

CLASS STRUGGLE: THE CROSSROADS

On Monday, 3 September the Trades Union Congress will open in Blackpool. It will be meeting at a crucial turning point for the development of working class struggle in this country.

There is tremendous frustration throughout the working class today, caused by the never-ending wearing down of living standards under the Tories' wage and price policy, and the thousand-and-one ways in which capitalist exploitation grinds down the working class: redundancies, speed-up, the need to work long hours to make up for low pay, etc.

This frustration is approaching an explosive level. Militants in many industries are preparing to fight for wage claims which will bust Tory Government policy wide open. This will be the match that sets off the explosion.

by CHRIS BALFOUR

POLICIES NEEDED

The occasion of the TUC is an opportunity for militants to consider the type of policies necessary to lead the movement forward — the sort of policies which the TUC would adopt were it really concerned with fighting for the needs of the mass of workers. However, given the fact that the TUC is dominated by trade union bureaucrats who do not really represent working class interests, it will be up to the rank-and-file militants themselves to take the steps necessary to develop and carry out such policies.

The first task must be to ensure that the forces of the working class movement are in top shape for the coming fight. The TUC-Government talks, which sow confusion throughout the working class and strengthen the hand of the Government, must be stopped. It is not through negotiations but through struggle that working class interests will be served. The job now is to devote all energies to preparing that struggle.

The capitalist state is trying to weaken the working class movement before the key battles begin. This must be blocked. The full force of the trade union movement should be placed behind the 24 building workers who are on trial in Shrewsbury over their picketing activities, in order to assure their acquittal and the protection of this crucial instrument of working class struggle from legal attack.

CAPITALIST MANOEUVRES

The unity of the working class will be essential in the months ahead. But such unity cannot be forged as long as white workers are infected by racist ideas and black workers can be

victimised by racist laws. A decisive blow would be struck against racism and for working class unity by purging racism from the trade union movement and mobilising the power of the trade unions against all racist laws — the Immigration Act, the Aliens Acts, and the Pakistan Act.

Ireland is a testing ground for new techniques and weapons of repression. The army is being toughened up there for the dirty work it will soon have to carry out against the British working class. A major blow must be struck now against these manoeuvres of the ruling class in Ireland. What is needed is a campaign throughout the working class for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland and in support of the right of the whole Irish nation to self-determination.

SOLIDARITY

The widest possible solidarity must be developed throughout the trade union movement with any group of workers which launches a struggle against the Government. But such solidarity must be prepared, and all workers convinced of the need for common struggle. A systematic campaign of education should be launched along with the setting up by all trades councils and shop stewards committees of local delegate bodies to plan the practical organisation of solidarity actions.

This would assure that the struggle of any single group of workers against the Government would be met with an organised wave of solidarity from the rest of the working class. Such a powerful movement would soon go beyond solidarity actions and begin to put forward its own demands on the bosses and the Government. It would rapidly reach the scale of a general strike.

GENERAL STRIKE

A general strike movement would challenge the very ability of the Tory Government to rule the country and, by calling for the downfall of this hated Government, could draw into struggle every group that has suffered from Tory policies: trade unionists would be joined by the mass of students, housewives, un-



South London AUEW members offer to physically defend their union headquarters from bailiffs who may try to enforce a court judgement for £2,800 made against the Engineers' Union under the Industrial Relations Act. National President Hugh Scanlon refused their offer, in line with the AUEW leadership's policy of passive 'non-cooperation' with the Act. However, positive action — such as this excellent initiative by South London militants — are what will be needed if the coming struggles are to be seriously fought and won.

organised workers, pensioners, and many professional workers and small traders.

The general strike is the form of struggle that can most successfully unite the working class and its allies and, at the same time, most effectively undermine the power of the ruling class and its state machine. It would not have to content itself with tampering with this or that policy of the Tory government, but could kick out that government along with all its pro-capitalist policies. The way would then be clear for the working class to establish its own policies over important matters of concern to the mass of people, such as prices.

There is little chance that the TUC will take up questions such as these, but a number of very important questions will be discussed at the TUC, including the future of the TUC-Government talks. It is vitally important that the important victory won by the left at the AUEW conference be followed up, and the engineers' resolution calling off the talks be carried at the TUC.

If this happens, it will be all the easier for the mass of rank-and-file militants to work out and put into action a strategy and plan of practical organisation for the battles ahead. But whatever happens, steps must be taken immediately to create the understanding and organisation among the mass of workers that can develop and extend future struggles, and lay the basis for a general strike to kick out the Tory Government.

Bombs and Hypocrisy

The recent wave of bombings in London has brought out all the hypocrisy of the British capitalist press.

The first bombings came at almost the same time as the Derry coroner spoke out, describing the actions of the British Army on Bloody Sunday as 'sheer unadulterated murder'. Most British newspapers found no difficulty in combining frenetic denunciations of 'IRA terrorists' with full support for the actions of their butchers in the North of Ireland.

The revived image of Bloody Sunday was a timely reminder of what the 'gentlemen of the press' in this country have always preferred to forget: that the peace and quiet of the English countryside has always depended upon the blood-drenched spectre of British imperialism abroad.

From the days of the slave trade, when hundreds of thousands of blacks were torn away from their native homelands and sold into bondage—or death—to fill the coffers of English merchants and fuel the fires of the Industrial Revolution, English capitalist society has been nothing more than a tarted-up murder machine.

The activities of the Fenians in the 1870s, the IRA bombing campaign of

1939, and the present attacks represent nothing more than a few chickens coming home to roost from the three centuries long history of murder and brutality inflicted on Ireland by the English ruling class.

No matter what one thinks of the bombings from a tactical standpoint, it is impossible to avoid remarking that the British left have been due for a reminder of their responsibilities to the Irish struggle. If the British labour movement had given the Irish Republican movement even a fraction of the solidarity to which it was entitled, the present situation could never have developed. Nor can the revolutionary left afford to be self-righteous. Their guilt is less only because their influence is less. Their record is just as seriously blotted with the stains of British chauvinism.

Those who are really concerned to put a stop to the present bombing campaign have a simple course cut out for them—to work for a mass movement in this country against the presence of British troops in Ireland, and for the right of self-determination for the whole Irish nation. If the British Army was not at this very moment occupying the Six Counties of Ireland there would have been no bombs going off in London last week.

David Tettodoro

Over 400 workers at the Adwest Engineering factory in Woodley, Reading, are now in the second week of their sit-in strike.

They have demanded that the management stop immediately the rundown of production at the factory, which makes power steering components for Rover, Jaguar, Jensen, Aston Martin, Ford and other car firms.

This interview was given to *Red Weekly* by Peter O'Sullivan, a member of the strike committee, on behalf of the committee.

Are you expecting to win your demands quickly, or are you prepared to hold out for a long time?

Trouble has been brewing at Adwest for some time. Management have refused to budge an inch. As far as I can see, it may be some time before our action really begins to bite; Adwest components are produced mainly for the luxury end of the car market.

Anyway, we are prepared for a long fight. We've organised a shift system for picketing where everyone does six hours one day, then has the next day off, and so on. In this way everybody contributes to the running of the occupation. Last week two mass meetings of all the strikers were held, and the strike committee, composed of shop stewards and staff representatives, meets twice daily. All its decisions are published and posted on the notice boards.

Strikers have also been visiting local engineering factories - Sperry's in Bracknell, Prestcold, Thornycroft's in Basingstoke - to get support, and we're also in touch with other factories in the Adwest Group - Western Thompson on the Woodley estate, and Bowden Controls in Llanelli. Power Steering Ltd. in Sunderland will be coming out on strike next Monday if a claim for parity with us is not met, and they are blacking all materials from Reading. Other workers in the group have also promised support.

Already things are starting to happen out of our actions - for the first time we are discussing a group shop stewards combine, since we realise our fight is against the group as a whole, not just the management of one plant. Workers from Thornycroft's, who occupied their Basingstoke factory for several weeks, have given us the benefits of their experience which we are trying to use.

- Adwest is a very profitable company at the present time. Why do they want to shift production away from the Reading factory?

Land speculation. The price of land in Reading is

It seems almost certain that land speculation on a massive scale is behind a number of recent moves by industries owning plants in Reading.

Whatever the Adwest management may say, it seems clear that they intend to close down the factory altogether and sell off the site.

Huntley and Palmer's, the biscuit firm, had already announced their intention to transfer production away from Reading and close down in 1974. They too own a large, potentially very lucrative site near the centre of town.

Now the huge Courage brewery group has also announced plans to close its Reading plant - threatening 1,100 jobs. The reason they give is that they want to centralise their breweries onto a single (new) site. Their present brewery covers 13 acres of valuable land near the centre of Reading.

Next week's issue will carry a full report on these developments.

INTERVIEW with Adwest Strike Committee



phenomenal, and Adwest are in the fortunate position of owning hundreds of acres on the Woodley industrial estate. They could well be following the example of other local firms, who are running down factories in Reading for much the same reasons. So in the long run, much more is at stake than just the jobs of the workers at Adwest Engineering. Several hundred people working on sites owned by the group may find themselves out of a job as well.

