

The Red Mole

A stylized illustration of a hand holding a hammer, with a cloud-like shape containing text. The background is a solid red color. The hand and hammer are rendered in black and white with a stippled texture. The cloud-like shape is white with a black outline and contains the text 'SMASH PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE' in bold, black, sans-serif capital letters.

**SMASH
PEACEFUL
CO-EXISTENCE**

Middle East/Chad/Ireland/Nigeria

Robin Blackburn reports on the Soviet Union

Where are the trade-unions going?

News from Pilkingtonville

THE MIDDLE EAST

Permanent Arab Revolution!



Immediately after the June war, when the shooting stopped and cease fire was proclaimed by the Security Council, and accepted by Egypt and the other Arab States, everyone in Israel was joyous and triumphant. Everyone thought that everything Zionism had achieved hitherto was fully consolidated and secured, and the Zionist enterprise had thus become safe and able to expand for generations. The Arab States, after such a crushing defeat, seemed to have been forced to their knees, the backbone of their armies had been broken, and could never raise their heads for decades, and had no other alternative but to come to terms with victorious Israel, grant her official recognition and accept peace with her on her conditions.

The Israeli Minister of Defence, General Dayan, declared immediately after the cease-fire that he was waiting for a telephone call from the Arab States, asking for peace. As for the Palestinians, no one even thought of them. But the telephone of General Dayan remained silent. The heads of the Arab States met in Khartoum and declared their three "No's":

- No recognition of Israel
- No peace with her
- No negotiation.

Enter Mr. Peaceful Co-Existence

With the help of the USSR, Egypt began to rebuild her army. The Palestinians appeared on the stage, and began their commando warfare. But the Zionist rulers of Israel turned to their American boss, and received more arms and equipment, especially Phantom jets to crush the

new Egyptian Army in the bud and prevent it from being rebuilt. As for the Palestinian commandoes, the Israeli generals despised them. They thought and declared that they had no real backbone, no mass support, and they were no more than a handful of mercenaries, who would degenerate and disintegrate and be easily crushed within a few months, if not weeks.

But the Egyptian Army was not prevented from being rebuilt, and the Palestinian commandoes were not crushed. The fight on the Suez front was escalated, the commando warfare was further spread, the number of casualties mounted, and General Dayan admitted that he had no answer to the guerrilla warfare, and that the Israelis should learn to live with it for decades. Then the Israeli Air Force began to bomb Egypt deep in the rear, intending to break the morale of the Egyptians and force them to accept peace on Israeli terms.

In the meantime the expenses of the war were mounting. The deficit in Israel's balance of payments, which had been until the beginning of the war about \$500 million, annually reached more than \$1,000 million in 1969. The expenses of the war, as estimated by the Israeli Minister of Finance, reached \$2.5 million per day.

The "six day" war entered its third year without a prospect of ending, and with guerrilla warfare spreading. The number of casualties on the Suez front mounted, and economic conditions worsened. Doubts began to spread, especially among the young, those in the secondary schools who were about to be recruited into the army. In the last week of April 1970, 57 pupils of secondary schools sent a letter to the Prime Minister protesting against the policy of the government, and its refusal to allow Goldman to go to Cairo, saying that until then they believed that they would serve in the army for

three years and fight because there was no other alternative. But now after the Goldman affair it seemed that there was an alternative which was ignored by the government, and therefore they doubted the necessity of fighting a continuous war which has no aim, while the government was pursuing a policy of ignoring the opportunities for peace.

The Institute of Social Studies in the Hebrew University of Jerusalem organises public opinion polls every few months. One of the questions appearing every time has been: "What do you find most disturbing in the present situation?" In February 1969, 22% answered: the Military Situation. In December 1969, 44% answered: the Military Situation. In March 1970, 55% gave the same answer.

