industry, which was to lay the basis under Sean Lemass<sup>5</sup> for an expansion through foreign investment. The lesson of the whole Fianna Fail experience is that it is impossible to create an independent economy within the 26 Counties, not merely because of the weakness of the southern bourgeoisie, but because the chief economic fact in Irish history has been the insulation of the industry of the North East from the South, which prevented its expansion throughout Ireland. This insulation, imposed by the 1801 Act of Union, was given state form by partition in 1921.

The failure to create an independent Irish economy prevented the development of the Irish working class which has only recently become a majority of the population. It also meant that they worked in undeveloped fragmented industry and the most capable young Irish people were forced into emigration. Thus a weak Irish working class, politically dominated by the issue of partition, was unable to move towards a fight with the gombeen<sup>6</sup> 'Republicans' of Fianna Fail, and struggle for socialism. This in turn means that such a fight can only develop through a struggle to overthrow the Treaty settlement.

The masses in the South, the workers and small farmers have been unable to struggle effectively against any of the effects of partition, because there have never been any means whereby they could get at the roots of the problem.



But now, for the first time since 1922, they can see light at the end of the tunnel; the struggle in the North can make the continuation of partition impossible, if only the mass of the Irish people are mobilised to that end. And a series of events have revealed the possibility that this long slumber of the Southern Irish people is over.

The burning of the British Embassy in Dublin was only the most dramatic evidence of this. Even before the Derry massacre there had been mass resistance in border areas to the cratering of roads; Gardaí<sup>7</sup> and troops

of the Irish Army, were used at Ballyshannon to break up a crowd demonstrating for the release of IRA men who were appearing in court. The mass demonstration in Dublin organised by the Provisionals, which involved over 30,000 people from all 32 counties of Ireland is further evidence.

The burning of the British Embassy is about to become a legend, but it is also a symbol. The action stood out in sharp relief from the general passivity of the Irish people, because so far they have had no political channels through which to express their hatred of British imperialism.

# LAND THE TIME

Bob Purdie in which he argues that the  
is an open objective of the struggle,  
Provisional and Official Republicans



## failure of the vanguard

Now that the tide has started to turn it is vital to discuss the strategy through which the fight can go forward. This is all the more important since so far none of the organisations of the Irish people have developed an adequate strategy for linking up the struggles North and South. The Trade Unions have continued their old tradition of non-involvement in the national struggle (which is the hall mark of Irish reformism) while the Labour Party has deserted all of its former 'radical' pretences in order to offer itself, in partnership with the ex-fascists of Fine Gael,<sup>8</sup>

as a more efficient agent of British imperialism in Ireland than Fianna Fail. But the most serious failure is that of both sections of the Republican movement. Despite the heroic role they are playing in the armed struggle in the North, the political limitations of both sections are shown most clearly by the new conjuncture.

## provisionals and the working class

The chief flaw in the thinking of the Provisionals is the old Republican one;

because they place the military struggle, to expel British imperialism from the North, on a pedestal, they underestimate the importance of political mobilisation either of the Northern minority, or the southern masses. They have so far refused to take any action which would confront the Southern state in the mistaken belief that this will protect their 'bolt holes' in the 26 counties. The temporary dropping of charges against Provisional IRA men by the 26 county government is evidence that, in fact, the mobilisation of the mass of the people is the best guarantee of the safety of Republican soldiers.

The main political strategy which they propose is the establishment of Dail Uladh and Dail Chonnacht<sup>9</sup>. We have already stated in *The Red Mole* that these plans have valuable possibilities, that they pose a challenge alike to Stormont and the Free State Dail, and could link up the struggles of Ireland's two oppressed minorities, the Catholics in the North, and the Irish speaking population of the Gaeltacht.<sup>10</sup>

But so far they have not developed as a real reflection of the people in these areas, they have been created from the top, and on a quite inadequate political basis (it is significant that the Provisionals have involved Desmond Fenell in Dail Chonnacht—a reactionary journalist who supports the 'two nations theory' and opposes the changing of legislation on such matters as divorce and contraception, which discriminates against the Protestant minority in the South).

The axis of solidarity in the South has been revealed as Dublin, precisely because this is the area of the 26 Counties which has the greatest concentration of workers, and the longest working class tradition. The Provisionals are relatively weak there; because they have not intervened in the struggles of these workers, they are thus left with an orientation to areas which are important, but marginal to the movement now developing.

## officials and eec

The Official Republicans represent a step forward for Republicanism in political terms insofar as they understand that for Republicanism to be relevant to the people, the Republicans have to be involved in the struggles of the people. That is why they have participated in and led housing struggles, supported strikes, and developed numerous political campaigns. The correctness of this approach in the South, where armed struggle is not on the agenda at the moment, is borne out by the fact that the Official Sinn Fein in the South is much larger than the Provos. It was this correct thinking which led them to get involved in the Civil Rights struggle in the North from the start. But this has also led to a rigid separation of the struggles in the South and the North. Thus they appealed for their supporters in the 26 Counties not to cross the border for the Newry march, strengthening conceptions that the issue was one which concerned only the North.

An unsigned article 'Britain's Dilemma', in the February issue of the *United Irishman*, spells out what the Officials regard as the key issue at the moment:

"The Northern problem cannot be divorced from the struggle going on in the rest of Ireland. The programme of economic reintegration, upon which Britain and her hireling lackeys are engaged, centres on the EEC issue. This is also a matter on which there is almost unanimous agreement between all sections in the North: Unionists, Populists, Republicans and Radicals are all opposed to the imperial union of the EEC...*The defeat of the government's referendum on the EEC is the single, most important issue facing the Irish people at the moment*, since it is the lynchpin of Britain's strategy for the North as well as for the South."

The statement that the EEC is the main issue before the Irish people, hard on the heels of the Derry massacre, is a startling conclusion. It is however the logical out-

come of a standpoint which separates not only the struggle in the North from that in the South but the national struggle from the struggle for socialism. From this point of view, the minority cannot overthrow the whole rotten Unionist system, so it must aim to so transform it as to lay the basis for a successful overthrow at some later date when the experience of a democratic system has eradicated sectarianism. This also means that the struggle in the 26 Counties must centre on preventing Lynch from successfully piloting the free state into the EEC. Since both are separate issues, and do not contribute directly and immediately to each other, this means that alliances can be built with forces which are in opposition to the long term aspirations of the Republicans, in particular that credence can be put on Paisleyites and Unionists who oppose the EEC from a reactionary standpoint.

While a victory for the Irish people on the EEC issue would be a big step forward it would not challenge the imperialist set up between Britain and Ireland as much as the Officials claim, and while it is true that an integration of both Irish economies with the British one, through the EEC, is the main aim of British imperialism it is precisely the struggle in the North which has thrown their timetable out of gear, and which threatens the whole enterprise. While the EEC may be the key issue for Britain, the North is the key to the destruction of their plans.

If on the other hand the anti-EEC fight is fought as an isolated issue, with the dubious allies which the Officials are wooing, and even should the referendum result in a negative vote, Fianna Fail would simply negotiate associate status at a later date. We are after all dealing with a Fianna Fail leadership indiarubber enough to twist its way out of the arms smuggling scandal.

