

Red Weekly

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FASCISTS ROUTED IN LEICESTER — ON TO LONDON

LAST WEEK ALMOST 6000 ANTI-FASCIST DEMONSTRATORS marched in Leicester, compared to the miserable 500 bedraggled supporters the National Front were able to muster.

That turn out would not have been possible without the anti-fascist mobilisation in Red Lion Square on 15 June. Red Lion Square brought mass attention to the fascist NF and made it an issue throughout wide sections of the Labour movement and the immigrant community.

This is why the Leicester demonstration, unlike the Red Lion Square demonstrations of October and June, featured a significant number of trade union and immigrant workers' banners.

Leicester has shown there exists a vast potential for mobilising decisive sections of the working class on the slogan of *No Platform for Fascists*.

The Fords' Liverpool shop

stewards' committee marched in Leicester. They will be holding a meeting soon to decide whether to march in London. A delegation of black workers marched from Imperial Typewriters. The Liverpool Trades Council were at Leicester and will be on the London demonstration.

UCATT Central branch, Edinburgh, has noted in a resolution to the Trades Council 'the threat posed to the labour movement by

the attempt of the fascist NF to link up with extreme loyalists through their demonstration in London on 7 September.' The resolution calls on the Edinburgh Trades Council to send a delegation to the counter-demonstration.

This resolution contrasts with the attitude of Liberation—the CP dominated organisation—which organised the united front demonstration of 15 June. Liberation has refused to set up an organising committee for 7 September. It has refused to put out any public call for a counter-demonstration. This will quite simply leave all the initiatives in the hands of the NF and the police.

It also means that Liberation has simply lain down before the Home Office ruling that the demonstrations must remain at least one mile apart.

LOYALISTS

Furthermore Liberation has refused to make any point about the NF's links with the loyalists. This is done on the spurious grounds that to do so would divide the working class.

Leicester showed the potential for mobilising big forces against fascism. What is needed now is to organise and weld these forces into a powerful united front for 7 September which can mobilise a mass picket to meet the NF when it arrives at Hyde Park.

The lamentable failure and ignominious retreat of Liberation means that those organisations determined to fight for a *No Platform for Fascists* must issue a joint call for a mass picket. A failure to do this will lead to divisions, fragmentation and uncertainty. It will put all the advantages back into the hands of the NF and the police.

The *No Platform for Fascists* position was not fully implemented at Leicester. Leicester showed that there are new, growing forces coming onto the scene which can be won to putting that position into practice.

The newly built strength and unity must be organised to that end. It must not be permitted to break up in disarray and confusion



(Photo: Chris Davies, Report)

Chile demo forges ahead

MANY THOUSANDS of people are expected to join in the national demonstration marking the anniversary of the bloody coup in Chile on 15 September.

Speakers on the demo will include Tariq Ali (IMG), Ron Hayward (General Secretary of the Labour Party), Jack Jones and Hortensia Allende, widow of the Chilean President, murdered in his palace a year ago. Organised by The Chile Solidarity Campaign, the demonstration is being supported by a wide cross section of the trade union movement.

The CSC has been active in the localities in preparation. In Liverpool, for example, there are plans to hire a special train to bring people down.

In Newport, South Wales, a special 'Chile week' has been organised featuring films and a teach-in, as well as a local demonstration on the 14th.

In South London another 'week' is to take place, again with public meetings, films and a local march. These sorts of activities, as well as mobilising for the national demonstration, help to make the question of Chile a live political issue within the various local labour movements.

STOPPAGE

The CSC has also called for a national half-hour stoppage on 11 September (the actual anniversary date) for which only a little support has so far been

achieved.

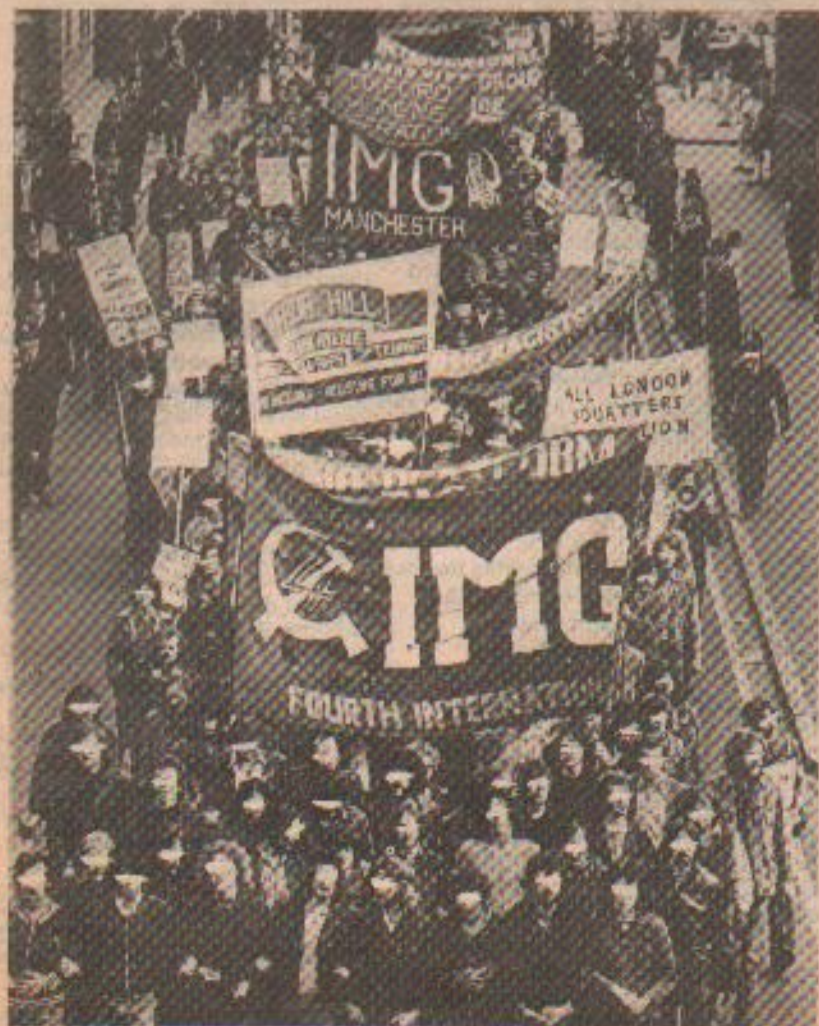
This shows how much work has to be done inside the trade union movement to reawaken the tradition of international solidarity that was so strong in the 'hands of Russia' campaign in 1919 and again in 1936 in support of the Spanish revolution.

But the national demonstration has to do more than mourn the thousands of workers and peasants butchered by the military junta in Chile. It has to drive home to the Labour Government that as a government brought into office by its support from the working class it has to break all links with the Chilean junta, and give full support to all actions taken by workers in this country, such as the blacking of Chilean goods in solidarity with the Chilean resistance.

It is not just that the Labour Government has scabbed on the decisions taken at the last Labour Party Conference. It has scabbed on the whole of the labour movement by continuing diplomatic and economic exchanges with the Chilean butchers.

Unfortunately there are those who argue that so close to an election is not the time for criticising the Government; that now is the time for closing ranks to fight the common enemy, etc. But an election is precisely the time when the labour movement has to take a firm position on the policies being followed by the Labour Government.

After all, the first lesson that must be learnt from the tragic experiences in Chile, is that a left-wing government if it does not draw on the organised strength of the working class in order to implement a socialist programme, but relies on parliamentary legislation and the institutions of the capitalist class, is at the mercy of bloody counter-revolution.



(Photo: Chris Davies, Report)

GREAT BRITAIN 75

—The Colonel Is Rumbled—

by John Marshall

THE REVELATIONS about Colonel David Stirling's strike breaking force 'GB75' should come as no surprise to anyone who has been following what sections of the ruling class have been up to in the last months.

On the 28 January a group of Tory MPs put down a motion in the House of Commons calling for the Government to set up a register of people willing to assist in maintaining essential services 'on a free and voluntary basis...in the event of a national emergency.

Since then a whole series of anti-strike neo-fascist and paramilitary organisations have been established

such as 'Unison' set up by former NATO military chief General Sir William Walker.

MOST SERIOUS

The outfit proposed by Stirling is the most serious of the organisations so far set up. It undoubtedly has backing in 'reputable' circles, the legal advice for example is spot on, and it is certainly well funded—the allocation is for salaries of £6,000 per year for its main employees. Furthermore it is very free from the usual wild rantings about 'smashing the Red scum into the ground' and instead poses questions, from the ruling class point of view, in a quite serious way. It has no illusion

about defeating a big widespread or general strike. It aims merely at keeping limited services going in some industries for a few days until the army and other reserves could be mobilised.

Stirling has an acute understanding of the technical problems of the bourgeoisie in a modern general strike: 'In 1926 the Territorial Army, along with volunteers drawn from every category and level of the community was able, albeit on a minimum scale, to keep the country's basic services "ticking over"....Today's technical developments in automation, electronics and computerisation have resulted in the creation of plants and installations requiring a much higher level of sophisticated qualifications to operate them than was required in 1926. Also on that occasion the Broadcasting Authority was not strike bound - whereas there must be a grave risk that all media will be struck in today's circumstances.'

