

The Red Mole

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Shrewsbury Frame-up

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Six months after the event, the building employers have kindly provided a test case in the use of the *criminal* law, now that the Industrial Relations Act has had to be placed in cold storage for the moment. Ensuring the victory of the Shrewsbury 24 — and six further men have recently been committed in various courts in North Wales — is a crucial task for the working class today. This view was also emphasised at the conference of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions.

By

ALF JENNING

The working class have forced the State to drop charges before. The Longannet miners last year were released after the Scottish NUM threatened a national strike. Mass solidarity strikes last summer brought about the release of the Pentonville Five from prison. Today, the working class must prove to the ruling class once again that it is not intimidated by its legal machine.

URGENCY OF SOLIDARITY

The urgency of solidarity is increased by the fact that UCATT, the building union, is still dragging its feet. The bureaucracy is frightened by the word 'conspiracy' and want the men to plead guilty to the charges so that the conspiracy charges are dropped. Today, after their shameful refusal of a lawyer for the men last month, the union leadership is now deliberating about financial aid. But the Shrewsbury men must not be left to rely on the bureaucracy as far as cash is concerned. The bureaucracy is liable at any time to do a deal with police or to pressurise the men to plead guilty. The men must therefore be supplied with enough cash — which may mean as much as £5,000 — to allow them to choose.

But most important is solidarity action on 25 April, and not only in the building trade. Massive delegations should be sent to Shrewsbury to prevent the police from blocking off the town as they did last time, thereby depriving the men of the support of thousands of their brothers outside the Court.

Already local organisations are taking initiatives of this sort. In Oxford, the Council of Action has given the issue immediate priority, with all delegates pushing in their unions for delegations to go to Shrewsbury. In Sheffield, building workers raising the issue at meetings have met with an enthusiastic response. Militants in the engineering industry are campaigning for a mass meeting of workers in the area on 18 April, and several union branches have already agreed to send delegations to Shrewsbury. In Rotherham a site in Park Gate is organising a coach to go down, and Rotherham UCATT joint shop stewards committee is producing a bulletin on the issue for mass circulation.

The outcome of the hearing will not at all necessarily depend on the balance of forces inside the court; a widespread and determined campaign in the labour movement can have a decisive effect on the court's decisions. All efforts must be turned to ensuring that that decision is

BUILD NOW FOR MAY DAY

The preparations for the May Day General Strike are taking place in the teeth of opposition, if not outright sabotage from the trade union leaders.

So far the AUEW and the TGWU have called their members out; but the NUR, the NUT and other executives have come out against the strike call. As for Mr. Gormley of the NUM, he cynically tried to use the result of the miners' ballot to declare that the miners could not be expected to come out on May Day.

RANK AND FILE ACTION

But in many areas the retreats by national leaderships are being counter-acted by local rank and file initiatives. In Oxford, for example, the Trades Council is to convene a meeting of *all* shop-stewards and work-place representatives of *all* unions in the area to plan and co-ordinate the May Day strike. Such an example can be followed in other areas to decisively rebuff the strike of Gormley and his friends. In areas where no central co-ordinating body exists, and in those localities where right-wing domination of the Trades Councils ensures no action will be organised, Action Committees should be established *now* to mobilise for 1 May.

In addition plans are being laid to ensure that May Day involves much more than a protest march and meeting. In some areas Trades Councils are electing a committee to organise a mobile picket force to ensure a total shut down and suggestions have been put forward for public transport to be commandeered by the strikers to facilitate mass attendance at meetings and demonstrations. In this way the strike can be transformed into a massive demonstration of the potential power of the working class movement.

POLITICAL STRIKE

The Labour Party Executive has decided to back the TUC's May Day call, but simultaneously made itself appear ridiculous by declaring that May Day would not be a political strike! What is it then? A religious ceremony?

All but the blind know that May Day is a strike against the Government. But it will take place at a time when the trade union and Labour leaderships are trying to run away from the fight to bring down the Tory Government. If the TUC had prepared and organised a united working class offensive to smash the Pay Laws during the winter then May Day would have marked a climax of the labour movement's fight. As it is, the hospital workers are being left to fight alone.

The TUC is preparing to return to talks with the Government. As Scanlon put it: "we must face



Sheffield demonstration in support of hospital workers showed way forward to united working class offensive

First: the struggle against Phase Two has so far failed. But not because of too much militancy. The real reason is the refusal of the labour leadership to organise a *united* struggle against the Government.

Second: the last three years show that without militant, bold action nothing whatever can be won.

Third: a policy of pleading for mercy at the negotiating table has been shown to be absolutely futile. The Tory Government must press forward its attack until the working class is decisively defeated: nothing else will solve the crisis of British capitalism and enable the exploitation of the working class to be jacked up sufficiently to restore the rate of profit.

In these conditions the "realism" of Scanlon is nothing but a policy for working class defeat. The only realistic policy for the labour movement today is that of preparing for a General Strike to throw out the Tory Government. Every issue, every struggle must be tackled with that need in mind.

Following the miners' ballot the Tories have won a temporary breathing space. They will

try to press home this advantage during the coming months before the next wave of working class struggle on the economic front. The propaganda war against trade unionists will be stepped up. There will be a stepping up of the repression which is already occurring against hospital pickets and the building workers from Shrewsbury.

May Day should mark the start of a working class counter-offensive. These moves from the capitalist class must be taken up by militants and a fight must be waged for the working class movement to be able to answer them. A halt must be called to the retreats of the trade union bureaucracy: there should be no talks with the Government; nothing less than the total scrapping of the Industrial Relations Act and the wage controls is acceptable. The unions must organise defence of picket lines and every court attack on militants must be treated as an attack on the whole working class movement. Every strike for higher pay must be treated as a struggle to be supported by the entire labour movement. And every struggle must be approached within the strategy of a General Strike to bring down the Government.

London Conference Against the Wage Freeze and Against the Government
SATURDAY 14th APRIL 1973

11 a.m.

CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER

LECTURER WINS VICTIMISATION FIGHT

Steve Whitley, lecturer at Northumberland College of Education, has won his fight against victimisation. The meeting of the College Board of Governors on 9 April decided to lift his suspension and to reinstate him to his former post as senior resident tutor. A fine of one day's pay was imposed on Whitley, presumably as 'punishment' for his presence on the picket lines during the NUS day of action on 14 March.

MILITANT CAMPAIGN

The decision to reinstate Whitley was not a simple triumph for constitutional methods but was a direct result of the campaign fought by the student militants and the local Steve Whitley Defence Committee. As soon as Whitley was dismissed from his post as resident tutor the more militant students began to argue for action to secure his reinstatement.

Opposition to this came from three groups: right-wing students, apolitical students and part of the liberal wing. Many of the right-wing students welcomed his dismissal pointing out his membership of the IMG. They and the apoliticals were also horrified at the prospect of strikes and occupations, claiming that it would 'get the college a bad name' and 'affect their future careers'. Some of the liberals

claimed that the College Principal had acted in an unconstitutional manner and thus the attempt to get him reinstated should be conducted in a purely legal way.

The militants rejected these views, pointing out that Whitley's dismissal would strengthen the hand of the Principal and encourage the most reactionary lecturers in their attempts to strengthen college discipline. They explained that by occupying the Administration Block they would not only disrupt the College but encourage students and lecturers in other colleges to take supporting action. Furthermore only such action could inspire any campaign amongst trades unionists who were hardly likely to act in defence of Whitley if students of the college were passively accepting his victimisation.

SUPPORT

This position was fully justified in practice. Even though only a minority of students occupied the Administration Block it evoked messages of support from over 30 colleges — the universities had already closed for the vacation — and received the support of the NUS executive, backed by a resolution at the NUS Conference. Academics throughout the country signed petitions demanding his reinstatement, many of which called on the NUT

and ATTI to 'black' the college if his dismissal was confirmed.

Recognising that some members of the Board of Governors had connections with the trade unions and local Labour parties, the Defence Committee campaigned inside the local unions and Labour parties for support. Branches of NALGO, NUPE etc. went on record for his reinstatement. The Newcastle Trades Council carried a motion of support and circulated its affiliated organisations on the case. The South Shields Trades Council not only came out in clear support but sent their banner and pickets to the Board of Governors' meeting.

Some people had argued that this activity might alienate some of the more 'progressive' members of the Board. But the Defence Committee correctly saw that what would move these people was an open demonstration that the trade union and labour movement would not tolerate any complicity on their part in Whitley's projected victimisation.

By refusing to let the case be tied to legal manoeuvres alone, and thus isolated in the rooms of secret committee meetings, the Defence Committee ensured that the maximum pressure was brought to bear against the authorities and thus laid the basis for Whitley's reinstatement.

Family allowances campaign

On Tuesday, 27 March, Women's Liberation members of the National Family Allowance Campaign held a day of action focussing on pickets of post offices in towns all over the country, to draw attention to the Government's proposals to reorganise the tax system. In several places militant occupations of post offices took place — in Lancaster, for example, where six people were arrested. In Colchester, the Women's Liberation Group picketed five of the town's post offices and distributed over 10,000 leaflets explaining the implications of the proposed tax system.

The proposed Tax Credit System is an attempt by the government to rationalise the tax system. Instead of assessing each individual's rate of taxation everyone earning over £8 a week or receiving unemployment benefit (but not the self-employed or students) will be taxed at a rate of 30% of their income and then receive in their wage packet a number of credits according to their circumstances — single or married, how many children, and so on. The automatic, non-means-tested, right to family allowance will be replaced by "child credits".

The Campaign is fighting not only for family allowances to be retained but that they should be increased and extended to first children as well. As the campaigners point out, whether the child credits go to the mother or father is largely irrelevant — what matters is that family allowances are kept as the *statutory* and *independent* right of every mother and are not absorbed into the tax system.