As far as Adwest components are concerned, management want to shift production of the main item - power steering gears - to Sunderland because they can take advantage of all kinds of factors: cheaper land, development grants, tax gains, and a plentiful supply of labour. All these things far outweigh their so-called 'concern' for their Reading workers.

- What problems are you being faced with in carrying out your sit-in action?

In many ways we are in a fairly good position, in that we have virtually 100% support in the factory. All the unions - AUEW, APEX, TASS, and my own union, the ASTMS - are supporting the sit-in action. Of course it's very important that we maintain this unity by ensuring the fullest possible participation by the

whole work force in the running and development of the occupation.

Management are trying various tricks to stop the sit-in being effective, but so far we've forced them to back down. Last week they brought in a contracting firm to try to lift a generator over the picket line to provide essential services for the factories dependent on Adwest, but when it was explained to the contractors that their strike-breaking wouldn't be the best advertisement for them in the area they gave up. And all scheduled deliveries to the factory have been successfully turned away since the sit-in started.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to: Adwest Strike Committee, Adwest Engineering Ltd., Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading.

STOP PRESS: On Wednesday morning, about 80 workers at Western Thompson Ltd., another Adwest subsidiary in Reading, voted with none against to strike in support of their fellow workers in Adwest Engineering. Western Thompson Ltd. control 70% of the market for thermostats in the motor industry.

and support of the majority of STC workers.

In this strike, it will be the attitude of trade unionists outside STC which will be decisive. The AUEW bureaucracy, who have long turned a blind eye to the existence of racism in the unions, are incapable of understanding this. When we phoned the district office for a statement, they told us: 'We are trying to cool this strike down. You buggers are trying to hot it up!' Rather than confront the issue of racism, they seek to brush it under the carpet. This in turn gives every other trade unionist outside STC an excuse for complacency and inactivity on the question.

DEFENCE COMMITTEE

This is why the setting up of the STC Strike Defence Committee is so important. Already the failure to extend support for the strike has encouraged the racists: a member of the Black Workers Movement reported at Sunday's meeting that 'an ETU shop steward is threatening the Asian workers that if they come out in support of the strike he will have the police check them out as illegal immigrants.'

The Strike Defence Committee has already started to organise the collection of money for the strikers, and is attempting to gain active support from trade unionists and from among the black community. A mass picket of the factory, which would give an immediate focus for this support, is also expected to take place soon. Particular stress is being laid on contacting AUEW and ETU members. Further details from: STC Strike Defence Committee, 30 Leigh Road, London, N.5.

Defence Committee for STC

By DAVE BAILEY

Many workers, even on the left, argue that unity is a precondition for launching a struggle, and much of the discussion at the meeting centred around this question. But as Gutzmore pointed out: 'The white working class tend to be more or less willing agents of the ruling class in regard to blacks, which is precisely why one section of the working class finds it is necessary to use industrial action against another.'

RACISTS CHALLENGED

With many of the white workers openly allying themselves with management, this was obviously the case at STC. Ted Corbett, the white AUEW convenor, told the meeting how 'it was only the black people who rallied to the defence of a black worker. The whites, with one or two exceptions, were against it. Had we submitted this issue to the whole shopfloor, there would have been no struggle.' As it is, the strike has forced the white workers into the open, and put them on the spot. By their action, the strikers have openly challenged the hold of a minority of hardened racists on the sympathy

CURRENT ACCOUNT

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE THRESHOLD

Eighteen months ago, the TUC embraced the idea of threshold agreements; it was then largely rejected by both the employers and the Tory Government. It has now, however, become an important part of the Government's Phase 3 strategy.

A threshold agreement is a pay deal which contains a clause guaranteeing additional wage rises during the lifetime of the agreement if prices rise by more than a certain 'threshold' percentage. So, if there is an agreement for a 5% immediate wage increase with a 3% threshold (i.e. a 1% rise in wages for every 1% increase in price levels above the 3% mark), and if the rate of inflation is 10% per annum, then in principle the result would be as follows: money wages would rise to begin with by 5%; 3% of this would be eroded by inflation before the clause became operative; before the end of the year, money wages would rise a further 7% with inflation; and at the end of the year, money wages would be 12% higher than a year before and real wages would be 2% higher.

So what decides the change in real wages by the end of the year is the difference between the initial wage rise and the size of the threshold.

In practice, the protection against inflation can be seriously undermined by the price index on which the threshold is based. It is almost certain that the retail price index, which the Tory Government wants to use, generally underestimates the cost of living increase for workers. Moreover, threshold agreements do nothing to compensate workers for the increase in the cost of living in the period before they came into operation.

It is significant that the Government is advocating threshold agreements after a year of wage control, at the end of which workers' real standards of living will have fallen by at least 4% - something which has not happened in any other year since the War. If the above numerical example were accurate, then by the end of a year of Phase 3, workers' real wages would still be 2% below the level two years earlier - which would be an unprecedented victory for the capitalist class.

The TUC originally espoused threshold agreements because they seemed to guarantee real wage increases in a period of inflation. One reason for the Tories' conversion to them is that they can equally guarantee a limit to real wage increases.

But the Tories are also planning to trade thresholds in exchange for a de-escalation of money wage demands. This is needed because during rapid inflation, an initial demand large enough to secure a given increase at the end of the agreement would give workers more over the year as a whole than a threshold agreement which produced the same percentage increase in real wages at the end of the year. In the first case, real wages would rise a lot at first and then be eroded over the year; in the second real wages would rise very little at first, but would be eroded more slowly.

In spite of all these disadvantages from the workers' point of view, the TUC is on weak ground in the discussion. Most of the Tories' current arguments for threshold deals were supplied by the TUC itself in its propaganda for them last year. In this it accepted, as it still does, that the Government's objective is to fight inflation, and not to fight wages and the workers' bargaining power for which the fight against inflation is a substitute.

Michael Price

The TUC's present counter-proposal to threshold agreements is price control. This will be discussed in this column next week.

Over 200 workers at the Southgate factory of Standard Telephones & Cables in London are still on strike after six weeks. Mostly West Indians, they are demanding the reinstatement of a black worker, Roderick Adams, who was being trained as a machine setter until the white setters refused to continue his training.

This is only the latest phase of a long battle by black machine operators, members of the AUEW, to break the colour bar which has prevented them from gaining promotion to more skilled jobs. One of the obstacles they have had to fight is the alliance between management and the skilled white setters, many of whom left the AUEW and joined the ETU on a racialist basis in 1969.

STEWARDS SCABBING

Although the strike has been made official by the AUEW, the majority of the white AUEW stewards are still crossing the picket line and the AUEW District Committee has so far refused to withdraw their credentials. The vast majority of white workers - as well as some West Indians and Asians - are either actively opposed to the strike or regard it as none of their business. Altogether the factory employs some 3,000 workers.

On Sunday, 130 strikers and their supporters attended a public meeting in Tottenham called by the newly formed STC Strike Defence Committee. The chairman was Cecil Gutzmore, who in 1971 wrote a report for the Runnymede Trust documenting the history of racist practices at STC.

The Daily Mail - record of reaction

'Hurrah for the Blackshirts!' was the headline with which one British newspaper greeted the formation of Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists in 1934. That newspaper was the *Daily Mail*.

This past week the *Mail* has been living up to its heritage with a spate of scare-mongering articles on the London bombings. Last Thursday the International Marxist Group was privileged to be the object of an attack by this reactionary rag, under the banner headline 'Bombs Hunt for Marxists.' This was followed on Friday with a rag-bag of lying slanders, claiming, among other absurdities, that the Fourth International had prepared a secret 'Plan X' which was 'to be used to begin a reign of terror' involving 'planting bombs in cinemas, department stores, schools, public transport and government offices.'

REACTIONARY POLITICS

Whatever may have changed about the *Mail* over the years, its political outlook has remained the same. The horror stories with which it entertains its readers today are cut from exactly the same cloth as the accounts of left-wing 'atrocities' that appeared regularly on its front pages during the Spanish Civil War.

Always a loyal supporter of reaction, the *Mail* was a staunch propagandist for Franco and fascism in the 30s, and provides the same services for the Special Branch today.

Reactionary politics flow in the veins of the Rothermere family, owners of the vast newspaper empire which includes the *Daily Mail*. The first Viscount Rothermere was an enthusiastic supporter of Mussolini. He felt, however, that Mussolini's methods of one-man rule might be a bit drastic here: instead he proposed that Britain should be run by a

three-man committee with dictatorial powers, and free from Parliamentary control.

LETTERS TO HITLER

He backed Mosley's fascists from the first, placing his press solidly behind them. Later on he became disillusioned with Mosley, but found a new hero in ... Adolf Hitler. He visited Germany for talks with Nazi leaders, and conducted a long personal correspondence with Hitler.