The militancy and self-confidence displayed by the demonstrators who burnt the Embassy give an indication of what is possible. Once the people of the 26 Counties are on the move they will clearly see the meaning of Fianna Fail's manoeuvring and will make any attempts to submit the Irish nation to the EEC impossible.

## the way forward

The 26 County workers are amongst the most militant in Europe, with a long and honourable tradition of struggle. Already they have indicated some of the forms of resistance and solidarity which can be developed in the South: direct action aimed at British firms, the refusal to unload the lying British newspapers, which slandered the Derry dead, the general strike which forced Fianna Fail to sanctify the situation with a day of mourning.

This must be extended to mass crossing of the border in defiance of the British, to demonstrate rejection of Britain's right to divide Ireland, mass Southern participation in Northern Civil Rights demonstrations, the seizing of British factories, offices, property, etc. as a ransom for the minority in the North, and resistance to all attempts of Fianna Fail to coerce the Irish people into acceptance of British oppression.

We must re-emphasise, this is the first opportunity in fifty years for a united fight of the Irish people North and South against the domination of their country; the Irish vanguard must seize the time!

—Bob Purdie

## NOTES

1. *The Murder Machine*, 1912.
2. Fianna Fail, (Soldiers of Destiny): Governing bourgeois party in the South.
3. Cumann na nGaedheal (Irish Party): Original governing party in South following Treaty of 1922.
4. Dail Eireann: Irish Parliament.
5. Sean Lemass: Fianna Fail Premier who preceded the present incumbent Jack Lynch.
6. Gombeen: Irish word for moneylender.
7. Gardai: Irish police.
8. Fine Gael (United Ireland): main bourgeois opposition party in the South, political descendants of Cumann na nGaedheal.
9. Dail Uladh and Dail Chonnacht: unofficial 'parliaments' for the provinces of Ulster (including the 3 counties within the Southern administration), and Connaught respectively.
10. Gaeltacht: areas in which Irish is the main language.

# MAURITIUS STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR ROYAL VISIT

*At the end of March Queen Elizabeth is scheduled to visit the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean. As is shown by this article, sent to us by a socialist activist in Mauritius, this royal visit has a purpose similar to that underlying the recent visit to Thailand—to divert public attention away from the ever-intensifying internal contradictions in that country.*

*Since this article was written, the police have closed down the headquarters of the Mouvement Militant Mauricien in Quatre Bornes and the offices of their trade union organisation in the capital, Port Louis, on the grounds that they*

*were 'still' being used for 'subversive activities'. On 25 January it also became known that the Mauritian Ombudsman, Swedish Judge Gunnar Lindh, had tendered his resignation to the Prime Minister, explaining that it had become impossible for him to carry out his duties because of government interference. This followed an earlier incident in July, 1971, when the Prime Minister had asked Lindh to resign and he had refused, citing the international aspects of the problem and then writing to bring it to the attention of the Commonwealth Office.*

A State of Emergency was declared in Mauritius last December. The coalition government under Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam at the same time suspended two sections of the constitution relating to protection of right to personal liberty and protection from discrimination on the grounds of race, caste, place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed. Faced with mounting social unrest and a general strike, the government aided and abetted by the British government, chose to dig in its heels, and rule by repression. Since then, arbitrary arrest of political opponents and of trade union leaders have become increasingly frequent; thirteen trade unions have been suspended; the daily paper *Le Militant*, voice of the Mouvement Militant Mauricien, has been banned and the press in general is under strict censorship; laws of exception favouring employers have been proclaimed; all gatherings of five or more people for other than for social or religious purposes as well as public meetings are not allowed throughout the island; searches and raids are being effected without warrant; passports of M.M.M. leaders have been withdrawn including that of Dev Virahsawmy, an elected member of Parliament and the Secretary-General of the M.M.M., who was due to leave for Europe and Africa in January on an information tour.

## 1967 to 1972

The coalition government was formed in October 1969 and brought together the two main political parties of that time: the Labour Party (P.T.) of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam and the Parti Mauricien Social Démocrate (P.M.S.D.) of Mr. Gaetan Duval, today Minister for Foreign Affairs in the coalition government.

The way to the coalition was paved by Michel Debre's visit in 1968 and Princess Alexandra's in September 1969; the alliance was sealed against the wish of the people. At the last general elections in 1967, the Labour Party had campaigned for the independence of Mauritius against the PMSD, which was for 'association' with Great Britain. The Labour Party won the elections but the P.M.S.D. with 44 per cent of the votes, continued its campaign against independence and boycotted independence celebrations in March 1968. In fact, these 'celebrations' had to take place in the presence of a peace-keeping detachment of British troops, as there had been violent racial riots between muslims and 'creoles' of African descent in January 1968.

One must bear in mind that from the 50's to 1967, all political parties in Mauritius had been organised mainly on a 'communal' basis. Thus the PMSD represented the interests of estate owners of French descent and of 'creoles'. The Labour Party was predominantly hindu. The Comite d'Action Musulman (CAM) claimed to represent the interests of muslims in the Island. In 1967 the CAM had joined forces with the Labour Party against the PMSD. These various parties served the interests of the monied classes in

each community, but it was the working class that paid the price for 'communalism' (as is termed this multiple-headed 'racism') in the 'race riots'. In 1965 there had already been violent clashes between hindus and 'creoles' that time.

In 1969 therefore it was coalition, very soon after, the parties in the government resorted to repression against the duped nation and the new opposition that manifested itself in that same year.

The General Elections which were due to be held in 1972 were postponed to 1976 after a rather dubious amendment to the constitution. At the beginning of 1970, the government started attacking the Trade Unions and the Press. Public gatherings were prohibited and arbitrary arrests followed. On the 30th December 1970, the notoriously repressive 'Public Order Act' was voted in. The henchmen of the PMSD became a 'parallel police force'. Trade Unionists were subject to intimidation. The Municipal Elections which were due to be held in January 1972 were also postponed. In August, a strike in Public Transport was declared illegal and the armed forces intervened. Then, in December, the government voted in an amendment to the Trade Dispute Ordinance which practically paralysed Trade Union activities in the country, and, faced with the culmination of public exasperation, resorted to the State of Emergency and laws of exception.

It must be pointed out that from 1969 to 1971, the coalition parties made constant use of the 'communalism' on which they depend for their very existence, in an attempt to divide the middle and working classes; while there was increasing violence by their 'henchmen' against the opposition. This state of affairs came to a head in October 1971, when shots were fired at Paul Berenger and Dev Virahsawmy, leaders of the main opposition party (Mouvement Militant Mauricien) and on that same occasion an agent of the party was killed by a rifle shot.

## THE MOUVEMENT MILITANT MAURICIEN (MMM)

The MMM has in fact been the victim of repression from 1969 to 1971 and is today the target of the State of Emergency

Created in September 1969, the MMM became very rapidly the main opposition party in Mauritius. In September 1970 it won a by-election against the coalition parties with a crushing majority and that too in the constituency of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam (the P.M.): Previously the MMM, supported by the people, had defied the ban on public gatherings and in April 1971, won another electoral victory in the Municipal by-elections.