The introduction of a means-tested "credit" system tied to wages has serious implications for the whole of the working class. Not only will many women lose that last shred of financial independence and become even more dependent on their husbands to maintain the family unit which serves to oppress them, but the whole struggle of the working class could be held back by the fact of the husband's increased responsibility as breadwinner and financial prop to the family.

These implications must be understood and taken up by the trade union movement. It must be included in the activities of Trades Councils and local committees campaigning against the Tories' policies in the build up to May 1st and afterwards. The Family Allowance Committee are planning to take part in the May Day demonstration. This must not remain at the level of a joint *protest* — as projected by the TUC — but must be extended into the fight against the Government and all its anti-working class policies.

CROMPTON PARKINSON STRIKE

The management's attempts to destroy the unity of Arab, Pakistani and white workers at the Crompton Parkinson factory in Newport has failed. The management had tried to manipulate the shift system in one department from three into two, thus producing a pool of surplus labour which was to have been laid off. When management refused to negotiate on this, the workers responded by immediate strike action.

At one stage there was an attempt through the local T&G official to do a deal which would have isolated the one department by accepting the new shift system in return for wage negotiations. But the strikers were adamant about continuing with their action.

Following this show of unity and determination, management was forced to offer negotiations on the shift system and the wage claim, coupled with a three months guaranteed no redundancy offer. The task now is to prepare for the struggle against the redundancies, and a factory bulletin is being produced with this aim.

GARAGE PICKET ARRESTED

One of three shop stewards leading a strike at Lankaster's Garage in New Malden, Surrey, was arrested for obstruction last Friday while picketing. He was due to appear in court on Wednesday.

The strike started on Monday, 2 April, over management's refusal to recognise the union and renegotiate the grading structure. Until recently management had managed very successfully to split the workforce completely through a complicated wage structure which meant that almost every one of the 26 workers was earning different money. But at the beginning of this year the workers started to join the AUEW and it was agreed to put in for a wage increase which would largely eliminate the differentials and improve particularly the position of the apprentices at the garage.

The strike is being supported by the Kingston district committee of the AUEW, although official union recognition has not yet been forthcoming. Workers at British Leyland in Cowley are blacking all supplies to the garage, which is a distributor for Austin-Morris. Attempts are now being made to extend support for the struggle in the area and also to take up the case of the arrested steward.

All donations, messages of support should be sent to: AUEW District Office, 9 Grange Road, Kingston,

CAR WORKERS HIT BACK

Over two thousand workers are now on strike at the giant Rubery Owen car components factory at Darlestone, and its subsidiary at Kingshill Hill.

The dispute started last July when the AUEW-TWGU negotiating committee submitted a wage claim. Since then nine different schemes have been negotiated over without success, but the management have now submitted their own scheme over the heads of the negotiating committee via a letter to all workers. The essence of the management's proposal is that the workers on day work (a small minority) can have an increase provided that those on piece-work agree to limitations on piece work. The net result of this would be that piece workers would, in the vast majority of cases, suffer a *wages cut*.

One worker told *Red Mole* reporters that if the scheme were implemented his weekly wage packet would go down by £13. Since the management want their scheme to last for two years, the work-force would be re-negotiating in two years time from a considerably worsened position. In other words, if the management are allowed to get away with their scheme

From PHIL HEARSE

wages at the factory — which dominates the small town of Darlestone — will suffer a long-term depression. It is this which accounts for the workers' absolute determination to resist the scheme. As one picket put it: "We have just got to win this one".

CLEVER GAME

The company, however, are playing a very clever game. By offering a direct increase to the small minority of dayworkers, they hope to split them from the piece-workers. When the company's letter went out, two thousand workers stopped work and held a massive demonstration outside the main offices on 2 April, an event which got virtually no publicity. However, when four days later a small number of dayworkers demonstrated in favour of the management's offer it merited both local television coverage and headline news in the local, ultra-reactionary, *Wolverhampton Express and Star*.

But the vast majority of workers are unimpressed by such antics, and only a small minority of even the dayworkers are still working. The negotiating committee has replied to the

company's manoeuvres by demanding an equal pay rise for all — two pounds fifty across the board, in addition to whatever the company have already offered the day workers.

The issues in this dispute are clear. The first is that the unions are having to fight against the notion that the worse paid workers in the factory should get a *rise at the expense* of the better paid workers, and also against the principle of wage cuts in general. Secondly, they are fighting against the attempts of the company to introduce a thinly-disguised scheme of partial measured day work. And thirdly, they are fighting an attempt to by-pass and sabotage the strong union organisation in the factory.

These issues are of vital concern to all workers in the car industry, and in the engineering industry in general. That is why it is essential that Rubery Owen should receive maximum solidarity from the whole car industry, including those factories laid-off as a result of the dispute; and that is why the Rubery Owen workers must be successful in this strike.

All messages of solidarity to: Strike Committee, Labour Party Club, Bentley, nr. Darlestone, Staffs.

PRINTERS OCCUPY FACTORY

Four hundred SOGAT workers have now been occupying Tillotson's packaging and printing factory in North Liverpool for over three weeks, following the sacking of four chapel officers.

The original dispute stretches back to 1967, when Tillotson's, part of the St. Regis (UK) combine, began a long term redundancy programme which has slashed the SOGAT work force from 700 to about 400 in six years. Last year the workers decided to call a halt to this, and eventually an agreement was reached. The company, however, eventually went ahead with its plans and threatened to chop 103 jobs in September last year.

The workers responded with the threat of a work-to-rule, against *all* cuts in the labour force, "voluntary" or otherwise, and as a result a joint working party was set up. Nevertheless the management sacked 23 women while negotiations were going ahead, and the chapel hit back with a work-to-rule which led to the union officers being sacked for an "unfair industrial practice" under the Industrial Relations Act. When the officers tried to attend a chapel meeting in the plant, they were kept out, and that same meeting voted to occupy against redundancies and

From PAUL COOPER

At first, workers in the four other unions (NGA, SLADE, EEPTU, AUEW) were let in to carry on working, but they were then sent home, mostly on full pay for the time being, when management's representatives were kept out of the plant. So far this has presented no particular problems since the other unions support the SOGAT workers. But there is an ominous parallel with the recent struggle at CAV-Lucas, where the divisions between different unions and between the occupiers and the locked out workers eventually crippled the whole struggle and contributed to defeat. The occupiers at Tillotson's should therefore pull out all the stops to involve the other unions in the sit-in so that the workers can present a united front to the company.

The occupiers themselves, mainly women, are 100% solid, and support so far has been encouraging. The local SOGAT branch has put a levy on its 4000 members, and many local factories such as Fisher-Bendix and Metal Box have organised collections. Liverpool Trades Council has called on all Merseyside workers to assist Tillotson's struggle.

headed. In the first few weeks the CAV workers were overwhelmed by support. But as the struggle dragged on, it dwindled badly. This must not be allowed to happen at Tillotson's. The dispute committee's assertion that "It is our fight today and may be your fight tomorrow" is not quite correct — it is *everybody's* fight today; the working class has to make every fight against repression and redundancy its own if we are to go forward. Vague statements and resolutions about opposing repression need to be converted into *concrete* action over *specific* examples of repression like Tillotson's and the Shrewsbury building workers.

This is one of the few examples of the occupation tactic being used to fight an issue other than mass redundancy or factory closure. We must show that Tillotson's are fighting the *same* battle against unemployment that the CAV workers were, and the *same* battle against repression of militants that the building workers are fighting now. A victory at Tillotson's would help not only to broaden even further the use of an effective tactic; it would be a political step forward in the struggle against the ruling class's onslaught on the most advanced militants of the working class.

Send donations, messages of support to:

The meeting of the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions in London on 31 March, attended by over a thousand delegates, showed once again the weaknesses of the LCDTU.

Halpin, the CP chairman, wanted to run the Conference like the TUC Congress — no resolutions or amendments, just a yes or no vote on the document. When forced to a vote on this procedure, possibly 30-40% of the Conference voted against the Chair, and the London docks delegation walked out. After the point was raised again in the afternoon session, every single speaker attacked the revolutionaries. The way the Communist Party managed the conference showed once again the CP's fear of its political strategy being challenged in open debate.

The Committee's Resolution stated that: "This Conference calls upon the whole movement to show maximum solidarity in action with all those forces in the forefront of the struggle against Phase 2 in every possible way — financially, joining picket lines and solidarity industrial action ... similar solidarity with workers facing criminal charges arising out of participation in traditional forms of trade union activity." Halpin's opening speech was even more explicit: mass strike action in solidarity with the hospital workers is the task of the moment, and making May Day a big success an overriding aim.

NO INDEPENDENT ROLE

But the LCDTU intends to play no independent role in carrying out these tasks of the day. It proposed no organisational or agitational initiatives within the actions already planned by the TUC, no independent calls to follow-up from May Day, nor any concrete proposals as to the mechanics of getting strikes in solidarity with the hospital workers. This Conference actually marks a decline in the activity and influence of the LCDTU since its high point in 1971 when it was able to call out over 600,000 workers against the Industrial Relations Bill under its own name, with some union executives endorsing this call.

In the struggle against the Bill the LCDTU revealed its capacity to take independent initiatives which sections of the union bureaucracy were then forced to endorse. If it had continued to do so it would have found itself building a formidable movement in the unions which would have acted increasingly as an alternative *political leadership* to the political line of the trade union bureaucracy. Instead, the CP was content to pressure the left wing of the bureaucracy into action on the supposition that the left bureaucracy had a political line adequate to the problems confronting the working class. Events proved the CP wrong. The Scanlon-Jones left has moved to the right.

The CP has therefore taught the militants to rely on a section of the bureaucracy rather than to use them. Today, the CP line of getting the TUC to "call a series of 24-hour General Strikes, (and) if such actions fail to compel the Government to drop its incomes policy and

LIAISON COMMITTEE REJECTS INDEPENDENT ROLE

ALF JENNING

anti-Trade Union legislation, then an unlimited General Strike to achieve this objective", is an admission of helplessness.