This was reflected in Rothermere's newspapers. The *Daily Mail* had no interest in certain horrors and atrocities. In July 1933 the *Mail* reported that Nazi terror 'consists merely of a few isolated acts of violence such as are inevitable among a nation half as big again as ours.' The Nazis' anti-semitism also came in for a whitewash, the *Mail* explaining in the following terms: 'Israelites of international attachments were insinuating themselves into key positions in the German administrative machine ... it is from such abuses that Hitler has freed Germany.'

IMMENSE EMPIRE

The *Daily Mail's* staunch defence of capitalism is not completely unselfish. The *Mail* is part-and-parcel of an immense financial empire, controlled - and largely owned - by the present day descendants of the forthright first Viscount Rothermere.

At the pinnacle is the Daily Mail and General Trust, whose chairman is the second Viscount Rothermere, and on whose board sits the heir to the Rothermere fortune, the Honourable Vere Harmsworth, along with his cousin, Sir Geoffrey Harmsworth.

This company owns a majority of the shares of the Associated Newspaper Group, the centre-piece of the Rothermere empire. This colossus owns and publishes two national daily papers -

the *Daily Mail* and the *Evening News* - some 38 provincial newspapers, and *Weekend* magazine.

It controls a number of provincial dailies: the *Hull Daily Mail*, the Stoke-on-Trent *Evening Sentinel*, the Derby *Evening Telegraph*, and the *Leicester Mercury*.

Its financial interests extend throughout the field of publishing and communications, and into market research, public entertainment, road transport, and shipping. It owns the Southern Television network jointly with the gigantic Rank Corporation, has its finger in the pie of commercial radio, and has interests in Australian television. It also owns an important slice of a major Canadian papermaking and mining concern.

A LOT TO DEFEND

The Chairman of Associated Newspapers is Vere Harmsworth, and his father, Viscount Rothermere, is its President. Until recently the vice-chairman was Sir Neill Cooper-Key, Rothermere's son-in-law and, from 1945-1970, Tory MP for Hastings. Cooper-Key also served as the Rothermere man on the Southern Television board and was chairman of the company which ran Rothermere transport interests.

The total worth of the Rothermere empire is somewhere in the vicinity of £30 million. It exercises a powerful influence over the communications media of the country, and in many provincial centres has a total stranglehold over the local press.

There is little wonder that the various tentacles of this empire - such as the *Daily Mail* - align themselves so decisively with the 'forces of order.' Nor should we be surprised at the fact that their methods have so often been ruthless: they have a lot to defend. Brian Slocock

SOLIDARITY AND THE BOMBINGS

Reply to the SLL

Workers Press has now added its voice to the chorus of slanders from the reactionary, capitalist press against the International Marxist Group. In its issues of 25 and 27 August, editor Alex Mitchell goes well beyond the bounds of polemic, and makes statements which amount to an accusation that I.M.G. militants are in the service of the police.

Since *Workers Press* is so intent on distorting the facts in order to try and gain petty sectarian advantages, we will once again spell out the central points concerning the actions of I.M.G. militant Gery Lawless:

1. Upon receiving a statement from the Irish Republican Press Bureau on Sunday afternoon accepting responsibility for the bombings, and after satisfying himself of the genuineness of this statement, Gery Lawless contacted the police for the sole purpose of obtaining information - of verifying whether or not bombings had actually occurred; no information whatsoever was communicated to the police on that occasion.

2. Comrade Lawless went to Scotland Yard on Monday evening, accompanied by his solicitor, after having been requested to do so by the police; that was the first occasion on which comrade Lawless gave any information whatsoever to the police, and his statement told them nothing that they could not have found out by reading that morning's newspaper.

As far as the International Marxist Group is concerned, we recognise only too clearly the power of the state apparatus and the police in capitalist society. If comrade Lawless had engaged in false 'heroics', and rejected Habershon's request, he would have been subject to forcible detainment and interrogation, under circumstances much more favourable to the police.

For revolutionaries the political principle involved in relations with the police is simple: at no time and in no way can we support the actions of the police, nor can we attempt to use the police as a means of dealing with disputes within the working class movement. At no time have any actions of comrade Lawless infringed that principle, and we are therefore satisfied that nothing done by comrade Lawless has in any way compromised his position as a revolutionary militant. As the statement published elsewhere in this issue shows, that view is shared by the National Organiser of the Republican Movement in Britain.

The Socialist Labour League's concern with the actions of comrade Lawless does not stem from some high regard for socialist principles. It simply serves them as an excuse for breaking solidarity with the International Marxist Group just as it is in the greatest danger of coming under attack from the capitalist state. This was made perfectly clear in a letter to the I.M.G. from Gerry Healy, National Secretary of the S.L.L. on Sunday, 26 August, rejecting the I.M.G.'s proposal for a joint meeting with the S.L.L. and the International Socialist, to discuss a joint defence against the witch-hunt.

At the present time the main concern of the S.L.L. is to run away from anything that might connect it with the Irish liberation struggle. The statement of the Socialist Labour League on the bombing makes no mention of solidarity with the Irish struggle and 'condemns the bombers whoever they are' (our emphasis). In other words, even if the Provisional I.R.A. is responsible for Sunday's bombings, they are unconditionally 'condemned' by the S.L.L. This certainly places the S.L.L. in rather mixed company.

The excuse they give for this position is that: 'Their [the bombers] activities only retard the development of the political and industrial campaign to force the hated Heath Government out of office.'

That should be a clear enough warning to the Republican movement. The S.L.L. believes that the central task is to kick out the Tories and return Labour to power on a socialist programme. The I.R.A. may feel that their central task is to defeat British imperialism in Ireland, but they will have to toe the line laid down by the S.L.L. The Socialist Labour League does not brook any nonsense about the Irish republican movement having the right to set their own objectives and determine their own methods of struggle.

As a result the S.L.L. judges actions which spread the war into the imperialist homeland not on the basis of their effectiveness in advancing the Irish struggle, but in terms of their effect on the prejudices of British workers.

The S.L.L. has never taken seriously the need to support the fight for national liberation in Ireland. It has been conspicuously absent from the demonstrations, meetings and campaigns against internment and the whole series of repressive measures carried out by British imperialism in Ireland. Even after the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre in Derry, it was nowhere to be seen in the mass actions that took place against this act of 'unadulterated murder'.

Having prepared neither its members nor its readers for the task of giving real solidarity with the Irish struggle, the S.L.L.'s cardboard castle of revolutionary politics has been blown over by the first good gust of real capitalist reaction. Their rhetoric about a principled defence of democratic rights is exposed as an empty sham. All their energies must now be devoted to a pathetic attempt to squirm off the hook, because they are totally incapable of mounting a real campaign of solidarity with the Irish struggle.

Viscount Rothermere drops in for a fireside chat with Nazi boss Hermann Goering, December 1934



ERRATUM

In the article 'Unity of the Left', on page 5, in the third paragraph of the section 'United action', the penultimate sentence does not make sense as it stands due to a typing error. It should read as follows:

If comrade Heffer's view is right, that the way forward in the struggle for socialism lies through the Labour party and a Labour government, then it will be proved correct in the struggle. If we are right, and a Labour government cannot do the job and the Labour party cannot become the instrument with which to win socialism, then it is we who will be proved correct in practice.

FUND DRIVE

With the month rapidly drawing to a close, the Fighting Fund is seriously short of its target—we have received only half of the £300 required. This is largely because of the fact that we suspended publication for the first part of August—but the money's needed just the same. Let's have a big drive to bring in as much as possible before the end of the month.

WE'RE STILL £150 SHORT OF THE TARGET!

In view of the slanderous attacks on Mr. G. Lawless the Republican Movement would make it clear that in their opinion he has acted in the best interests of the Irish people over the years.

We neither agree with nor approve his political beliefs, but we must record the gratitude of the Irish people for his work in the Anti-Internment League and his continued support for the cause of an Ireland independent and free.

On behalf of the Republican Movement,

B. Magill

National Organiser

Two articles by Labour MP Eric Heffer on the 'UNITY OF THE LEFT' recently appeared in *Tribune*, the paper of the Labour left. This is important because of the general trend throughout Europe towards more joint action between members of Socialist parties, Communist parties, and the revolutionary left.

The following statement from the Political Committee of the International Marxist Group is an attempt to continue the discussion opened by comrade Heffer and to make clear the attitude of the IMG towards left unity.

'UNITY OF THE LEFT'



Eric Heffer, M.P.

This spring and summer saw a big attack by the government and the employers against the working class. Following the more or less successful imposition of Phase Two, there was an attack on factory organisation (highlighted in the Chrysler dispute), and on the right to picket (shown most dramatically in the Shrewsbury case). The decisive starting point in considering the prospects for the autumn must be that this employers' attack failed.