The military and economic situation continued to deteriorate. Thanks to the Soviet SA missiles, the Israeli air bombing of Egypt proved to be very dangerous to the Israeli Air Force, and consequently stopped, and the fight on the Suez front reached a peak. Israeli casualties reached 30-40 a month, which was a very high proportion in comparison to the Israeli population of 2.5 million.

The military threat posed by the missiles has been exaggerated. No one seriously thinks that the Egyptian Army can retake Sinai with SA missiles. But the appearance of those missiles has made the Israeli Air Force—the backbone of the Israeli military power and the pride of the Israeli Army virtually ineffective, and thus losing its prestige.

Pressures of United States Imperialism

In such a situation the dependence of Israel on American imperialism, military and economically, became more evident. Declarations of government ministers and articles in the press made it look as if the whole fate and future of Israel depend upon getting more and more American jets, and a variety of air-to-ground missiles capable of destroying the Egyptian SA missile site.

And now, in such circumstances, came the so-called "Rogers proposals". Washington and Moscow appear to have reached some agreement on the issue of the Middle East. Whatever their differing interests, they both share a joint one: to stop revolutionary initiative and action from spreading throughout the Arab world, which might endanger not only Zionism, and the Arab States, but the whole global status quo favourable to both American imperialism and the Soviet bureaucracy. It is for this reason that Nixon pressurises Israel to withdraw, and Kosygin pressurises Nasser to reach an agreement with Israel. The partners to the global status quo wish to impose their "solution" before the situation gets out of their hands.

The Israeli Zionist rulers, in spite of their desire to keep what they achieved by military power, are not in a position to oppose a solution dictated by the U.S. Without American economic and military aid, the whole Zionist structure would collapse like a house of cards. They may try to sabotage and manoeuvre; but

it would all be to try and get more American aid, and to catch as catch can, that is to say to keep as much of the advantage they gained in the "six day" war, and to maintain their prestige in the eyes of the population. Two years ago 77% of the population thought the government was pursuing "a very good policy" in dealing with the situation. A year ago 82% thought the same. At the end of 1969 the number dropped to 69% and at the beginning of 1970 it rose to 77%. But now, as Walter Schwartz writes in the *Observer* 23rd August 1970, "The contrast between private passions and cabinet decisions is a symptom of the schizophrenia that has afflicted the Israelis since last month." "With part of their minds they know that President Nasser's agreement to the Rogers proposals could turn out to be the biggest breakthrough towards peace in their history. But the transfer of missiles within hours of the ceasefire brought out fears that go deeper than the immediate situation."

A minister of the cabinet said: "The feeling in the country is the same as in the days before the six day war". Those jokes of May-June 1967 expressing desperate hopes in the language of mock despair, are going round again. Like the one about the huge sign above the gates of Lydda airport: "The last to leave should turn off the lights."

The Gahal party walk out of the Cabinet in protest against the acceptance of the Rogers proposals, and its formation of a national committee to resist withdrawal, which claims the support of 38 members of Parliament, can hardly be considered as more than a manoeuvre to save face and disclaim the responsibility of withdrawal.

The Arab Revolution Will Continue

But even if the Zionist Israeli rulers succeeded in sabotaging a settlement, it would be very hard for them to keep their hold on the people by claiming there is no other alternative but to fight. Everyone but blockheads and diehards would see that there was an alternative, that was intentionally sabotaged. Whatever the immediate outcome of the Soviet-American manoeuvres, one thing is certain: they will not solve any of the problems facing the broad masses in the Middle East. Israel will not have peace as long as it retains its Zionist character and its ties with imperialism. The Palestinian masses will not achieve their liberation as long as they separate their cause from the socialist revolution of the entire Arab world. The Palestine problem is a product of imperialism and will only disappear with imperialism. The only way to defeat imperialism is in a socialist revolution which mobilises the millions of workers and peasants throughout the Arab world. If the revolutionaries succeed in mobilising those millions they will defeat imperialism together with its agents and allies; if they do not, they will suffer another defeat.