From 1969 to 1971, the MMM had mobilised the Mauritian people through regular pub-

lic meetings, active 'cells' in towns and villages, its daily newspaper *Le Militant*; and at the same time Trade Unions were joining forces in the MMM controlled General Workers Federation.

The MMM manifesto can be summarised as follows:

*Internally:* Class struggle replacing racial divisions; economic social and cultural decolonisation; agrarian reforms and workers control; mobilisation of the masses and popular democracy;.....

*Externally:* Fight against neo-colonisation, for a true independence; commitment with progressive and socialist third-world countries, stand against South Africa.....

## THE ROLE OF SOUTH AFRICA AND GREAT BRITAIN

It is a fact that if the coalition government has survived the events of last December and continues to rule by repression, it is due to the support given to it by the British government.

Already in 1965, Sir Seewoosagur had 'bartered' a group of small islands (Diego-Garcia) to the British government, in exchange for 'his' independence. Diego Garcia is today an Anglo-American base.....

Then independence was granted in March 1968 under the watchful bayonets of British troops. During Princess Alexandra's visit in September 1969, 18 members of the MMM were jailed. On September 22nd 1970, the day on which the MMM by-election victory in the constituency of Sir Seewoosagur was announced, the Government was asking, unsuccessfully, for the help of British and French troops to control the popular uprising. In January 1971, the Government banned a peaceful demonstration protesting against the visit of President Banda—the MMM however defied the ban. Still in January 1971, Gaetan Duval, Minister for Foreign Affairs, offered a military base to Great Britain.

In May 1971, on one of his visits to South Africa, Mr. Duval was more than ever advocating 'dialogue' with Pretoria. In June 1971 at the OAU summit conference, Mauritius voted in favour of 'dialogue'.....

Last November, Britain insisted that the Mauritian coalition government buy back certain harbour facilities in Mahebourg, in the south of the island, which it had been sold to a company 'under Russian control'.

It seemed as if Sir Seewoosagur had on this occasion, 'bartered' Mahebourg for the support of the British last December and the repression that followed.

Great Britain is in fact omnipresent in Mauritius; Britishers are at the head of the administration, the Police Security services and armed forces—the advisor to the government on security is also English. In the context of its East of Suez policy and the Simonstown Agreement, arms sales to South Africa and Russian penetration into the Indian Ocean, it seems as if Great Britain has decided to turn Mauritius into a mini-Singapore for military and strategic purposes.

South Africa has found in Gaetan Duval a choice ally and is investing more and more capital in Mauritius. The links between some 'whites' of Mauritius and South Africa are well known.....

The United States, who already have a base in Diego Garcia, announced earlier this month that the 'Seventh Fleet' would become more active in the Indian Ocean. The paranoid attitude of the U.S. to 'socialism' in Tanzania, Somalia or Aden is well known and the U.S. government sees red when they think of Chinese 'penetration' into East Africa..... France, on the other hand, has vested interests in Reunion, Comores Islands and Madagascar and her sale of arms to South Africa has now surpassed that of Britain. In Mauritius, France has previously totally identified itself with the person of Gaetan Duval, but at the moment seems to maintain diplomatic distance with the coalition government.

Mauritius is thus directly threatened by the South African 'Buffer State' policy and is already fighting British 'Neo Colonisation'. The possibility of South Africa, Britain, the United States and Portugal joining up forces in this region is increasing all the time, and one can well imagine their reaction to the idea of an MMM government in Mauritius.

For the time being, it is internal repression. The MMM, for its part, is preparing itself to face two eventualities: either the coalition government decides or finds itself forced to hold General Elections in 1972, as prescribed by the constitution—or that the repressive measures increase. In the meantime, the immediate objectives are to alert opinion in Africa and the world as regards the situation in Mauritius and this region of the world.

—A Mauritian Socialist

## Ceylon Committee

Dear Comrade,

I wish to draw your attention to the news item which appeared in *The Red Mole* of 24 January '72, under the heading of 'Ceylon Repression'. First of all there are a number of inaccuracies in that statement which I would like you to correct; a number of comrades including Mani and Rupesinghe will confirm the fact that the Ceylon Solidarity Committee was not formed with the aim of supporting the JVP. I was an observer from the IMG at its inaugural (and the only) general meeting and a number of people expressed the view that our object should be to solidarise with the victims of repression. It could not be otherwise. Politically we cannot support the JVP on a number of questions. For instance we would not agree with them on their analysis of the peasantry as the agent of social change; nor would we characterise the Soviet Union as 'social imperialist' and so on. Our own analysis which was expressed in the two *Red Mole* articles was that while we politically disagree and criticise the JVP, we solidarise with them as victims of repression and call for the restoration of democratic liberties etc. Similarly it would be absurd today to talk about a 'JVP struggle against the Government', today the JVP does not exist because it has been completely crushed. The report also talks about three organisations which formed the Committee; this is also incorrect because there were only two organisations—i.e. the Ginipupura group and the Ceylon studies forum. Apart from them all the others were individuals or observers.

I object to the manner in which this report was published by you without an editorial comment. I

request you to publish a correction in your next issue before our political opponents try to make political capital out of it. As far as I was aware the Ceylon Solidarity Committee was dead; if it has been resurrected, at least they must do it on the basis on which it was first formed. If they intend to pursue other aims it is fair that you publish that fact.

Yours fraternally,

Upali Cooray

### EDITORIAL COMMENT:

*We are pleased to publish Comrade Cooray's comment on the report in The Red Mole number 35. A number of comrades had, in light of that item, written in to ask what our position is in regard to the present political situation in Ceylon. It seems that some comrades mistook this news report for a statement by the IMG or the Fourth International. This misunderstanding was re-inforced by the fact that we had inadvertently missed off the signature to this news report. We should also point out that statements by the IMG and Fourth International are always signed. We would, furthermore, like to make it clear that while we do solidarise with the victimised JVP militants especially those under repression in Ceylon's jails, we nevertheless have political differences with the JVP which have been set out in previous articles. In addition, at the present moment our struggle must be concentrated to obtain the release of all political prisoners and to demand the restoration of political and civil rights in Ceylon and an immediate ending of the State of Emergency.*

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

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

Glasgow Red Circle.  
Weekly Discussion Group for Revolutionary Socialists.  
Iona Community Centre, 214 Clyde Street.  
Every Thursday at 7.30 p.m.

### IRISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

The Irish Solidarity Campaign holds alternate forums and business meetings every Friday at 8 p.m. at the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (junction Wharfdale Road) nearest tube Kings Cross.

Friday, March 3rd: Anna de Casparis on 'Orangeism and Paisleyism—Fascist movements?'