Furthermore Stirling has an accurate understanding of the political problems of the main parties: 'neither of the main political parties contemplate drawing up such a plan [for smashing a general strike] for fear of being accused by the Unions of strike breaking and union bashing.'

The forces lined up behind the anti-strike groups and tactics are very motley indeed. But they do show a fair cross section of at least parts of the ruling class.

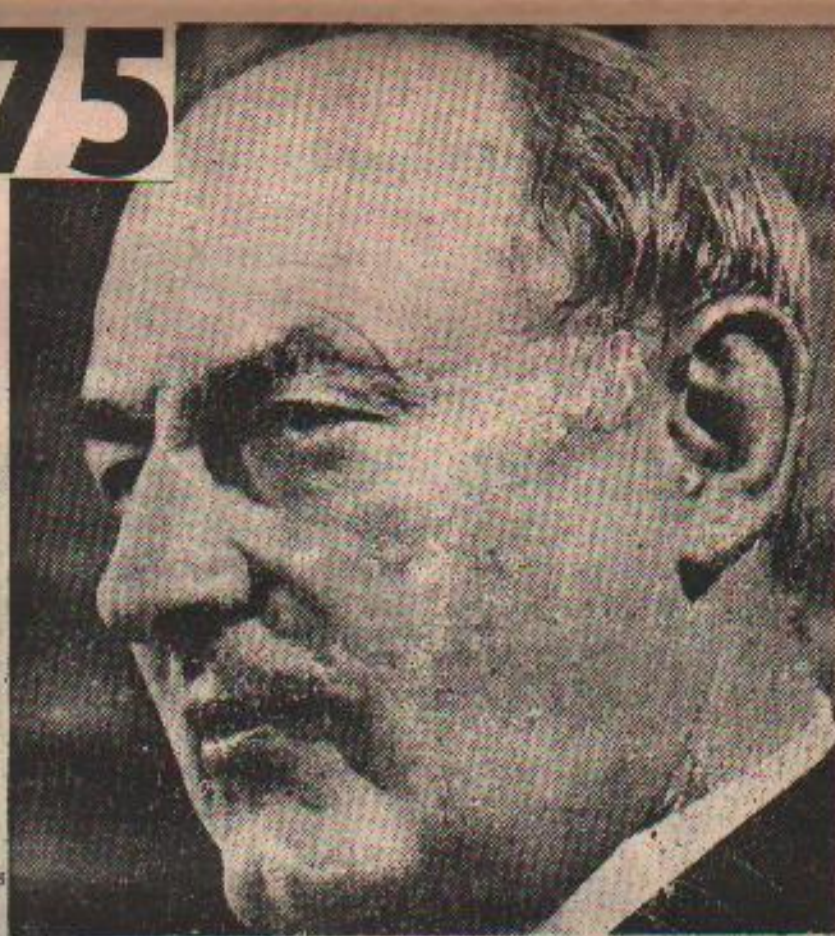
First are the army officers. Most of the major figures in these groups—Colonel Stirling, General Walker, Wing-Commander Goding, Major Greenwood—come from the armed forces. Neither are they individual isolated men. General Sir Walter Walker was the commander of NATO land forces in Northern Europe. Stirling was the founder of the Special Air Service. These are people from the very core of the armed forces.



General Sir William Walker

Neither is there any reason to suppose that these retired officers have lost their links with their colleagues who are still in the army or that still serving officers do not share their views. On the contrary the exact opposite is the case. Here the key man is the head of infantry training Brigadier Kitson. He has already called for the Government to prepare army forces for strike breaking by setting up 'specialist individuals and units within the army to enable essential civil services to be maintained in the event of civilians being unable or unwilling to maintain them.'

The second element in the situation is a number of sectional groups of the ruling class. The old engineering firm GKN, whose director Brookes is the main leader of the swing to the right in the CBI, has a known association with fascist organisations. A main director of the Brentwood Company, Charles Gordon, is the founder of the Great Britain Coalition Party, which has declared its aim as ending the 'criminal lunacy' of rule by politicians. Wealth stockbroker Major Alexander Greenwood has founded the 'Society of Friends' which claims to have 900 volunteers ready to go into action in



Col. David Stirling—founder of the Army's 'Special Air Services' (SAS) unit and now master-mind behind 'GB 75'

the event of a breakdown in 'law and order'. Small, and not so-small, businessmen in the Midlands have links with the National Front and have financed the many 'Back Enoch' movements.

SMALL BUSINESSMEN

The third element is simply the squeezed small businessmen and middle classes who are organised in such groups as the National Ratepayers Association. It is of course this group which supplies most of the ideological ravings.

The attitude of the big industrial bourgeoisie to these extreme right wing organisations is however more complex. They have no confidence whatever that the social contract will get the unions 'under control'. The latest *Business Decisions Ltd* survey indicated that two thirds of the firms polled thought the social contract would have no effect on current pay claims and none thought it would prevent further acceleration of claims.

The belief that the 'Social Contract' will not work and that the policy of integration of the unions cannot succeed is compounded within the ruling class by an absolutely widespread belief that the present economic situation is destroying all the institutions of bourgeois rule. In its projections for 1974 the *Financial Times* says 'The economic successes needed to restore confidence in many of our institutions (notably Parliament and the City), to "sell" the EBC to a sceptical public and to ease the tensions in British public life have simply failed to materialise. And the troubles have actually become worse in consequence. The *Financial Times* doubts whether our political institutions will stand the strain. It will not be merely our material standards that are threatened but the whole fabric of freedom and decency which characterise our country.'

It is this line of thought which led to the 'coup d'etat' in the CBI and the emergence of a new hard right-wing line led by Brookes of GKN.

HARD LINE

Just now hard this right-wing line can be, was well expressed in one of the main mouthpieces of industrial capital *The Economist*. On the 2 February it wrote: 'The recent ambulance men's strikes were largely beaten by middle class blacklegs. There are not likely to be many middle class blackleg's streaming across the pithead pickets to dig British coal, but there gradually could be to deliver supplies of oil and imported coal to power stations.' On 16 February it wrote: 'In 1974-79 employers will need to show greater willingness to sack contract-breakers, use black-legs, resist pickets, import coal.'

But while the whole logic of the big bourgeoisie's position drives it

towards the strong state and the utilisation of the extra-state anti-strike squads, simple fear of the working class response drives it in the opposite direction. The attempt of Chrysler to use such an anti-strike force to drive lorries through the picket, backfired in a big way during the 1973 strike. When police waded into the pickets during the Footprint tools dispute in Sheffield, and arrested the District Secretary of the AUEW, this led to a district engineering strike.

The result of this conflict between the logical evolution of their position and their worry about the working class response, is that the bourgeoisie continually flies kites about the whole thing. For example *The Times* in recent weeks has had no less than three major articles discussing the possibility of a Military coup while papers such as the *Observer* have taken to running articles on whether the army could in fact takeover if it wanted to. It is beginning, although only beginning, to move towards the position of the Italian ruling class whose whole state apparatus covers up for the fascists and strong arm men. But the ruling class itself is continually scared by the massive working class response to fascist and strike breaking activity. Similarly the Tory Party will not be openly associated with the strike breaking groups but neither will it openly condemn them.

THE FUTURE

We must avoid alarmism. What is important is not what the bourgeoisie would like to do, but what it is able to do. The defence against the strike breakers and neo-fascists is not whether the ruling class does or does not favour them but the strength and militancy of the working class. Here the situation is much more favourable. The organisations of the working class in Britain are formidably strong. The social structure of the country is the most unfavourable for fascism or for a military takeover. Finally it is quite clear that a simple undisguised physical assault on the working class cannot succeed. The working class to be defeated must first suffer a major political defeat on a question such as racism or Ireland.

But the alarm bells should start ringing. The organisation of working class self-defence must become an increasing part of militants' activity in the coming years and months. We must never forget that Hitler, Mussolini, Franco and the Chilean junta also started from small beginnings.

The full text of Col. Stirling's confidential plans have been published in a special issue of *Peace News*. Available from *Peace News*, 5, Caledonian Road, London, N.1.

IN FOCUS

ON THE ROCKS WITH COURT LINE

The Collapse of the big travel firm Court Line has left a lot of egg on a lot of faces.

Most embarrassed are those circles of the ruling class who have recently been spending huge sums of money to extoll the virtues of 'private enterprise' across the length and breadth of the country.

The Court Line debacle has served as a more powerful object lesson in the real nature of capitalism than all the 'Aims of Industry' pamphlets and ads put together.

The fate of Court Line has had a direct effect on the lives of hundreds of thousands of people—both customers and employees of the firm. But the decisions which led to this fate were made in total secrecy by a small handful of company managers and directors.

When the Company collapsed:

—there was no cash in the company's coffers to cover the cost of holidays already booked and paid for.

—there was no cash to pay for the return fares of those already abroad.

—little or no cash had been passed on to pay the hotel bills of those already on holiday.