The CP's strategy flows, as we have argued before, from its parliamentary road. Its aim is to build electoral alliances with the Labour left and to this end it pursues a reformist political alliance with the left trade union bureaucracy, covering up for its patent betrayals in the process.

* SPLITTING

The CP reply that to have built the sort of independent political focus we have argued for would "split the trade union movement". They repeat the argument that the LCDTU would violate the constitution of the unions. In fact of course, the CP built just such a movement in the 1920's, the Minority Movement. And the LCDTU itself has made calls for strikes independently of the leaders (December 1971 being a case in point). But the "unity" of the CP is a confusion between the interests and politics of the trade union bureaucracy, a definite social layer in the unions, and the interests that the unions have in fighting capitalism on behalf of their members. To do that it is necessary to fight against the bureaucracy as such in the unions and against the politics of class collaboration which are expressed in the bureaucracy.

The bureaucracy itself thrives on this sort of confusion. It tries to present itself as expressing the unity of the trade union machine on which the workers depend in the factories. They argue against political strikes not on the basis that workers should collaborate with



Above: Delegates demand the right to pass resolutions at Liaison Committee Conference.

capitalism (only the right wing bureaucracy does that) but by appealing to the shop stewards' genuine anxieties over political strikes. Shop stewards feel that political strikes might jeopardise the future of the union in the plant, split the union membership, bankrupt the company etc. But instead of building for a General Strike, a confrontation with capital in which the gains made justify these risks, the CP uses precisely these fears to reinforce the shop stewards' dependence on the left bureaucracy. It thus discourages any organised initiative on their part which would fundamentally threaten the bureaucracy's political and organisational power.

So today, when the working class itself is beginning to undertake one solidarity strike after another, when the militants recognise that an enormous increase in this sort of action is more than ever an *objective task* of the movement and a preparation for a General Strike, the LCDTU has no infrastructure to help organise it.

NEW TYPES OF ORGANISATION

What is more, the CP has learned nothing from

history. Precisely because an increase in the number of political strikes militants have to carry out *does* open the union machine in the plants to the employers' attack, the workers feel the need for new *types* of organisation: organisations in which the workers can democratically work out where all this activity should lead, i.e. a political programme capable of resolving the social crisis. And in fact, only if the LCDTU can answer this political need, will it have the *authority* to call political struggles independently of the bureaucracy.

And if the CP is serious about the General Strike then it is precisely these types of organisation writ large which must arise in order to organise the strike independently of the TUC (at such a moment hurrying along to Downing Street) and project the aims of the General Strike.

The CP have forgotten what rising political strikes imply. They have forgotten the lesson that a General Strike is a fight with the state which demands new forms of workers' democracy. They believe that existing trade union organisation is sufficient for the task. They have abandoned altogether Lenin's concept of the revolution.

Scanlon paves way for talks

As Phase 2 becomes law, TUC leaders are planning the next stage of the game. Not to fight Phase 2, not to give concrete aid to the hospital workers, not to extend the one-day strike on May 1st. Not even to have a 'non-cooperation' policy towards the Government as was attempted over the Industrial Relations Act. The next stage of the game is to talk to the Government.

Heath has already called for such talks. Now Hugh Scanlon, the last man in the TUC to advocate the old policy of non-cooperation and non-recognition with the Industrial Relations Act, has finally decided that it is time to help the TUC adjust to life under the new regime of Phase 2.

Last week, in a speech to the parliamentary press gallery, Scanlon totally reversed his previous line by suggesting two specific amendments to the Act. In other words, he was proposing not simply to recognise it, but to accept it as a permanent fact of life, at least until some future Labour Government 'repeals' it. His justification? "If we could get these two essential amendments, then perhaps we could talk about some of the other practicalities. These amendments would provide a temporary period, a breathing space, to work out a voluntary policy on the basis of what was offered at Chequers. I believe that would be the way forward."

GOVERNMENT APPROVAL

Scanlon's main demand in return for recognition of the Act is acceptance by the Government that any actions taken against unions through the NIRC must first be approved by a Government Minister! The hope here is that Ministers will 'see sense' and only approve those actions which neither the Government

nor the TUC expect to provoke a working class response.

This would prevent a future repetition of the kind of 'Gormley's Choice' faced by Scanlon over the Goad case — whether to lead industrial action against the Government or knuckle under. As everybody knows, he is a good constitutional democrat and therefore sacrificed the interests of the working class and his own members. Now he accepts his political impotence and accepts the Act.

Scanlon may feel that the acceptance of the Act will make no material difference to the working class. After all, the Government seems to have put it away for the time being. Instead they are using other laws to attack trade unionists such as the Shrewsbury 24.

But what action has Scanlon proposed against these attacks? Nothing. After all, they do not attack the union as a whole, and so leave the trade union bureaucracy more or less unscathed. Further such attacks will be tolerated, including through the Industrial Relations Act, as long as they don't stand in the way of 'constructive talks' about how to force the interests of the working class into the framework of capitalism.

As for the *Morning Star*, two days before the LCDTU Conference, it at first chose not to mention the affair. And when it was forced to speak on the Friday it tried to imply that people who attacked Scanlon attacked the AUEW, and anyway Scanlon didn't actually say it. That is what happens when a strategy is based on deals with 'left' leaders rather than a clear political fight in the trade unions. Such apologetics can only confuse the working class movement. The only way to develop independent organisations of the working class is to use the trade union leaders by all means but never, never to depend on them. ALF JENNING

WE'LL BE THERE ON MAY DAY!

The Red Mole was started by the International Marxist Group as a fortnightly paper in March, 1970. Issue 65 will be the last. Why? Because the IMG is producing a new weekly newspaper, Red Weekly.

Red Weekly will appear in a changed format, and will provide on the spot coverage and analysis of the class struggle nationally and internationally. We are in a special position to do this since Red Weekly will be part of a growing network which constitutes the press of the Fourth International. It will join The Militant (USA), Rouge (France), La Gauche and Rood (Belgium) as a weekly agitator and organiser. It will encourage La Breche (Switzerland), Was Tun (Germany), Bandiera Rossa (Italy), World Revolution (Japan), The Plough (Ireland) and the many others to begin the transition to a weekly.

Red Weekly will be unashamedly and openly biased in its approach. Yes, we will be on the side of the working class in its struggle against capitalism, for the struggle of the oppressed minority in the North of Ireland for national self-determination, on the side of the immigrant workers against racism. We will support all struggles for national liberation in Africa, Asia, and Latin America against American and allied imperialisms. We will support the young workers and intellectuals in the USSR and Eastern Europe and increasingly in China in their struggle against bureaucratic rule in their countries. For us, "Workers of the world Unite" will not be an empty phrase used on special occasions, but will be embedded in the very heart of the new weekly.

You can support us in this task by helping us to reach a bigger audience, by getting your local library to order a copy, by introducing the paper to your mates on the shop floor or agitating on its behalf in schools, polytechnics and universities. BUT BEFORE YOU CAN DO ALL THAT YOU MUST SUBSCRIBE TO THE PAPER: Turn to back page for subscription form.

Disraeli once said that every time Britain finds an answer to the Irish question, the Irish change the question.

This is just a clever way of saying that British diplomacy in Ireland has always covered its nakedness by avoiding the issues and discussing irrelevancies. The Whitelaw White Paper is just the latest example of the grand old tradition. The key feature of Britain's latest plans for Ireland is their failure to grapple with the needs of the Irish people (which was to be expected) but also their failure to satisfy the needs of British imperialism itself.

THE GREEN PAPER — FIRST STEP TOWARDS FEDERALISM

It is now commonplace knowledge among socialists, republicans and political commentators in general that Britain and its native clients desire a 'federal solution' to the Irish problem. There is no need to elaborate on this, merely to mention that the general forms of this solution were outlined last October in the Westminster Green Paper, *The Future of Northern Ireland*.

The Green Paper constituted a basic reappraisal of British imperialism's strategy in Ireland. The central revision concerned what is known as the 'constitutional position' of the Six Counties. The Six Counties were considered to be an integral part of the United Kingdom, and its status was held to be inviolable except by the will of the Protestant majority, i.e. the Unionist bourgeoisie.

This tenet of British policy was deleted by the Green Paper which stated that the constitutional position of the North "must not preclude the necessary taking into account of . . . the Irish dimension". In other words the future of the Orange statelet was no longer to be considered purely in terms of the Protestant majority but in terms of the whole people of Ireland. Moreover Britain's confidence at this point was highlighted by its desire to give its change of policy as wide a currency as possible as is evidenced by the statement (contrary to the wishes of Conor O'Brien) that a refusal to speak now of Irish unity would be "a prescription for confusion".

The Green Paper not only insisted on placing the question of partition in the context of Irish unity, but it also spelt out in a general way what this would mean for the basic structures of the Six County statelet.

For the first time it was openly admitted that the conflict rending the North apart over the past fifty years, arose not merely from the existence of two "political viewpoints", but from the existence of "two whole communities".

The reformulation of the problem in this manner, pointed the finger logically at other features of the Orange statelet. It was admitted, albeit in an indirect way (using such euphemistic terms as "permanent majority" and "permanent minority") that this situation had resulted in institutionalised sectarianism against the Catholic minority.

By so framing the problems the need to radically alter the structures of power in the North was deliberately posed. Thus the need "to seek a much wider consensus than has hitherto existed" was insisted upon. It was openly acknowledged that "minority groups should be assured of an effective voice and a real influence". And it was stressed that this would have to be done by "giving minority interests a share in the exercise of executive power".

