

CAR WORKERS

FIGHT BACK



The best way to stop a lorry going in - Chrysler men in action on Monday

Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

Over 25,000 car workers are currently on strike, locked out, or laid off. The car industry is once again at the centre of the class struggle.

Workers and employers in the industry have been on a collision course for some time. A big boom in car orders has forced the bosses to step up production before there has been enough new plant opened up. The only answer has been a major drive for speed-up.

With the defeat of many sections of the working class by the government over Phase 2, the bosses have felt confident that such moves could be pulled off.

By DAVE BAILEY

But it is precisely these defeats which have driven the workers to resist any further attempts to step up their exploitation. Unable to break through on the wages front, they are all the more determined to fight back on those questions that can, for the time being, still be tackled in the traditional arena of struggle - the shop floor.

NOT SPECIAL

This is not a special situation. The same problems exist in many British industries, and the bosses will respond in exactly the same way. A report of the Confederation of British Industries prepared last week stressed the need for employers to attack 'restrictive practices' and 'squeeze more output out of the existing work force.' We can expect to see a whole series of struggles like those now taking place in the car industry.

The tactics used by the car workers have revealed an awareness that even 'traditional' struggles now require a much higher degree of organisation if they are to be won.

The Chrysler strikers have developed a system of flying pickets and used them to stop all movement of ma-

terials in four out of eight factories, their storage depots, and railheads. When the Chrysler management, at one point last week, decided to smuggle a convey of five car transporters out through a gate that had been closed for thirty years, motorised pickets tracked them down and diverted them to a storage depot, where they remain under permanent picket.

NO WAY ROUND

Many workers are beginning to look for ways around Phase 2 - ways to launch wages struggles without taking on the full force of government. Two plants in Birmingham have struck over parity claims, and a dispute has been going on at the Perkins Diesel Engines' plant in Peterborough for almost three months over a parity claim. The Perkins management seem determined for a showdown, and are pressing ahead with plans to lock out the 5700-strong work force. The wave of 'equal pay' strikes now under way has a similar character.

In the long run, however, there is no 'way round' Phase 2 and the Tory government. The present strikes may be able to win important gains, but their long-term significance will be as a means by which militants can rally the forces of the working class and prepare for an all-out offensive against Phase 3 in the autumn. There is no other way forward.

Neither Phase 2, Phase 3, Nor Speed Up - Allow the Ruling Class No Quarter.

'RETROACTION' and REACTION

On Monday the Law Lords, highest judicial appeal authority in the country, handed down a verdict which opens up the threat of immediate deportation for as many as 10,000 immigrants. The verdict upheld the right of Parliament to make its laws 'retroactive' - to apply to actions that took place before the passing of the Act - if it so wishes. This means that all immigrants who entered the country other than through the legal channels between 1968 and 1971 are now liable to be deported, despite the fact that the law at the time of their entry stated that they would be immune from deportation once they had been resident for six months.

This verdict is not at all surprising - it is just one more sign of the deeply racist character of British society and politics. Increasingly the British ruling class is turning away from the

'liberal' forms of back-door racial oppression, and adopting an openly reactionary stance. The Law Lords' verdict is the latest stage in this rightward course.

What is involved here from the standpoint of the working class movement? The Law Lords have given an open hunting licence to every reactionary, racist organisation in the country. The government may have better things to do than start a 'witch hunt,' but they have no need to; there are enough enthusiasts of 'repatriation' in the country to do this job for them.

The effect will be to create a climate of insecurity throughout the whole immigrant community which can only make all the more difficult unity between black and white workers.

Today it is 'illegal' immigrants who are being deported. But when will

the next victory for the 'repatriation' brigade come?

The working class movement must adopt a principled stand on this question. British capitalist society, for the past three hundred years, has rested upon the blood of Africans and Indians. If the working class is to fight for an end to this exploitative system and claim the wealth of this system as its own, we cannot deny the claims of our black brothers and sisters. The wealth of British capitalism is as much a product of their labour as it is of ours.

We must oppose all forms of anti-immigrant legislation, and pledge ourselves to defend all those who come under attack either by the reactionary manoeuvres of the capitalist state or the witch-hunts of semi-fascist rabble. If we cannot carry out this task then we will not be fit to smash the power of the capitalist class.

FIGHTING FUND

With the help of our readers and supporters, Red Weekly is now firmly established. But we do not intend to stop here. Over the next few months we hope further to expand the scope and coverage of the paper.

But this can only be done with your continued support and assistance. That is why we have launched a regular Fighting Fund to raise £300 a month. Since the first appeal two weeks ago we have raised just over £85, but we ask every reader to consider sending us a donation. Or why not make it a regular banker's order? Cheques/POs/bankers' orders to: Red Weekly, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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STOP PRESS!

Seven of the 24 Shrewsbury building workers will now stand trial at Mold Crown Court in North Wales on Tuesday 26 June, following the committal proceedings at Shrewsbury on 18 May.

NUS GRANTS COMPROMISE

Last weekend the National Union of Students held an emergency conference to discuss the future of the campaign it has been conducting against the Tory government over the low level of student grants. The grants campaign was originally based on a set of four demands: an end to 'discretionary awards' (grants which can be given or withheld at the whim of Local Education officials), no discrimination against married women, abolition of the means test, and an all round increase in the amount of grants.

NEGOTIATIONS

However, the NUS executive reported to the conference that the fight for the full claim was hopeless and that the only way gains could be made would be through the upcoming negotiations with the government. Ironically, the Communist Party members of the executive (who are its leading elements) shared this high expectation of government talks, despite the more sceptical attitude shown by their fellow party members in the trade union movement.

Indeed, the NUS executive could take a lesson or two from the book of trade union struggles. For not only have they put all their eggs in the basket of negotiation, but they are entering these negotiations with all their cards showing. A decision was taken, on the recommendation of the executive, to assign an order of priority to what were formerly considered the *inseparable* demands of the grants campaign. Top priority was given to the demand for an end to discretionary awards.

COMPROMISE

While compromise may become necessary in any struggle, this particular move simply gives the government advance notice that the NUS is prepared to settle for only a small part of its

whole claim. Even more seriously, this compromise move is made *before* any attempt to renew and extend the struggle in the coming college year. By reaching such a decision *now*, the student movement is left trying to mobilize students around demands that have virtually been abandoned. If very many industrial strikes were run on that basis, the working class would not have made any gains at all in the past thirty years.

By accepting this approach, the student movement will now find itself in the same position as any group of workers who accept a pay settlement within government norms: forced to fight among themselves to decide how the 'cake', the size of which is fixed by the government, will be divided between the worst-off (the polytechnics and colleges) and the slightly better-off (the universities).

A more positive sign was the rejection by conference of the executive suggestion, once more supported by its Communist Party members, that the rent strikes currently in progress should be abandoned before the summer vacation. This decision, and the adoption of a motion calling for full backing to the 14 students victimized at Reading University over a rent strike, means that there is a possibility of the rent strikes serving as a springboard for future militant struggle.

CONFUSED IDEAS

The pessimistic mood of the conference reflected both the defeats that had been suffered at the hands of the government, and the confused political idea, promoted by the CP and the NUS executive, that real support could be gained from college authorities. If a perspective had been put forward from the start of giving the campaign real power by linking it up with the fight of the working class against the Tory pay policy, then it would be much easier to talk

now about a revival of the campaign in the autumn.

This made it crucial at the conference for the revolutionary left to start popularizing this type of perspective — the only way to break the student movement out of its current confusion and demoralization. Unfortunately, this was not understood by important sections of the revolutionary left — particularly the International Socialists. IS, along with the IMG, supported the proposal to continue the fight for the full claim. But they refused to cooperate in the call for a 'week of explanation and action' in which students could bring the question of grants to the attention of the working class through mass action, and also rejected the suggestion of a national conference of students in support of the coming struggles of the working class against Phase 3. On the crucial question of strategy for the campaign, IS had nothing to offer but 'more of the same' militancy and 'join IS'. Needless to say such ideas could not deal with the problems facing the conference.

MAJOR TASKS

Several major tasks face revolutionaries in the student field at the present moment: maximum support must be organized for rent strikers under attack, as at Reading, and preparation made to support others who may soon come under attack; action should be taken to extract guarantees from Vice-Chancellors that no disciplinary action will be taken against rent-strikers over the summer. The aim in the autumn should be to extend the rent strikes and lay the basis for a return to a united campaign for the entire four demands at the autumn NUS conference. Decisive to all this will be the popularization of a strategy that can link these struggles up with the renewed offensive of the working class movement in the coming year.