While the Shrewsbury case goes on, and must be won, all the other attempts at victimisation and weakening of working class organisation — at Chryslers, Coles Cranes, Baxters and so on — were met with tremendous resistance. Furthermore, throughout the summer at union conferences, despite a few setbacks, the resolutions have gone against those who want to collaborate with Incomes Policies, the Industrial Relations Act and all the other shackles on the unions. A great deal remains to be done in order to turn words into actions, but the overall climate in the trade union movement is changing. This is occurring in a situation in which inflation convinces thousands of people every day that the Tory government offers no way forward.

Important developments are also taking place inside the Labour party. The new National Executive policy proposals, and those of *Tribune*, suffer from serious weaknesses: they do not tackle the fundamental question of the capitalist state, and the nationalisations they propose are to be carried out on the basis of the state and not as part of a struggle to break it. Furthermore right wingers want to counterpose the demand for a new Labour government to the coming struggles in the autumn against Phase Three. Nevertheless, merely by raising the questions of nationalisation, workers control, and so on, these proposals will stimulate debate and interest in these key issues.

In short, while there are still many problems and shortcomings, the prospect of a massive struggle for socialism is better than at any time for decades. Not only are we going to see a far bigger trade union upsurge in the coming months even than that of 1969-72, but whereas that previous upsurge occurred when no political perspectives appeared open to the working class, the Labour party's turn to the left now creates a new interest and debate about political solutions. In this situation a decisive turn towards united action on the part of the left would have a greater following than ever before.

Tory government

The present attacks on the working class do not

stem fundamentally from the existence of the Tory government but from the private ownership of the means of production and the existence of the capitalist state. Nevertheless, the Tory government is at present the main tool being used by the ruling class to carry out its attacks. This is reflected in the growing hatred of the Tories throughout many different layers of society. For this reason a general attack on capitalism must have as its present focus the struggle to get rid of the Tory government. There is complete agreement on the left on the need to get rid of the Tories. There are big differences however on *how* to achieve this. The Labour left has a wrong and illogical position.

Anthony Wedgwood Benn has said this Tory government is a 'barbaric, inhuman government.' If this is so, its existence in office for one day longer cannot be tolerated. Yet *Tribune* seems precisely to propose that we should accept the present situation. Richard Clements writing in *Tribune* on March 30th said 'the Labour party in opposition can basically only wait until Edward Heath declares the date of the next general election.' He goes on to say that the trade unions can at least resist the Tories, but he does not propose any way that the Tories can be driven from office. His whole position is completely false. Not only is it open to the Labour party as a whole, and individual Labour party MPs and others to carry on a struggle inside and outside Parliament to defeat the Tory policies (Clay Cross shows the way here), but they can also wage a struggle to get rid of the Tory government once and for all. The means to accomplish this task are obvious. The massive strikes of the last few years have already shaken the Tory government to its foundations. It is possible to use this massive strike power to unite the present partial struggles into a general strike to kick out the Tory government.

The Communist party is equally as wrong on this as *Tribune*. John Gollan, in a recent article, said 'Every day this Tory government lasts is a disaster for the working class ... to drive out the Tories is the over-riding need.' But he does not say how. The Communist party has talked of 'action of general strike proportions' but has not actively campaigned for this nor explained to the mass of workers that this is the weapon to get rid of the Tories.

A serious debate is needed on this point on the left. It will come up time and time again in discussions on unity in action on more limited issues. If at present however agreement is not achieved on this crucial point, unity is possible and essential on a more limited basis in the struggle against the Tory government and its policies.

The key issue for any future Labour government is going to be the question of nationalisa-

tion and workers control. Without taking industry out of private hands any talk of socialism is just hot air. Indeed, more than that, without massive nationalisation even the most moderate reformist policy would be impossible to carry out. But how is this nationalisation to be carried out?

Struggle for control

Take the proposal to nationalise 25 major firms. We are talking about taking out of private ownership ICI, British Leyland, Fords, Shell, Unilever and so on. Does comrade Heffer think this is going to be done peacefully? If so, this is the greatest lack of realism we have heard for years.

The employers have already shown how they will react to even moderate proposals. Take the 1950 Nationalisation of Steel. The employers simply refused to co-operate, sabotaging the nationalisation and the economy. They imposed a complete boycott of the Iron and Steel Board and no administrative or technical personnel were permitted to attend the board. As a result, state control over the industry, despite nominal ownership, never became a reality. This tactic was maintained until Labour was out of office. Such sabotage is carried out by every capitalist class when measures are taken against it which it does not like. The lorry owners strikes in Chile are another recent example of this.

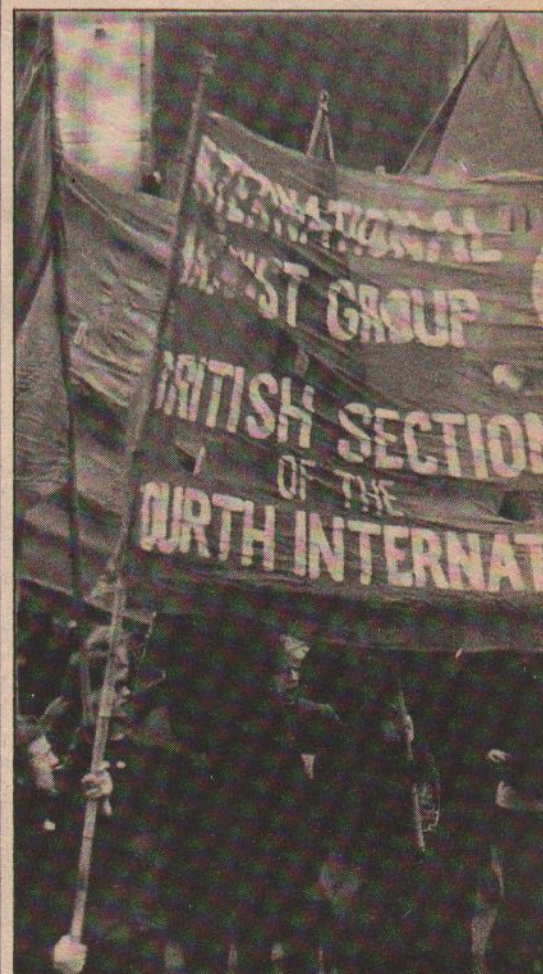
For this reason workers control, and in particular, opening the books of all the capitalist trusts, is not simply something to come *after* nationalisation, but something which is vital in order to *carry out* nationalisation. In an article in the 6th July *Tribune*, which we disagree with on many other points, Ken Coates gets this correct: 'workers need to insist upon their rights to *any* and *all* information which they consider relevant.' This is the indispensable pre-requisite both for workers control and to ensure nationalisation can really be carried through. In order to be effective such a struggle for control has to start at once throughout the whole economy — in particular in those industries which are going to be nationalised.

This struggle for control and for opening the books can be begun by shop stewards committees and trade union branches. This will start to fuse the industrial struggle with the struggle to take industry out of the hands of the capitalists. We concretely propose that in every major industry, starting with those proposed for nationalisation, a nationalisation committee is set up to start the campaign for nationalisation and opening the books. *Here is a real question on which left unity should be built.*

An absolutely key area where unity is needed is in the industrial struggle. Major wage claims, those of the engineers and the miners for example, have already been put in. These would blow any incomes policy to bits if achieved and would be an enormous step forward on the way to sending the Tory government packing. Heath, scared of the coming clashes, is at present trying desperately to avert them through his negotiations with the TUC. He knows that getting an agreement on incomes policy is the best chance he has of staying in power. At the same time the Industrial Relations Act is still on the books and that, together with the freeze legislation, can be used to carry out future attacks on the unions.

In this situation most of the left has come out firmly against the talks with the government. The *Morning Star* has campaigned against them. The AUEW instructed Scanlon to withdraw from the talks. The National Conference of Trades Councils has voted against the negotiations. The move to get the NUR to withdraw was defeated by a narrow right wing

Part of Bloody Sunday commemoration this year —





May Day strikes and demonstrations showed possibility of left unity against the Tory Government and its policies

majority. Even in the GMWU the call to withdraw received 25% of the vote. In the present situation it is vital that the talks be ended. In practice Communist party members, members of the left wing of the Labour party in the trade unions, and members of the International Marxist Group, International Socialists and Socialist Labour League are already co-operating to get these talks ended. An unequivocal statement from the organised Labour left opposing the talks, and their involvement in this campaign, would be a great step forward for left unity.

But it is necessary to go further. As has been proved over and over again, any form of incomes policy under capitalism is always used against the interests of the working class. There is a growing realisation of this already. Both the AUEW and the ASTMS voted at their annual conferences not to accept any incomes policy from any government. A clear pledge from the Labour left that it would vote against any future Labour government's attempts to introduce an incomes policy would be another step forward for left unity. As for the Industrial Relations Act, the Labour party is already

our left does nothing on this question



pledged to repeal – which must be complete and total and include all other anti-union laws.

On the wages struggles, the strongest possible unity must be forged to give unconditional support for the strikes and claims. There is a tremendous amount which Labour can do which it is not at present doing. Clay Cross is a fine example here. Every Labour council could strike an important blow against the freeze by paying higher wages to its employees. In every strike the facilities controlled by Labour councils could be placed at the disposal of strikers, and affiliated bodies such as the Co-op could provide credit for strikers. The whole working class movement must be placed on a war footing.