The Green Paper undoubtedly marked a major shift in the historic orientation of British imperialism in the sense that it posed the need for some formal unity between North and South and the need for a definite sharing of executive power between the Catholic and Protestant communities in the North.

Arising from the new orientation two important practical proposals were made. Firstly, that a Council

of Ireland should be set up which would take account of the Irish dimension by giving the Southern bourgeoisie a significant say in the affairs of the Six Counties. Put simply, it was intended to end the sovereignty of the Unionists. Secondly, that a community government be set up in which representatives of the Catholic minority (i.e. the Catholic middle class) would wield ministerial power.

RESISTANCE FROM THE SOUTH

Although British imperialism wishes to introduce these reforms and alterations, it is caught in the web of its past policies. Now that it has altered its course, the material results of its past interventions have produced autonomous tendencies which are cutting across her path at this point.

In the South these tendencies assert themselves in two important ways.

Firstly, in the economic sphere: one of the fundamental reasons behind the federal proposals, has been the significant increase of control gained by British capital over the Southern economy during the sixties. But this is not only the reason for federalism; it is supposed to be a means to achieving it. The influx of capital, the expansion of industry, the creation of jobs, was supposed to show in a practical way the desirability of integration with Britain. In the short run this may in fact have had some effect.

But the way in which British capital created and organised industry was guaranteed to defeat such a purpose. British capital, to use a Marxist expression, tended to increase the organic composition of capital invested in industry, i.e., it increased the ratio between capital invested in plant and machinery, and capital invested in labour power. Since surplus value and profit are created on the capital invested in labour, a decline was produced in the rate of profit. To offset this decline the rate of exploitation of labour had to be increased. (This increased rate of exploitation, has already received a practical manifestation in the huge strike wave which marked the sixties.)



In addition to this central feature, there is a whole galaxy of secondary problems — intensified inflation, worsening balance of payments, run down of external reserves, etc., which eat away any surplus social product that might have been used to provide decent social services or create a welfare state.

In the long term, the intervention of British imperialism was bound to propel the Irish working class into struggle against its designs, rather than integrating the class into its overall system.

Secondly, in the cultural sphere the hopes of British imperialism have proved equally vain.

During the 30's, 40's, 50's, for reasons we will not discuss here, Fianna Fail seized on the Republican traditions of the working class and small farmers and used them in a demagogic way to consolidate its position of power. Now the process of integration with Britain demands that these traditions be liquidated. But the fruits of their years hard work cannot be obliterated over night. The "ideological reformation" had to begin gradually. The first changes naturally began within the intelligentsia and were slowly transmitted to the general public. But the unexpected explosion of the struggle in the North reactivated the traditional instincts. It came as a timely shot in the arm to the Republican ethos which was about to expire helplessly.

The interaction of these economic and cultural factors have prevented the ripening of conditions and the preparation of public opinion quickly enough to permit any attempt at laying the prerequisite foundations for the implementation of the proposals of the Green Paper.

OBSTACLES IN THE NORTH

Of course the more important and profound stumbling blocks to any meaningful implementation of the line elaborated in the Green Paper, came primarily from the North. These obstacles to the policy of the British are traceable largely to the heterogeneity of Unionism and the peculiar position occupied by the Protestant working class in the production process.

The heterogeneity of Unionism stems from the deformed nature of the Irish market and the consequently deformed nature of the Northern market. Because the Northern market is a fragmented piece of the entire Irish market, it succeeded in producing only an unstable and unbalanced economy. In particular it created two distinct layers within the Unionist ruling class, who's interests do not immediately coincide.

The smallness of this market, resulting in high risk and low profitability on capital, causes an outflow of capital to Britain and keeps the size of industrial enterprises limited. Hence the widespread existence of the Victorian type family firm, which of course is bigger than a petty bourgeois concern but not quite the norm of 20th century capitalism. This type of firm continues to play a vital and vigorous role in the North of Ireland economy.

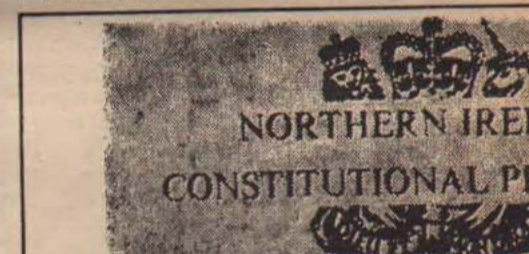
By contrast to the effusion of capital there is a continuous influx of capital from Britain which arises from the lower rate of profit due to greater technical advancement and a higher organic composition of capital in Britain. This influx of capital has created an alternative and distinct layer within Unionism, which is much more closely identified with the interests of British imperialism.

While both these wings of Unionism are heavily dependent on British imperialism, they are so, in different and even contradictory ways.

The second wing of Unionism, the "moderates" in

the present struggle, while it may have some degree of independence has no real or substantial interests apart from those of British imperialism.

The first wing, the "extremists", is much different however. The family firm, in the course of such a long and prosperous existence has become not only an economic unit, but a social and political unit as well. As such, it is much more deeply rooted and interested in the Protestant community.



This situation has created, along with a variety of other factors, a strong paternalism which has reinforced and further spawned a web of favouritism, discrimination, graft, power and privilege.

Accordingly the extreme wing is hostile to any attempt to infringe on its sovereignty and more particularly to sharing state power with the Catholic minority. So, while this wing depends on Britain for profitable outlets for its surplus capital, it has a firm base of its own which can create friction with the interests of British capital.

As Britain proceeded with the plans of reform, it did not consider seriously the significance of the growing schism within the Unionist camp. The material basis of the split was not understood and a naive belief persisted that it would heal itself once the gravity of the situation became apparent. As it turned out, no assumption could have been more ill-founded. It is in fact the resistance of the extreme wing of Unionism which today constitutes one of the most dangerous elements in the grave situation which exists.

The second obstacle we mentioned, the position of the Protestant working class, is of course an extension of the problem of heterogeneity in the Unionist camp but it is best dealt with as a separate category.

The Protestant working class cannot be understood solely in terms of the labour-capital conflict which characterises any segment of capitalist society. It must be analysed in the context of the evolution of the entire Protestant community. Only in this way can the importance of its role be put in proper perspective.

Two aspects of this evolution must be taken into consideration. To begin with, the elementary historical fact that the Protestant community was planted in Ireland as a bridgehead of nascent British capitalism meant that the lower ranks had to be granted special concessions in order to encourage loyalty and bind them to the aristocracy. The principle concession was security of tenure, which allowed an improvement and expansion of holdings and the emergence of line weaving and spinning as a "cottage industry". By contrast, the native Catholic population was forbidden any security of holdings and consequently was not in a position to develop any skills or techniques.

By the time of the industrialisation of the North during the middle of the last century, it was only the



Below: Derry housewife (right) crouches in doorway while Old Age Pensioner (left) takes cover as English gunmen enforce White Paper policies.

R - WHY IT FAILED



Protestant peasantry which was in a position to fill up the leading skilled ranks in industry.

In addition, their new advantage by comparison to the Catholic population was reinforced by the factors which as we have seen also created a fissure in the Unionist bourgeois monolith — the nature of the Six County market.

While a significant layer of industry with skilled



opportunities did spring up, the smallness of its market base prevented widespread diversification and created intense competition for these positions. Since the Protestant workers were installed first, they have been able to use their advantage of monopolise the various trades in the major industries. The Catholic workers on the other hand have been forced to occupy the unskilled positions and as there is too little scope in this field of employment, they have been subjected to an abnormally high rate of unemployment and emigration.

The Protestant working class has therefore, as Connolly pointed out, come to occupy a position quite similar to the old British labour aristocracy. But there is the additional feature, that a reactionary peasant ideology, Orangism, lay ready to hand, at the time of the formation of the Protestant working class which they used to solidify their ranks and defend their privileged position.

The Protestant working class is naturally hostile to the moves towards a federal solution and the economic tendencies of diversification which underpin it. Consequently they have mobilised as a separate

identifiable force and have thrown their weight in behind the extreme wing of the Unionist bourgeoisie. This has accentuated the rift in the Unionist camp and reinforced the obstacles to Britain's strategy. The Protestant working class has in fact played a decisive role in the extreme Unionist mobilisation against the threat to its privileged position.

A DISEMBOWELLED GREEN PAPER

It is unnecessary to recall here how all the factors we have outlined have intervened in the last few months. In the South, the massive trade union upsurge after Bloody Sunday and the repeated mobilisations after Mac Stiofan's arrest and during the passing of the Offences Against the State Amendment Act are clear enough in their meaning.

On the opposite side, since the abolition of Stormont we have seen the consolidation of the extreme wing of Unionism, the Vanguard Movement led by Craig, and the rise of the Protestant working class through the Orange Order, the Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW) and the Ulster Defence Association.

It was obvious, even when the Green Paper was first published, that the proposals logically flowing from it

could not possibly be implemented against such odds. But British imperialism still had a few cards left to play. In the South an all out effort to crush republicanism both physically and politically was projected. The main weapons in this drive were the Anti-IRA bill (O.S.A.A.) followed by the general elections. In the North the border poll was to be used as a lever to enhance the position of the moderate wing and put it in a position where it could compete with the extremists for hegemony over the Protestant workers.

Both of these offensives failed. The Anti-IRA Bill met with tremendous opposition from the Southern people. It was only with the help of a few bombs from British Intelligence that the legislation was forced through, and the government recognised its defeat by not widely using its new powers. In the general elections which followed, this defeat was confirmed. (The purpose of the elections was clearly to stabilise the situation for the White Paper, but none of the major pro-imperialist parties were able to raise the pertinent issues such as security, repression, collaboration etc. Instead the manoeuvre was reduced to a squabble over rates and prices etc.)