# NIXON-MAO SUMMIT

The Chinese Revolution is far too important to be left to the Maoists



Nixon's visit to Peking is not a tourist jaunt. The American President is in the People's Republic of China neither to play ping-pong nor to take a swim in the Yangtze. He is there to see whether the Chinese government is serious in its intention as far as peaceful co-existence is concerned—in other words to test whether his State Department advisers correctly interpreted Chinese policy vis a vis Ceylon and Bangla-Desh as indications that they were prepared to come to terms with American imperialism—or whether it is simply a tactical move designed to end China's isolation and increase her influence in relation to the Soviet bureaucracy. For Nixon, therefore, this visit will determine American policies in Indo-China. If a settlement can be reached, the result would be a division of Asia into spheres of influence and a pledge from the Chinese to stop supporting verbally or with arms guerrilla movements active in many parts of Asia. In our view this is exactly what the Chinese leaders want at the present moment. Provided American troops are withdrawn from Vietnam (i.e. from China's borders) and provided that the United States agrees to recognise Taiwan as part of China (leaving aside the question of its actual transference till Chiang Kai Shek dies) the bureaucrats in Peking will not be too unhappy. Whatever doubts they might have had seem to have been resolved with the disappearance of Lin Biao and Chen Po-Ta: from *Long Live the Victory of the Peoples' War* it is back to *Socialism in One Country* and with a vengeance.

## THE CHINESE REVOLUTION: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

It is not sufficient, however, to explain what is happening in China today simply by concentrating on its foreign policy as the latter is generally a reflection of the internal situation of a country. To understand why the Chinese government is supporting the dictatorships in Pakistan and Sudan or numerous other reactionary and counter-revolutionary states, it is vital to explain the genesis of the Chinese Revolution, though of necessity it will be somewhat schematic and sketchy.

The Chinese Revolution was victorious after one of the longest civil wars in revolutionary history. The party which led it to victory was not the same party which had suffered defeats in Shanghai and Canton in the late Twenties as a result of accepting the advice of the Comintern.<sup>1</sup> In the Twenties the party's base was rooted in the proletariat in the Chinese cities. Its understanding of the class forces in the countryside was restricted and the practical consequences contained in Mao Tse Tung's correct analysis in the original version of *An Investigation of the Peasant movement in Hunan* were not widely understood. The defeats in Shanghai and Canton enabled Mao to make considerable gains in the Party and by 1935 the group

around him had succeeded in gaining complete control. This period coincided with the purges in the Soviet Union and the complete hegemony of Stalinism in the CPSU and the Comintern. The ideology of the Chinese Party of Mao Tse Tung was, as a result, dominated by the theme of 'revolution in stages', 'building socialism in one country', etc. The internal practice of the party led to a virtual end of debates within the rank and file. However the strategy decided by the CCP, namely, concentration in the countryside, creation of liberated zones and a Red Army to wage a protracted armed struggle was undoubtedly justified, given the situation in China as a whole. The important point to grasp is that while the CCP continued to pay lip-service to the Comintern on the level of theory, its practice was, to a large extent, determined empirically by the needs of the situation which it confronted. Even when the Chinese Communist party, under Stalinist instructions, made a bloc with Chiang Kai Shek, it never subordinated its army to the bourgeois army; on the contrary it showed its superiority by demonstrating concretely how Japanese imperialism could be defeated.

Another factor which shaped the development of the CCP was the fact that for a long period of its existence it was isolated from the working class in the cities and its largely peasant base facilitated, in a certain sense, the militarisation of the party. While there can be no doubt that it won the support of the peasant masses, this support could not be institutionalised through organs of popular power as it could in the cities. It was mediated via the Party and the army. The nature of the countryside and its inhabitants, therefore, aided the bureaucratisation of the party and given the weakness of Party organisation in the cities, the process could not be easily halted.

The military success of the Eighth Route Army coupled with the fact that in the liberated zones the power of landlordism began to be smashed, paved the way to the liberation of the entire country. The defeat of Japanese imperialism in the Second World War provided further aid and despite Stalin's attempts to force the Chinese C.P. to form a coalition with Chiang Kai Shek, the dynamic of the struggle had reached such a stage that the Chinese C.P. even if it had wanted to, would have been hard put to contain the mass uprisings which were taking place throughout the country. The uprising of poor peasants in North China in 1946 symbolised the party's dilemma: revolution or the Comintern? The CCP finally decided to carry on the military struggle and in October 1949 the Chinese armies of Mao Tse Tung and Chu Teh marched into the cities, smashed the bourgeois army and the state apparatus, and proclaimed the existence of a unified Peoples Republic of China. Chiang and a section of his army fled to Taiwan.

## THE SEIZURE OF POWER

The victory of the Chinese Revolution, despite the wishes of Stalin and the Soviet bureaucracy, was a defeat for the 'theory of socialism in one country' and a vindication of the theses of the 'permanent revolution'. For the Maoists, the seizure of power created new problems. In the first instance what existed after 1949 was a situation where the military apparatus of the Chinese bourgeoisie was destroyed, but the latter still retained economic power. Here the weaknesses of Maoism became dominant. The Chinese working class was not mobilised because in Stalinist mythology what had taken place was a 'new democratic revolution'. To state otherwise would have meant being guilty of....Trotskyism! As a result only the 'comprador bourgeoisie' was expropriated in 1949 and the so-called 'national' bourgeois continued to draw profits and exploit the Chinese workers, a situation which was legitimised by the Maoist regime.

However, it was obvious that this farce could not continue, particularly as the new regime had established a monopoly of foreign trade controlled by the State and also because private ownership hindered any effective planning. In 1953 virtually the entire economy in the cities was nationalised, though in many cases generous compensation was paid to the 'national' bourgeois. The tragedy of the Chinese Revolution has been that this process in the cities was carried out without the active mobilisation of the Chinese working class and, despite vacillations and a half-hearted search for another way, the Chinese leadership finally opted to re-model the Chinese economy in the cities on Stalinist lines.<sup>2</sup> No organs of popular power existed in the cities and the relationship of the masses to the new state was mediated through the Chinese Communist Party. A deformation existed in the Chinese Revolution from the very beginning and led to increased bureaucratisation. This also meant that the Chinese never projected their revolution internationally till the years of the Sino-Soviet split and the Cultural Revolution and even then in a very distorted and near religious fashion. It is important to understand these defects if one is to appreciate the present course of the Chinese bureaucracy.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

We will not discuss the Sino-Soviet split here, but its impact globally was extremely important: the destruction of the Stalinist monolith, the beginnings of debate within the European C.P. s, etc., which enabled thousands of newly-radicalised youth to break from the strait-jacket of Stalinism throughout the world. Within China also it posed certain choices and a difference of opinion within

the Party was one of the causes of the 'Cultural Revolution' initiated by Mao to try and regain complete control of the party apparatus. However though the Cultural Revolution was initiated as an inter-bureaucratic conflict, the three principles which Mao proclaimed to justify it are fairly important:

1. To destroy the bureaucracy in the CCP and the State;
2. The right of the minority to exist and criticise;
3. The institution of elections modelled on the Paris Commune at every level of Chinese society.

Even if Mao's understanding of the bureaucracy was not scientific and referred to combatting 'red-tapism', 'inefficiency', etc. the other two points are very crucial. Once the faction fight had been won inside the CCP and Liu Shao Chi had been dismissed and denounced as an 'agent of imperialism', Mao, with the aid of the army, ended the Cultural Revolution. But two facts stand out: a section of the masses were mobilised and in certain cases transcended the limitations of both wings of the bureaucracy and the whole period allowed many political discussions to take place. Also the weakness of Maoism was demonstrated once again: only the students were 'officially' mobilised. If Mao was serious in wanting to destroy the bureaucracy the only class in China capable of doing so institutionally was the Chinese working class and it had no place in the Maoist schema. In fact when spontaneous workers' mobilisations began to take place, the Army intervened!