Ireland

One of the areas on which united action is most needed, but where it is going to be hardest to get, is on the question of Ireland. Here the record of the Labour left is appalling. Ireland is a single nation. Labour party policy is based on hypocrisy when it says the question of Northern Ireland will be decided by a vote of the people of the North. It is perfectly well known that the original boundary between the 26 counties and the six counties was drawn by Britain in such a way as to ensure a permanent majority against national unity. To maintain this fraud the British army has for four years now been shooting, arresting without trial, torturing and (as the Littlejohn affair makes clear) bombing, blackmailing and assassinating. The Labour party has done *nothing* about this. It sent the troops in in the first place. It has maintained a 'bipartisan' policy with the Tories. It has in practice supported internment without trial. As for its supposed horror at the 'violence' of the IRA, we would ask when Socialists have ever put on the same plane the violence of the oppressed and the violence of the oppressor? The Labour left has put forward no demand for the only real solution – the withdrawal of British troops and self-determination for the whole of Ireland.

Fortunately, within the working class movement some realisation is beginning to emerge of what is going on in Ireland. Some trades councils and trade union branches are now moving to call for the withdrawal of British troops. Hopefully this will be a prelude to moves within the Labour party. We call upon comrade Heffer, and the whole Labour left, to come out openly for an end to the bipartisan policy with the Tories, for an end to internment, and for the withdrawal of troops. United action on these points is imperative for the left.

Racism

Recent months have seen a new height of openly racist actions and laws in Britain. The

Immigration Act and the House of Lords ruling on 'illegal' immigration have been followed by the Pakistan Act. This, by classifying Pakistanis as aliens, will deprive them of the vote, the right to stand for election as an MP, the right to work in the civil service, make them liable to jail for taking part in industrial struggles, etc. A fight back has already started. Mansfield Hosiery Mills, British Celanese and Standard Telephones have all seen important industrial struggles against racism. The massive demonstration in London against the House of Lords ruling on illegal immigrants was another step forward. The conference of trade unionists against racism, although the politics of many of the participants raised as many problems as it solved, was also a step in the right direction.

As well as helping to build grass roots unity against racism in any form, the Labour left could also set the pace, if it wanted, for a united struggle. While simply getting rid of laws won't solve the problem by itself, there are a whole series of laws – the Immigration Act, the Aliens Acts and the Pakistan Act – which must go. Labour's record on this question is terrible. A total and public commitment to the repeal of these and all similar acts would open the way for left unity on this front. Without that it looks as if those fighting against racism are going to be fighting the next Labour government, and the Labour left, just as much as the last one.

Also tied up with this question is the struggle against the National Front and other fascist organisations. Under cover of the new 'respectability' given by the House of Lords decision, these organisations are bound to step up their racist activity. So far united action has started the fight back against them – the last time Colin Jordan tried to speak he was almost thrown in the Mersey. But a public call from the Labour left to drive the racists and fascists off the streets every time they appear would be another important step forward for left unity.

Democratic rights

We all know that capitalist democratic rights are a sham. It is nonsense to talk of 'freedom' when the operations of big firms can throw hundreds of thousands out of work. It is a fraud to talk of 'free speech' when three or four men control the press on which millions depend for information. But we also know that even what capitalist democratic rights there are were won through struggle, and that without them the struggle for socialism would be far, far more difficult than it already is. Laws such as the Industrial Relations Act and the continual police harassment and raids on Irish and socialist militants, threaten every hard-won

liberty the working class possesses. We are in a period marked by the undermining of capitalist democracy. In this situation the defence of democratic rights is crucial.

This summer the defence of democratic rights has been focussed on the case of the Shrewsbury building workers. A real measure of left unity has been achieved here. The IMG and the SLL have had joint meetings. The Communist Party has supported the campaign against the trials. So far, unfortunately, not much has been heard from the Labour left on this. A struggle on the defence of the Shrewsbury 24, and a commitment to ending totally the anti-picketing and conspiracy laws, would be another issue on which left unity could be forged. We would propose that the way to start this is for the Labour left to move an emergency motion on Shrewsbury at this year's Labour party Conference.

United action

United action of the left is achieved on a partial basis on a whole series of questions – against the Americans in Indochina, in the trade union struggle and so on. But most people feel the need to go further than this. What then are the problems for extending united left action? They are twofold – political and organisational. Some of the political problems have already been mentioned. While it is clear there are many differences, there is also a wide range of issues on which common political positions exist and where, therefore, united action is possible.

What poses new questions for left unity on the organisational level is the existence of tens of thousands, or even, in France and Italy, hundreds of thousands of people who are actively engaged in politics but who support policies and organisations other than those of the Socialist and Communist parties. In the 1950s or early 1960s left unity could mean simply the unity of the Labour party and Communist party. Now there are thousands of people not in those organisations whom real left unity will have to include. These are also frequently the most active political people – active in supporting and participating in strikes, demonstrating against the Americans in Vietnam, defending the Shrewsbury 24, fighting for Womens Liberation, and so on. Organisations like the Shrewsbury Defence Committees, the Anti-Internment League, etc. are going to keep appearing. These may, of course, include the Labour and Communist parties, but will extend to wider forces as well.

At the present time the most pressing need is for unity against the Tory government and its policies. We cannot wait until the entire left has reached agreement on the correct way of fighting the Tories before starting the job of building left unity. The important thing is to start the struggle *now*, with unity around those things on which we *can* agree. Everyone will be free to put forward their view as to how the struggle can best be carried forward, and we will be able to see in practice who is right. If comrade Heffer's view is right that the way forward in the struggle for socialism lies through the Labour party and a Labour government, then it is we who will be proved correct in practice. It is the real experience of the struggle that will decide who is right and who is wrong, – this will convince far more people than a thousand articles in *Red Weekly* or *Tribune*.

United bodies

For this reason we propose the formation in every area of united bodies of *all* socialist, trade union and political organisations, open to all those who are prepared to struggle against the Tory government and its policies. Similar types of bodies have already proved their worth in various parts of the country by mobilising support for the May Day strike, the gas and hospital workers struggles, organising the defence of the Shrewsbury 24, and providing a forum for debate on how to carry the struggle against the Tory government forward. A national move along these lines by *all* socialist forces (we are not talking about organisations of just a few people claiming to 'lead' the working class) seems to us the best way to forge a real left unity.

There are of course many more issues on which left unity is essential – Indochina, housing, attacks on the welfare state – but we have taken up the most urgent, which seem to us to offer the best starting point for a campaign to unify the left forces in this country.

Finally, we would like to offer comrade Heffer the pages of *Red Weekly* to reply to our views or take up any of the points we have raised. We hope that this statement will help to stimulate debate throughout the entire left on this important question.

TUC participates

By DAVE BAILEY

The TUC has come out in favour of workers participation, or what it calls 'industrial democracy,' in a document published last month called 'Industrial Democracy, Interim Report by the TUC General Council.'

What forced this sudden adoption of a new policy is Britain's entry into the EEC. The new company laws being drafted in Brussels will formalise and extend to every British company employing more than 500 workers the system of workers participation already widely established on the continent. The central aspect of this system is a company supervisory board on which workers are represented and which has limited powers of veto over management decisions.

NEW BUREAUCRATS

Alternatively, confidential information could be made available without damaging the company's prospects, if the worker representatives swore themselves to secrecy. But in that case, such representatives would not be subject to democratic control by the workers. This is therefore a formula for deals - sanctified by the TUC as 'collective bargaining' or 'consultation' - being made behind the workers' backs.

The TUC Report is in fact very vague about accountability. Although it is in favour of representatives on supervisory boards being elected through the unions (mainly to stave off the works councils favoured by the Tories), the representatives need not be company employees. This is a formula for creating a new layer of trade union bureaucrats who spend their time sitting on one board after another ('experts'). Their alleged 'powers over the management' will be used to dampen rank and file initiatives.

INFORMATION

At this year's TUC, the AUEW is calling for complete rejection of worker directors on supervisory boards, the T&G is 'opposing' the Common Market, and ACTT rejects both, demanding 'total opposition to the consolidation of the EEC.' Anticipating this awkward situation, the TUC have put forward the Brussels proposals as their own, but have selected and endorsed the most apparently radical elements of the European system in an effort to sow division and divide possible opponents on the left.

Schemes for workers participation in the management of enterprises are designed to make the workers' representatives carry the can for the anti-working class policies of capitalism. In times of intense class struggle, such 'integrationist' schemes are popular with the ruling class. But they also involve the conceding of certain important principles to the workers. To make such schemes credible, the ruling class has to accept the right of the workers to have access to large amounts of hitherto confidential company information and recognise their right to bargain over the central strategic decisions of the company.