Piers Corbyn

CURRENT ACCOUNT



The stripping monster

A capitalist crisis brings to the fore those capitalists most capable of an entirely ruthless and single-minded pursuit of profits. The merger between Hill Samuel and Slater Walker Securities (announced in April and now going ahead with government and Bank of England approval) is an incarnation of that kind of ruthlessness. The new company, in the words of the *Economist*, 'is one of the largest merchant banks in the world and intends to become a world merchant bank'. It will have net assets (assets minus liabilities) of £153 million, which last year produced profits of about £18 million. But this doesn't reveal its real power: the gross assets controlled directly by the group will be £1,500 million — equal to those of the fourth largest British industrial company.

Both companies are conglomerates with numerous subsidiaries: 208, mostly financial but some industrial like plastics, in the Slater Walker group; and 165, nearly all financial in Hill Samuel. Many of these are in overseas countries including the EEC, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, Greece, Malaysia, Brazil, Argentina, USA, Nigeria, Rhodesia, and South Africa (where Slater Walker has a number of subsidiaries including the sadistic-sounding Natal Tanning Extract Property Company).

It presumably has nothing to do with tanning that in finalising the merger the two companies are engaged in what is known as 'undressing' — revealing to each other the real size of their assets and profits which financial corporations are normally allowed to conceal behind the fig leaf of a public balance sheet. After this naked embrace the group is said to have plans for further seductions — of a large insurance company (Eagle Star?), a major commercial bank (the Midland?) as well as large property companies.

It is a less refined procedure than undressing which prompted the *Financial Times* recently to comment that in the City 'there never has been anything quite so big, so successful and so singular as the growth of Slater Walker Securities'. Founded in 1964 with £25,000 by Peter Walker, now Minister of Trade and Industry, and Jim Slater, once Lord Stokes' deputy at Leyland, the company's success has been largely based on the notorious practice of 'asset-stripping'. This involves the purchase of ailing companies at bargain prices and their brutal rationalisation to restore profits, throwing men out of work in the process.

Hill Samuel, though relatively more traditional, has become the second largest merchant bank in the country only through a series of aggressive mergers. It is headed by Sir Kenneth Keith, sometime assistant to the Director General of Political Intelligence in the Foreign Office, former member of the National Economic Development Council, and now a Director of BEA, *The Times*, Beechams and the Eagle Star Insurance Co. Keith is known in the City as a 'tough banker' anxious to get his hands more directly on wider sources of finance.

The merger illustrates a lot about how the structure of British capital is changing in response to the need to compete in Europe with the unprecedented concentration of financial and industrial power which has now been going on for six years. Second, it illustrates the coming together of financial and industrial capital which was also a feature of the 1930's. Both companies are kinds of banks, but neither is purely financial. Both have increasingly acquired industrial and commercial interests, and the joint group plans much closer involvement with industry. Third, the merger is a response of the need to compete in Europe with the vast investment banks of Germany and France.

It might have been more appropriate if the new giant had taken as its name not Hill Samuel but the name of a Slater Walker subsidiary — the Frankenstein Group Ltd. For undoubtedly the merger equips the capitalist class with a powerful and aggressive new monster.

Michael Price



Almost a hundred people demonstrated outside the Shire Hall in Chelmsford last Friday, 8 June, when the Essex Monday Club held a showing of the anti-immigration film, 'England, Whose England'. Eighteen people passed through the police cordon to see the film. Photo: Ezra Nathan

Stoke Newington 5: Statement

The appeals of John Barker, Hilary Creek, Anna Mendelson, Jim Greenfield and Jake Prescott, the 'Stoke Newington 5' are about to begin. The five were convicted in the course of two trials, on charges connected with the 'Angry Brigade' bombings.

In the light of the impending appeals, we, the Stoke Newington 5 Solidarity Committee,

reaffirm our conviction that these prisoners are political prisoners and that their trials were political trials.

In both trials the prosecution found it necessary to use the conspiracy law which allows innuendo and political belief to count as significant evidence. The conspiracy charge was the only charge on which Jake Prescott was found guilty, and on this basis he was

sentenced to 15 years imprisonment. Like Anna Mendelson and Jim Greenfield, Jake was acquitted on all substantive charges, and nobody has yet been found guilty of actually causing an explosion.

In the second trial the jury asked for leniency to be shown to John, Hilary, Anna and Jim. But they were, nevertheless, given ten years each.

The vicious sentences given to the 5 reflect the State's intention to victimise left wing activists at all costs, and to introduce a higher degree of repression into this country. This intensification of repression must be vigorously resisted.

regiment before it embarks in July for an 18 month tour of duty in Ballykinler, 30 miles south of Belfast.

TROOPS WITHDRAWAL

This could not be more timely for the chaps, since the local press has in the past month been forced to devote a considerable amount of space to the debate around the petition for the withdrawal of the troops organised by the local mother of a serving soldier, Mrs Peggy Chaston. Although the sources of finance for this venture seem rather mysterious, and it is being carried out on an anti-Irish basis, it has made Ireland a live issue for many Reading people.

Because of the large number of Army bases around Reading (Sandhurst, Aldershot, etc.) and the move of the Belfast 10 trial to Winchester, the organisation in this area of propaganda in support of the Irish struggle (in particular for the withdrawal of troops) assumes an added importance. The Reading Anti-Internment League, in conjunction with other groups opposed to the presence of British troops in Ireland, is co-ordinating several meetings and a demonstration, taking the form of a mass picket, in the local shopping precinct on Saturday 23 June at 12 noon. The assembly point for this will be in the Forbury Gardens (near Reading Station) at 11.30a.m.

Challenge army stunt!

An army propaganda exercise grandiosely dubbed 'Operation Friendship' reaches its climax with a band performance and a weaponry display in Reading on 23 June, organised by the First Battalion, the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire). The exercise is designed to boost public support for the

LABOUR FAILS TO SCORE

Tory policy is developed in private, and handed down from the top ... The Labour Party does not work like this and has no wish to do so. We are the only political party which grew from the unions and constituencies into Parliament and our sturdy Party democracy has served the people of Britain well. Policy in the Labour Party is made by the members.'

ED WYATT
and
ANDREW JENKINS

This charming picture of life in the Labour Party comes from the opening paragraphs of 'Labour's Programme for Britain,' published last Friday as a special supplement to *Labour Weekly*.

The timing of this document's appearance was rather unfortunate: for earlier that same week Harold Wilson, guardian of 'sturdy Party democracy,' had been heard to scream at the Labour Left. 'The Shadow Cabinet would not hesitate to use its veto at the appropriate time.' No matter the National Executive had decided that the next Labour Government should buy shares in the top 25 companies, the Shadow Cabinet reserved the right to make policy, 'handed down from the top.'

In fact, Labour's political policies are never the outcome of the wishes of the working class on which the Party bases itself. They are the product of deals made between one section of the bureaucracy of the working class movement — Labour's parliamentary leaders — and the other main section of this bureaucracy — the leaders of the TUC, and the capitalist class. These policies always revolve within the framework of the capitalist system.

The new programme of the Party is no exception. One of the major objects of this new programme is to repair the relationship between the Labour Party leadership and the trade union bureaucracy, a relationship that came under considerable strain with the anti-union policies followed in the last years of the Labour government, and which has not been improved by the Opposition's inability to provide any protection for the trade union movement from the onslaught of the Tory government.

In order to heal the breach the Party is willing to make some definite promises. The Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Act are both to be repealed. The redundancy pro-



gramme in the steel industry is to be halted for the time being, and the coal output stepped up. The Docks will be nationalized, and the 'lump' outlawed in the building industry. Undoubtedly such proposals will be received enthusiastically by many trade unionists, and every trade union bureaucrat will doubtless rise to the occasion and jump on the Labour bandwagon.

This comes at a very opportune time for the

trade union bureaucrats. For some time now their inability to lead a struggle against the Tories and defend the interests of the rank-and-file has been exposed for all to see. The tried and true escape hatch of 'wait for the next Labour government to solve all our problems' has been rather difficult to use because of the bad taste the last Labour government left in the mouths of many workers. However, this latest statement of Labour policy will help to relieve some of the difficulties.

ARBITRATION COMMITTEE

But the trade union leaders in return must help Labour to supply the bourgeoisie with an alternative to the Industrial Relations Act and the statutory Incomes Policy. Hence the Programme announces a new 'Conciliation and Arbitration Service,' to be set up with government money and run by a joint council of trade union officials, employers' representatives and 'neutral' industrial relations experts. Unions could compel employers to appear before the Arbitration Committee. Together, the Government, the TUC and the employers, would work out an agreement each year on prices and incomes. As in Sweden, the expected total national income will be carved up between capitalists and workers with the TUC fixing pay norms for different categories of workers accordingly.