In the North the border poll stunt produced equally ineffectual and dubious results. Although the extreme wing had raised the cry of a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, a separate nine county Ulster with independently negotiated relations with both the South and Britain etc., this was largely demagogic hot air. When the crunch came the moderate wing found it had very little room to outflank the extremists. In fact the only interests which suffered were those of Britain who had her "Irish dimensions" kicked out the door.

Unable to deal effectively with all these obstacles and suffering repeated defeats every time it tried to grapple with them, British imperialism has been forced to retreat. The magnitude of this retreat can be judged by a comparison of the proposals in the White Paper and those projected in the Green Paper.

The most glaring retreat in the light of such a comparison has been on the question of the "Irish Dimension" since this is central to the federal solution. (Whereas the question of power sharing is only a means to an end.)

Until quite recently, it was thought that the recognition of the "Irish dimension" in the form of a Council of Ireland which would give the Free State a veto over some affairs in the North would be a central feature of the White Paper. Although it was admitted as the deadline for the White Paper that nothing too bold would be ventured in this field, it certainly came as a surprise to all seasoned commentators that no direct proposals on the Council of Ireland were contained in it.

A careful examination of the White Paper commentary on this shows that the whole line of approach to the Council of Ireland has been changed. The Free State will first have to recognise the status of "Northern Ireland" and crush the Republican Movement before any kind of united council can be considered. In addition, the areas of work for such a council are limited in advance to "tourism, regional development, electricity and transport". This means pushing the Irish dimension right out of the picture again. The prospects of the Free State authorities being able to mobilise popular support for a constitutional change which would recognise the right of British imperialism in Ireland and O.K. the extirpation of republicanism in return for a mess of pottage such as "co-operation" in tourism, electricity, transport etc, is to say the least unlikely. The "regrets" expressed by Cosgrave are a hint to British imperialism and the Unionists about the awkward position their Southern collaborators are in.

The move towards Community Government was also halted, though not in such clear and decisive terms. Firstly the restored Stormont Assembly will not have even the limited power which the old regime had. Prior to this Stormont had no control over foreign policy, treaties or trade pacts, no control over currency, weights, measures, radio, air or sea navigation, taxation

post office; no power to declare war or raise an army; in addition, any decision taken by the legislature could be annulled by the Queen's Government.

Now the security and constitutional matters have been removed from the sphere of its competence. The new Stormont Assembly will in fact be nothing more than a glorified County Council.

Thus the question of power sharing is avoided altogether by depriving the Assembly of any effective power. In other words, the new Assembly will just be a more naked form of *direct rule*.

In this form, the Assembly cannot act as a stabiliser. While it strips the Unionists of power it does not give the Catholic middle class (led by the SDLP) any additional power. The SDLP, while it may be prepared to accept this temporarily in the hope of better things to come, will not embrace it as a definitive solution. That is why they have shown such little interest in the proposed structures for power sharing.

Of course, apart from any question of the Assembly having real power, the proposed method of power sharing are transparently ineffectual for the simple reason that the Six Counties by its very nature is a sectarian apartheid state and can only be genuinely reformed in an all-Ireland context. No matter whether the seats are increased from 52 to 80 or 800, no matter whether the straight vote or proportional representation is in operation, the Unionist and Protestant population will still have a substantial permanent majority.



Accordingly, it doesn't matter whether the Cabinet is chosen by the Secretary of State (who will undoubtedly always appoint a couple of Castle Catholics), the ministers, whether they be Protestant or Catholic will have to submit to a Unionist majority. Moreover these Ministers, if they operate in accordance with the procedures recommended in the White Paper will have to bring their legislation through departmental committees which will be elected on a PR basis which will guarantee that they are Unionist dominated. So even at this preliminary stage any Catholic or non-Unionist minister would have his hands tied by a Unionist majority.

No wonder Mr. Faulkner could boast that the "epoch making" proposals of the White Paper were only a souped up version of the proposals made by the Unionist Party as early as.....1970!

WHAT NEXT?

The implications of this failure are becoming more obvious every day. The only way out of the complex impasse in the North will be a major defeat for one of the sectors opposing the British solution. Having changed the balance of forces through a decisive military intervention, it may then be possible for Britain to implement some of its proposals.

There are two important opposition groups—the Catholic masses and the extreme unionists. The question is: which of these will the British opt to defeat?

It is unlikely that imperialism will make a major offensive against its former allies. Not for any sentimental reasons of course, but because of the dangerous consequences this could have.

Any attempt to crush the organisations like Vanguard, LAW, the UDA as has already been proved would generate a whole series of pogrom attacks against the Catholic ghettos. The security forces would then find themselves taking on both sectors at the same time

since the resistance of the minority tends to grow over into offence against imperialism. Such a fight they are not capable of winning except at enormous expense to the already over-stretched resources of British imperialism.

Even if such a situation did not occur there are deeper political consequences which must be considered.

The taming of the "Loyalists" would indeed change the balance of forces but not specifically in the direction of British imperialism. The position of the Catholic masses would be strengthened as a result, and without the extremist wing of Unionism to act as a buffer their struggle could not be easily contained. In the long run, the strategy of defeating the Loyalists would not be the most profitable one for Britain.



On the other hand an offensive against the Catholic minority would have many side effects. The most important effect would be to put the moderate wing of Unionism in a position to compete with the extreme wing of Unionism for leadership of the Protestant working class. A heavy defeat for the Catholic masses would undoubtedly placate large sections of the Protestant workers and reconcile them to Britain's new plans. It is likely therefore that the failure of the White Paper will result in an escalation of the brutality against the Catholic community.

The tasks of revolutionaries and their supporters are two-fold. The first task is to expose any illusion that the White Paper might work. (Such an illusion leads to collaboration with imperialism and disarms the people against the inevitable attack.

The second task is to link the struggle North and South. Only the mobilisation of the Southern workers can prevent the defeat of the Catholic ghettos in the North. In this respect the tendency among socialists and Republicans to think that the main line of offence against imperialism is along the economic front is very erroneous and dangerous.

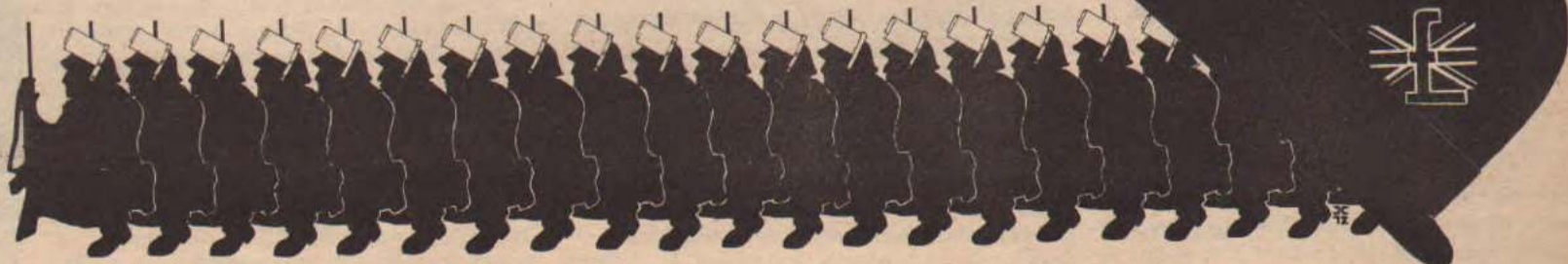
The practical tasks of the socialist and republican movement necessary are:-

1. To explain how and why the White Paper is a failure.
2. To expose the dangers of collaboration.
3. To prepare for mass mobilisations among the Catholic people.
4. To win support in the South for the minority in the North as the first stage in the mobilisation against imperialism in the South.

James Conroy

The above detailed analysis of the background to the recent White Paper on Ireland is taken from this month's issue of *The Plough*, the paper of the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish supporters of the Fourth International).

Copies of *The Plough*, price 5p can be obtained from the RMG, 5, Parnell Road, Harold's Cross Bridge, Dublin 6, or from *The Red Mole*.



Reviews

The Class Struggle in Parliament, by Eric Heffer (Gollancz, £3.90)
John Marshall

There was a time in the remote past when Eric Heffer was a good old British syndicalist. This book shows conclusively that he has come a long way since then. What it also shows, unfortunately, is that he hasn't learnt much on the way:

It is, however, in a morbid sort of way, a useful book as it gives a blow by blow account of the Labour left's participation in the 'act of God' strategy of fighting the Industrial Relations Act. (This strategy is known as the 'act of God' because it relies essentially on divine providence to arrange a suitable lightning bolt to strike down simultaneously thirty or so Tory M.P.s as they are approaching the voting lobbies in the House of Commons. In other words, to fight the Act in any way primarily through Parliament is a farce because the Government, precisely because it is the Government, has a majority and will therefore win all the votes.) This book is also generally revealing on the present state of mind of 'Tribunism'.

CLASSIC IDEAS

As regards this latter question, we find in the book all the classic ideas of the Labour left. Firstly, the idea of a golden past: "The Labour Government of 1945-51 was positively revolutionary compared to that of 1964-70" (p.278), which somehow succeeds in missing such 'little' points as the Malayan war which, except for decrepit British imperialism's 'unfortunate' lack of the most sophisticated technology of mass murder, quite as vicious as Vietnam. Indeed, even the Johnson regime did not feel it expedient, as did the British, to allow soldiers to pose for photographers holding as 'trophies' the freshly severed heads of guerilla fighters. Furthermore, this view is discreetly silent on the fact that most of the welfare reforms had already, under pressure from the masses, been decided upon by the war-time government led by that well known socialist Sir Winston Churchill.

The second myth is the idea that we are slowly progressing towards 'democracy'. Indeed, Heffer goes so far as simply to refer to "our democratic society" (p.284). This idea of 'gradual progress' really is one of the most bankrupt peddled by the Labour left. Far

from going forwards on this question we are inevitably, as capitalism develops, going backwards. Just ponder one fact, Mr. Heffer. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries such 'harmless' men as Karl Marx and Lenin were left in relative peace by the bourgeoisie to potter around the British Museum. Now, however, in this period of 'gradual advance', if you happen to be Bertrand Russell's secretary or a German student with a bullet through your brain you are clearly 'too dangerous' to be left in the country.