So where had all the money laid out by Court Line's customers actually gone? As figures released after the firm's bankruptcy showed Court Line was a virtual bottomless pit, with assets of only about £2 million and debts totalling close to £60 million!

The policies followed by Court Line ended up cheating the company's customers out of both their money and the few weeks of hard-earned pleasure that capitalism permits, and the firm's workers out of their jobs. But such policies are perfectly legal under capitalism—indeed they are just a slight extension of the run-of-the-mill policies according to which every capitalist firm operates.

The Court Line crash is not just a 'special case'. True, the package holidays industry—especially dependent on the exchange rate of the pound, fuel costs, and the existence of a level of working class incomes able to afford such 'luxuries' as overseas holidays—was bound to be amongst the first to suffer as the waves of capitalist crisis began to rise.

But every other industry will feel the shock in its time, and 'Court Lines' will spring up in every nook and cranny of the British industry.

The other faces to emerge from the smoke of the Court Line crash bedecked in yellow streaks belong to the Labour Government, in particular to Industry minister Benn.

The Government was aware of Court Line's troubles two months ago, and was planning steps to bail them out (basically by buying out their shipbuilding interests at a generous price).

But rather than warning Court Line's customers and workers of the impending dangers, and taking resolute measures to solve the problem, Benn issued statements that allowed Court Line to put up a false front and continue raking in customers cash until the day before the firm disintegrated.

If such policies are repeated when 'two, three, many Court Lines, begin to sweep the country the consequences for the working class will be disastrous.

The Court Line affair show the uselessness of Labour's present policies and underlines the importance of the labour movement taking up and fighting for a trade union plan to meet the economic crisis. A basic part of such a plan must be the demands:

OPEN THE BOOKS—all capitalist business affairs to be open to regular and close scrutiny by the trade unions.

NATIONALIZATION not redundancy—all firms unable to keep their employees in work should be nationalised in full, without compensation, and with firm guarantees of employment for all workers.

WOMEN WORKERS ON THE OFFENSIVE



Striking women workers on the picket line outside the SEI factory at Heywood, Lancs.

.. on Clydeside

WOMEN TASS MEMBERS at John Brown's engineering in Clydebank have won increases leading to a £1,500 minimum wage after a three day strike.

The settlement fell short of what could have been won and what most of the strikers wanted. But it gave a tremendous boost to the self-confidence of the women, taught a lesson to many of the male workers, and inflicted a defeat on the management's strategy of trying to split the traditional TASS membership — mainly male draughtsmen — from the newly unionised and lower paid office workers — mainly women.

IDENTICAL

An almost identical dispute over equal pay at the Personna razor blade factory in Hillington shows this strategy is widespread in Glasgow. The dispute began a month ago when John Brown management replied to a TASS claim. The offer gave draughtsmen increases of up to £700, whilst leaving the women at rates as low as £1375 in all. Some women in jobs not long ago done by men were

still earning £15 a week less than the men.

A mass meeting of TASS members voted narrowly to accept the offer against the Office Committee's recommendation. Management appeared to have bought peace at the expense of the women. However, the mass meeting agreed that anyone who wanted to press a separate claim could do so.

The Office Committee called a meeting of women members which overwhelmingly decided to take action for a better settlement. They wanted to fight management's discrimination by bringing up the level of all the worst paid — if possible up to the original TASS claim for £1600 minimum.

STRIKE

A mass meeting backed them with a £1.50 per week levy in support of selective strike action. On Monday, 19 August, the printroom and punch card operators walked out, together with two male computer operators also in dispute and taking joint action. The first response by management was to get programmers to organise scabbing on the computer and punchcard operators. The TASS members promptly voted overwhelmingly for immediate strike action if scabbing carried on and the next day management made their new offer.

So within a month the action of the women had moved the predominantly male staff workers from a 60 to 55 vote for accepting management's offer to an overwhelming vote for supporting strike action.

The offer brought the seven worst paid women to the same level as about 20 others but it gave no advance to the majority of women and did not remove the equal pay anomalies. Unfortunately the TASS Divisional Organiser argued for the Office Committee to recommend the acceptance of this offer.

IMG Office Committee members argued against this and that the women should decide and the OC should place its backing behind their decisions. The OC divided fifty-fifty and it was finally agreed to take the offer to the women without a recommendation. The women voted by a narrow majority to return. There is no doubt that the position of the Divisional Organiser and the Office Committee's indecision contributed to the women accepting an offer which solved only the worst cases of discrimination. But in a test case and what is likely to be a pattern of struggles against discrimination against women, the women at John Browns have found their feet and scored a victory.

ALAN FREEMAN

.. in Lancashire

SALFORD ELECTRICAL INSTRUMENTS, a subsidiary of the giant GEC-AEI company and scene of the long equal pay strike last year, is once again facing a militant struggle from the women workers.

Three months of negotiations with the managements of the SEI plants at Heywood and Eccles produced precisely nothing for the women towards equal pay. The women at Heywood therefore started a ban on piecework and the management promptly locked them out. They refused to pay any wages unless piecework was resumed and 400 women downed tools and walked out. Blacklisted by APEX for ignoring the Equal Pay Act this is the third major confrontation at SEI in the last twelve months.

In many respects this is a test case for engineering workers; not only is it the first of many battles over equal pay, foreshadowing the problems of regrading, but it is also a fight about thresholds. It is certainly no accident that the management chose to lockout the women by attacking the local piecework agreement.

A coordinated campaign of support, following the backing given to the women from AUEW District Committee, will not only ensure that they get their full demands but also mark the first step by Manchester engineers to prepare their ground for the coming battles. Last week the Manchester and Salford Trades Council declared its support for a campaign around the Working Womens Charter, the first step being to organise support for the SEI dispute.

In Heywood itself, lessons of the last dispute must be learnt. Eccles is the parent plant of Heywood, but only the Heywood women took the fight for the joint claim to a piecework ban, which provoked the lockout. The old tactics of divide and rule should not be allowed to win. The Manchester District Committee has issued an instruction to the women at Eccles to down tools, and a coachload of women from Heywood leafleted Eccles for their support. If followed up by mass pickets at Eccles, supported by the entire local labour movement as in the last SEI dispute, this would show the women at Eccles the determination of Heywood women to fight.

Manchester IMG

DEFEAT ON THE AGENDA

Some chill winds will be blowing through Brighton when the Trade Union Congress meets there on 2-6 September.

The ruling class is very apprehensive about the debate on Labour's programme. As far as millions of workers are concerned that is what the main debate should be about. A glance through the agenda will however allay any fears that the ruling class may have. The resolution from the National Union of Mineworkers says: 'Congress gives full support to the TUC Labour Party Liaison Committee in the efforts they are making towards solving the economic problems facing Britain today.'

OLD FORMULA

The majority of resolutions on Economic Policy and Organisation, like those from NALGO, NUT and the Textile Workers, repeat the old formula of the need for free collective bargaining. Only the resolution from TASS, which talks about 'permanent price control' and 'substantial increases in public ownership' really gets to the nub of what this TUC should be concentrating on.

The same miners' leaders who not long ago were busy congratulating themselves on bringing down the Heath Government, are content to leave the living standards of the working class in the hands of those who concocted the *social compact*.

The ruling class are right to be frightened about the power that the TUC represents. Over the past few years the plans of the ruling class have suffered considerable setbacks because of the power of the trade unions. But the trade union leaders as the agenda for this TUC shows, are an obstacle to the full use of that power.

FAILED

Again, the TUC has completely failed to provide a programme of social and political demands which can consolidate the power of the workers' movement.

The document is obviously written with the General Election in mind. This is the road to disaster. Unless those sections of the Labour Party which support the Benn proposals—despite all their weaknesses—get the upper hand the big danger is that Labour will suffer heavy losses.

With massive inflation, the collapse of big sectors of industry, and the prospect of two million unemployed by winter 1975, this weak whimper from Brighton is a crime.

PAUL SMITH

Next week Paul Smith will examine the special reports on Industrial Democracy prepared for the TUC.

LESSONS OF LEICESTER

The International Socialists and the fight against fascism

IS made a welcome turn by calling out their forces for the anti-fascist forces in Leicester last Saturday.

This ensured that the revolutionary left made up about two thirds of the demonstration.

But despite the revolutionary left having such large forces the *No Platform* position was not posed and the reformist non-confrontation line of the CP dominated. Although a small group of demonstrators went off to 'harrass' the Front, this did not change that fact.

This is because of the IS's totally incorrect understanding of what the tasks of revolutionaries are in relation to the National

Front. Of course the IS is correct in pointing out that the NF has the ultimate aim of destroying all the organisations of the working class. That the National Front is a fascist front. But it is precisely in denying and hiding this fact that the NF is attempting to build its forces and support.

'RESPECTABLE'

Rather it proclaims that it is the National Union of Students which is 'increasingly fascist' and gives out leaflets denying it is a fascist organisation. The National Front is not concentrating on building a street fighting force but is attempting to construct a 'respectable' political movement—a movement with roots in the working class.