This is a return to the capitalist strategy of protecting the profits of private business by 'integrating' the trade union leadership into the running of the capitalist state machine. Since the trade union leaders will be involved in the making of economic policy, they can hardly be in a position to lead struggles against that policy. This is what the Labour Party means by a 'new social contract' — a sugar coated sell-out of the working class by the bureaucracy.

But such a strategy always involves one big problem: can the bureaucracy control the 'troublemakers' who actually lead the struggles of the rank-and-file? It's this problem that gives the sugar coated pill a very bitter centre: the success of a policy of 'integration' depends upon the ability of the bureaucracy to crack-down effectively on the militants and rob the rank-and-file of any independent leadership.

They will have to carry out the dirty work that the Industrial Relations Act has thus far failed to accomplish. Thus a new Labour Government, rather than ushering in an era of milk and honey for the working class, could well produce a wave of red-baiting and bureaucratic crackdown.

DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT

In order to help out the trade union bureaucrats in this difficult task, the Labour Party's 'theoreticians' have taken a leaf from the book of Continental Social-Democratic parties. In the factories, Labour is calling for 'Supervisory Boards' that would be responsible for overall company policy, half of these places being filled by workers' representatives.

The effect of such a reform would be two-fold. On the one hand it would involve the mass of the workforce taking responsibility for the operation of a company still subject to the laws of capitalism — and therefore place them in the position of 'democratically managing' the exploitation of their own labour. At the same time it would create a new infusion of blood into the trade union bureaucracy — in the form of the 'workers' representatives' on management boards. This new bureaucratic group would be a very useful counterweight to the shop stewards' movement, and would have considerable influence because of its access to information about company affairs and its connection with the management's 'levers of power'.

REDISTRIBUTION OF POWER

This would amount to an attempt to redistribute power away from the organs of struggle forged by the working class in the fight against capitalist exploitation, in favour of new organs of class collaboration, set up by the state to bind the workers more firmly to their bosses. If successful, such a move would deprive the trade union rank-and-file of independent organisation, with disastrous consequences for their ability to resist the combined forces of the union bureaucracy, the capitalists state, and the employers.

This article has only concentrated on a few of the more important implications of the new Labour Programme. Next week's *Red Weekly* will carry a full and detailed analysis of this important document.

The equal pay strike at Salford Electrical Instruments, now in its second week, looks like being the first of many. Ballots on the issue held by the clerical workers' union APEX at a number of other plants have in all cases shown a large majority in favour of strike action, and these decisions are almost certain to be endorsed by the Executive of the union at its meeting this Saturday.

The dispute at S.E.I., which is a subsidiary of the giant GEC combine, opened up after a management offer in early April of £1.75 to the clerks, more than half of whom are women. The workers were told that this was the best the company could do under Phase 2, and that the increase represented a step towards equal pay, since it narrowed the percentage differential.

APEX, however, wants to see equal pay achieved at the highest possible rate for both men and women. To this end they demanded separate calculation of the increases, raising the male rate by £2 and the female rate by £1.70, coupled with a one-third closing of the differential (which is allowed for under Phase 2). This would give the women a further £2, i.e. a total increase of £3.70. But management refused to make any advance on the original offer, and after protracted negotiations more than 100 APEX members, men as well as women, walked out at both the Eccles and Heywood plants of S.E.I. on 30 May.

Since then, the workers have been organising a 24-hour picket which has been almost totally successful in turning away the hundreds of lorries which arrive each day. The management has now been reduced to the level of smuggling in important components in car boots. Although the factory has so far managed to remain open, the production workers, a large number of whom are also women, were meeting on Wednesday to decide whether or not to recognise the APEX pickets. Most of these workers are not in a union (although some are members of the AUEW), which has made it difficult to explain the issues and the need for solidarity between clerical and production workers to the shop floor. But if they vote to

Striking out for equal pay

recognise the pickets, a move supported by the AUEW, then the factory will come to a complete standstill.

PRESSURE

APEX is not known as a militant union — indeed its recent conference has just added the International Socialists to the list of proscribed organizations and outlawed the APEX Action rank-and-file group. But it is obviously coming under pressure from the other white-collar unions on

the question of equal pay, since more than half of its 125,000 members are women. The union now has a policy of vetoing all settlements which do not make progress towards equal pay.

This poses the issue very sharply. Already workers at GEC Turbine Generators in Rugby have walked out in a dispute over a management job evaluation scheme and refusal to narrow the differential. Action is also threatened at British Domestic Appliances (also a GEC subsidiary), Coventry Climax, Smiths Industries, Salisbury

Transmissions, Prestige Ltd., Joseph Lucas, J & J Cash, Wickmans, Fleming Reid, and others.

The solidarity of male with female workers at S.E.I. has already shown that it is possible to overcome one of the traditional weaknesses of such disputes. In the next few weeks the whole labour movement must face up to the fact that only by fighting for the more weakly organized and badly paid sections can fragmentation and eventual defeat at the hands of the employing class be avoided.

MARTIN METEYARD

APEX workers from GEC in Rugby picket press conference on equal pay at Department of Employment building.

Photo: Peter Harrap (Report)



The class struggle in Britain is hotting up. So far we have felt only the thin end of the wedge: the main attacks on the trade union movement have been led, so far, by the summons-server and the judge.

But in the next big offensive by the working class movement the capitalist state will turn to the cop and the club — backed up by the rubber bullet and the CS gas canister, fresh from 'peacekeeping' in the Six Counties of northern Ireland.

It is these weapons which we must learn to combat. Otherwise no struggle can be successful.

Class struggle in America

As late as the 1930s, the vast majority of American workers were still not organised into trade unions. This was because the craft-union dominated American Federation of Labor showed little interest in trying to organise the unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the new mass production industries such as cars, rubber and steel.

These industries were the ones dominated by the large trusts, controlled by the most class-conscious and ruthless sections of the capitalist class.

Yet in the mid-30s, in the midst of a serious depression and mass unemployment, a series of major breakthroughs were made in unionising these industries. These victories were won only by well planned organising drives, which directly involved the mass of the workers.

Two strikes in particular marked the beginning of this period of struggle: the Toledo Auto-Lite strike and the Minneapolis Teamsters' strikes. Both of these broke out in 1934, and in both the issue of trade union recognition was central.

Toledo Auto-Lite

The workers at the Toledo Auto-Lite company struck in April of 1934. The company promptly got a court injunction limiting their right to picket and recruited 1800 scabs to do the work of the strikers.

However, due to the activity of a small group of revolutionaries, the unemployed workers in the area were very well organised. The Auto-Lite workers approached the local Unemployed League and asked for their assistance. The League then sent a letter to the judge who had issued the injunction which said in part:

'On Monday morning May 7, at the Auto-Lite plant, the Lucas County Unemployed League, in protest of the injunction issued by your court, will deliberately and specifically violate the injunction enjoining us from sympathetically picketing peacefully in support of the striking Auto Workers Federal Union.'

10,000 pickets

Within two weeks the picket line had grown to 10,000. The police faithfully escorted the scabs through the picket lines and continually attacked individual pickets. Finally, on 23 May, the pickets decided to put a stop to all this.



The Organizer: the morning after police opened fire on unarmed pickets.

FIGHTING UNITY — THE WAY TO WIN

They blocked the police attempts to escort the new shift of scabs through their lines and, after defeating the police, laid siege to the plant itself, from which they had come under attack with tear gas bombs and fire hoses. After 15 hours a force of 900 National Guardsmen (state militia) were called in to free the scabs still imprisoned in the plant.

Guard opens fire

The battle then continued between the strikers and the National Guard. In between skirmishes the strikers set up soap boxes in front of the troops and explained to them the nature of the strike and the role the troops were playing as strike breakers.

On the second day, the guardsmen opened fire on the pickets, killing two and wounding 25. But over 6000 workers returned that night to continue the fight under the cover of dark, despite the fact that the area around the factory had been placed under martial law. On two occasions the fury of the workers' assault forced the troops to retreat back into the safety of the plant.

Eventually, after six days of running battles, the company decided to close the plant. A mass rally of 40,000 workers was held in support of the strikers, and 98 of the 99 AFL branches in the area voted in favour of a general strike.