The importance of the Cultural Revolution lay in the fact that it politicised hundreds of thousands of people and therefore one is confident of the ability of Chinese workers, peasants and students to continue the Chinese Revolution by overthrowing the bureaucracy within the next several years. The Chinese masses today are not in the same state as were the Russian workers after the victory of Stalinism. The latter could maintain its power because internally it had demoralised and terrorised a working class decimated by civil war and famine, while externally it had strangled the revolution. The European working class had been defeated. In China and Asia today the situation is vastly different. And this, of course, coincides with a capitalist crisis in Europe and North America. The growing successes of the Indo-Chinese revolution, the spread of the struggle to South Asia, the re-emergence of struggle in Indonesia and Malaysia, weakens the power of the Chinese bureaucracy vis a vis the Chinese masses. That is why the bureaucrats are keen to preserve the status quo. That is why even poor old Lin Biao, anointed Crown Prince at the Ninth Party Congress, can't stomach the latest turn and has to be removed (it's interesting that while he was completely incorrect and mechanistic in his analyses, at least he saw the revolution as a world process).

The only way of defending the Chinese Revolution is to extend it. Today the best way to do this is not only by continuing the mass struggles in Asia—and the sub-continent of India is a vital weak link in this respect—but by overthrowing the Maoist bureaucracy. We are confident that the Chinese masses will do this, aided by the development of the struggle throughout the world.

—Clarissa Howard

## FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Trotsky was an unrelenting critic of Comintern policies and commented on China: "If, at the beginning of the Northern expedition (1926) we had begun to organise Soviets in the 'liberated' districts (and the masses were instinctively aspiring for that with all their might and main) we would have secured the necessary basis and a revolutionary running start, we would have rallied around us the agrarian uprisings, we would have built our own army, we would have disintegrated the enemy armies; and despite the youthfulness of the Communist Party of China, the latter would have been able, thanks to proper guidance from the Comintern, to mature in these exceptional circumstances and to assume power, if not in the whole of China at once, then at least in a considerable part of China. And, above all, we would have had a party." *Third International After Lenin*, Pioneer, P.185-86.

<sup>2</sup> cf. Livio Maitan's book on China, to be published shortly by NLB, for details and analyses of this period.

# RACIST EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

## THE WAY IT WORKS:

### Part One of an important article which shows how and why racism is institutionalised in the educational system.

It is not difficult to give examples of acts of individual racism in schools. For instance there was the well-publicised case of the Asian teacher whom Walsall L.E.A. refused to employ because of her colour<sup>1</sup>. Indeed, Walsall publicly declared it would not even consider her application unless she signed a form stating that the application would not be used 'to seek to establish that this authority is committing an act of discrimination'. Again, and far more important, numerous examples can be given of individual black pupils being subjected to racism by the school authorities including school teachers. For instance there was the recent unpublicised case in Birley High School in Moss Side, Manchester of a teacher of a black student who was friendly with a white girl in the same class, writing to the girl's parents, asking them if they knew about the relationship and whether they 'minded'.

#### RACISM INSTITUTIONALISED IN THE SCHOOLS

However, these examples of individual racism, though blatant, are politically of little relevance in that they do not reveal the main basis of racist education. The point about racism in schools is that it is *not* a question of individual acts—this is one of the fallacies of the liberals. Thus it is possible to give many examples of teachers who are manifestly not racist. Rather racism is INSTITUTIONALISED within the *whole* school's structure. Indeed it is part of the purpose of that structure in order to begin the process of dividing the future working class.

Basically racism is structured in two ways within the schools. On the one hand it is used to denigrate black culture and black history in order to subjectively make white students feel superior and black students feel inferior. Thus this is the reason for the volume of racist literature and the totally racist interpretation of history found in schools. Moreover such literature and such history is not a temporary aberration on the part of the ruling class of which it is unaware. Rather it intends it—and sometimes it admits the intention, albeit in a euphemistic way. For instance it was stated in the Second Report of the Commonwealth Immigrants Advisory Council<sup>2</sup> that 'A natural system of education cannot be expected to perpetuate the different values of immigrant groups'. In other words use the schools first to make blacks, black culture and black history seem contemptible and then smash them.

The second way racism is structured in schools is through giving black students the worst conditions and the worst employment possibilities. The point here is that in order to make blacks subjectively feel inferior and the whites superior, then it helps if blacks actually are made socially inferior as an objective fact. This is the political reason why black students get the worst schools and in particular why they are herded into E.S.N. schools, that is schools for the supposed 'sub normal'. Again one of the political reasons why unemployment amongst black school-leavers is so high is that it is the result of objectively inferior conditions in the schools. Of course another reason is racism within the whole employment set-up itself.

#### RACIST LITERATURE USED IN SCHOOLS

Though at first sight much of this literature might appear merely ludicrous yet it cannot be dismissed as a triviality. Instead it expresses a definite class and racist position identical to

that found in bourgeois produced 'adult' publications. For instance in *Biggles and the Black Raider*, Biggles undertakes to go in search of a Black 'terrorist' only "on the understanding that there's no interference by bureaucrats. I want no bleating in the House of Commons about a poor innocent native being shot. Nobody says a word if fifty British Tommies are bumped off; but let one poor benighted heathen get the works and the balloon goes up. Then people wonder why things are going to pot". It is precisely this argument of course which the bourgeoisie is using to try and conceal its own terrorism in Ireland at the moment and towards blacks in the ghettos here. Thus in Ireland the death of every British soldier is given headline treatment. Again in the Mangrove trial, the total emphasis of the prosecution was on the number of police who had supposedly been attacked by black militants—with the judge doing the best he could to keep out of the case the whole history of police harassment and brutality towards blacks in Notting Hill.



Many other examples can be given—like the book 'The Brown Rabbit'. This is used in Royce Infants School in Moss Side to teach five year olds to read. It tells the story of a non-white rabbit with whom none of the white rabbits would play because of his colour and who, after unsuccessfully trying to paint his fur, resigns himself to a life of living with the non-white rabbits. The Royce school is over 60 per cent black. It's a real favourite of the hair-bleach manufacturers.

#### RACIST INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY IN SCHOOLS

The most revealing example of the total distortion of black culture occurs in the way history is presented in the schools. These examples are revealing because history is presented *consistently* in a racist fashion. This is because bourgeois history is nothing more than an attempt to justify imperialist exploitation—which is itself the basis of racism. Thus bourgeois educationalists might, if they wanted to, try to erase the more crude racist outbursts from individual pieces of literature. The bourgeoisie could hardly, though, rewrite its own history from an anti-imperialist perspective. On the contrary it is forced to spend all its time justifying this imperialism—and its consequent racist oppression.

This faking of history and justification for racism can be seen in various ways.

1. All history (outside the bible) in which the whole European race played no part is

simply treated as never having happened. Non-white civilisation is ignored as being automatically worthless. This is often stated openly. Thus one of the history books frequently used in secondary schools<sup>3</sup> does not discuss China on the grounds that 'Chinese civilisation has no connection with Europe: it is a thing apart'. Naturally enough this book not only fails to even mention the 2000 years of Chinese culture and civilisation—it also neglects to mention the attempted rape of the civilisation by the European states from the 11th century to the 20th (and also their attitude today towards the workers state of China).