If it was to proclaim directly its fascist nature the N.F. would not only get nowhere but would be set upon by large sections of the working class. The N.F. therefore is avoiding becoming associated with anything characteristic of fascism before it has built up a political base. Whilst hiding its fascist nature it takes up those issues on which the working class has a particularly weak flank—notably racism but more recently also the question of Ireland. It wants to separate off these themes from the question of fascism.

While the working class is opposed to fascism not only the masses but also large sections of the rank and file leadership are not opposed to racism or anti-Irish chauvinism and do not see them as a danger. The aim of the left must be to prevent this operation of the N.F. by showing that behind its racism and chauvinism stand fascism. In so doing we deliver a blow not only to the fascists but also the racism of the working class.

AIM

Consequently at this stage, the call for 'No Platform' is not primarily a call to defeat the 'military' threat of the fascists. The primary aim of this policy is to show in practice the violent fascist nature of the N.F. To show that it is not a 'normal' political organisation. To tear away its veil of respectability. Small scale, behind the scenes actions are useless from this point of view. They leave the mass of the anti-fascist movement impotent in the face of the reformist line to simply out-mobilise the NF on a platform of no confrontation.

Vanguard actions only have a relevance in so far as they have a perspective and the intention of drawing in mass forces. We should not be in favour of substituting

small actions for the action of the masses.

The balance sheet of the anti-fascist campaign so far indicates the correctness of this perspective. The effect of the action against the N.F. in the first Red Lion Square demo provoked the debate and the victory of the *No Platform* position in the student field. The second Red Lion Square action has provided the basis for the involvement of broad forces from the working class and the whole of the revolutionary left.

Our next actions must develop this process, a process which indicates the real nature of the N.F. to progressively wider layers of the workers movement. Substitutionist actions can only set the movement back.

Brian Clynes

CORRECTION

Warwick Students Union has asked us to correct the statement—*Red Weekly 64*—that the Warwick Student's Union had called for the establishment of a National Liaison Committee for the counter-demonstration against the National Front.

The Action Committee at Warwick in fact decided to 'follow the lead and initiatives of the appropriate local organisations in Leicester.'

IMG protests Irish trials

THE TRIAL of the six people arrested at the demonstration in Belfast marking the third anniversary of internment (see *Red Weekly 64*) was quite clearly intended to be something of a political showpiece.

One English member of the IMG was described as a 'foreign agitator' and the evidence of several of the British soldiers was so transparently a fabrication that the cases against two of the defendants had to be dismissed.

On the same day in London a picket was held by the IMG outside Ulster House in protest against the trial.

With increasing accommodation to the loyalist elements by the British ruling class clearly we can expect more repression of this kind against militants over the coming months.

The 'Mouse with a

Labour's White Paper on Indu

EVERY LABOUR GOVERNMENT which has ever come to power has been faced with an economic crisis. Two different solutions have always been proposed within the working class movement to the capitalist threats which such a crisis produces.

The solution always followed by Labour Governments has been to use the economic crisis as a reason for *slowing down*, or abandoning completely, any anti-capitalist economic measures. The Labour Government has tried to work the capitalist economic system and, as a result, has been forced to carry out vicious, anti-working class measures.

Thus the 1929-31 Labour Government slashed unemployment pay, the 1945-51 Government used troops against a docks strike and imposed a wage freeze. The 1964-70 Wilson Government carried out just about every anti-working class measure, from incomes policy to anti-union proposals.

The other policy which has been urged to deal with the economic crisis is to go ahead *more rapidly* with socialist policies. It is pointed out that only workers' control and widespread nationalisation can take the economy out of the capitalists' grip, and therefore provide a way out of the crisis.

At last year's Labour Party conference, the Industry Minister Wedgewood Benn, spoke precisely on these two different policies and declared he supported the second one. He said: 'We are saying at this conference that the crisis we inherit when we come to power will be the occasion for fundamental change and not an excuse for postponing it; that is what we are saying in this debate today.'

Now, less than a year after that Labour Party conference and with the publication of Labour's White Paper on Industry, we can see just how far Benn has retreated from his own brave words.

THE LONG RETREAT

The first proposals which started the nationalisation debate in the Labour Party were the National Executive proposals for the nationalisation of 25 leading companies. This really put the cat amongst the employers' pigeons. While this proposal did not go far enough towards socialism, there is no doubt that it was not a proposal in the interests of the ruling class.

The first retreat on the NEC position came at the 1973 conference. While *Tribune* carried the banner

headline: 'We kept the Red Flag flying here,' all the real teeth of the nationalisation proposals were taken out. At the time we said in *Red Weekly*: 'There is a difference—and not just one of numbers—between Wilson's nationalisation proposals and the original proposal of the NEC to take over 25 top companies. The NEC proposals for nationalisation would, however inadequate and confused, be a definite blow against the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie. Wilson's proposals are qualitatively different: the machine tool and aircraft industries are bankrupt; nationalisation of North Sea oil and gas will only provide cheaper fuel for industrial capital; and land nationalisation will only affect property speculators and so on.' Those words still remain true.

Benn's 'consultative' *Green Paper* brought a further retreat. Only 'indicative planning' and a few nationalisations were proposed. The new Government *White Paper* marks a further retreat. No key firms are proposed for nationalisation at all. As we pointed out at the time the proposals for 'planning' were completely unimplementable as they contained no use of workers control to force employers to do things against their will. This circle has now been squared by the latest Labour proposals which say that 'planning agreements' will be entirely voluntary anyway!

What this means is that the firms, if they are feeling generous, will simply write down what they intend to do anyway (which in general at the moment is raising prices and sacking people). They will then forward these proposals to the Government. The Government will then collect together all these proposals, bind them in a book with a brightly coloured cover, and announce this as a plan.

In the 1945 Labour Government Chancellor Stafford Cripps applied policies that attacked workers' living standards to bolster capitalism. Today his pupil Harold Wilson is following the same course.



If the firms are not feeling generous, or they intend to do something which even the tin of the mill capitalist can't stomach, then they will just refuse to tell the Government anyway.

The employers' magazine *The Economist* expressed very well how businessmen will react to this: 'a mountain of sub-editing has brought forth his [Benn's] *White Paper* as a mouse with only an apologetic leer. The famous "planning agreements" are not to be a statutory requirement, although the Government hope that big firms will tell it what they intend to do over the next three years ... [this] will certainly put a premium on the public relations hucksters who are most adept at conning even private investors and who will slightly change their style to accomplish the easier task of getting taxpayers' money out of politicians ... But for most companies, the planning agreements will simply mean the passage of xeroxes of meaningless material from companies files to Whitehall files ... It is humourless to call this rabid socialism.'

As for nationalisation, it is true

monopolies, the banks, and the firms flagrantly breaking even Labour's feeble price controls? All these are going to be allowed to go on as before.

The *Times* was correct when it crowed: 'Gone is all that stuff about making a "fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power" there are some definite proposals—development land, North Sea oil, shipbuilding, aircraft, road haulage, ports and parts of construction. Reference to machine tools, pharmaceuticals, banks and building societies, all of which were mentioned in Labour's election manifesto, have however, been dropped. All the nationalisations are to be welcomed, but they don't get anywhere near the heart of the problem of the 20% rate of inflation and the 800,000-1 million unemployed which is going to develop over the next year.

What about the building trade which is going to lay off 100,000 men by the autumn at a time when housebuilding is at its lowest for 14 years? What about the motor industry where tens of thousands are going to get the sack? What about the food

and about private industry's "arbitrary exercise of economic power frustrating the national will." They [the Labour Party] have changed their tune. The threats, the metaphors drawn from the manual of infantry tactics, the accusations of incompetence or irresponsibility have been excised. Instead the talk is all of partnership, a desire to be of assistance, the collaborative achievements of a vigorous and profitable private sector.'

It is clear that militants can use the controversy of which Labour's *White Paper* is a part to put over real socialist solutions to the crisis. But the socialist way forward for dealing with the economic crisis is even less contained in the latest proposals than in the previous Labour plans.

The key thing now is the response of the trade unions. There will undoubtedly be a big round of wages and anti-redundancy struggles this winter. It is absolutely vital that these are won if the struggle is to go forward. But it is impossible to fight capitalism's attacks simply through trade union action. If you believe the trade unions are a weapon of struggle then you must see that they must also become a political weapon. They must also impose their policy in the political arena. They must become the core of a political movement against the present leaders of the working class. It is necessary to organise politically inside and outside the Labour Party. Three vital tasks flow from this in relation to the economic crisis and the miserable industry proposals of the Labour Party.

PROPOSALS

*Organise to win the coming round of wages and anti-redundancy struggles. Strike committees, occupations, mass and flying pickets are the necessary weapons of struggle. Demands for full granting of wage demands, for a sliding scale of wages, for a national minimum wage, for equal pay for women are the types of demands that must be won on the wages front.

*Any attempt to impose an incomes policy should be met with a general strike.

*On redundancy, all closures and sackings should be met with occupations and the demand that the firm be nationalised without compensa-

'ALERT, RESPONSIBLE' EMPLOYERS = DIVE IN LIVING STANDARDS

The Labour *White Paper* rambles on about its desire for partnership with capitalist industry. It talks of 'a vigorous, alert, responsible and profitable private sector, working together with the Government in a framework which brings together the interests of all concerned; those who work in industry, whether in management or on the shop floor, those who own its assets, and those who use its products and depend upon its success.'