Three days later the company capitulated, granting exclusive negotiating rights for the union (the first time this had been achieved) and an immediate 5% wage increase. With this victory behind them the Toledo car workers were able to organise another 19 plants that year, and the following year led a successful strike in a General Motors plant, thus beginning the unionisation of this pinnacle of U.S. capitalism.

Minneapolis Teamsters

The rule of capital in America has always had a brutality and nakedness not often matched here in Britain, where high-flown ideas and polite manners serve to disguise the realities of capitalist exploitation. Thus the American labour movement has a richer fund of experience on how to deal with capitalist violence: experiences from which we can learn much.

One of the most impressive struggles waged by the rank-and-file of the labour movement in the U.S. was the massive drive by Local 574 of the Teamsters' Union in 1934 to organise the trucking industry in the commercial centre of Minneapolis. This city of less than half a million — somewhere between Sheffield and Coventry in size — thus became the site of a major historical battle between the united power of the working class and the unfettered brutality of the bosses and their state machine.

Preparations

This struggle was exceptional because it involved a plan of organising different from that practised by other unions connected with the AFL (American Federation of Labour American TUC). The aim was not simply to organise a single factory, but to challenge the power of the bosses throughout an entire key industry. The struggle had another major difference: the leadership of Local 574 was in the hands of revolutionaries, members of the Communist League of America, the American Trotskyist movement. It was these two factors that gave the Minneapolis strikes their power and impact.

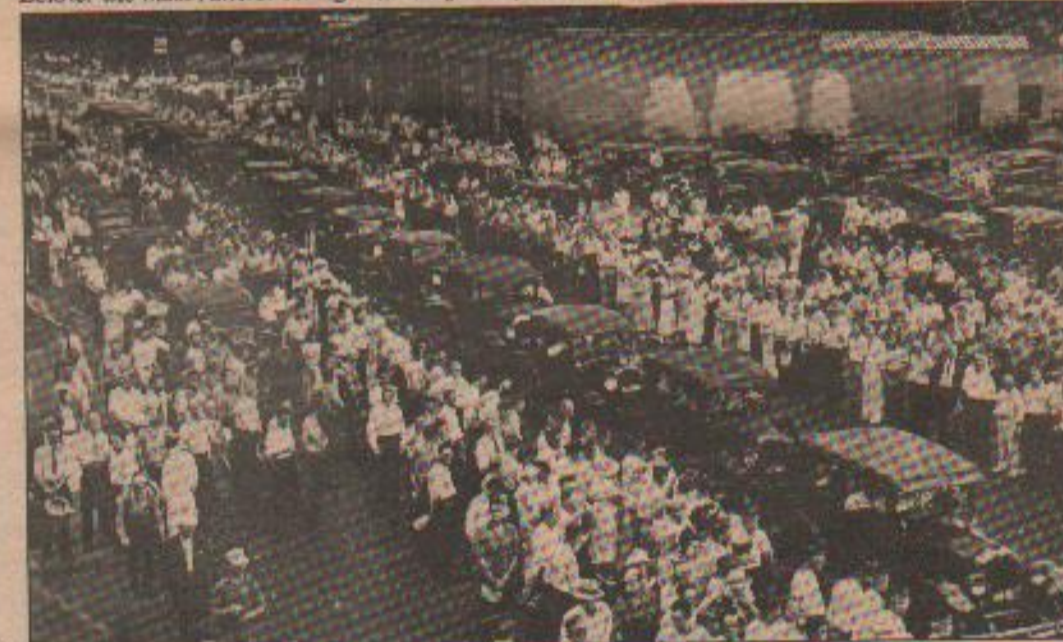
The union entered the struggle well prepared. It made contact with local farmer's organisa-

Below and right: two scenes from the crucial battle in the marketplace during the Minneapolis Teamsters' strike. Pickets, armed with clubs, defeated hundreds of special deputies and armed police, thus showing that the power of the bosses was not invulnerable. This victory was an inspiration to the strikers, and to workers across the country, to carry the struggle on to final victory

by Chris Balfour



Below: the mass funeral cortège of Henry Ness, militant murdered by police gunfire.



tions to avoid disrupting their trade and driving them into the arms of the bosses. Contacts were built up with the unemployed (of whom there were 30,000 in the city) who were organised by the union, rather than leaving them to the bosses as scabs. Special organisations were set up to draw the wives and families of strikers into the struggle.

A highly efficient and well-coordinated system of mobile pickets was formed to prevent the movement of scab vehicles. A military-type

organisation was forged to ensure that they could effectively deal with police attempts to intimidate and crush the picket squads.

In his book *Teamster Rebellion*, Farrell Dobbs, a leading participant in these events, shows how this operated in practice:

'In the Monday confrontation... two organised and disciplined forces were to face each other, club against club, in a battle fought along military lines. We didn't know how many different attempts the bosses would make to

The capitalist state resorts to its instruments of violence whenever and wherever its power is threatened. During the 1911 Liverpool general strike troops were sent in against the strikers. In this scene a docher — in the same way as the Toledo Auto-Lite strikers — tries to put his case across to the soldiers.





begin moving trucks on Monday, but a major effort could be expected in the market district ... Since, from the union's viewpoint, the market was a good battleground, we were not disturbed by the news. We simply concentrated on preparations for a fight there.

'...About 600 men had been concentrated in the AFL hall before morning, all armed with clubs. Around four a.m. Monday small picket lines appeared in front of the market houses. Larger numbers of pickets, their union buttons temporarily concealed, fanned out in strategic positions around the district ... Several hundred uniformed cops were on hand in the market, along with comparable numbers of special deputies ... About nine a.m. scab drivers backed six trucks up to the leading dock ... and the fight was on.

'With the cops deployed on the assumption that they knew the union's strength, the 600 pickets waiting at the AFL hall were ordered into battle and they moved out in military formation ... With the workers challenging them, club against club, most of the deputies took to their heels, leaving the uniformed cops on their own. More police were rushed in from posts in the main business district. The union quickly countered this move by summoning hundreds of reserves from the strike headquarters.

'In an act of desperation, the cops drew their guns, threatening to shoot; but they seemed hesitant to resort to such extreme measures, and that gave us a little time to do something about it. As matters stood they were pretty well bunched up, with an open field of fire against the strikers. To solve the problem they had to be scattered among the pickets ... The remaining reserves at strike headquarters were loaded into trucks ... the lead truck ... was told to rush to the market, ignoring all traffic rules, and to drive right into the midst of the cops ... The pickets jumped out of the truck onto the cops who, being unable to shoot without hitting one another, had to continue fighting with clubs. After that, Police Chief Johannes decided to call it a day ... In a three-hour slugfest the union had fought the trained police to a draw, and not a single truck had been moved.'

New round opens

The following day brought an even more decisive victory for the Local 574 picket squads over the police. The state then arranged a truce with the union and turned to negotiations. A settlement was hammered out that gave the union what they wanted: recognition by the main employers and the right to organise 'inside' workers, as well as truckers, in

the wholesale grocery trade. For about a month a shaky peace was maintained between the union and the employes on the basis of this settlement.

But while local employers had been forced to recognise the union, they had no intention of conceding any demands for higher wages. A new round of struggle was clearly on the cards - and it broke out on 16 July, under the leadership of a democratically-elected strike committee of 100 chosen from the ranks of Local 574.

Several steps had been taken to strengthen the union's position. Relations with the farmers' association had been renewed, and the working alliance with the unemployed was extended by the convening of an all-union conference on the problems of the unemployed. A central council of workers was set up: '... a delegated body of representatives from various workers' organisations such as unemployed formations, trade unions, labour political groups, workers' fraternal associations, cooperative movements, youth, and women's organisations of a working class nature.' Every effort was made to unify the entire Minneapolis trade union movement around the forthcoming struggle of Local 574.

Rank-and-file militants from 574 spoke at trade union branch meetings throughout the town, and a joint conference of local unions was organised. This body called a mass demonstration and meeting in which some 15,000 participated. The union began the publication of its own weekly paper, *The Organizer*, and this was turned into a daily on the eve of the strike. The Minneapolis working class movement was effectively unified and thoroughly prepared for the battles to come.

Capitalist violence

The bosses and the police replied more violently than on the previous occasion. Armed police took on the job of escorting scab trucks and breaking the power of the mobile picket squads. There was only one way this could be done.

On 20 July the inevitable step was taken: 150 cops opened fire with shot guns on unarmed and peaceful picket trucks. Two strikers were murdered in this onslaught, another 45 grievously wounded.