A. Said

.....and from Israel

(The Israeli Socialist Organisation [Matzpen] has recently issued a statement on the current situation in the Middle East. In printing it below The Red Mole declares its solidarity with the comrades of Matzpen, who in an extremely difficult situation have managed to keep the spirit of revolutionary Marxism alive in Israel and who by their very existence pose a challenge to the Zionist state structure.)

AGAINST THE PLOT

After six days and three years of incessant war, the Great Powers have reached a joint formula on a "political settlement" in the [Middle East] region. Many people regard this as a decisive turning point and essential change in the totality of political relations throughout the Arab East. Many people are pinning their hopes on a new political settlement between Israel and the Arab States, and cheer the [prospective] settlement with faith and enthusiasm.

The Israeli Socialist Organisation rejects the Rogers plan for two main reasons:

1. It is a plan which is meant to freeze the existing *status quo* in the Arab East, in order to prevent the development of a revolutionary movement that would aim at liquidating the reactionary regimes going well beyond Nasserism, towards the expropriation of oil and [other] natural resources from the imperialist mono-

polies, towards breaking the power of the land-owning and capitalist classes throughout the Middle East.

2. It is a plan which is based on the denial of the national, political and human rights of the Palestinian Arab people.

The Rogers plan, which is nothing but the American interpretation of the Security Council resolution of 22nd October 1967, intends to safeguard the stability of the Zionist regime and the reactionary regimes in the Arab world; to guard them against the Palestinian movements which play havoc with their plans, undermine [their] stability and incessantly ferment the whole region. Similarly, Nasserism—which hopes to strengthen itself as a result of the [Rogers] plan—is also bankrupt. It attempts to build itself up on a new corrupt bourgeois oligarchy—against the masses of workers and peasants—and on neutralism in the international arena, indulging in a diplomatic game between the Great Powers. This regime cannot save Arab society; rather than encourage the development of that society, it actually retards it.

Those who pin their hopes on the [Rogers] plan, believing that it can lead to normalising Israeli-Arab relations, or to a lasting peace between Israel and the Arab people, are backing a non-starter. A lasting peace can only be based on liquidating the Zionist-colonial

character of the Israeli community on the one hand, and on breaking the anti-popular Arab regimes on the other, on an absolute equality between the Jewish people in Israel and the Palestinian Arab people in all matters of rights pertaining to the territory of Palestine. Such peace cannot be achieved by pressure of Big Powers, but by a popular struggle for overthrowing the nationalist regimes in both national camps.

Those who have not learned from the experience of the Ben-Gurion/Abdallah secret agreement and of the 1949 armistice agreements, will now have to experience a new and less lasting version of the same phenomenon.

It may be that the forces which back the [Rogers] plan, including also the USSR and the Communist Parties that follow her, are sufficiently great and powerful to impose it—even at the price of liquidating (politically and physically) the Palestinian and revolutionary Arab elements that would not accept it. But this much is certain: true peace will not be achieved through inter-government agreement trampling on the rights of an entire people.

Those who hope for a long calm will soon be disappointed. The Palestinian wound can only be cured in a revolutionary and human way, by the equality of rights of all peoples of the Middle East. Also, the revolutionary move-

ment in the Arab East—which draws considerable strength from the Palestinian struggle—cannot be shackled for long.

Since the war we were against conquests, and now we continue to demand an immediate, total and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from all the territories conquered in June 1967, based on the principle that a nation that oppresses another cannot be free.

We call the masses of workers, peasants, youth and intellectuals in Israel to struggle against Zionism and imperialism.

We support the revolutionary struggle which is going on in the Palestinian camp and in the Arab world against the Zionist regime, against imperialism and against the reactionary Arab regimes, for a social revolution which will guarantee a true peace between the Israeli people and the Arab people—without conquerors and conquered, without expropriators and expropriated, without oppressors and oppressed, without humiliators and humiliated.

*The Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen)
P.O. Box 28061, Tel Aviv.
P.O. Box 2234, Jerusalem.*

(The above is a translation of a bi-lingual [Hebrew-Arabic] leaflet issued by the ISO in Israel.)