It is worth looking at what this 'vigorous, alert, responsible' private sector is at the moment being forced to propose for the working class.

The aim of the employing class is clear. It is not to cut the rate of increase of working class living standards, or even temporarily to stop

any increase in the living standards of the working class. At present the scale of the economic crisis is such that the ruling class is having to aim at a systematic cut in the living standards of the working class.

This policy is now a quite conscious aim. As long ago as December the *Financial Times* spoke of a 'target of a cut of about one-eighth in personal consumption during the crisis [the three day week] ... If such a drastic cut cannot be achieved immediately [!] it must be made up by smaller cuts later ... for example by a 2-3 per cent cut in consumption in the post-emergency period.'

HOW MUCH?

The only dispute in the ruling class at present on this front is about *how much* the working class's living standard must be lowered. The

Economist simply noted in its 9 March issue that 'Wages are at present barely keeping pace with prices, which means, with taxes taking a larger share of higher (money) incomes, that wage earners are becoming worse off.'

The National Institute of Economic and Social Research in its March report simply talked of 'the end of the year when it seems likely that the real standard of living of the wage earner will have fallen significantly.' More exact calculations have been attempted by the *Financial Times* and economists from the London School of Business Studies. The *Financial Times* of 31 January calculated that the real net income of a worker earning the average wage and with two children fell by 0.6 per cent in 1972-73, after rising 7.6 per cent after the miners' victory in 1972.

They expect this real income to fall by 1.4 per cent in 1973-74.

Other figures put the fall much higher. The projections of the economists of the London School of Business Studies in the *Sunday Times* on 21 January were: 'For 1974 real personal disposable income is expected to decline by over 5 per cent.'

The fall which is already taking place is truly remarkable. There is no doubt that the working class's standard of living was already greatly depressed during the three day week. Industry Minister Benn announced in the House of Commons on 23 March that the index of average earnings in January showed a fall of 4.5 per cent against December. This continued into February when earnings were up only 8.4 per cent on a year previously, while prices

went up 13 per cent.

WORSE

The situation has got worse. The *Economist* on 27 July calculated that in the five months since the end of the three day week the real income of a worker with two children on the average industrial wage has fallen by 2.5 per cent, equalling an annual rate of well over 5 per cent.

For some sections the situation is far worse. A newly starting teacher with no family, for example, has a real income which at present is dropping at a rate equivalent to over 15 per cent a year.

The middle class is also being severely squeezed. A person with a family and two children on £4,000 a year (equivalent to twice the average national wage) is 5.4 per cent worse off over the last five

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tion and with a guarantee of no loss of jobs.

*The unions should make it clear that they do not intend to allow a million of their members to be thrown on the dole and the whole working class to have its standard of living cut by five per cent or more simply because the survival of capitalism demands it. On the contrary, against the miserable *White Paper* of Labour the unions should advance a trade union plan for the nationalisation of industry under workers control.

*Finally, it should be settled once and for all who a Labour Government is responsible to. It claims to base itself on a party of the working class and to speak in the name of the working class. But who sanctioned all the appalling retreats of the last six months? Not the rank-and-file of the Labour Party or the trade unions, that is for sure. The demand must be for a Labour Government which is responsible to the organisations of the working class not to Parliament. The first steps to that must be the demand for a Labour Party conference to decide on the election manifesto and the organisation by local trades councils of conferences to discuss local Labour MPs' positions.

On one issue we will make a clear prediction. No Labour Government which attempts to carry through the policies of the present Government will survive. The present proposals mean a Labour Government presiding over 1.14 million unemployed, a 20% rate of inflation and a drop in the standard of living of the working class by five per cent or more a year. The British working class is at present far too strong to passively tolerate any such situation.

If Labour tries to carry out such a policy it will lead to electoral disaster and, to the greatest upsurge of militancy against any government since 1926. There will be the most ferocious in-fighting ever seen within the Party which would tear the Party apart.

At the moment the weight given by the possession of office to the extreme right-wing and leadership of the Party is leading Labour either to electoral defeat or to the crippling and destruction of the next Labour Government. And that may be a setback for the working class, but it will destroy the present political line of Labour, along with its authors.

months—equivalent to a drop of over 11 per cent in a year.

Such a fall in the standard of living, which will of course hit the low paid and the unemployed even harder than average figures indicate affects not just items such as drink, radio and so on. It hits the whole quality of the living standard of the working class right down to absolute essentials. For example, it is already clear that the diet of the working class is worsening. The *Daily Express* on 19 April reported that last year consumption of meat fell from 134.7 lbs. per head to 127 lbs. The amount of fish per head eaten fell from 18.3 lbs. to 17.6 lbs. and each person ate eight less eggs. While consumption of these healthy foods fell, that of potatoes, peas, beans and carrots rose.

Furthermore all these deteriorations in income are accompanied by a deterioration on all fronts of social expenditure—house building is

UNIONS NEED PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Despite the general uselessness of the Labour *White Paper* on industry there are some individual points which can be used by militants in the coming months and on which the trade unions should campaign. The most important ones are:

1. Nationalisation through the National Enterprise Board and other means.

The *Economist* spelt out the dangers for the ruling class: 'The danger of the National Enterprise

Board may come when next year's slump causes some big firms (perhaps like British Leyland) to issue mass redundancy notices to workers, who will then respond with sit-ins and occupations, demanding that their jobs be saved by takeovers by the National Enterprise Board. If the Board obliges, every one of the more than one million workers who seem likely to be sacked in the winter of 1975-76 will then take very seriously the idea of a sit-in providing the best

hope of saving his job.' This lear is what the unions have to turn into a reality in the coming months. Any redundancy should be met with an occupation and demand for nationalisation with guarantee of no loss of jobs.

2. Workers Control.

Workers control is left totally vague in the *White Paper*, and is in any case dealt with under the totally confused term 'industrial democracy.' The *White Paper* simply says the following: 'The Government envisages a major development of industrial democracy throughout industry in the years ahead. Within that framework, the National Enterprise Board will play its part in ensuring that enterprises under its control provide for the full involvement of employees in decision making at all levels.' It adds: 'The Government intends that the plans to be covered by a (planning) agreement will be drawn up by management in close consultation with trade union representatives from the firm. The framing and updating of agreements will thus involve a continuing discussion between management and unions and will constitute an important advance in the part to be played by industrial democracy in the planning of company strategy. The Government envisages that union representatives from companies, while not formally parties to planning agreements, would also take part where they wished to do so in consultations on agreements with the Government.'

This is waffle, but precisely because of that it can be given many contents depending on the relation of class-forces. The Labour leaders no doubt intend that the unions should agree to what the companies propose and the Government accepts.

But given the nature of what the companies propose and the companies are going to have to do in the next few years, i.e. sack hundreds of thousands of workers, it is not clear what the unions will actually do. Socialists must therefore demand the unions to be given real veto powers over management plans.

3. Opening the books.

This is connected to the previous point. There are proposals which are potentially important in the *White Paper* on company information. It

says: 'If consultation is to be effective, union representatives must be provided with all the necessary information relevant to the contents of planning agreements. The Government will therefore require employers to disclose information of this kind.'

There is of course a get out clause which says that this need not be done 'where disclosure could seriously prejudice the company's commercial interests.' There is no doubt that firms are going to be forced to cough up some information. Again a big intervention must be made by the unions on this to demand full disclosure of all company information.

4. Partially state owned firms.

The *White Paper* says that when the proposed National Enterprise Board gives financial help to a company it should take over a corresponding proportion of the shares. In a time of capitalist boom this would be irrelevant. During the 1950s and 1960s British companies on average generated 70% of their own investment funds from their own profits and could raise the rest fairly easily from the stock market or from bank loans. But with the present profits and liquidity crisis the estimates are that this 70 per cent is going to fall to about 30 per cent.

With stock exchange prices having fallen in real terms over two-thirds in the last two years the stock exchange is virtually excluded as a way of obtaining significant new finance. As for bank loans very few ailing companies would have sections of their shares owned by the state. This is going to raise the question of government control, of partially government controlled firms threatening redundancy and so on which the employers do not want to be discussed at all.

The unions must demand that all such firms are fully nationalised. This is going to be important in the case of companies such as British Leyland which are clearly going bankrupt and which the Government will be called upon to bail out.

Despite the fact that certain parts of the *White Paper*, if they are put into effect, can be used by the unions there should be no illusions whatever that this *White Paper* as a whole is going to solve anything at all for the working class.



Punch magazine sneered contemptuously at Labour's nationalisation plans in 1948. The employers can afford to do the same today because Industry Minister Benn's schemes contain no proposals for fighting employers' resistance.

'The interests of all concerned'—but capitalism is based on a fundamental antagonism of interests between workers and capitalists. Any Government which refuses to break with capitalism will end up serving the interests of the tiny handful of capitalists who control the economy.