But Local 574 knew how to respond to the violence of the ruling class: 'You thought you would shoot Local 574 into oblivion. But you only succeeded in making 574 a battlecry on the lips of every self-respecting working man and working woman in Minneapolis. You

thought you would separate the rank-and-file from their leaders. You only succeeded in cementing the bond that holds them together in an efficient fighting army. You thought you would alienate the labor movement from 574. You only succeeded in rallying every section of the labor movement to our cause.' Such was the reply of *The Organizer* on the morning of 21 July.

Unity and determination

A one-day strike of transport workers brought the city to a halt on Monday 23rd. And the following day over 5000 unemployed walked off the government public works projects in support of 574 and to press their own demands for trade union rates of relief. On that same day the funeral of Henry Ness, one of the militants murdered by the police, made its way through the streets of Minneapolis accompanied by a mass march of 20,000. Another 20,000 waited at strike headquarters for the arrival of the procession.

This massive display of working class unity and determination created the conditions necessary for 574 to resume its picketing under the very guns which had murdered their comrades.

The struggle went on for another month. The union had to weather red-baiting from the trade union officials, the use of the National Guard by the 'left' Farmer-Labour State Governor, Olson, to break the strike, the arrest of their leaders, and continuing armed harassment of their picket squads. But Local 574 won.

The way to win

This struggle shows how victory can be won by the working class movement even under the most difficult of circumstances and against the most determined enemy. What is required is a clear political understanding of the need to build the greatest practical unity of the working class around the struggle, and the ability to carry on the fight effectively against the capitalist class and their police force.

These two sides of the struggle back one another up: the ability of one section of the class to take on the 'all-powerful' state machine and fight it to a standstill inspires the rest of the class to take up this cause as their own and to join in the fight. The broadest, fighting unity of the masses weakens the hand of the capitalist state machine and restrains them from using their might to crush what would otherwise be an isolated struggle.

In the coming fights we must learn to carry out both these tasks and to carry them out well. And it is worth keeping in mind these words of Farrell Dobbs about the situation in Minneapolis: 'If a comparable situation had existed nationally, what began as a simple trade union action could have broadened into a sweeping social conflict leading toward a revolutionary confrontation for state power.'

Two excellent books, both written by leading participants in these events, give a full account of this great period of struggle: *Teamster Rebellion*, by Farrell Dobbs, is a personal account of the Minneapolis Teamsters' strike by one of its leaders; *Labor's Giant Step*, by Art Preis, a leader of the Lucas County Unemployed League and involved in the Toledo Auto-Lite strike, gives a broad overview of American trade union struggles in this period. Both can be obtained from Red Books, 24 Boundary Road, London N.W.8 - *Teamster Rebellion* - 95p. & 15p. p & p; *Labor's Giant Step* - £1.65 & 25p. p & p.

THE ORGANIZER

VICTORY!

Settlement Goes Through!

Vote for 574 in the Elections
Make Minneapolis a Union Town

The Organizer: Victory is won

Reviews

Grim journalism

Crisis on the Clyde, by Jack McGill
(Davis-Poynter Ltd., £1.50)/Richard
Neubauer

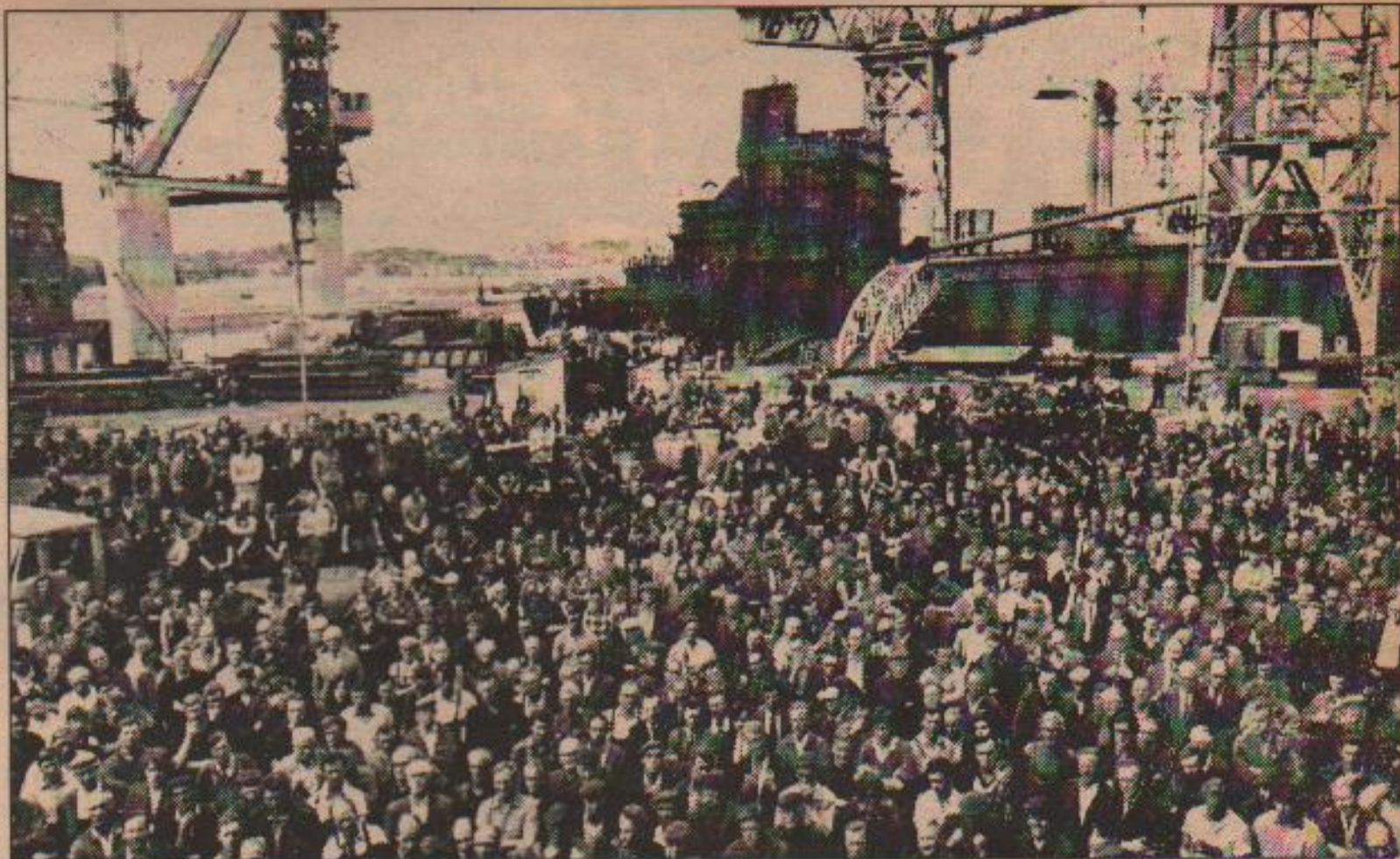
'The little superior air of not taking sides: a maxim of Realpolitik, an allusion to sociology ... and some picturesque, some human interest, some exotic words.'

Bourgeois journalism has survived the attacks of Victor Serge's novels, to discover new outlets. Today's on-the-spot reporter does not rest when his stories have been filed. He drags out his news clippings on some suitably dramatic topic and coaxes his red-hot typewriter into stitching together a book to catch the market before public interest fades.

Alas, his 'popular' daily style often clings to the inky keys. Here, in consequence, complete with 'grim-faced' workers and 'big, tough-talking, pipe-smoking' capitalists ('the stem is always gripped firmly between the teeth, almost aggressively'), and largely couched in short, crisp sentences, is the work of a former industrial correspondent of the *Scottish Daily Express* on the Clyde shipbuilding crisis of the last five years. 'Not a social study nor an economic analysis,' he needlessly warns, 'but simply the story of Upper Clyde Shipbuilders.' Grit your teeth and read on.

MISTAKES AND DISCREDIT

Familiar faces and incidents dance across the pages as McGill, carefully including the details of his own slight involvement in the drama, traces the course of events in three main stages: the inception and subsequent failure of the merger of five shipyards into UCS; the work-in tactics adopted in July 1971 to resist redundancies; the ultimate re-organisation of local shipbuilding under new direction — in descending order of detailed attention. The



Mass meeting at start of UCS work-in.

fundamental roots of the crisis are ignored. The uncompetitiveness of British capitalism's traditional industries in general, the protectionist policies of rival states in world shipbuilding, the strength of trade union organisation in the industry's labour force in the UK — all form the context in which the Wilson government developed the strategy of the 1966 Geddes Report, combining massive state aid to shipbuilding industrialists with mergers and a productivity bargaining offensive against the workers. This created UCS.