The TUC has enthusiastically caught hold of these principles. The main theme of the Report is the need to extend collective bargaining to 'matters which are at present outside collective agreements,' and it demands the disclosure of much company information so as to make this possible. The TUC has recognised the fact that closures, mergers and takeovers represent a more serious threat than ever before to the job security of workers in Britain today, and puts forward the correct idea that workers should gain access to information about forward planning rather than having to always prepare the fight at the very last moment.

The TUC distinguishes three broad types of company information: manpower and earnings; financial information (profits, directors' fees, production costs etc.); and the all-important future plans of companies on closures, mergers, redeployment of labour etc. The first sort of information should be given as an 'absolute right', says the TUC. This, however, simply formalises the existing situation.

The second type of information can generally be acquired at present from piecing together material from Company House, annual accounts, and company hand-outs. But this is now to be made the subject of an 'information agreement,' under which each individual worker will receive a glossy brochure about the firm along with his plant overalls.

STRATEGIC PLANS

On the far more important question of the strategic plans of companies, the TUC make the following remark:

'While it is not impossible to envisage a role for the law in compelling employers to provide financial and forward planning information ... it is clear that enforced disclosure is hardly likely to be followed by meaningful discussions on related decisions.'

The reason for stopping short of this fence gives the whole game away:

'There is of course the problem of the confidentiality of certain types of information. There are two problems: first, the need to maintain the privacy of trade secrets; and, second, the need not to disclose vital financial data to competitors.'

In other words, the TUC wants the unions to have information on forward planning decisions, but not sufficient information to damage the company's competitive manoeuvrability in relation to other companies. These two principles are irreconcilable.

This will mean one of several things in practice. Since the TUC has renounced the principle of forcible disclosures, companies will, by and large, only enter into 'information agreements' on the central issues in order to 'prove' to the workers the hopelessness of fighting against redundancy. Often, this will be a ruse to get the workers to sign a productivity deal. The TUC Report in fact reaffirms TUC support for productivity deals.

What information is made available, and

from the white liberal rightwards. We also find the whole range of white groupings, from the community that considered the bringing up of a black orphan its 'Christian duty' to the lynch mob, whose oppression of the black community is a little more overt.

It is perhaps in his terrifying descriptions of lynchings that Hughes excels in this collection - the complete arbitrariness of lynching coming over with particular vividness. Unfortunately the format, the short story, does not enable Hughes to set lynching into the wider social process of the oppression of black people.

There are two stories about lynching. The first is of a negro violinist who had come home from Europe to visit his parents in a Southern town. He stopped to talk to a white woman who had been his music teacher and was lynched 'to keep negroes in their place.' The other story concerns a negro who shot himself before the mob reached him, so they strung up his body. This, apparently, wasn't good enough fun for the mob, so they went back in the afternoon and lynched his brother.

Smallcreep's Day by Peter Currell Brown (Picador, 40p).

Peter Brown's book is the story of a surrealistic journey through a capitalist factory. The central



what bargaining does take place over strategic decisions will then be used to tie workers closer to the management of 'their' company, by creating the pretence that 'by working more closely together' workers and bosses can make the company a 'bigger success.' In the section on productivity deals, the Report says:

'The employers' objective in productivity bargaining is to secure greater profitability ... What is sought ... is union and worker identification with that objective. Providing the unions and workers involved do not lose sight of the broader trade union objectives (sic) this may be accepted.'

In other words, the TUC is saying: 'Line yourselves up with your bosses; principles are only for Sundays.'

Since the principal objective of worker representatives on management boards is to advance the interests of the workers within the framework of company interests, no amount of radical proposals for a souped-up supervisory board will make a difference to the collaborationist nature of the scheme. The TUC try to obscure this essential point by tarring up the existing European schemes for supervisory boards. Instead of one-third worker representatives, it should be 50-50; it should be extended to firms with 200 employees, instead of 500 employees; etc.

But the main point around which the TUC wants to establish its radicalism is that the European systems:

'... do not entail any restriction of the powers of the owners of the enterprise represented in

character, Pinquean Smallcreep, has slotted a slot into a pulley for the last sixteen years and now he sets out on a trip through the factory to find out why. Anyone who has worked in a factory will recognise the characters and incidents related.

'We could take for instance the factory inspector ... a little old stooped man who wore dark glasses and carried a white stick ... I saw that the old man was fumbling about with one hand trying to find the ear-piece of his hearing aid ...' Or the humble man who 'looked after' the factory sewage and was right at the bottom of the wages scale - but he knew his place ... 'Are you telling me to ask them to upset the entire system of wage differential upon which the Unions, and indeed all society, stand? Unions exist to create and preserve order and syntax in our society, not to back up the haphazard fancies of greedy and irresponsible minorities or individuals.' The book also reveals something of the persecution which gay people face at the hands of the working class, in the scenes in which Smallcreep is accused of being a homosexual.

But the book is not just a collection of incidents which occur as Smallcreep explores the factory and the offices, it is also a clever exposition of how the various aspects of capitalist production combine to produce alienation: when Smallcreep reaches the final product of the factory all he can see of it is that it makes a lot of noise, pollutes the atmosphere, and is generally an indescribable abomination.

the General Meeting of shareholders. The latter can still, arising from the right of ownership, overrule the decisions of the other organs of the enterprises. To alter the ultimate powers of ownership of industrial shareholding is of course not possible without altering the pattern of ownership itself through political means. But a straightforward institutional extension of the powers of the Supervisory Board to be able to overrule the AGM of shareholders on the same decisions as it can override the board of management would place a stringent limit on the collective ownership rights of shareholders at their AGM.'

Since, however, power over strategic decisions is only possible on the basis of information - which is only given by information agreements - this extension of power of the supervisory board is an empty victory. Furthermore, AGM's of shareholders do not take strategic decisions. To discuss such things in an open meeting of shareholders would impair company security and damage its competitive future. The power to overrule AGMs is therefore of little importance.

Neither does the TUC get very far concerning the voting procedures of supervisory boards. Here there is straightforward confusion. On the one hand, the board as a whole is to have veto powers over major company decisions (page 43), yet elsewhere it says, major decisions should be 'subject to the consent or veto of worker-representatives' (page 37). A spokesman for Congress House agreed that this was 'rather ambiguous.'

KEY ELEMENTS

To have effective controls, the working class needs three things: complete abolition of business secrecy, unlimited and unrestricted veto rights, and to have these veto powers vested in mass meetings of workers. The TUC recognises the elements of workers control, but tries to tie them together within the framework of capitalist competition and without disrupting capitalist law. The result can only be workers participating in their own exploitation and compromising their own interests. At the same time, the TUC Report has raised the key issues in the debate and will introduce the question of workers' control to broader layers of workers.

Because of their apparent radicalism, many sections of the labour movement will embrace the TUC proposals in good faith. This places a particular burden of responsibility on the revolutionary left. No longer must the question of workers control be posed by the left in a purely verbal fashion. Workers control tactics must be discussed and wherever possible applied, practically and concretely, in relation to the particular problems facing the working class movement.

Red Weekly has already discussed in detail the type of thing which needs to be done to control rising prices, for example. This would involve the creation of 'price commissions' in each factory and at major distribution points, with powers to investigate every aspect of the company and interview all staff, and having powers to veto any price rises. Local price committees would invigilate such a freeze and ensure against sabotage by the capitalists. But such a development would be impossible without a major clash with capitalist law, for it would represent a major invasion of private property rights. Such actions would in turn only derive legitimacy from revolutionary right and would require any government which had a policy of controlling prices to base itself on workers' organisations, rather than on Parliament.

It is unfortunate that the book holds out no hope for the future and shows no way out of the capitalist system. It is indeed ironic that the way out that Peter Brown took, that of making hand-made pottery on his own, is not only impossible for the majority of people, but relies on that majority of the population continuing to work in the very conditions that he satirises so effectively. In spite of this failure, however, this remains a book which should be read.

The Second Death of Ramon Mercador by Jorge Semprun (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, £2.25).

'The Second Death of Ramon Mercader' by Jorge Semprun, the script writer of 'Z', is ostensibly a spy thriller of the Americans vs the Russians variety. This however is merely a vehicle for weaving in other strands. It deals with the effects of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution on an Old Bolshevik who has been rehabilitated after 'De-Stalinisation.' He is now employed by the KGB and the contrast between being an agent of the World Revolution for the Comintern in the twenties and the present is particularly well portrayed. Weaving through the whole story is the allusion to the first Ramon Mercader - the assassin of Leon Trotsky in Mexico. This novel is well worth reading.

Reviews

Left fiction: a mixed bag

Pauline Ryan

The Ways of White Folks by Langston Hughes (Wildwood House, 90p).

This is a collection of short stories by Langston Hughes, written in the 1930s, concerned with various aspects of the relationships between black and white people. Through the pages of the book we find a whole range of white attitudes, succinctly portrayed,

The end for Allende?

President Allende of Chile has now called off his planned visit to Algeria next Monday. Had he gone, there was good reason to doubt whether he could seriously have expected to return.