Income range	Number of persons	Identifiable wealth	Percentage of total	Mean average per person
Top 1%	412,000	£29,040 million	30%	£70,485
Top 5%	2,060,000	£54,208 million	56%	£26,314
Remaining 95%	39,140,000	£42,592 million	44%	£1,088

at its lowest level for 14 years, a working class child has to wait 18 months for a hospital bed to have his tonsils out, a working class woman has to wait 12 months for a hospital bed for any gynaecological operation.

It is to partnership in these types of proposals and development, that the Labour *White Paper* is attempting to commit the working class movement. As someone once said: 'You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but...'

Unemployed workers in the 1930s stage a sit-in at a dinner for big industrialists. The labour movement must act now to prevent the capitalist crisis unleashing such mass unemployment again.



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JAMES P. CANNON TROTSKYIST PIONEER DIES



Moscow, 1922: James P. Cannon (centre) with Max Eastman (left) and IWW leader William ('Big Bill') Haywood (right).

JAMES P. CANNON, founder and inspirer of American Trotskyism, died on 21 August 1974.

Cannon was born in 1890 and joined the Syndicalist Industrial Workers of the World—the 'wobblies'—in 1911. An opponent of the imperialist war, he later joined the American Socialist Party and was one of the leaders of its left-wing. He enthusiastically greeted the Russian Revolution and joined those forces in the Socialist Party that split away to help form the American Communist Party.

Cannon became one of the important leaders of the young Communist Party, and was several times a delegate to the Communist International. In 1928 he was part of the American delegation to the Sixth Congress—the Congress which was to discuss the draft programme drawn up by Bukharin and Stalin.

SLIP-UP

Meanwhile Trotsky, exiled in Alma Ata and expelled from the Russian Party and the Communist International had put in an appeal to the Sixth Congress. The appeal included Trotsky's criticism of Bukharin's thesis of 'Socialism in One Country'. This appeal was suppressed but, by some bureaucratic slip-up, Cannon luckily got hold of a copy.

Trotsky's document—*The Draft Programme of the Communist International: A Criticism of Fundamentals*—revealed to Cannon the reactionary nature of the theory of socialism in one country and provided a marxist explanation of the bureaucratic degeneration taking place in the USSR, the Third International and the world communist parties. He said:

"We [himself and Maurice Spector, leader of the Canadian delegation] let the caucus meetings and the Congress sessions go to the devil while we read and studied this document. Then I knew what we had to do, and so did he. It was as clear as daylight that marxist truth was on the side of Trotsky. We made a compact there and then—Spector and I—that we would come back home and begin a struggle under the banner of Trotskyism."

Cannon never gave up that struggle until he died 46 years later, aged 84.

He was convinced about the need for, and the possibilities of, making the proletarian revolution. He dedicated all his time, energies and resources to that end. He saw American Trotskyism, not as some 'new' bright idea which could be sold to radicals as something 'different' and more 'humane' than the sullied communism of the Third International but as the

logical continuation of bolshevism.

MEMORY

The historian Theodore Draper remarked on Cannon's phenomenal memory for events in the early American Communist Party. As Draper explained:

"Memoirs of ex-communists vary in content, but too many of them are motivated by the desire to tell why the writer decided to break with the communist movement rather than what he did in it.... Jim Cannon wanted to remember. This portion of his life still lives for him because he has not killed it within himself."

Cannon always understood that the main enemy was the bourgeoisie. His work in the International Labour Defence Committee during the 1920's is an excellent example of how to fight to build the communist movement and at the same time ally that movement in defence of all class-war prisoners and victims of the bourgeois state. He wrote:

"Professional anti-communists always proceed from the premise of that man in the Bible who did not believe that any good thing would come out of Nazareth...one of them described my motives in helping IWW prisoners through the ILD as "not altogether philanthropic".

"My motives were not "philanthropic" at all. I really believed in the principle of solidarity with all class war prisoners—the tradition in which I had been brought up in the radical movement of the earlier days. To be sure, I was an undisguised communist and I thought and said that the honest work of solidarity practiced by the ILD would bring at least some credit to the Communist Party."

MAGNIFICENT

The ILD Committee played a magnificent role in mobilising support for those revolutionaries—socialists, communists, anarchists etc, who were incarcerated in the American jails. It stands as a vivid contrast to the American CP of 1940 which actively supported the jailing of Cannon and the other leaders of the Trotskyist Socialist Workers Party under the infamous Smith Act. In the 1950s the American ruling class used the same act to railroad the leaders of the American CP into prison.

The work of the ILD is also a salutary lesson to the British left who, with few exceptions, have done little to defend class war prisoners like the Belfast 9 and the Stoke Newington comrades.

Many British trotskysts owe a great debt to Jim Cannon. In the dog-days of small isolated groups invariably short of the resources to publish material, and often reduced to little more than propaganda circles Cannon's books such as the *History of American Trotskyism* and *Notebook of an Agitator* were the only readings

available in English about the interventions of Trotskyism in the mass struggle. They helped to prepare and educate that small handful of revolutionaries for the struggles that were going to come.

VANGUARD

Much of Cannon's writing about the building of the revolutionary movement are about the time when the vanguard was organised in the traditional organisations of the working class.

This was a time of flux inside these organisations, of internal conflict and debate, and the emergence of left-moving centrist currents. His emphasis on building through a process of splits, fusions and re-groupments was at that time absolutely correct.

The organisational decline of social democracy in particular, resulting in a growth of a new vanguard outside of, though influenced by, the ideology of social democracy, requires a new perspective of growth. I am sure that Cannon would have had some wry comments to make about those on the British left who slavishly adopt the sacred text in the form of his writings on this, but fail to grasp the content of his analysis which was always based on locating the revolutionary forces in the mainstream of revolutionary development.

It is perhaps appropriate that as I write this tribute to Cannon, anti-fascist forces are assembling in Leicester. They are going there on a programme of 'No Platform for Fascists'. Cannon would have understood and approved of that. It was he, along with the other American trotskysts, who worked in the united fronts of the thirties to make sure that Father Caughlin and the fascist rabble in the USA did not get a platform to peddle their racist and anti-working class ideology.

Bob Pennington

BOOKS BY J P CANNON:

- The History of American Trotskyism— £1.25p
- The First Ten Years of American Communism— £1.45p
- The Notebook of an Agitator— £1.45p
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WHAT'S ON

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Lara!* (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Mullvadén, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation, 81a Renshaw Street, Liverpool, Tues.—Fri.: 12.30-3.0. Sat.: 11-3.

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IMG GAY GROUP: Contact J. Mills, 153 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds for further information.

FORD UNDERWRITES TOTTERING THIEU

WITHIN 3 DAYS of his inauguration US President Gerald Ford had made it quite clear that when it comes to defending the interests of American big business he is going to be just as dedicated as his predecessor. One of the 'new' President's first acts was to send a message to the South Vietnamese dictator, Thieu, promising continued aid and support.

It is mainly the support of the USA which has kept Thieu in power: support in the form of 1500 tanks, 900 aircraft and more than one million tons of ammunition since January 1973, a recent 'loan' of 1000 million dollars (sneaked past Congress (with more yet to come)), and over 10 thousand 'advisers' who run Thieu's police, jails, and 'pacification' programmes, command his bomber squadrons and direct his military operations.



South Vietnam's dictator Thieu: worried about President Ford's intentions

However, even this is not enough. Thieu's army (the ARVN) is using up weaponry faster than it can be supplied. Part of the thinking behind the recent saturation bombing of the liberated zones controlled by the Provisional Revolutionary Government was to force Ford's hand. Thieu was afraid that the American bourgeoisie would use the opportunity of having a new President to cut down their rather embarrassing commitments to him. But Ford responded as Thieu hoped.

Thieu's position is nonetheless worsening. In the last few months, a number of important bases in the Central Highlands, Mekong Delta, the Coastal regions and around Saigon have been liberated by the NLF. The ARVN has suffered heavy losses, the town of Thuang Duc has been

captured and two others have been isolated. Now the South Vietnamese soldiers are either deserting in large numbers or refusing to fight without massive air cover—something which it is becoming increasingly difficult to provide.

In the towns political opposition continues to build up, with even the right-wing catholic clergy adding their voices to the clamour.

RESPONSE

Thieu's response has been twofold. The scale of military involvement has escalated, but there has also been a change in the character of military operations. Formerly air strikes were only used in support of ground offensives, but the recent raids on Loc Nian and the flights over Hanoi and Haiphong are intended purely to terrorise the liberated zones.

The response to the urban unrest is more complex. Thieu cannot afford to ignore the charges of corruption, nor can he simply arrest the critics since they are largely people on whose support he depends. Instead he has looked for a scapegoat, and found one in Vietnam's ethnic Chinese population.

There has been a long history of resentment of the Chinese in this part of the world, and Thieu has used this (as have his counterparts in Thailand and Malaysia) to try to channel political opposition into racist outbursts.

This is his objective in the recent seizure of 118 Vietnamese refugees of Chinese origin in Hong Kong, the trial, and the sentencing of several death or life imprisonment. Now, whenever the criticisms become too loud, a raid on a few brothels or gaming houses produces a handful of ethnic Chinese to blame for the latest bit of corruption to have been discovered.