2. Similarly 'civilisation' is taught as only being brought to the non-European lands by the white 'civilisers' (who also happened to 'discover' these lands, as though they did not exist before). This double-think is taken to its extreme form by those writers who claim that African art was the product of the white man. Thus in *The Land and People of West Africa* it is claimed that the famous Benin ivory and bronze work—the product of the most highly organised of all the historical black states on the W. Coast of Africa—was 'all the result of Portuguese Influence'. In fact all of Portugal's influence and energy towards Benin was directed towards plundering it for slaves for 400 years.

3. One re-occurring piece of bourgeois propaganda in school text-books is that without the 'help' of the white imperialists then there would have been no industrial development in the colonies. Thus in *Let's Visit South Africa*—in use in primary schools—it is said, 'The white man has made a great difference to Bantu life . . . The Bantu are very conservative . . . The Ovambos are better workers than most of the other Bantu'. Well, of course, the white man did make a great difference to Bantu life—he destroyed it. Again any industrial development in South Africa has been entirely the result of black slave labour—and anyhow this development nowhere equals that of 'non-white' China since

the revolution. However, we doubt whether the author of this book will add a post-script in the next edition about the 7000 Ovambos who are now fighting back against their slavery by going on strike and being shot down as a consequence at the huge Klein Ayb Copper Mine in order to break the notorious contract labour system which ties blacks to their jobs. Strikes by blacks in South Africa are totally illegal.

4. Indeed one of the notable features of bourgeois history in schools is the almost complete silence about the long history of black struggle against imperialist forces. For instance there is hardly ever even mentioned the great black revolution of Haiti. Here in 1791 the black slaves of Haiti rebelled against their French masters. In a struggle which lasted over 12 years there was waged the biggest guerilla war in history before Vietnam. In the end the blacks defeated 60,000 British troops and two French invasion forces totalling 40,000.

#### BLACKS AND E.S.N. SCHOOLS

As explained above the aim of the ruling class is not only to destroy blacks culturally but also materially—in order to make them seem socially inferior as an objective fact.

This is the reason behind the creation of black ghettos and the herding of young people from these ghettos into sub-standard schools. In particular this explains why so many blacks are placed as 'sub-normal' and

sent to E.S.N. schools. Thus a report produced by the Inner London Education Authority in 1967 showed that 28.4 per cent of students in London E.S.N. schools were black, whereas the percentage was only 15 per cent in ordinary schools. Moreover this racism is particularly acute in the case of West Indian youth, for three quarters of all the black students in E.S.N. schools were West Indian whereas West Indians comprised only half of the black students in the ordinary schools.

#### UNEMPLOYMENT AMONGST BLACK SCHOOL-LEAVERS

That aspect of racism within the schools structure which hits the blacks the hardest is in respect to unemployment. Thus one of the main purposes of the schools in the ghetto areas is to create a pool of unskilled, passive black unemployed.

Now the present Tory government, and the former Labour government, claimed that unemployment amongst blacks was not particularly high. For instance the Department of Employment has just issued figures to show that black unemployment constitutes 'only' 2.3 per cent of overall unemployment in October. The real truth about black unemployment and in particular black unemployment amongst youth, is however far different. Thus:

1. Even on the government's own figures black unemployment is rising—for figures for May showed that 'only' 2.2 per cent of unemployed were black.

2. Moreover, again on the government's own figures, the percentage of unemployment is far higher in areas of a larger black concentration—which is where blacks are usually to be found because of ghettoisation. Thus in the West Midlands 6.3 per cent of the unemployed are black.

3. However, the main point about the government's figures is that they are totally bent and crooked in order to conceal the extent of black unemployment. Thus to understand the real extent of black unemployment it is no use confirming the numbers of black unemployed with the *total* number of unemployed (both of black and white). Instead it is necessary to see the ratio of blacks unemployed to blacks employed and compare this with the ratio of white unemployed to white employed. In other words to see the real extent of black unemployment it is necessary to compare the percentage of unemployment within the black population as a whole with that within the white population. The government says it can't do this as it only keeps the figures for black unemployed and not for black employed! However, in one survey<sup>4</sup> in North London it was found that unemployment amongst West Indians between the ages of 16 and 24 was 20 per cent—which was four times the figures for white youths in the area.

4. The above figures for North London also indicate the unemployment rate amongst black youth in particular. However, here again there are no meaningful relevant figures comparing black youth unemployment to that of white youth. Another indication though of the extent of black youth unemployment is that the Department of Employment's figures show that of the total number of West Indian unemployed, 25 per cent are 'young persons'.

5. Finally, the racist denial of employment to black school-leavers is institutionalised not just through the schools themselves but also through the Youth Employment Service—many of whose officers work in schools as well. The general approach of the Y.E.S. is well shown by the admission of the organiser of the youth employment service in Birmingham<sup>5</sup> that 'There is some discrimination—but so there is against long hair and Catholics in Ulster! Precisely.

Steve Cohen

#### FOOTNOTES

1. *The Guardian*, May 4th, 1971.
2. Set up in 1963 to advise into the 'integration of blacks'.
3. R. Mears—*Britain and Europe*.
4. *Race Today*, August 1970.
5. *The Times*, 1st Sept., 1970.

This is the first part of a two part article. The second part, on 'The role of the liberals' will appear in the next issue of *The Red Mole*.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**The Coming British Revolution**, by Tariq Ali (Cape, 95p paperback)

It is hardly surprising that the bourgeois press has attacked this book so violently—the two most hostile reviews being those of Bernard Levin in *The Observer* and Christopher Hitchens (I.S.) in *The Times*—as its aim is very clear, namely, of stressing that the socialist revolution in Britain is not only inevitable but necessary and has to be organised. The book doesn't lay any claim to new theoretical discoveries. It is simply what it was intended to be; an introductory volume for large numbers of people who are beginning to question the legitimacy of the bourgeois state and are developing an interest in revolutionary ideas and organisations. While the book clearly represents the political views of the IMG, to which Tariq Ali belongs, the chapter on the revolutionary left is by no means uncritical of the IMG's past and contains a number of pertinent self-criticisms.

The various chapters discuss the decline of British capitalism, the labour movement, the youth radicalisation, brief histories of the British C.P. and Trotskyism in Britain, the lack of a Marxist tradition in Britain and the need for revolutionary organisations. One of the appendices contains a little-known text by Lenin on the Labour Party which succinctly explains the latter's class nature, and should be read by all those who still have doubts on this score.

**Ireland Unfree**, by Bob Purdie. Red Pamphlets—2 (IMG Publications, 30p)

As the position adopted nearly two years ago by *The Red Mole* and the IMG on Ireland, relating specifically to the resurgence of Republicanism, is now being accepted by even those who claimed not so long ago that Republicanism was historically dead Bob Purdie's pamphlet is very timely. For a long time the IMG was the only organisation on the extreme left to give unconditional support to the Republicans in their struggle against British Imperialism. This pamphlet explains why and in so doing traces the background of the Civil Rights movement and Peoples Democracy, explaining both their strengths and weaknesses. There is a thorough analysis of Republicanism and a fraternal but forceful critique of some of the positions adopted by the Provisional and Official wings of the IRA. While the pamphlet also deals with the small groups of the revolutionary left its critique of the "two nations theory" is necessarily brief and needs to be extended further elsewhere, but for militants engaged in building a solidarity movement in Britain, the pamphlet is essential reading.