'A MISTAKE'

Third and final myth is the view that the Labour left's failure to take a real stand on the key issues was always somehow merely 'a mistake.' The absolute classic here is Heffer's statement that "We opposed the (Labour) government over the Seamen's strike although tactically I think we can be faulted for not voting against the emergency powers" (p.268). How touching. This is rather like saying that upon coming across a thug beating someone round the head with a club you protested but made a 'tactical mistake' by not trying to take away the weapon.

In short, in a strange sort of way, this is a useful book for anyone who wants to get a real glimpse of the complete confusion reigning in the heads of the 'realistic men' of the Labour left. However, at almost £4 a copy not many people are going to make the effort. Unless your taste is for going to horror movies just to see how bad they are you won't have missed much.

Frantz Fanon: A Critical Study, by Irene L. Gendzier (Wildwood House paperback, £1.75)

As with Malcolm X, the ideas and writings of Frantz Fanon became much more widely known after his death in the early sixties than during his lifetime.

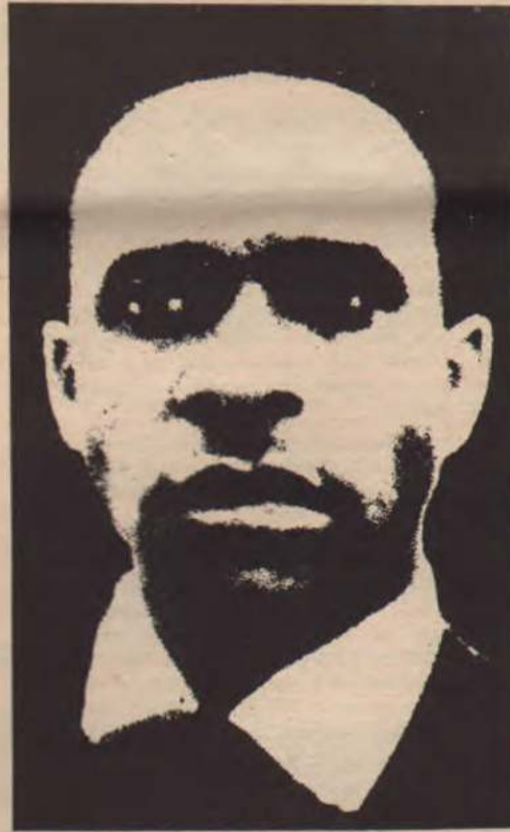
Fanon was born into an upper middle class family in Martinique — an island typical of the West Indies in so far as it possessed "a graduated hierarchy of colour" closely related to class divisions. At the age of 18 he was involved with the "Free French" forces and by 1947 had migrated to France to pursue his studies in psychotherapy.

Although he had been politically active in Martinique, supporting, for instance, the 1946 election campaign of Aime Cesaire, one of the theoreticians of "Negritude", Fanon's commitment was essentially determined by his experiences in France and later in Algeria as doctor in charge of a mental hospital. In his final years until his death of leukaemia in 1961 he operated in Tunisia and elsewhere in a full time capacity on behalf of the Algerian FLN.

VOCATIONAL PREOCCUPATIONS

Gendzier's study makes it clear how closely related was Fanon's political evolution to his vocational preoccupations as a psychiatrist. In his first book *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952), he was concerned to expose through a number of detailed case studies, the way in which colonialism has conditioned the consciousness of the colonised through imposing a mental disposition towards imitation, as

Fanon and the Effects of Colonialism



an ideal model, of all things associated with the culture of the coloniser. In spite of some differences, to the extent that he argues for the total rejection by the oppressed of this imposed system of values as a precondition for an effective political response, Fanon stands within the tradition of African and West Indian advocates of Negritude like Cesaire and Senghor, and US Black Power proponents like Malcolm. This is attested to by Eldridge Cleaver, for instance, who cites him as a key influence.

Throughout his work Fanon continually returned to psychological themes. The fifth chapter of his last and most influential book, *The Wretched of the Earth*, is titled "The Colonial War and Mental Disorders" and constitutes a vivid account of the way in which colonialism was "a fertile purveyor for psychiatric hospitals".

OTHER ASPECTS

To Gendzier (and also to this reviewer) it is above all Fanon's vivid portrayal of such effects of colonialism which appears to possess the most enduring value and to give his work continued topicality. Other aspects have however frequently been drawn to the fore.

In the 1972 edition of *Socialist Register*, for instance, Peter Worsley develops a lengthy

exposition under the title "Frantz Fanon and Lumpenproletariat". In this he argues for the increasing relevance of Fanon's characterisation of the urban working class in the 'Third World' as possessing a privileged status which will decrease its revolutionary potential. This position led to the idealisation, developed at length in *The Wretched of the Earth*, of the role of the peasantry and urban "underclass" as the key factor in revolutionary movements.

This particular theory is essentially misleading because it poses the working class and "lumpen" proletariat as polar opposites instead of the complementary and intermingled phenomena which they are in such countries. It is singularly inappropriate when throughout the Third World, most obviously in those areas like Latin America and Southern Africa which are subject to the most intensive exploitation by imperialism, it is increasingly the working class which is coming to the fore in struggle.

Of more enduring value was Fanon's analysis of the role of the bourgeoisie in Third World countries — one which in *The Wretched of the Earth* he develops into a full scale attack on the "depravation of the national middle class" and its inability to lead genuinely revolutionary struggles which would totally root out imperialist influence. While the conclusions here are essentially those of Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution, two things are clearly lacking from Fanon's analysis. Firstly there is never any real explanation of the objective economic circumstances which underpin this situation, making this class totally dependent servants of imperialism. Secondly, although one chapter of *The Wretched of the Earth* is entitled "Spontaneity, Its Strengths and Weaknesses", it does not deal in any substantial fashion with the need for party building activity. Wherever the need for centralisation of the struggle is posed more stress is laid on military than on political functions.

AMBIGUITY

Such weaknesses derive from the fact, which Gendzier is at pains to point out, that in spite of his undoubted familiarity with the works of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Fanon never characterised himself as a marxist. Precisely this ambiguity characteristic of Fanon is seen in his latest 'biographer'. The book contains a very thorough exposition of Fanon's views on the above and other topics. It is carefully researched on the details of his life. But its pretensions to being a "Critical Study" are in some doubt.

In view of the continued influence of Fanon such a study written from a marxist viewpoint would clearly be of some importance. But this book fails to relate his ideas to contemporary political developments or to subject them to rigorous analysis in the light of the history of the past twelve years. Not the least indication of this weakness is that one is left after 270 pages quite uncertain about Gendzier's actual political stance. The definitive study of Fanon's work from a marxist standpoint still awaits its author.

Tony Southall

PABLO PICASSO

Picasso is dead. He left £20,000,000. Already a torrent of eulogistic gibberish is flowing off the presses all over the world in praise of his 'genius'. To get this artist in perspective we can do no better than the following composite quotation from John Berger's excellent book *Success and Failure of Picasso*:

"Picasso is the typical artist of the middle of the twentieth century because his is the success story par excellence (yet) he has invited success as little as Van Gogh invited failure. Success has been Picasso's destiny and that is what makes him the typical artist of our time, as Van Gogh was of his. . . ."

"Consider how in the last twenty years the rebels and iconoclasts of the years before have been honoured . . . or consider the phenomenon from the consumers' rather than the producers' point of view. Art, and especially 'experimental' art, has now become a prestige symbol, taking the place in the mythology of advertising, of limousine cars and ancestral homes. Art is now the proof of success . . ."

"For the first time (1917) we see the modern artist serving despite his own intentions, the bourgeois world and therefore sharing a position of doubtful privilege. The rest of the story of Picasso's life is a story of how he has struggled to overcome the disadvantages of his position . . ."

"To be successful is to be assimilated into society, just as being a failure means being rejected. Picasso has been assimilated into European bourgeois society — and this society is now essentially unreal . . ."

"The unreality . . . is at base economic. The prosperity of capitalism depends, through investment, on the raw materials and labour of the under-privileged countries. But they are far away and unseen — so that at home most people are protected from the contradictions of their own system: those very contradictions from which all development must come . . ."

"Once it was perfectly possible to live off the loot of the world, to ignore the fact, and still to make progress. Now it is impossible . . ."

"The example of Picasso is not only relevant to artists. It is because he is an artist that we can observe his experience more easily. His experience proves that success and honour, as offered by bourgeois society, should no longer tempt anyone. It is no longer a question of refusing on principle but of refusing for the sake of self-preservation. The time when the bourgeoisie could offer true privileges has passed. What they offer now is not worth having . . ."

"The example of Picasso is also an example of the failure of revolutionary nerve . . . to sustain such nerve one must be convinced that there will be another kind of success: a success which will operate in a field connecting, for the first time ever, the most complex imaginative constructions of the human mind and the liberation of those people in the world who until now have been forced to be simple, and of whom Picasso has always wished to be the representative."



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'ARMY MORALE BEGINS TO CRACK'



Above: Snipers to the right . . . and left. Camera catches worried look on troops' faces.

Belfast RMG Reports

In January, the British Government applied to Sweden for an extradition order. It was for a deserting soldier. When he heard his unit was to be sent for another tour of duty in the North of Ireland he preferred instead to walk for three days across snow covered mountains to find asylum in Sweden. He said he wanted no part in the killing.

His case was the tiny tip of a very large iceberg. Everyone living in the minority areas of the North knows of the soldiers that "break"—the men who run from the barracks seeking escape, usually only to be dragged back by the snatch squads.