The armed forces now threaten Allende with two possible alternatives: either to renounce the whole programme of the three year-old Popular Unity government, or to step down from the Presidency. Either road amounts to the establishment of a military dictatorship.

Allende has been forced into retreat after retreat. The coalition government of the military and the Popular Unity parties, described by Allende as 'the last resort against civil war', has fallen apart after only two weeks. General Carlos Prats and the other military ministers all withdrew from the Cabinet on 23 August. This step had been demanded for days by the fascists, by the right wing National Party, and by the demonstrations of middle-class housewives and professionals last week.

The tune is now being called by the right wing; every concession, far from appeasing them, merely encourages them to make further demands. The lorry-owners' boycott, which sparked off the present crisis, shows no signs of ending after over a month. Economic life has now been brought virtually to a standstill.

A further encouragement to the right has been the appointment of General Torres de la Cruz as military governor of the capital, Santiago. Torres de la Cruz was responsible for the shooting of a worker during recent arms searches of factories. Similarly, left wing sailors arrested after planning a mutiny against their right wing officers are said to have been tortured. As the battles between left and right continue on the streets of the capital, the counter-revolutionaries are taking the offensive.

The responsibility for this situation lies clearly with the Popular Unity leaders. It is they who have allowed the working class to be disarmed, exhorting them to trust in the very army which has been routing out their limited stocks of

arms over the past few weeks.

Allende has always had a policy of wooing the military. He brought the army commander, Prats, into the Government last October to deal with the first lorry-owners' boycott. After the abortive coup at the end of June, he appealed to the thousands of workers who had come out onto the streets to entrust matters of law and order to the Government and the army. This was the constant theme of the leaders of Allende's Socialist Party, and of the Communist Party which has unwaveringly supported every retreat in the last few weeks.

But now Prats has deserted them. He made his position quite clear when he first entered the Government last year: such a post, he said, was fitting for an army leader because 'national security' encompassed the defence not only of Chile's borders but also of 'the social order and spiritual and material wealth of the country'. Yet still Allende and the Communist Party fostered the illusion that the commander of the capitalists' army was committed to their

'peaceful road' to socialism.

There are few who still share this illusion today. The Communist Party, in particular, is increasingly hard put to conceal the disastrous failure of the 'peaceful road' in Chile and its lessons for Britain.

Writing in a book on Chile published last year (Kate Clark, *Chile: Reality and Prospects of Popular Unity*), Jack Woddis, 'theoretician' of the Communist Party, had this to say:

'What is now being attempted is the carrying through of deep-going social and economic changes which will open up the possibilities of a transition to socialism without an armed uprising against the existing state and constitution

' . . . it is of immense interest to progressive people everywhere who see in this heroic effort by the Popular Unity government and its supporters a testing ground of the possibility, even under different conditions, of a similar path to socialism "by other means" that is to say, other than civil war.'

The results of the test are now apparent. Class violence and civil war cannot be avoided in the struggle for power. Three years of government by reformists advocating the 'peaceful road' in Chile have only produced a situation in which the offensive in class violence is now taken by the bourgeoisie, against the working class movement. Jane Fraz

Talks start at LIP

By JOHN MARSTON

The last few days have seen a lull in solidarity actions with the Lip workers, evicted from their watch factory in Besancon in eastern France by 3,000 armed police just over a fortnight ago.

Sporadic demonstrations are, of course, continuing to take place, but the last co-ordinated activity took place on Thursday, 23 August. Then radio and TV employees struck for 24 hours, and there were numerous other stoppages in Paris — mainly of postal and printing workers, although even employees at the Stock Exchange stopped for 15 minutes. The day of action culminated in a mass rally attended by delegations from some 600 factories.

That there has been no decline in popular support for the Lip workers is clear; just last week another opinion poll in the magazine *L'Express* showed that only 31% of those interviewed disapproved of the methods used by the Lip workers in 'illegally' taking over their factory, continuing to manufacture and sell watches, and paying themselves out of the proceeds.

The opinion polls confirm the impression given by the almost unprecedented wave of spontaneous sympathy strikes which followed the police take-over of the factory. Such actions are not a common form of struggle in France — indeed, they have not been seen in an industrial dispute since the miners' strike in 1963. With the holiday period coming to an end, now is obviously the moment for decisive action in support of the Lip struggle.

But in place of such a plan for national action, the leaders of the main trade union federations, the CGT and the CFDT, and of the Communist and Socialist parties, continue to offer mere

empty declarations of solidarity. It is true that on Tuesday, 21 August, Mascarello of the Communist Party-led CGT and Maire of the Socialist inclined CFDT issued a joint statement which 'invited the regional organisations to take all such initiatives as will permit the development of action at places of work and in the localities'. But British workers will remember a similar 'invitation' from the TUC for May Day this year. Such statements are nothing but an abdication of leadership — they 'invite' workers to take actions while offering them no perspective for organising to make them effective.

A third session of talks was due to take place on Thursday, 30 August. But it is already clear where all this is leading. The real questions will not be resolved at the negotiating table but by events outside — why else did the Government send the police in? Any settlement will only ratify a relationship of forces achieved in the class struggle itself. To emphasise the negotiations is to blur this fact, by suggesting that a solution can be reached through 'rational discussion' without the necessity of mobilising the forces of the working class.

This may fit in with the electoral ambitions of the reformist leaders and their 'peaceful road', but it could spell disaster for the Lip workers and for the large sections of the working class which now identify with their struggle. As the holiday period comes to an end, and the factories begin to reopen, everything will depend on the ability of local militants to initiate actions at the base which can begin to turn the tide.

In fact, the reformist leaders *do* have a perspective — but one which comes out in rather a different way. Thus Raymond Gelly wrote in the Communist Party newspaper *L'Humanite* last week: 'It is necessary to act, without losing an instant. It is a question of negotiating. Nothing more, nothing less.' The implications of this have become clear in the course of talks last week between the Government's negotiator, Giraud, and the Lip workers' representatives.

grant workers and to step up the number of deportations.

This comes at a time when immigrant workers have begun for the first time to engage in militant struggles, as at the Renault car plant earlier this year. The new restrictions, launched in the 'Fontanet circular' late last year, include measures which make the employers responsible for providing accommodation — thus leaving the immigrant workers totally dependent on them.

Over the summer, the Ministry of the Interior has taken steps to deport a number of immigrant workers, and further deportations are in the pipeline. This has gone hand in hand with a growing harassment of immigrant workers by the fascist groups, who have been encouraged

International. Ali spoke at public meetings in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane on 'Imperialism and Revolution in Asia' and at numerous other meetings on 'The Class Struggle in Europe' and 'The Politics of the Fourth International'.

Ali's tour was one of the most successful to be conducted by a member of the Fourth International. The politics and ideas of the FI were presented to over 1,000 militants at public meetings. The visit was also fully covered in the Australian press, and in frequent interviews on TV and radio Ali explained in some detail what the Fourth International stands for.

Given the recent wave of strikes in Australia, in



The Lip workers broke with 'legality' by selling watches to pay themselves

The first session took place on Tuesday, 21 August. The local CFDT delegates walked out before the end, complaining that: 'There was nothing new. They presented us once more with the Charbonnel plan' (which involves at least 300 redundancies, division of the firm into three separate companies, etc.). Next day, they told the general assembly of Lip workers that 'we will only send an observer' to the next session.

But the line of the CGT delegates was complete-

by the measures taken by the Government.

In response to this, a Committee Against the Deportations has been set up in Paris. Among the groups so far supporting it are the Paris federation of the Socialist Party, the newspaper *Rouge* (formerly published by the banned Communist League), the Unified Socialist Party, and the Workers Struggle group. Its first act has been to issue the following statement:

The immigrant workers Larbi, Boudjanana, Mohamed Larbi, Maurice Courbage, and Mohamed Najeh Salim, have had deportation orders served on them. Maurice Courbage was taken straight from work and put on an aeroplane.

The Ministry of the Interior has announced other deportations during the holiday period.

particular the Ford's Broadmeadows strike, Ali's description and analysis of workers' struggles in Britain, France, etc., was especially valuable. He pointed out the growing intervention of the European sections of the Fourth International in the class struggle, and explained the banning of the French Communist League in this context.

A united front meeting at which every working class organisation was represented was held in Sydney to defend the Communist League, at which 300 dollars (about £175) was collected. Thus the tour gave an important shot in the arm to the international campaign. In Queensland, the Communist Party of Australia requested Ali to address its State Committee

ly different. Their leader, Mercet, told the assembly that: 'The CGT delegation will go to this meeting. The negotiations are like a bone. We must chew it over for as long as necessary. Even if it is a question of six months, we will go on to the end.' And when the second session did take place, the CFDT sent a normal delegation. Obviously under pressure from their own national leaders, as well as the CGT, they shamefacedly announced that: 'We don't want it to be said that the CFDT prevented the success of the negotiations'.