MINERS AND THE COMING STRIKE

A root cause of the 1926 miners' strike was the widespread feeling of the need for change. It was another twenty years before that change was realised, and the mines were nationalised. The reason being that the feeling required political consummation, and the leadership necessary to achieve this was absent. The feeling which underlay the Miners' (unofficial) strike last October is also a feeling which beckons change. The strike gained the largest pay increase since nationalisation, and a reduction in surface workers' hours. Consequently the members are beginning to appreciate that militancy pays, when effectively directed. In their long history the NUM has never sought to use, to learn, and to lead its members in militancy. So the members used, taught and led their "leaders".

At their annual conference on the Isle of Wight the rank and file delegates continued to instruct their leaders in the lessons of their October. The feeling generated in 1969 had simmered since and in 1970 should mature in plenty. Despite opposition from the NEC, the Conference called for substantial pay increases to be backed by industrial action. The demand of more than 30% would increase the minimum pay to £20 for surface workers, £22 for underground workers, and £30 for face workers. One delegate said that if the demand was not met, "it will unleash an anger that will make last October seem like a Sunday School picnic."

Changing Structures and Changing Attitudes

In order to appreciate the feeling of change the present should be seen in terms of the past and of the future. The current pay demand, and the strike last October, should be seen in terms of the changing structure and nature of mining. It should also be seen in terms of a changing attitude on the part of the membership towards the NUM.

1. The changing nature of mining, or "rationalisation" as it is called, has involved three distinct elements. In the first place the closure of "uneconomic" pits. Or to be correct the closure of the smallest units and those that presented difficulties in mechanising. Thus there has been the concentration of the largest units and their mechanisation. In 1950 only 1% of total output was the product of mechanisation. In 1969 the total was 91%. The corollary being the reduction of manpower needed, and often the destruction of regions and communities (Scotland, the North-East, and Wales in particular, but not exclusively so).

2. The second factor, after introducing the machinery, was to achieve "optimum" use by multi-shift operation. There are 24 hours in a day and 168 hours in a week. At collieries in Nottinghamshire the rotating seven-day-week was introduced. The rest of the industry has so far resisted this, but has experienced the two, three, or four shift system. "Between March 1965 and March 1966 the number of longwall faces working 3 or 4 shifts increased by 18%. Between March 1966 and March 1967, the first year of the new agreement, the increase was about 33%." (1) (The new agreement was the NPLA). In March 1968 there was a total of 1,195 longwall machines working, 989 or 83% of which were utilised on two or more shifts. In March 1969 out of a total of 998 longwall machines, 841 or 84% were engaged in multi-shift utilisation.

3. The third feature has been the continuing process of concentrated machine use during shift time. This was achieved primarily by increased supervision, and the clauses regarding interchangeability in the NPLA. (See R. Heath article in *Trade Union Register* 1969). The increased supervision is observable in the changing ratio of officials to men. In the North Derbyshire area, for example, the ratio of officials to workers increased from 1:12 in June 1967 to 1:9.5 in July 1968. At the coal face the ratio is nearer 1:6, which is a degree of control and supervision unprecedented even in the motorcar industry.

The N.U.M. Conciliatorists

The role of the NUM since its formation, which covers the period of nationalisation, has been a conciliatory one. Its role during the period of the industry's transformation has been one which would bring blushes to any innocent's face. This was recognised by the NCB in the following words: "Despite the heavy closure programme and the high rate of manpower reduction in recent years, the Board have, by close cooperation with the Unions, maintaining good industrial relations, avoided major industrial disputes and made continued progress in reducing the tonnage lost from disputes." (NCB Report and Accounts, 1968/69, Vol. 1, p.1.) In the years 1966-67, 1967-68 and 1968-69, there were losses due to strikes of 2.26 million tons out of a total output of 480.1 million tons, equivalent to less than 0.5% of output. There has been less time lost in disputes than through sickness and injury.