**CAPITAL: A Readable Introduction to Volume One**, Red Pamphlets—1 (IMG Publications, 40p.)

First of a series of Red Pamphlets, this pamphlet is exactly what its title says: a readable introduction to the first volume of Marx's *Capital*. It follows the text of

*Capital* fairly closely dealing in order with Marx's key concepts: the analysis of commodities, the constituents of Capital, Surplus Value, the Working Day, etc. It is deliberately written in a simple style so that it can readily be understood by someone with no prior knowledge of economics whatsoever. This type of pamphlet, although helpful for individual study, comes into its element when used in study groups. This text has already been used in Workers' Study Circles in West Germany, hopefully it will serve the same function here. In any case it fills a gap in the literature, providing a stepping stone for the study of *Capital* and encouraging comrades to begin the task of studying *Capital* itself.

**The Formation of the Economic Thought of Karl Marx**, by Ernest Mandel (New Left Books, £2.25)

To understand the revolutionary nature of the industrial proletariat requires an understanding of the capitalist mode of production: its historical origins, its merits as well as the contradictions that spell its doom. The starting point of classical political economy had been *wealth*; Marx and Engels began their analysis with *poverty*, and with the laws of evolution of wages—rooted in the complete separation of producers from the means of production. Unlike Malthus and Ricardo, they start not from the population movements but from the movement of accumulation of capital. It took them a considerable time to rid themselves completely of Ricardo's views and Marx was led initially not only to miscalculate the

periodicity of the capitalist crisis of overproduction but also the significance of trade-union activity. A careful study of both resulted in the more correct position in the *Grundrisse* and *Capital*. True, the accumulation of capital and the replacement of human labour by machines tend to lower the nominal wage, but this accumulation also gives rise to new branches of industry as well as new needs which, together with trade-union resistance to the decline in the standard of living, increase the value of labour and its price. However, the inadequacy of wages is no longer measured against the minimum required for physical survival but also reflects new needs.

What is valuable in Mandel's account of the formation of Marx's economic thought is not just his clear and masterly presentation of issues such as those outlined above, but also his demolition of a number of well-known bourgeois and Marxist critics of Marx (from Parsons, Robinson and Touraine to Marcuse and Althusser). He traces the fate of certain 'forgotten' themes (e.g. the Asiatic mode of production) and also takes the opportunity to combat some general views on the nature of transitional societies. What is now required is a concrete analysis of the economic laws of motion of these societies.

All books and pamphlets reviewed in this column can be obtained from Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1. For orders of over 6 please include 10% to cover postage costs.



estates were suggested. We were asked if we would use the slogan 'Victory to the IRA', at the Alliance meetings, and we explained that we would try to argue why the slogan 'Solidarity with all those struggling against British Imperialism in Ireland' involved support for the IRA, as the only organisations carrying out actual armed struggle against British Imperialism. This horrified the other organisations, for whom the 'Solidarity' slogan is apparently a meaningless political platitude without any concrete content. Under pressure we agreed that we should say that our interpretation of the 'Solidarity' slogan was not that of the other organisations, but even this was inadequate for them, and they voted to expel us from the 'alliance'. We repeatedly asked what the other comrades proposed to do when members of the public asked them about the IRA and where they stood about it. Their position would be, they said, not to answer the question directly, but to rephrase it, so as to indicate that the British Government was responsible for casualties. This is of course true, but it is also a sophistry and evasion, since the IRA is making the casualties. The fact is that the entire basis of the support which the British government can muster among the British population is the propaganda campaign it has waged against the IRA. Until we can break through that propaganda, no effective campaign can be built in this country—it will always founder on the 'terrorism' of the IRA. Thus socialists cannot evade an evaluation of the IRA, and an explanation of its real position and meaning in the Irish struggle. If they think they can, the comrades in Lancaster are living with their heads in the sand. They will solve none of the problems and build nothing by the unprincipled expulsion of

the organisations which are trying to tackle these problems.

To attempt to muzzle organisations which support agreed slogans from explaining what they mean by them is a particularly vicious form of political backwardness. The actions of the Lancaster I.S., which took the lead in this witchhunt, indicate very clearly the conception of this organisation as to the left politics they want to develop in Britain. What is the attitude of the national organisation to the actions of its Lancaster Branch?

Lancaster IMG and ISC members.

## THE RADICAL SCHOLARS

Following the successful Glasgow Conference of Radical Scholars of Eastern Europe and the USSR, held over the weekend of 22/23 January, plans have been made for a further conference to take place in London, probably in October, on the theme of 'Social Change and the Social Structure in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union since 1953'. It is hoped that this next conference will provide a forum for all radical scholars from various disciplines to meet and discuss their ideas in a situation providing at least a minimum of agreement on method, terms and analytic tools. The organisers stress "the imperative need for such a conference which will transcend the arid empiricism of established orthodoxy and the often ragged theorizing of the left".

There are also plans to establish a new journal, *Critique*, as a logical corollary of the Conference—it is hoped that the papers from the Glasgow and proposed London conferences will provide at least a kernel of material for the first two issues.

Anyone interested in any way, or who would like copies of the papers presented at the Glasgow conference, should write to: H.H. Tickin, 31 Clevedon Road, Glasgow, W.2.

## NOW OUT!

Women Workers in Britain: A handbook by Leonora Lloyd—25p. Illustrated. A Socialist Woman Publication available from 182 Pentonville Road, N.1. and bookshops.

Over 30 tables on every aspect of women workers—pay, training, unions, etc.—with analysis and explanation. Articles on Industrial campaign, equal pay, etc.

## CORRECTION

Due to a misunderstanding on the telephone, there were two inaccuracies in the account of the occupation of the Army Recruitment Office in Oxford that appeared in *The Red Mole* 36. The break-out from the Office did in fact result in *three* arrests, although none of those who occupied were arrested. Secondly, although the I.S. (and the C.P.) did not support the occupation, and none of their comrades occupied, they did participate in the demonstration and in the successful break-out.

## letter

### WHAT DOES SOLIDARITY MEAN?

Dear Comrade:

In Lancaster, both in the University and the town, we have worked hard to develop the basis of a movement on Ireland, through the Irish Solidarity Campaign. Therefore we welcomed the activity of other left groupings which felt that the Derry massacre made it necessary for them to start work on the Irish question. Together with the International Socialists, the Communist Party, the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists, and the Independent Labour Party (one member) we formed an Irish 'Solidarity Alliance', based on three of the slogans of the ISC, together with the slogan 'Solidarity with all those struggling against British Imperialism in Ireland', which was a compromise as the slogan, 'Victory to the IRA', was not acceptable to the other groups.

We began to discuss how to develop a campaign in Lancaster. Meetings on housing

## International Marxist Group

British Section of the Fourth International

If you would like to be put in touch with IMG militants in your area, please fill in the form below and send it to the IMG, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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Address .....