The book restricts itself to describing the mechanics of the merger. Naturally, however, this approach creates difficulties for the author in explaining the run of crises which then dogged the new group, all flowing from the same basic causes and all requiring fresh injections of state capital at regular intervals.

Perhaps the most famous of these was the 'national disaster' in constructing the QE2 so far behind schedule that it sailed on its maiden voyage 105 days late in May, 1969. McGill ascribes these events to managerial 'mistakes' ('at the former John Brown's yard at Clydebank, no-one was employed to seek new customers!' — an attitude dating from the era of British dominance of shipbuilding prior to the 1950s); and also to the workers' 'crazy' disputes and opposition to productivity schemes 'despite the amount of money Fairfields spent on taking shop stewards to the ETU College at Esher, Middlesex, to explain Measured Day Work. To their everlasting discredit, the workers at Fairfields fiddled the figures.' If this book seeks to deny essential class antagonisms, however, class warriors may still find lessons within it.

IRA AND UCS

The crunch, of course, came with the new Tory government's severe change of strategy. Preparation for the EEC entailed the sacrifice of the older, unprofitable capitalist trades for the future survival of British capitalism as a whole, and this necessitated a clash with the generally powerful unions established in the industries concerned.

In July, 1971, UCS was axed by the government simply cutting off its financial life-line. Including its suppliers, 15,000 faced the sack. The book tells how the state viewed the likely social repercussions — 'the Cabinet had considered the possibility of violence breaking out on Clydeside since the announcement that the Group was going into liquidation, and had delayed the publication of the Four Wise Men's Report for fifteen days because on July 14 all available army units were in Northern Ireland. Aware that the police forces in the areas would be unable to handle a situation involving thousands of workers, Heath ... decided that the best course was to delay the Report until some troops were stationed back in Britain.' Ireland's struggle had stretched the forces of the British state to its limits.

In this vital setting, the work-in tactics become easier to evaluate. While the struggle showed every sign of spreading to really mobilise the workers across the West of Scotland, with thousands on strike and in the streets of Glasgow in solidarity demonstrations, the

UCS stewards' methods opened the door to the ruling-class's remaining ally — the trade union bureaucrats, principally of the 'left' variety.

'There has been a widespread misconception of the nature and extent of the work-in, often misquoted as a precedent for quite different industrial action of a totally obstructive or sit-in nature' — the Liquidator, Robert Smith, drew the distinction in August, 1972, quoted by McGill. The union leaders, committed on paper typically to nationalisation of the whole industry, now wrested control to defuse the struggle and return the yards to full capitalist management.

The limits of the sit-in, the failure to build on non-bureaucratic trade union support beyond UCS (other than by raising ultimately £486,000 in donations) were swiftly recognised. Boilermakers' President Dan McGarvey confides 'one has got to time when one goes into something. If you don't, you become a follower rather than a leader. At the time of the spontaneous combustion the last thing was to go in and ask people to be rational.' But afterwards, of course, ... The rest is painful and well-known. An important opportunity for revolutionary advance passed by, and one meandering journalist missed the point, while raking over the evidence in his rush to publish 'the story.'

A revolutionary classic

From Lenin to Stalin, by Victor Serge
(Pathfinder Press, £1.05)/Pauline Ryan

Pathfinder Press must be commended on the excellent job they are doing in bringing out a whole series of revolutionary classics, and making them available to the revolutionary left for the first time since the thirties.

Victor Serge's *From Lenin to Stalin* is one such. The bulk of the book was written in 1936, not long after Serge was exiled from the Soviet Union. He got out by the skin of his teeth, and was the last person identified with the opposition to Stalin to do so. Later in that year began the mass arrests and great purges leading up to the first of the Moscow trials.

Serge, who had previously been the editor of *Communist International*, organ of the Comintern, used his brilliant journalistic and observational talents to draw this picture of the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the usurpation of power by Stalin in the period following Lenin's death.

'THE GREAT YEARS'

The book begins with the Russian Revolution in March 1917, prior to the arrival of Lenin and the publication of his *April Theses*. It goes on to describe the Bolshevik Revolution and the Civil War, which Serge calls 'The Great Years.'

The book then moves on to the founding of the Third International, something in which Serge was personally involved. He describes the dazzling array of talent which the Third International assembled under its banner, and he chronicles the way in which this vigour and talent was squandered by Stalin. Woven in with this is a description of the rise and the defeat of the Left Opposition. The question of China, and the way in which the defeats caused by Stalin only succeeded in consolidating Stalin's grip, is discussed, as is the question of collectivisation and industrialisation.

Trotsky, of course, deals with the latter at length in his book *The Revolution Betrayed*, but Trotsky is more concerned in dealing with the twists and turns of the Stalin leadership, and the figures he was using to support his analysis. Serge, on the other hand, draws on his own experience as an exile and that of other exiled members of the Left Opposition, and paints a picture of what these figures meant in human terms. To talk of hundreds of thousands or even millions of people being deported in the forced collectivisation is, without a description of the conditions of those deported, to have only half the story.

Serge, for instance, quotes a letter from a Siberian exile: 'First we witnessed the arrival of 3,000 deported kulaks. Many of them were poor or middle peasants. Some of them had received decorations for bravery in the civil war, but their decorations had, of course, been taken from them. According to the plan they were supposed to cut timber, but no arrangements had been made for them. The crowding in the barracks soon caused an epidemic of typhus. In the forests it was even worse. They were sent into the woods with their wives. I do not know why, in midwinter, without any warm clothing ...' (p.64).

COMPLEMENTARY

It is perhaps in conjunction with *The Revolution Betrayed* that this book is best read, for it forms an indispensable complement. Although, obviously, such a book could not be written without an analysis of the degeneration of the Soviet Union, this analysis remains implicit, and is not brought out in any systematic way. It is in this sphere that the book is perhaps most lacking. But in many other ways it makes up for this failing. The descriptions of Stalin's terror, and even more of Stalin's own fears are graphic and nightmarish and should be read by every revolutionary.

The last part of the book consists of six miscellaneous essays, all of which are well worth reading, particularly the essays on the condition of women, and managed science, literature and pedagogy. The former essay discusses the crowded conditions in Soviet cities and the effect of this on the women. The latter is a discussion of the implications for science and literature of the Soviet regime.

In conclusion, this book is strongly recommended as an aid to understanding exactly what the degeneration of the Soviet Union meant for those living there.



Tripartitism

I can confirm Michael Price's remarks about the CBI in your 'Current Account' column in *Red Weekly* of 1 June, 'from the horse's mouth.'

In a recent speech on incomes policy, made to retailers 'behind closed doors,' Campbell Adamson of the CBI stated in support of your point that the Phase 2 legislation was 'almost identical' to the CBI's own proposals submitted during the previous 'tripartite' talks. Price restraint, he added, was 'largely cosmetic.'

His other major theme was to tell retailers to join the CBI as the Retail Consortium would not be represented in negotiations preceding Phase 3. This obviously amounted to a straightforward piece of bullying of small capital by big capital.

Bernard Young

Republican prisoners

Red Weekly in its issue of 19 May and its story headed 'New Attempts to intimidate prisoners' by Bob Pennington lists Saoirse's address as 32, Gardiner Place. This should have read 30, Gardiner Place, Dublin 1. Saoirse is a Republican Movement committee for Prison Reform and as such is interested in contacting such groups in other countries.

A Committee which your correspondent failed to mention in his article was 'Cabhair' (Irish Republican Prisoners Defence and Aid Fund) with offices at 30, Gardiner Place, Dublin 1. This committee which raises funds for the families of Irish political prisoners is headed by Tomas Mac Giolla, President of Sinn Féin.

is miss,
Sean O Ciannaith,
Director, International Affairs Bureau,
Irish Republican Movement.

ARGENTINA : STORMING OF THE PRISONS

By BRIAN SLOCOCK

On the afternoon of 16 May three specially chartered aircraft flew into Buenos Aires, the capital city of Argentina. As the passengers left the plane they were greeted by banners and placards emblazoned with political slogans, and crowds of demonstrators chanting 'For every liberated fighter a gun is waiting.' This uncompromising slogan must have given the newly-elected President of Argentina, Hector Campora, second thoughts about his decision to release the political prisoners jailed by his military predecessors.

PRISONERS FREED

For the two hundred passengers returning on these planes were militants of the various guerilla groups that have been fighting the Argentinian military dictatorship arms-in-hand for the past four years. Campora's decision to release them was made necessary by the eruption of a mass movement in the wake of his electoral victory demanding immediate freedom for these heroic fighters.