The demoralisation of the British Army is not surprising. They have used every tactic at their disposal in an attempt to bludgeon the anti-unionist people into submission, and they have clearly failed. Morale is disintegrating, the soldiers whose consciences are immune to their anti-working class activities are shaken by the unabated resistance they are facing.

The soldiers have found many outlets for their frustrations, and they are not merely the petty bullying of the foot patrol and the searches. In one recent month alone, 27 "guardians of law and order" were convicted in court on charges ranging from theft to rape. But they have some other, more sinister pastimes—the shooting of innocent civilians, whether openly while in uniform, or hiding behind the guise of sectarian murders, in plain clothes from passing cars.

Only last month there were the open murders of two supposed "gunmen".

On 13 March, Mr. Eddie Sharpe was shot dead by an Army sniper as he stood in his own doorway in Ardoyne. Only one shot was fired around that time—it was by a British paratrooper. On 4 March, 12 year old Kevin Heatley was murdered as he stood with some friends in his home estate, Derrybeg in Newry. Only one shot was fired that night—it was by a drunken British soldier.

These have been no isolated incidents but just a part of the pattern that makes up occupation by the British Army. These murders have been regular occurrences since the arrival of the troops in 1969.

HIGH CASUALTIES

The British Army has admitted to nearly 170 men killed since 1969, though the true figures are somewhat higher. These are their biggest losses since the Korean War. Now, especially since the introduction of the RPG-7 rockets at the beginning of the year, the IRA is fighting with better equipment than ever before, and British soldiers are more vulnerable than ever. The rockets were a development the British just had no answer for. Soldiers were made vulnerable everywhere, at any time, whether in armoured car or in barracks. A weapon designed specifically for use against armoured cars has been proved effective on several occasions, despite Army denials.

There is another factor which the British Army has never had to cope with in war before. Because advanced English hospitals are comparatively near, the injured and maimed are getting unusually good medical treatment. This has saved the lives of many soldiers but has also had the effect of keeping alive casualties

as little more than vegetables. This has obvious consequences on wives and relatives of the patients and their reactions reverberate through the married quarters and home towns. Clearly this not only shatters British Army morale but also builds up a desire in Britain for pulling out of Ireland.

FACTS CLEAR

The facts of collapsing British Army morale are clear. In October last year Army enlistment figures were 25 per cent down on the previous year.

In November an "over tired" member of the Labour Party front bench revealed in the bars of the House of Commons that the British Army had experienced its first mutiny of the present campaign. Units stationed in Germany, believed to be from the 2nd Battalion, The Light Infantry and the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, refused to contemplate a return to Ireland.

In the same month it was admitted, and published in most English newspapers, that large numbers of soldiers at Colchester in Essex, where the British Army tries out soldiers returning from Ireland, had been arrested on drugs charges.

On 9 December, a short paragraph in the *Daily Mirror* reported that British soldiers at Colchester had opened fire on the administrative block of the barracks.

Later in the same month the *Daily Mail* reported an attempt by just under 30 paras to buy themselves out of the Army. Their regiment was to return to the Six Counties.

Those were incidents given or accid-

entally leaked, to the Press in only three recent months. Obviously, they are just the affairs the authorities could not hide, and they indicate far deeper crises in the Army which have been kept from general knowledge.

EFFECTS IN BRITAIN

And all these British Army casualties and the continued resistance is having political effects in Britain itself. British war weariness is beginning to be reflected in Parliament. Slight cracks have been appearing in the bipartisan approach to Ireland by the two major parties and several Labour members have been making speeches calling to "bring our boys back home". It would probably take only one major political figure to express similar sentiments to unleash a tidal wave of public opinion demanding withdrawal from Ireland.

And if the White Paper fails to pacify the North, imperialism will be in crisis. The British will be forced back on their usual tactic—sheer military force. But that is a strategy they have been following for three years, and it has not paid off. The Army is war weary, the British people are war weary. The only comparatively new factor on the side of Britain is the willingness of the Southern regime to attack anti-imperialists just as vehemently as the imperialists themselves. This is a crucially important aspect of the situation and must be combatted by socialists and Republicans North and South.

But the way forward for the anti-unionist people of the Six Counties is clear—resistance in all its forms must continue against the British Army, against imperialism. [Plough]

Belfast Ten Defence Committee

88, Roslyn Road, London N.15

A committee has been set up to help defend the ten people charged in connection with the recent bomb explosions in London. It is in urgent need of support. It calls on all those willing to defend democratic rights, and who are opposed to the continued repression of Irish militants, to assist it in launching a national campaign to highlight the way in which the Belfast Ten have been treated since their arrest, and to demand their unconditional release.

The committee has been in touch with the families and associates of the Ten, and with their agreement has assumed responsibility for the welfare of the prisoners—insofar as the prison authorities are willing to have any provision for their welfare made.

The following facts illustrate the general attitude of the police and prison authorities to date:

*In defiance of regulations and general practice, the ten were denied access to solicitors, and relatives who tried to visit them between March 8th, the day of their arrest, and March 12th.

*In defiance of regulations and "normal standards of decency", nine of the ten were kept completely unclothed in Ealing Police Station for the same period.

*In clear breach of the "legal rights of the citizen", the finger-prints of the ten were taken forcibly without any warrant being produced or sought.

*Against all precedent, the three girls, Dolores and Marion Price and Roisin McInerney, are being held in a male prison, Brixton.

*The visiting rights accorded all remand prisoners have been denied the Ten. Most visitors are simply not admitted. Their Belfast solicitor, Mr. Patrick McGrory, has not been allowed to see them.

Not one national newspaper has made any complaint against this erosion of civil liberty. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the committee's campaign be given all possible support.

The committee needs money—to bring the families of the Ten to London to visit them, to ensure that food, cigarettes, books, etc. are made available, and for printing, the hire of halls, etc. At present the committee has no funds at all.

The committee hopes that a campaign for normal visiting facilities will soon be successful. We want to arrange a rota-system which will ensure that each of the Ten has the statutory one visit per day. We therefore urge people to send their names to be put on such a rota-list.

All donations, names for the visiting rota, and other communications should be sent to Maureen Maguire at the above address.

CONFERENCE

THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND THE BRITISH ARMY IN IRELAND

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, (Holborn), Saturday, 19th May 1973.

Details from Anti-Internment League, 88, Roslyn Road, London N.15.

Soviet Marxists Jailed

In January 1972 the Soviet bureaucracy opened up a campaign of mass arrests in an effort to smash the opposition movement. Since then almost 200 dissidents have been arrested, and many have been sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

The mass arrests proved most severe in Ukraine, where since the mid-fifties a new opposition arose prepared to give battle to the bureaucracy. Since January 1972 close to 150 Ukrainians have been arrested by the KGB (Soviet secret police).

Among the latest victims of police repression in Ukraine are two of the most prominent spokesmen of the Ukrainian socialist opposition: Vyacheslav Chornovil and Ivan Dzyuba.

Chornovil recently received a 12 year sentence

(2 years of prison, 5 years hard labour, and 5 years enforced exile) for "anti-Soviet agitation". The Marxist-Leninist Ivan Dzyuba was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment on a similar charge.

Dzyuba is the author of *Internationalism or Russification?*, a Marxist-Leninist critique of the Stalinist nationalities policy. His work (to be published shortly in a French edition by the Ligue Communiste) circulated widely in the Ukrainian underground, and has been called the symbol of the opposition.

SOCIALISTS

The Stalinist press has labelled those arrested as "bourgeois nationalists". Dzyuba, Chornovil and others have repeatedly denied this slander. As socialists they want the re-

establishment not of capitalism but of social democracy.

Chornovil summarised what may be termed not only his personal, but the collective manifesto of the Ukrainian opposition when he wrote:

"I categorically state contrary to all illogical assertions . . . that I have always firmly adhered to the principles of socialism and continue to do so. But not of that socialism that tries to regiment not merely the actions but also the thoughts of individuals. I cannot imagine true socialism without guaranteed democratic freedoms, without the widest political and economic self-government of all the cells of the state organism down to and including the smallest, without a real guarantee—and not merely a paper one—of the rights of all nations within a multinational state."



International Marxist Group

(British Section of the Fourth International)

182 Pentonville Road London N.1

I would like more information about the IMG and its activities.

NAME

ADDRESS

HOT SPRING IN PARIS

From JOAN STOTT in Paris

"Hot, hot, hot - the spring is going to be hot!" is the defiant slogan being chanted by tens of thousands of protesting school students throughout France. The strength of the upsurge has left the Pompidou regime stunned; its organisational efficiency has shattered the complacency of the trade union bureaucrats; its discipline and self-defence preparations have sent not a few fascists to hospital. France is experiencing yet another upheaval, at present in its infancy, but given the social crisis and the electoral defeat of the Union of the Left, likely very soon to develop into a new social explosion.

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PREPARATIONS

The movement was not sparked off spontaneously. A sparking plug, well-known in the French Left as the Communist League (French section of the Fourth International), had been extremely active on the question of the Debre Law for several weeks prior to the upsurge. On 10-11 February the high school Red Circles of the Communist League held a national convention and assessed the experience of the struggles in Belgium against conscription and the role of the Revolutionary Workers League (Belgian

Section of the F.I.). The convention proposed the setting up of Committees Against the Debre Law - CSADL.

As we go to press demonstrations are still taking place, but it is essential to draw an initial balance sheet. The schools movement which has erupted is larger than the student movement of May '68: the demonstration of 3 April brought 250,000 students out on the streets, while in May '68 the biggest demonstration never exceeded 80,000. Throughout France over half a million students have been involved in demonstrations with apprentices playing a very important role, 15,000 of them marching on the big demonstration. A striking feature has been the exemplary self-organisation and democracy in the movement. Mass assemblies have elected committees which can be recalled at any time, as well as 1,500 marshalls to undertake security precautions and self-defence.