What the immediate future holds is not yet clear. The NLF's military offensive has been greatly intensified with a definite turn to direct attack on supposedly 'secure' ARVN rear bases, including munitions depots, airfields and even oil depots and tankers in Saigon itself. These attacks are all designed to demoralise the ARVN further and undermine their ability to fight, as well as expose the weakness of the Thieu regime.

Also unclear are the intentions of the US. What is certain is that it will be difficult for Kissinger and the Pecking bureaucrats to make a deal over the Vietnamese revolution when Kissinger visits China in the coming months.

Also certain is that those of us who support the NLF must not allow the manoeuvres of Thieu and his US masters to go unchallenged, and must prepare for the show down which lies ahead.

David Johnson

PORTUGUESE COLONIES. LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM



FRELIMO guerilla fighters in Mozambique: one of the colonies where the Portuguese have yet to give up their hold.

AN AGREEMENT has been signed in Algeria between the Portuguese Government and the African liberation movement, PAIGC, recognising the independence of Guinea-Bissau as of 10 September.

An immediate ceasefire has been declared in the former Portuguese colony, and all Portuguese troops are due to be out of the country by 31 October.

VICTORY

This agreement is a great victory both for the people of Guinea-Bissau and for anti-imperialist fighters all round the world. But it comes as no surprise. The guerilla struggle in Guinea has given the Portuguese military their biggest headache over the past few years. A quarter of Portugal's forces in Africa were tied up controlling a region that represented, in both area and population, less than 5% of Portugal's African possessions.

It was in Guinea that the liberation movement was most successful - controlling the majority of the country long before the military coup in Portugal on 25 April. Moreover, Guinea is of the least economic importance to Portugal of all her African possessions.

Elsewhere in Africa, however, the prospect is not so bright. In the Cape Verde Islands, off the coast of Guinea,

the Portuguese Government has refused to recognise the claims of the PAIGC. They are insisting on a Portuguese-managed referendum on the political future of the islands. The object of this is to prevent union between Cape Verde and Guinea, thus preserving the islands' present function as an important NATO base, and a staging post for the South African air lines.

MOZAMBIQUE

Mozambique is the other colony where the liberation movement is relatively strong and united. As a result, the Portuguese government has repeatedly stressed its readiness to grant independence to Mozambique, and has been engaged in lengthy talks with the guerilla organisation, FRELIMO.

However the situation in the country remains very confused. In some parts the guerillas and the army are reported to be cooperating to maintain order, in others - particularly the north - the guerillas have gone onto the offensive and won important gains from the Portuguese army.

In any event, as long as Portuguese military forces are in the country attempts to politically outmanoeuvre the guerillas will continue. The latest effort comes with the unification of five different anti-FRELIMO groups to form the 'Mozambique National Coalition Party', under the leadership of a former spokesman of the FRELIMO right-wing.

ANGOLA

The situation is darkest in Angola. This is the most economically important

colony for Portugal, it has the largest white minority, and the liberation movement there is badly divided.

The only offer the Portuguese have made to the liberation movements has been a joke - in exchange for a ceasefire the setting up of a provisional Government with representatives from all political groups (including the white settlers), and the army to remain in Angola until after elections are held in two years time.

So far there has been little support for such a proposal from the guerilla groups, although an ominous alliance has developed between one of the smallest of them - UNITA - and white settlers.

The intentions of Portugal's rulers are plain. As far as possible, and particularly in Angola, they want to ensure that whatever regime takes over when the army finally leaves is not hostile to the interests of imperialism. Then there may still be a hope for Portuguese imperialism to do a deal with its bigger brothers and ensure that Portugal continues to get a cut from the imperialist exploitation of Africa.

It remains as urgent as ever that the socialist and labour movement in Britain continues to organise solidarity with the struggle in the African colonies for immediate, full and unconditional independence.

Guinea was the first victory - we must make sure that it can be repeated as rapidly as possible in Mozambique and Angola.

CHRIS BALFOUR

Cyprus Imperialism at Sixes and Sevens

WITHIN THE NEXT three weeks Cyprus may well undergo a further constitutional change with the declaration of a separate Turkish Cypriot Republic. If this step is taken within a short space of time the Greek section of the island will be incorporated into Greece. Such a 'double Enosis' will in no way even begin to solve the basic problems which face the mass of the population of Greece, Turkey or Cyprus. Its main effect will be for the Karamanlis and Ecevit regimes to pose as great 'unifiers' of the 'nation'. In fact of course such 'national unity' has little to do with the people and a great deal to do with the relations between the bankers, financiers and industrialists of the Eastern Mediterranean countries and the Imperialist powers with interests in the areas, the United States and Britain. In the past few weeks there has been a wave of popular indignation against the US in both Greece and Cyprus. The killing of US Ambassador Roger Davis has only been the most dramatic event revealing the real feeling of the workers and peasants. It is certainly no isolated incident. Apart from the massive demonstrations in Athens, Piraeas and Salonica raising the slogan 'Down with Yankee Imperialism', even smaller towns and cities have had their own expressions of anger. In Heraklion, on the small island of Crete some 20,000 people marched on the US base and were only prevented from attacking it by the police of Karamanlis.

CIA

Ever since the Papadopolous Junta seized control in Athens in 1967 it has been common knowledge that the CIA was the mastermind, and Papadopolous their agent. Now it is being revealed that it was the same source which was behind the installing of the murderous Sampson and his gang in Cyprus in July. The quiet whispering in the coffee houses, the secret communications systems in the prisons are now replaced by the massive actions of the workers, peasants, students and intellectuals of the streets. The whole alignment of the imperialist powers is in a state of flux. And devices are now needed by them to restore the situation. However the basic instabilities of international capitalism exacerbate the competing interests of the Imperialists. This is

seen very clearly over the question of the Turkish advances into increasing areas of Cyprus.

Britain is determined to hang on to its bases. These provide a counterweight to the US bases in Greece. British capitalism needs to keep its end up in NATO, and also because of its key role in the Central Treaty Organisation (CENTO) comprising Britain, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. The British bases are staging posts for both organisations. When Cyprus was still a colony the British used the Turkish community as an excuse for not granting independence. Today it is its relationship with Turkey in Cento which makes it very cautious in its approach to the Turkish advances. The grim perspectives for British capitalism forces the ruling class to cling to salvageable assets that it may have. CENTO and its trading implications (as seen in the recent deals with the Shah of Iran) is one of these.

'REPUTATION'

It is also quite clear that the British are using their position on the island bases as a way of enhancing their 'reputation'. According to Evening Standard reporter Max Hastings 'Both the British forces and the British public (retired colonels) have enjoyed the events of the last month in Cyprus immensely. We have become so passive, so accustomed to endless surrender and decay, that the spectacle of British armoured cars bringing the tourists out of the turmoil, of the Navy lifting families off the beaches and the RAF running superbly efficient operations to cope with them and bringing them home has given the British at least a feeling of doing something and doing it well'. You might think these are just off the cuff remarks of some journalist, but they appear to be the 'official' view too, as according to the Commander in Chief on Cyprus, Air Marshal Sir John Aitken, 'We have been through tragic times, but exciting times, rewarding times'. Perhaps the remark about 'tragic times' relates to the changing circumstances of the British, as Hastings does seem to think things have changes for the worst. For example before the war Cyprus was a 'powerful booster' for army recruitment. Now the end has come to the time 'when the British never had it so good'. For Hastings these are the most terrible results of the Sampson coup and the Turkish invasion. While 5,000 Cypriots have died, 160,000 made homeless, and atrocities of the worst kind are reported from both Greek and Turkish held areas of the island, Hastings sums up: 'The dream was shattered when the Turkish army invaded the island. The airlift of Britons from the beaches was glorious, the smashing up of their lives horrific'.

PORTUGAL. Noose tightens on left



Mass demonstration outside the Lisbon prison where former PIDE (fascist political police) are being held. It was a police attack on a demonstration like this (protesting against the prisoners' claims for better treatment) that touched off the recent wave of repression

THE CAMPAIGN OF REPRESSION unleashed against the revolutionary left by Portugal's military junta has been stepped up over the past weeks. At its high point police opened fire on an unarmed crowd, killing one and wounding four.

The new campaign of repression began at the beginning of the month with the banning of a revolutionary paper. A demonstration called in protest was banned in turn, and the military occupied the Lisbon city centre with armed soldiers and armoured cars to enforce the ban. (See Red Weekly 64 for an eyewitness account).

The following week, on Monday 12 August, a mass demonstration gathered outside the prison where the former agents of the fascist secret police, the PIDE, are being held. The demonstrators were there to protest at the occupation of the prison by the inmates (undoubtedly aided by sympathetic warders) to back up demands for better treatment. The demonstrators were attacked by the special riot squad set up under the fascist regime, many of whose members remain devoted to the cause of the far right.

On Wednesday, 14 August, a mass rally was planned in Lisbon by supporters of the Angolan liberation movement. The rally was to call for immediate independence for Angola and to highlight recent attacks by fascist hands on buildings occupied by liberation movement supporters. The Provisional Government has done nothing to stop such attacks, and a rash of assaults on individual blacks by white racists has recently broken out.