Campora was inaugurated as President on 25 May, and the same afternoon a mass demonstration took place outside one of the main Buenos Aires prisons. Forty thousand demonstrators, unwilling to wait for the government to take matters into their own hands and storm the prison. That evening Campora hastily issued a pardon for the prisoners, and their release began at 11 p.m.

ARMED STRUGGLE

There are four main guerilla groups in Argentina, all of which were represented among the released prisoners. Two of these consider themselves part of the 'Peronist' movement, followers of former 'popular' President Juan Peron, the main body of which is the Justicialist Movement to which President Campora belongs. These groups have indicated their support for the present government.

But by far the most important of the guerilla groups is the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP), led by the Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRT), Argentinian section of the Fourth International. It is the insistence of this group in maintaining its independence that gives Campora his current headaches.

In order to grasp the relationship between the new government, the popular movement that is backing it, and the armed organisations, it is necessary to look back a few years. From May 1969 on the harsh military dictatorship ruling Argentina, headed by General Lanusse, met with increasing resistance from the working class. This led to a series of general strikes and local armed uprisings, coupled with the rise of armed guerilla forces that were able to impose important defeats on the dictatorship. The Argentinian ruling class was forced to turn towards the restoration of 'democratic' government as a means of heading off this growing revolutionary movement.

ELECTIONS

The only major force in Argentinian politics with mass popular support is the Peronist movement, basing itself on a long history of reformist and anti-imperialist rhetoric. The military regime thus agreed to step down from power and allow, for the first time in many years, free elections to be held. The victory of the Peronist candidate Campora, under these circumstances, was inevitable.

After this victory the new Argentinian government has to follow the difficult path of trying to keep the support of the masses from whom they gain their influence, but without alienating the Argentinian ruling class, in particular the military, who could easily change their attitude towards 'democracy' should their interests be threatened.

ECONOMIC TROUBLES

Big economic problems — particularly a very high rate of inflation — face the country. But the new government will have difficulty in taking any drastic action directed against

either the Argentinian capitalists or the imperialist businesses with which 'national' capital has very close relations. Such moves would encourage the ruling class and imperialism to turn back to the army.

It will be necessary, in the long run, to place the burden of these problems onto the backs of the working class. But Argentina has one of the largest, most highly organised and most class conscious working classes in Latin America. Fortunately for Campora the bureaucracy in the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) has a long history of Peronist sympathies, and can be counted on to cooperate with the government. But the CGT bureaucrats are worried about the effect of this on their members: if any sort of alternative leadership exists for the working class,



Guerilla slogans are daubed on the walls as demonstrators decide to release prisoners themselves.

the bureaucrats could find themselves in deep trouble.

ALTERNATIVE

It is just this alternative that the guerilla groups could open up. Thus Campora cannot afford to tolerate any movement that has prestige and influence among the masses, and is not under the thumb of the Peronist leadership. The refusal of the ERP to jump on the Peronist band wagon is thus very important. In a recently issued statement they charge: 'He (Campora) is talking about national unity between the oppressor army and the oppressed, between the exploiters and the exploited workers, between the oligarchic landowners and the dispossessed peons.'

The ERP has pledged itself not to launch any armed attacks against the government, as long as the government does not attack the people or try to suppress the guerilla organisations. However, it plans to continue the fight against the armed forces, foreign imperialist business operations, and known political criminals of the old regime.

PERONIST ATTACK

The government and the Peronist movement have responded by launching a witch hunt against the ERP and its supporters. Peron himself, from exile in Spain, has made a public statement denouncing the ERP as provoca-

teurs. A group calling itself the Security Command of the Social Justice Movement has said that it will kill 10 'leftists' for every Peronist killed by the ERP.

The fact that this campaign has been launched despite the pledge of the ERP not to physically attack the government suggests that its real purpose is not the defense of the Peronist movement, but to serve as a prelude to the physical liquidation of all opposition on the left.

MEMORIES

The government has issued an ultimatum to the Peronist guerillas to give up their arms. But so far they have failed to comply. Many retain bitter memories of the experience of September 1955, when the Peronist leadership replied to the military coup that removed Peron from power by calling on the people to 'wait' and to 'avoid civil war.' The result of this was to leave the military free to drown the workers' movement in blood.

Argentinian revolutionaries have a big job ahead of them. They must sink deep roots into the mass movement unleashed by the elections, strive to win the most politically advanced sections from Peronism to revolutionary Marxism, push the struggles of the masses forward (rejecting calls by the union bureaucrats or the Peronist parliamentarians to 'wait'), and develop independent organisations of the masses, including armed organisations, to carry on the fight against the army and prepare for the establishment of proletarian state power.



Italy

The unanimous vote with which the congress of the Christian Democrats, Italy's main capitalist party, closed on Sunday provided no solution to the country's parliamentary crisis. Party chiefs Rumor and Fanfani are now working for a new 'centre-left' coalition with the Socialist Party, following Prime Minister Andreotti's decision to dissolve his Centre-Right government on Tuesday. Rumor is expected to head the new government while Fanfani takes the key behind-the-scenes post of Party Secretary.

Socialist politicians have already welcomed the Christian Democrat's 'left turn' and are ready for the inevitable secret sessions of political horse-trading over the make-up of the new government. But the 'unanimity' of the Christian Democrats is fragile in the extreme, with the ousted Andreotti and his supporters looking increasingly to the extreme right for backing.

Yugoslavia

Three students from the University of Belgrade — Milan Nikolic, Pavluso Imejovic and Jelka Kljajic — have now been in jail for 18 months. Originally tried and jailed last year, their appeals have been continually postponed by the Yugoslav regime.

It is understandable that the Yugoslav bureaucracy should be unwilling to draw attention to this case at present. It is faced with an acute economic crisis which has resulted in a massive export of labour, a million unemployed, rampant inflation, a chronic housing shortage, and cut-backs in social services and education. The number of strikes is on the increase. And the technocratic layer, which has thrived on the trends towards a market economy, is now also a threat to the position of the bureaucracy. The latter has therefore engaged in a spate of 'left' propaganda against 'bureaucratism', 'technocracy', 'unjustified enrichment' etc. — but without specifying how to get rid of them.

In fact the only people who have made such an analysis are the revolutionary marxists — now accused by the bureaucracy of a 'criminal ideology'. As Nikolic has written from his prison cell: 'There can be no socialism under a market economy subject to vicious competition: socialist democracy and self-management cannot be built at the same time as the representative role of the state grows; workers' self-management is meaningless without workers taking part in all important decision-making and with a ruling party completely outside the workers' control... We believe that a humane and democratic socialism, real self-management, cannot be achieved except by freeing the creative ability of the masses and that this requires the freedom of scientific research, the free dissemination of ideas, the right to express different opinions and conceptions on the way towards socialism.'

Already many figures in the international socialist and trade union movement have joined in signing a letter to the Yugoslav government protesting at the regime's attempt to silence its marxist critics. Copies of the letter are available from: Yugoslav Defence Committee, c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

Peru

The wave of arrests recently unleashed against revolutionaries in Peru, reported two weeks ago in Red Weekly, is just one part of a widespread attack on the working class movement. This attack is being carried out by the 'revolutionary' military government headed by General Velasco Alvarado, which took power four years ago. At that time the government claimed that it would follow 'popular' and 'anti-imperialist' policies and promised land reform.

Recent events at one of Peru's richest copper mines, Cuajone, indicate that the Peruvian working class is rapidly losing any illusions it may have had in the Velasco regime. The Cuajone mine is owned by American capital. Last December, some 700 miners working on new excavations were laid off, and then evicted from their company-owned houses. The workers refused to leave the mine, and the company retaliated by stopping any money or supplies reaching them from the neighbouring towns.

In January the workers launched a hunger-strike in protest, and on 5 March they marched to the provincial centre of Arequipa to present their demands to the local authorities. The government replied by arresting the secretary of their trade union and deporting him to Panama.

In early May a three-day general strike was declared in support of the miners in the city of Moquegua and the following week, after government troops had arrested four more trade union leaders, the strike wave spread throughout the southern part of the country. The struggle was a bloody one, with dozens wounded and a large number of arrests made. In the vicinity of Arequipa workers replied by dynamiting two bridges and setting up barricades to prevent the police from moving in.

The 'left' face of the Peruvian military dictatorship is now exposed for the phony mask it has always been. The fight of the Cuajone miners, and the wave of solidarity struggle it has touched off, shows the way forward to mobilising the Peruvian masses for the destruction of this government.