Occupation .....

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Comrades who would like more information about Socialist Woman, or who would like a subscription to the paper (48p per year—6 issues) should write to SOCIALIST WOMAN, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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# THE ALDERSHOT EXPLOSION

"Our sympathies are fully on the side of Irish, Russian, Polish or Indian terrorists in their struggle against national and political oppression".

(Leon Trotsky)

The bomb attack on the Aldershot barracks for which the Official wing of the IRA have claimed responsibility, is being seized upon with gusto by the British ruling class. Faced with the growing discontent and instability in Britain: the continuing unemployment, the failure of the economy to reflate and the most recent defeat the government suffered in the miners' strike, they are already using this to launch a campaign of national hysteria. There will be appeals for 'national unity' against this

threat of anarchy; already the media and the government are busy whipping up chauvinism.

Our duties in this situation are clear. We unconditionally support any section of an oppressed nation in struggle with their oppressors. The main thrust of our agitation must be against British imperialism, pointing out that it is the policy of British imperialism that is ultimately responsible. There will be great pressure on the Irish solidarity movement in Britain in the coming period. We must be undaunted by this. There must be no let up in the tempo of public agitation on Ireland, though the need for all meetings to be properly stewarded is now of prime importance.

In this situation many will be tempted to retreat behind the cover of arguments of the form "Marxism vs i l eo-anarchist Terrorism". This must be resisted. In our society we are constantly experiencing the violence of the bourgeoisie. This occurs in covert - the violence of economic deprivation and social oppression - and overt - the open violence of the army and police - forms. We deny them the right to use this violence. Every time they do, as on Bloody Sunday in Derry, we will use it to show the rottenness of their system.

For us violence is a response to their violence. The use of it is not a moral question. It is merely a tactic in our struggle - is a particular act of violence conducive to carrying the struggle forward or is it counterproductive?

No matter what criticism we might make of the tactics or carrying out of this

particular action the main fact is still that we unconditionally support the right of the IRA, or any other faction of the Republican population to carry on armed action aimed at destroying British rule in Ireland.

The pacifists and liberals may weep and wring their hands with grief but even in their own moralising terms the just violence of the IRA is nothing compared to the centuries of British imperialist butchery in Ireland. In political terms as we have explained, the struggle of the IRA is in the direct interests of the British working class. The fact that a bad technical error or tactical mistake meant that unfortunately British army officers were not killed by the blast, does not in the slightest alter the political content of the struggle of the IRA.

It is in this light that we must look at the Aldershot incident.

**VICTORY TO THE I.R.A.**

During the night of 29/30 January two commando groups of the Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP - People's Revolutionary Army) carried out the most audacious, important and spectacular operation yet seen in the Argentinian guerrilla movement. Having made themselves masters of the National Development Bank building, they proceeded to rob it of 402 million pesos, the equivalent of more than £160,000.

The operation was far more than a typical military action, its main objective being fundamentally political. The National Development Bank has played a major role in assisting and facilitating the imperialist exploitation of Argentina in the last few years; and one of the most important results of the operation was the seizure of confidential documents revealing a series of frauds involving public money, which implicate not only the directors of the bank but also officials of the Lanusse regime. It is significant, also, that the whole operation was made possible by the action of two manual workers in the bank who had joined the ERP as a result of their political convictions.

The Argentinian police are constantly publishing reports that the ERP is about to collapse. Yet on the same day that the operation on the National Development Bank was carried out, another section of the ERP was able to carry out a successful arms raid on the Air Force base at Cordoba. And this despite the fact that the secretary-general of the PRT, Argentinian section of the Fourth International and the party which created the ERP, has now been in prison in Buenos Aires for several months!



This photo of a strong box inscribed with the sign of the organisation was taken by ERP militants and sent to the press.

Se-Sung and Se-Sungik were arrested by the Park regime of South Korea in April, 1971 on the charge under the Anti-Communist Law. They had been active in the militant struggle against President Park and were sentenced to death in October 1971. A solidarity campaign has been developing in Japan, since they became revolutionaries in Japan when

they were students in a Tokyo university. The campaign is an important part of the struggle to defend the right of self-determination of the Koreans and Chinese living in Japan, in which the Japanese Section of the Fourth International has been taking a leading role.

## STATE DEFIED AS BELGIANS SUPPORT IRA

The Ligue Revolutionnaire des Travailleurs, Belgian section of the Fourth International, scored a big victory over the State earlier this month when it defied a government ban and went ahead with a series of meetings in support of the Irish struggle.

The Minister of Justice, who imposed the ban, said that it was 'inadmissible in the present circumstances that foreigners should have the opportunity in Belgium to inflame the tensions which already exist in the North of Ireland'. He added that the decision "should not be seen as indicating that we have taken any position on the problems which are

posed in Northern Ireland"; but his actions show only too clearly his complete opposition to the popular resistance forces in Ireland, and his support for British colonial oppression there.

The government ban on the meetings was headline news in all the Belgian newspapers, and every meeting was packed out. Despite continuous attempts by the police to arrest them, Gery Lawless and Oscar Gregan of the Irish Solidarity Campaign were able to explain to mass audiences (over 1,500 in Brussels) the origins of the present situation in Ireland and the need to build campaigns in solidarity with the struggle of the Irish people and its armed vanguard, the IRA. As a result of these meetings the prospects of a significant Irish solidarity campaign in Belgium are now extremely good.



Members of the GIM, German Section of the Fourth International, picketing in support of

the Irish struggle.

## ISRACA STATEMENT

**RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS IN ISRAEL.**

Hundreds of Palestinian Arabs are held in prison camps in Israel. Their 'crime': resistance to occupation and oppression. Tens of Israeli Black Panthers are thrown into jail every now and then. Their 'crime': protest against economic misery and cultural repression which the Zionist establishment inflicts upon them. Israeli draft resisters and conscientious objectors suffer not only from police brutality but also from judicial violence.

Three recent cases:

\*Giyora Neumann 19 years old. Imprisoned for draft resistance. Present address: Military Prison No. 6 Zahal mail 2648.

\*Irith Yacobi A girl, 19 years old. Imprisoned on Feb. 4th in army prison No. 400 (Zahal mail 2447) for draft resistance.

\*Eitan Grosfeld A boy of 16. Brutally assaulted by the Jerusalem police on Feb. 10th. while demonstrating with the Black Panthers outside the Zionist Congress. Sentenced to 'psychological observation' in Israel's worst Borstal (address: 'Mitzpeh-Yam Israel').

All these prisoners are POLITICAL prisoners. We are holding a 24 hour protest demo (starting on 1 p.m. March 10th) outside the Israeli Embassy (next to the Antique Hypermarket, High St. Kensington tube). Send delegations of support. Give maximum publicity to this statement. Send letters of support to the above address in Israel.

Israeli Revolutionary Action Committee Abroad, London, 20 February 1972.

**THEORETICAL PRACTICE NO. 5: MARX on WAGNER**—complete translation. Hussain: The Law of Value. Gane: Lenin on Conjuncture. 64 pages, 30p. Bookshops or 13 Grosvenor Avenue, London N.5.