The most important general assemblies have taken place in the Paris 'red belt', a stronghold of the CP. The initial tactic of the CP was to forestall the call made by the CSADL, by calling a separate demonstration on 21 March. It drew only 5000 people. The CSADL demonstration on the next day brought out 100,000 people. CP students giving out leaflets on the latter demonstration accusing the 'ultra-left' of splitting action must have felt both foolish and angry as the CP Political Bureau did a hasty volte-face when it saw the Communist League in the leadership of this massive mobilisation.

ENTER THE CGT

That day the CP-dominated trade union federation, the CGT, got in touch with the Communist League to arrange a meeting with its high school leaders. Present at the meeting was the CGT President, Seguy, and it resulted in the CGT calling on its militants to take to the

streets. The CP had been effectively outflanked and nationally it was denounced for its previous splitting role. By organising a mass movement based on a strong political intervention the Communist League together with the mass of school students forced the CP to make a 180 degrees about turn.

While there has been a real feeling of unity, the *Lutte Ouvriere* (Workers Struggle) group intervened in the apprentices' movement to divide them from the 'petty bourgeois' school students, refusing to join in the mass assemblies and attempting to manipulate the apprentices' sing of the movement. This apolitical and workerist approach has already begun to rebound on them, but unfortunately it tends to discredit the revolutionary left as a whole.

TWO TASKS

The Communist League has two clear cut aims. First, to establish links with the working class both from 'below' - using its own base and influence in the working class vanguard - and from 'above' - by united action with the CGT. At present there is a strike in Renault and the Peugeot factory is occupied. A continuation of the strikes and the strengthening of the links which have already been established would make for an explosive situation.

Secondly, the League has projected movements inside the Army to defend soldiers punished for supporting the movement. This defence of the democratic rights of the soldiers is a vital part of the movement, not understood by either the CP or *Lutte Ouvriere*.

The Pompidou regime and the bourgeoisie were not expecting trouble so soon after the elections. On 1 May there will be a joint student-worker demonstration supported by the major trade unions. The CGT bureaucrats may not realise it, but they are playing with fire

Solidarity with Hospital workers

Thousands of hospital workers and others at a London rally on 5 April were told by Alan Fisher, leader of the National Union of Public Employees, that if the hospital workers were to win "it will be because they have the support of other workers and other unions, who are in a better position to take industrial action". Speaking with Fisher was Jack Jones of the Transport and General Workers Union, who declared that, "we will continue this fight until we win". But Jones remained silent about giving any practical support along the lines suggested by Fisher. Nevertheless workers in various industries all over Britain have been taking action in support of the hospital workers. Only last week, on 5 April, 300 workers at Imperial College in London struck for half a day in solidarity with the hospital workers' struggle against the Pay Laws. Again, at Preston on Monday, Health Minister Sir Keith Joseph arrived for a meeting at the City Hall only to find that the porters and catering staff, all NUPE members, were blacking all services in solidarity with the hospital workers. Sir Keith had been diverted to Preston from Manchester, where 300 angry hospital workers who were waiting for him subsequently occupied the offices of the Regional Hospital Board.

In Basingstoke, Esso and British Oxygen workers refused to deliver supplies to the hospitals unless management withdrew scab labour. On Teesside there has been a two-hour strike of engineering, shipyard and steel workers.

The central thread running through the solidarity activities has been the big demonstrations held in most of the principal towns. Called by the trades councils, these have received support from miners, engineers, car workers and others. The initiative for these demonstrations came from the TUC, but they were posed simply as a means of putting pressure on the Government to settle the dispute as a 'special case'.

Many workers, however, instinctively feel that protest actions of this sort are not enough, and can only have meaning if they are part of a movement to build up a national campaign to fight the Pay Laws. Actions such as those at Basingstoke and Preston are important because they shift the focus away from protest and arguments about 'special cases' and give practical aid to winning the claim, which is the real way to fight the pay laws.

This contrasts vividly with the passivity of the 'left' leaders, and shows the need for local trade unionists to come together to fight against the Government by supporting and extending all struggles. This is the answer to the policy of the TUC, which was described in such a brutal but truthful way by *Guardian* writer Keith Harper when he wrote last Saturday that: "The strategy behind the TUC's tactics is to try to isolate the hospital workers from all other groups. This would make it possible for the Government to adjust an offer without fear of its being used by others in their bargaining."

CONFERENCE ON THE FAMILY LEEDS POLYTECHNIC UNION

SATURDAY 12th May

HISTORY OF THE FAMILY

Sheila Rowbotham and Linda Smith

THE FAMILY UNDER CAPITALISM

Margaret Coulson, Lee Sanders-Corner

SUNDAY 13th May

THE FAMILY IN POST-CAPITALIST SOCIETY

Maria Lottus

Each session will be followed by workshop discussions and plenary sessions. Final plenary session with panel of speakers and closing discussion.

Papers will be duplicated for distribution at the conference if submitted on A4 stencils by May 1st, to the address below.

There will be facilities for children (a creche) as long as we are given numbers. The conference is organised by Leeds Poly, Women's Lib, but is aimed at all those female and male who see the importance of this subject to our political understanding.

Coaches will be organised from these areas:

London: Felicity Trodd 01-340 7031

Coventry: Ann Smith 0203-58991

Manchester: Vicky Anderson 061-226 3328

Details from: Val Jones, 69 Bagby Rd., Leeds 2

Phone: 0532-27777

Left regroup after NUS set-back

The NUS conference in Exeter last week came at the end of six months of struggle in the colleges. The demonstrations, rents strikes and occupations of the grants campaign have been met with writs, threats of eviction and victimisations by the college authorities. The NUS leadership had not worked out a line to deal with these counter attacks and at the conference this lack of perspectives was beginning to be felt even by the militants in the colleges.

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This disillusion with the Communist Party-led Executive's strategy was most clearly expressed in the election of John Randall as president. This election of a candidate who was backed by the right represents a set-back. Randall as an individual is no worse than the CP-backed candidate, Terry, but his victory will encourage the right and demoralise sections of the left. A victory for Terry would have been seen by militants in the colleges as confirming left domination of the NUS and would have encouraged the development of struggles in the colleges. The IMG therefore considers that the IS group made a serious political mistake by not

calling on supporters of their candidate to vote for Terry against Randall.

THE GRANTS CAMPAIGN

On the central question facing the conference, the grants campaign, the key immediate problem is now how to fight the repression. If this cannot be done it is going to be impossible to carry the campaign forward. One thing which was immediately clear is that reliance on a 'good press', winning over MPs and fostering 'good relations' with Vice Chancellors is no way forward. The CP-led NUS Executive has failed to work out any alternative strategy however.

On the national level their main response has been to produce a document entitled "Legal opinion for the NUS", which laid out the many ways the Vice-Chancellors could attack the rent strikers, and the particular techniques of legal repression they could and would use. But they have failed to provide a strategy for fighting these attacks. When forced to come off the fence the Executive's answer to colleges on rent strike threatened with legal action was to pay up, minus the increases in rent. But this will only encourage the Vice-Chancellors to mount a fresh assault to regain the outstanding monies.

IMG's perspective was that the conference had to work out a plan of action against the repression which would clearly recognise who the campaign's real allies were and work to gain their support. This meant forging links with the working class, themselves the object of a series of political attacks at the hands of the government.

An immediate perspective was advanced of making May 1st a day of mass activity among students, of occupations where possible, teach-ins with local labour movement speakers, strikes and participation in local working class rallies wherever this was possible.

UNITY IN ACTION

When the question of unity of the left was raised at a 'broad left caucus' initiated by the CP, the IMG argued for unity in action - especially in cases of repression such as the Shrewsbury building workers case. It is only on the basis of such a united fight around the immediate issues facing the students in the colleges that any longer term and more extensive unity can be built. As a first step towards tackling the repression in the colleges, the IMG proposed that the NUS take up the fight against the suspension of victimised lecturer Steve Whitley, which was agreed unanimously.

In addition the IMG initiated a call for a conference to organise the fight against repression and consider different ways of advancing the grants campaign, and this move gained the support of many delegates at the conference. It is a positive sign that the International Socialists have agreed to support and work for this conference. It is to be hoped that those arguing for unity of the left, particularly militants of the CP, will also see the importance of this conference and give it their support. Preliminary arrangements for the conference, which will take place in London over the weekend of May 12th/13th, are under way and further details will be published in our next issue.

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IRELAND: TWO NATIONS? Workers' Fight Public Meeting, speaker Sean Matgamna. Sunday 15 April, 7.30 pm at Golden Lion Pub (corner of Kings Cross Road and Britannia Road).

I.M.G. RED FORUM: A series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday, 8 pm at the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (five minutes walk from Kings Cross tube).

IRELAND AND THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT: Merseyside IMG public meeting. Speaker: Alan Lenton. Weds, 25 April, 7.45 pm in the Warrington Co-op Meeting Hall (Small Room).

FREE THE STOKE NEWINGTON 51 Demonstration Saturday 12 May. Assemble Speakers Corner, 3 pm then march off to Lincoln's Inn Fields. To be followed by rally at Conway Hall, 7 pm.

WOUNDED KNEE is over but the war continues. Any one wishing to help please write the Anglo-Dakota Solidarity Campaign, c/o Compendium Books, 240 Camden High Street, London N.W. 1.

CEYLON SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN: Bulletin No. 5 now out, includes material on new developments in the opposition to the repression, the gagging of the press, treatment of political detainees, etc. Available from Ceylon Solidarity Campaign, 9 Dennington Park Mansion, London N.W. 6, price 5p.

THE DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT will be discussed at the 3rd Conference of Radical Scholars of Soviet and East European Studies at Birmingham University Union 4-6 May. Details from CRSEES, c/o Lucas House, Pritchatts Rd., Edgbaston, Birmingham.