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

VARSHAN. 998-4528, 407-2395

SUPPORT THE SHREWSBURY 24

Red Notes

Defend the Wandsworth 3

The aftermath of the struggles against Phase 2 are still with us. Three members of the Wandsworth Teachers Association of the NUT now face charges of professional misconduct, arising out of disturbances at a rally held in Central Hall on 27 February in the middle of the teachers' struggle over the London Allowance. Although the charges have been laid by an individual member, we cannot ignore the role of the NUT bureaucracy in this matter.

The Central Hall meeting indicated a deep rift between the capitulationist line of the bureaucracy and that of a large section of teachers who wished to pursue a militant policy with the object of smashing the Freeze. It was the bureaucracy's refusal to allow debate on a motion putting the militant case which was the immediate cause of the fracas from which these charges arise.

This meeting was only an indication to the bureaucracy of the existence of a large militant layer in the NUT which was extremely critical of the mishandling of the salaries struggle. And the bureaucracy is utilizing the present period of downturn to try to nip this current in the bud. It hopes that the example made of these militants will be enough to intimidate other sections of the rank and file.

It is no accident that at the recent national conference of the NUT the autonomy of local associations was attacked and severe restrictions placed upon them. The executive's prejudicial handling of this case, the statements made to the press and circulated to local associations, their refusal of legal aid, etc., demonstrates the complete identity of this attack with those on local autonomy.

Of course, what is intended is to lay the basis for a deal with the Tory Government over Phase 3. The fight against such deals is inextricably linked with the defence of the Wandsworth Three. Equally, the defence of the Three can only be on the basis of a fight against the compromise deals and capitulations of the bureaucracy, who put an accommodation with the Tory Government before the interests of the NUT membership.

It is on this basis that we must begin a campaign to mobilise the membership of the NUT, starting with the forces around NUT Rank and File: to link the defence of the Wandsworth Three to the fight against any deals with the Tories and against Phase 3. Motions of support should be passed to this effect. There should be maximum mobilisation for a demonstration to Hamilton House, NUT headquarters, on Saturday, 23 June.

Money should be raised, letters of support written, and offers made to act as witnesses by anyone at the Central Hall meeting to reinforce the political indictment of the executive.

For further information, contact: A. Jackson, Wandsworth Defence Committee, Flat 4, 697 Garratt Lane, London S.W.17 (947 3999).

As 15 June, the date of the next court appearance of the 24 building workers on trial in Shrewsbury for their picketing activities, approaches, there are increasing signs that the trade union movement is not going to allow the capitalist state to get away with its attack on these militants.

Last weekend the editorial board of *Charter*, the rank-and-file building workers' paper, met and decided to call on the Midlands and North-West regions of UCATT to support a national conference in defence of the Shrewsbury 24, which would be convened by the defence committee set

up in North Wales for these militants.

The defence committee itself has recently put out a call asking for the setting up of local defence committees.

Jackson was speaking at meetings arranged by the Joint Sites Committee, to mobilise support for the mass meeting of trade unionists they are holding at Central Hall, Westminster. The Joint Sites Committee has recently decided to sponsor a London-area defence committee, to which other organisations in the working class movement can then affiliate. At one meeting addressed by Jackson,

some 150 militants from five sites in Central London took a unanimous vote pledging industrial action in support of the 24 when they finally appear in the Crown Court. A wide variety of actions are being planned throughout the country for this Friday in solidarity with the Shrewsbury defendants.

The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions is holding a special meeting of its executive at Salford on 23 June, and has invited delegates from the main shop stewards committees across the country to attend. It is expected that this meeting will agree to convene a recall conference of the LCDTU, which will have as the two main items on its agenda the organisation of opposition to the Government-TUC talks and the defence of the Shrewsbury 24.

All of these developments indicate that a mobilization of the entire working class movement in defence of these militants is at least a real possibility. The capitalist state will be warned 'hands off the Shrewsbury 24'. The most important job we have to do over the next few months is to make sure that as widespread and powerful a movement as possible is built on the national level, throughout the whole working class, to carry this fight through to the finish.



Dave Jackson (third from right), secretary of the Defence Committee, at building workers' meeting in London on Tuesday. Photo: Ezra Nathan

End the Alliance!

The 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance will be marked this Saturday, 16 June, by co-ordinated picket action at each of the Portuguese consulates in Britain.

UNDERDEVELOPMENT

Britain has been exploiting Portugal for centuries, ploughing back profits only to expand British interests. As early as the 17th century Britain was manoeuvring to prevent native industrialisation through the Treaty of Methuen, and by the 19th century Britain had extended investment to include basic industries.

This dependence means that Portuguese capital has never been able to compete against the multinational corporations. Portugal has become merely a sub-imperialist minion of foreign capital.

HIGH RETURNS

The results of this economic dependence are two fold. Firstly, the Portuguese ruling

class offers exceptionally favourable terms to foreign investment in order to maintain its own position. High investment returns, made possible only by minimal wages, head the list. Wages are kept down by heavy curbs on trade union activity and a consistently high level of unemployment. Secondly, because she is not an imperialist power, Portugal is unable to decolonise without losing the trade and raw materials from her colonies to other capitalist powers. Thus the Portuguese are forced to maintain a costly presence in the so-called 'African Provinces.'

Portugal is the gendarme for the considerable British interests in Angola and Mozambique (foreign investment in Guinea is negligible). Economic dependence forces Portugal to look for support for her colonial wars from Britain and the other NATO powers - support which is only too forthcoming in view of the profits and investment at stake.

EVENTS

16 June: Picketing of Portuguese consulates: Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Canterbury & Dover, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull, Leeds & York, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Swansea.

20 June: London Rally: 'South Africa in Struggle.' Central Hall, Westminster at 7.30 p.m. Speakers include Marcelino dos Santos (poet and revolutionary, vice-president of FRELIMO).

22 June: Marcelino dos Santos speaks at Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate, Manchester at 8.00 p.m.

23-24 June: Conference in Manchester on 'The Revolution against Portuguese Colonialism,' starting 10.00 a.m. at Manchester University Students Union. Speakers include Marcelino dos Santos, Bob Sutcliffe, Fred Halliday, Basil Davidson.

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WHAT'S ON?

FREE THE BELFAST 10: Regular picket every Saturday, 2.00 p.m. in Jobb Avenue outside Brixton prison. Organised by Belfast 10 Defence Committee, 88 Redlyn Road, London, N.15.

STRUGGLE IN CAMBODIA: Meeting on Friday, 15 June, in Friends' Meeting House, Euston Road (opposite Euston station), 7.00 p.m. Speaker: Ek Hor Tan, representative of National United Front of Cambodia. Film showing visit of Sihanouk to liberated areas of Cambodia. Organised by Indochina Solidarity Conference.

LSE LATIN AMERICAN SOCIETY together with the Latin America Front organisation are holding a series of weekly talks on Mondays at 7.00 p.m. in Room 608, Main Building, LSE, this Monday, 18th. Panel on perspectives for revolutionary change in Latin America. All welcome.

RAFT NATIONAL CONFERENCE of socialist teachers in ATT sponsored by local Rank and File Technical Teacher groups, 16 June in Birmingham; Room 3, Digbeth Civic Hall, 11-1, 2-5. ATT members only. More information: 91, Lardowne Road, London, W.11.

JOURNALISTS CHARTER: London meeting. Speakers: Ian Knowles, editor of *The Journalist*; John Jennings, ACTT, 7.30 p.m., Friday 15 June, Reebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren Street tube).

YORK PUBLIC MEETING in defence of the Shrewsbury 24. Speaker from the Defence Committee. Thursday, 21 June at 8.00 p.m. in King's Manor, Exhibition Square.

IMG RED FORUM: Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday, 8.00 p.m. at the General Pictor pub, Caledonian Road (5 minutes Kings X tube). This week (19 June): 'Internationalism - the Fourth International.'

BRIGHTON IMG PUBLIC MEETING on 'Trade Unions and the Fight for Socialism.' Speaker: Bob Pennington, Wednesday, 27 June, 8.00 p.m. at the Prince George pub, Trafalgar St. (near St. Peter's Church).

LEEDS IMG PUBLIC MEETING: Friday, 22 June, 1.00 p.m. at Leeds University Union - Bob Sutcliffe (co-author of *British Capitalism, Workers and the Profits squeeze*) on 'Behind the Pay Law... Crisis of the British economy.'

CENTRAL LONDON A.L.L.: Ken Tarback on 'Neoliberalism' Friday 22 June, at 8.00 p.m. in the General Pictor Pub, Caledonian Road.