The rally was banned by the army, and the ban then endorsed by the coalition Government. The army then occupied the sports pavilion in which the rally was to be held.

SHOOTING

Barred from their meeting place, left-wing sympathisers made their way into Lisbon's main square, the Rossio. There they were attacked by the police, and widespread fighting broke out. The police replied by opening fire on the demonstrators.

One demonstrator was killed - an army officer who was a member of the Democratic Electoral Commission (CDE - broad liberal grouping

under the influence of the Communist Party). Four more people, including a German tourist, were wounded.

Since this murderous attack the army has pulled in its horns and a number of demonstrations have been held without interference.

But this is obviously only a tactical retreat. Plans for full-scale repression against all those on the left who refuse to lick the army's boots remain in force.

These are the difficult conditions under which the Portuguese Trotskyists of the LCI (International Communist League) have to work. Red Weekly's fund drive to assist the LCI has now topped the £100 mark, and we are proud to report that our Portuguese comrades have now been able to bring out the first issue of their bi-weekly newspaper.

They hope to turn it into a weekly early in the autumn, but they urgently need our assistance.

Red Weekly is continuing its fund drive. Send contributions to:
LCI, c/o Red Weekly, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

SCREWS TIGHTEN ON PAY BEDS

JOIN THE DEMONSTRATION AND MASS RALLY AGAINST PRIVATE PRACTICE!

SPEAKERS' CORNER
HYDE PARK
11 a.m. Saturday 31 August 1974

followed by a march to the Wellington Hospital, St. John's Wood.
Speakers will include ARTHUR LATHAM M.P. and STEVE JOHNSON, NALGO Health Service.

A MASS MEETING of trade union members at Hammersmith Hospital has decided to continue with the ban on private patients.

The ban has been imposed by the joint shop stewards' committee which includes members of ASTMS, NUPE, UCATT, AUEW and COHSE.

The NUPE branch had requested a date from management from which private patients would be phased out. Management refused to discuss this with the union and a ban was then placed on private patients.

Sanctions include withdrawal of portering services, transport of specimens for tests, and meals. Because the 15-20 private patients in the Hammersmith are scattered amongst ordinary NHS patients, it is a more difficult ban to enforce than one where all the private patients are grouped in one ward. In general however the ban appears to be working quite successfully.

The joint shop stewards' committee have distributed a leaflet to the NHS patients explaining the purpose of the ban.

COMMITTEE

At the recent London Conference organised by the Central London branch of ASTMS on the *Crisis in the NHS*, doctors and medical students voted to set up a *Medical Committee against Private Practice*.

The group held its first meeting last week, which was attended by hospital registrars, housemen, medical students and general practitioners.

They decided to establish research groups to inquire into how private practice operates in various areas such as teaching hospitals, NHS district hospitals, private hospitals, abortion clinics and general practice.

The aim of the group will be to mobilise, especially in the London area, doctors and students to take specific actions against private practice, both inside and outside the NHS.

Interested medics should contact the secretary, Dr. Nigel Leigh, 50A Arbour Square, London E1-790 4891.

The National Association of Local Government Officers has issued a leaflet saying: 'Join with NALGO in total opposition to any attempts to expand private patients' facilities within the NHS and to the development of a private sector for medical care.'

RALLY

The leaflet calls for support for the demonstration and mass rally against private practice being organised by the Westminster Trades Council on Saturday 31 August. Support for the demonstration—which will march on the Wellington private hospital—

is growing. The demonstration is supported by ASTMS, NUPE, NALGO and the NUS (health students' section).



NUPE branch secretary Bill Geddes (left) and assistant secretary Chris Longworth outside Hammersmith Hospital after informing the management of the private patient ban.

Sold out! NHS unions agree to big workload increase - for 56p

THE ALREADY OVER-WORKED ancillary workers in the National Health Service now face further increases in their workload.

Behind the backs of their members, the trade unions in the NHS have accepted a deal that gets the workers a joke pay increase of 56p, in return for a big extension of their duties.

At present there are two grades of workers. Grade A consists of domestic workers. Grade B—now due to be phased out—is for ward orderlies.

The new agreement means that ward orderlies will be classified as Grade C. The new grade means that ward orderlies will have to take on duties which are now done by nurses. They will also have to take on a number of jobs which have been previously classified as porters' work. These include taking patients around the hospitals.

EXTENSION

The other extension of ancillaries' work will be taking and delivering messages for nursing staff—a job normally done by nurses, auxiliaries or receptionists. In time this could lead to redundancies amongst auxiliaries and receptionists.

Ancillaries will also have to make unoccupied beds. One—deliberately ambiguous phrase—talks about ancillaries 'undertaking domestic duties as instructed in order to relieve nursing staff of non-nursing duties'. Another sweeping change in the duties of ancillary workers is that they will be expected to do 'such other patient orientated tasks under the supervision of the nursing staff as may be required.'

The agreement stipulates that: 'Entry to Ward Orderly Pay Group B shall cease after the date of this letter'. Only those 'Ward Orderlies then in post whose duties do not meet the job description set out above may retain their Grade B grading on a personal basis until such time as they are promoted or leave the service ...'

The aim of this agreement is clear. Jack-up the work load, at the cheapest possible cost—and 56p a week is very cheap! Divide and split the workforce. The nursing staff, underpaid and over-worked, will tend to view it as means of easing their already intolerable burden.

This agreement once again raises the issue of workers' control in the

NHS. Health workers are posed with either accepting a swingeing increase in the work load which will inevitably lead to a further deterioration in health care, or insisting on control of the manning scale.

Ancillary workers must insist that there be no further increases in their duties. Furthermore that all allocations of staff be determined by the workers and not by the hospital administration.

'Who runs this union, us or the membership?' asks NALGO executive member

AS THE DUST settles after the London weighting struggle—the first large-scale industrial action by the membership of NALGO—all those who have consciously or unconsciously aided the sell-out of the claim are trying to find someone else to blame.

The final irony came when members of the district council, who consistently voted against any meaningful escalation when the fight was on, voted overwhelmingly in favour of a motion which criticised the National Executive Council for their handling of the campaign.

The final settlement will in the long run only be harmful to the London membership. It increased the differential between 'inner' and 'outer' London from £39 to £120, and it penalises the under-18s by giving them only 50 per cent of the full increase of £261 and £381.

This settlement was forced upon the membership with unprecedented haste. It was based on the strength of a memo from the employers' secretariat which left unresolved 'details' such as the effects on superannuation, extra payment for backlog of work,

Busmen reverse their decision to back nurses

A decision by Bristol bus workers to stage a one-day strike in support of the nurses' pay claim has now been reversed.

The reversal has been obtained by the use of an hysterical anti-communist campaign led by Jack Hodge secretary of the local busworkers' TGWU branch. Hodge who recently lost his seat on the TGWU's general executive council obviously thinks red-baiting a good way of restoring his waning popularity in the union.

After the original decision to stage a one-day strike in support of the nurses, Hodge launched a vicious attack on 'six communists' who he said were 'in league with the nurses'.

The decision was taken by 53 votes to 28. Hodge then started a campaign—aided of course by enthusiastic local press—which attributed the vote to communist manipulation.

One of the accused six, who is a member of the IMG, said: 'Hodge had used the red-baiting tactic to break any solidarity action with the nurses.'

'At a time when working class solidarity is vital, Hodge plays the game for the ruling class. The duty of trade union members is to fight to defend and improve the NHS—and that means supporting the workers' demands, not scabbing on their struggle.'

and so on.

What was sadly lacking during the struggle was a real strategy for action. The bureaucracy became aware of what was at stake when Islington Branch (the only branch to take total strike action) became an organising focus for the struggle. An NEC member was prompted to write to the General Secretary, 'Who runs this union, us or the membership?'

Although many militants were able to push forward the struggle in a number of branches, this was never turned into a unified fight. The formation of an all-London body from the various campaign, strike and action committees in the branches and workplaces to take control of the campaign out of official hands was not seen as an urgent task by those involved in the local action. The NALGO Action Group—dominated by the International Socialists—could have helped to build such an all-London organisation, but unfortunately failed to understand what role such a body could play.

The failure to adopt this strategy, coupled with the failure to link the London Weighting campaign to the national claim, has left the London membership isolated and reluctant to

take any further action.

But already branches outside London are taking action for the national claim. In the Newcastle branch overtime is being banned. In the Liverpool branch a mass meeting adopted a motion moved by an IMG member setting up an Action Committee based on support for industrial action to win the 20% claim and any offer being subject to ratification by the membership. In Midlothian a further advance has been made by the unification of the separate services in an area-based committee.

With the national leadership already setting the scene for a sell-out, by pleading the necessity for a quick settlement in order to get anything at all, it is essential that a real strategy for action be adopted nationally. Action Committees can draw in the maximum number of people who wish to fight for the full 20%. They can also provide an effective link between services and the backbone of an area and national organising body. This would give NALGO members an effective weapon to fight for the full 20%.

BORIS DEAN

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