These workers have been struggling: — for the withdrawal of the Fontanet-Marcellin circulars (Marcellin is the Minister of the Interior), which tie them to their bosses; — for the right to accommodation; — against the racism which has led to the deaths of Ben Ali at Barbes, Mohamed Diab at Versailles, Malika at Fresnes, and Fernando Ramos at Ivry; — for freedom of expression.

We condemn the measures by which the Ministry of the Interior is trying to silence the immigrant workers in their fight for recognition that they have the same rights as other workers.

By defending freedom of expression for immigrant workers, you defend your own.

The Committee can be contacted at: 71 rue Louis-Blanc, Paris 10, France.

and then donated 50 dollars for the defence of the French Trotskyists. They also agreed to circulate further appeals to their membership.

It may be recalled that the previous Australian government had banned Ernest Mandel from visiting Australia. It was made clear during the course of Ali's tour, however, that Mandel, too, would be given a visa to enter the country to speak at public meetings.

(The newspaper of the Australian Communist League, *Militant*, which has carried detailed coverage of the recent wave of strikes in Australia, can be obtained from: MILITANT, P.O. Box 16, Westgate, Sydney 2048, Australia.)

French left fights deportations

In France, as in Britain, increasing moves are being made to tighten up restrictions on immi-

Tariq Ali tours Australia

Tariq Ali, a leading member of the IMG and the Fourth International, recently concluded a successful tour of Australia jointly sponsored by the Australian Union of Students and the Communist League, an Australian revolutionary organisation in solidarity with the Fourth

RUSSIAN DISSIDENTS ON TRIAL

By JULIET WYNTER

Pyotr Yakir and Victor Krasin are now on trial in Moscow on charges of 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda.' The Soviet regime is giving the trial considerable publicity, gloating over the confessions of guilt allegedly made by these dissidents.

However, these 'confessions' do not come as a surprise to those who remember Yakir's message to a journalist three months before his arrest in June of last year: 'If they beat me, I will say anything - I know that from my former experience in the camps. But you will know it will not be the real me speaking. Another thing, I shall never in any circumstances commit suicide. So you will know that if they say I have done away with myself, someone else will have done me in.' (*The Times*, 23 June, 1972).

ANTI-STALINIST

Yakir is charged with plotting the overthrow of the Soviet regime, and of collaborating with the neo-fascist emigre organisation NTS for this

purpose. But his actual crime is to have been a determined and courageous opponent of the Stalinist regime.

As he once said: 'Unfortunately there is a tendency nowadays to confuse anti-Stalinism with anti-Sovietism. In this way Stalinism is equated with Soviet power, and this conflicts with the spirit of the 20th and 22nd party congresses and the resolutions they passed.' References to the party congresses was a safe way of making the point, although, as Yakir knows, they did not of course liquidate Stalinism.

Yakir was involved in a number of actions designed to get this point across to Soviet citizens. In 1969, in response to an article in the journal *Kommunist* which attempted to rehabilitate Stalin, he demanded the opening of a legal action against Stalin, enumerating his crimes as matched against the Soviet code of political offences. Yakir was also one of a group of Soviet citizens who

failing to organise international support for them.

That is the urgent task now. The trial of Yakir and Krasin is designed to appeal to the United Nations against violations in the Soviet Union of basic rights and Soviet laws. In 1970, together with A. Sakharov, he founded the Human Rights movement in the Soviet Union.

INTENSIFIED REPRESSION

The Soviet Union is keen to have diplomatic detente and economic pacts with the West. But this goes hand in hand with intensified repression against internal dissidents. Only in this way can they be isolated from all cultural or ideological contact with the West; above all, from the revolutionary marxist forces, part of whose programme is directed towards the overthrow of bureaucracy.

Of course, sections of the Communist Parties in Britain and elsewhere have a 'sensitive' approach to these 'excesses' of the bureaucracy, which threaten the alliances they are busily constructing with the social democratic parties. But at the same time, they use the ideological weaknesses of the dissidents as an excuse for

Pyotr Yakir and his mother who spent many years in a labour camp with him



play the same role as did the Moscow Trials in the 1930s. The time is long overdue for members of the Communist Party to probe beyond these

show trials and 'confessions,' and face up to the whole history of Stalinist degeneration against which Yakir and Krasin have struggled.

Oldfield, old trick

From GERY LAWLESS



The recent press revelations of the name of Sir Maurice Oldfield as the new head of the Secret Intelligence Service were organised by the British Secret Service. They were part of an operation, so far successful, to cover up the recent reorganisation of the Secret Service.

Traditionally the Security Service (formerly M15) reported to the Home Secretary, who through a junior Minister at the Home Office was responsible for this agency. The S.I.S. (sometimes MI6 or DI6) was responsible to the Foreign Secretary through a junior Minister.

This division of the Secret Service had long been proclaimed as part of the uniquely British way of solving the age-old problem - how to keep a secret police without letting it grow too powerful.

REORGANISATION

But a reorganisation ordered by Edward Heath shortly after he became Prime Minister does away with these checks and balances.

Heath ordered the appointment of a

Maurice Oldfield

new Secret Service Supremo, Sir Peter Wilkinson.

A former British Ambassador to South Vietnam in 1966-67, Wilkinson is a personal friend not only of Heath but also of the Director of the CIA, William E. Colby. Colby was in Vietnam at the same time as Wilkinson; both men are also former heads of the Far Eastern desk in their respective organisations, and both are experts in interrogation and pacification techniques.

Wilkinson, as Co-ordinator of Security and Intelligence, operates from Number 10, Downing Street, and takes overall responsibility for both the Security Service and the Secret Intelligence Service, under the direct guidance of Heath himself.

In other words, Heath has become the first modern British Premier to be himself the political head of the Secret Service.

It was to cover this fact that we had the controlled leak of the name of the successor to Sir 'Jack' Rennie as head of the S.I.S.

BEAVERBROOK

The fact that Sir Maurice Oldfield had succeeded Rennie first appeared in the U.S. magazine *Newsweek*, and was picked up in the Beaverbrook paper the *Daily Express*. The first photograph of Oldfield to be published appeared in the German maga-

zine *Stern*, and was picked up by the *Beaverbrook Evening Standard*.

In fact I can reveal that in both cases the leak originated from within the Beaverbrook organisation, at the request of the Secret Service.

Magazines like *Time Out*, *Private Eye*, and even some sections of the left press then jumped on the story, not realising that the diet they were lapping up had been prepared and served by the S.I.S.

EDINBURGH TC SUPPORTS COMMUNIST LEAGUE

A further boost to the campaign against the French Government's ban on the Communist League came this week with a motion from Edinburgh and district trades council condemning the ban.

The trades council is going to send a delegation to the French Consulate in London to demand that the ban on the League is immediately dropped and all its arrested members released.

One leading militant of the former Communist League, Pierre Rousset, is still in jail two months after the imposition of the ban. No date has yet been set for hearing the charges against him.

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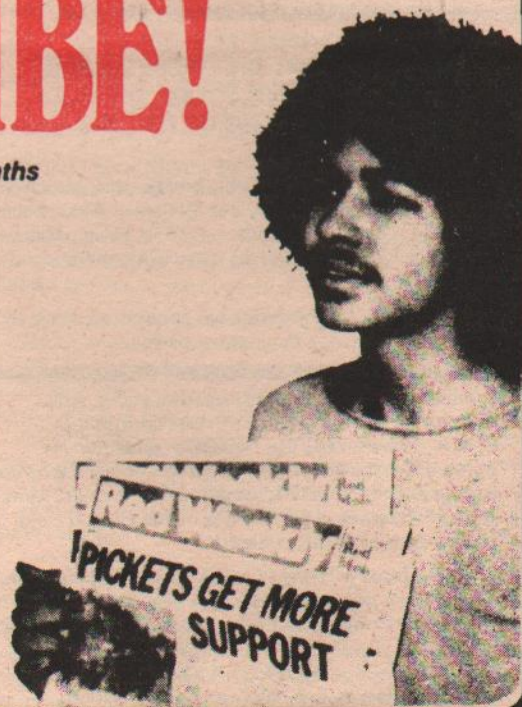
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182, Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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ADDRESS _____

OCCUPATION _____



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

WHAT'S ON

EDINBURGH IMG PUBLIC MEETING: 'Permanent Revolution in Southern Africa' - speaker: Tony Southall. Wednesday, 5 September, at 7.30 p.m. in the Trades Council, Picardy Place (top of Leith Walk).

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE: Public meeting on the present situation, speakers Lek Hor Tan (FUNK representative) and John Gittings. Monday, 3 September, at 7.30 p.m. in Room S075, St Clements Building, LSE, Clare Market, London W.C.2.

FREE THE BELFAST 10! Demonstration Sunday 16 September, 2.30 p.m. at Charing Cross Embankment. Rally at Speakers Corner. Organised by the Belfast 10 Defense Committee 88 Roslyn Rd., London N.15.

IMG RED FORUM: Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London N.1.

BIRMINGHAM IMG STUDY CLASSES: Introductory series of lectures on the politics of the IMG. Every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m. at the Wellington pub, Bristol Road.