It is L. Daly who, as General Secretary of the NUM, is primarily confronted with the problem of a discredited union. A problem he was well aware of before taking office, when he said: "...and if we continue to accept the Coal Board's rejection of even the most moderate demands (for example, the 40-hour week for surface workers) we become ineffective and

discredited as a Union..." (2) To reiterate an earlier point, the gains after October 1969 by industrial action were the highest pay increase since Nationalisation and during the history of the NUM.

The past ten years, and in particular the past five years, have created a climate of "no confidence" in the industry. A climate which is intensified when viewed in the perspective of projections up to 1975. The crisis is readily observable in the steadily increasing average age of those employed in mining, and in the failure of the NCB to control the manpower rundown. In 1960 the recruitment level was 42,400; in 1969 it had fallen to 18,900, a fall of 23,500. A level insufficient to set off natural wastage. In the coal fields of the Midlands there are jobs waiting for men; in Scotland, the North-East, and South Wales, there are miners wanting jobs.

The projections for the next five years are embodied in a Government White Paper of 1967, which says that by 1971 output would meet a demand of 155 million tons per year and the manpower required would be 275,000. By 1975 the demand would be 120 million tons and the manpower requirements 160,000. The actual output in the year up to March 1969 was 153 million tons, which was 2 million tons below a target two years in the future. It was achieved by a manpower of 340,000, which was 65,000 more than the 1971 estimates. This was achieved by an Oms (Output per man shift) of 42.5 cwt. Therefore in order to achieve the 1971 estimates, a minimum Oms of 70 cwt. would be required, and to reach the 1975 estimates an Oms of 75 cwt. The fear at the present time is that the manpower rundown may outpace productivity gains, in which case a more realistic estimate for 1975 may be 80 million ton per year.

A Robens-Daly Pact?

At the centre of the crisis is the failure of the NCB as an employer to pay a wage commensurate with the job. With higher paid jobs available, men are not prepared to waste any opportunities they may be offered of leaving. Those most reluctant to leave are in the 40-60 age group, as they would lose their accumulated benefits. Those who are leaving are those on whom the industry would rely in the future. It is important, therefore, that the current wage claim is successful to maintain and attract young labour. It is for this end and no other reason that Robens has appeared to defend the claim made by the miners. It is in this context that the central contradiction of the current situation is that only a Union, with the confidence of its membership, which is pursuing the largest wage demand in its history, could save the coal industry from collapse.

The failure of the Union in the current wage claim would confirm that the NUM was "ineffective and discredited as a Union." The men

would have little or no confidence in the NUM and the Union would deserve none. It would confirm to the NCB and the Government that the Union could not withstand even more ferocious blows being dealt to the miner and his community than have been delivered in the past. In which case the exodus from the mines would render even 80 million tons a year the wildest dream.

A successfully executed campaign by the Union without industrial action (assisted by the NCB) would tend to breathe artificial life into the old forms of negotiation. It would re-establish the credibility of the Union and slow down the exodus of manpower (to the relief of the NCB). However, it should be realised that the claim is for a 30% increase, and the mines are in the public sector (so-called) of the economy. To the disdain of Robens, the Government expect him to refuse the increase. "Mr. Barber said nationalised industry chairmen ought to resist inflationary wage claims in the national interest, even if their stand provoked a strike." (*The Times*, Thursday August 13 1970).

It does therefore appear as though the Union's 30% wage claim will force it into its first industrial in its history. The membership gained a valuable lesson last October and are pressuring the Union from below. We must not, however, assume that a strike is on until the men are drawing strike pay. Should the claim be refused then the Union E.C. would not call a strike. They would "consult the membership". The annual conference decision commits the NEC, in accordance with the Union rules. So that, although this leaves a great many opportunities for bureaucratic manipulation, if a strike is called in the meantime it would be difficult for the NUM to avoid supporting it.

The NUM officials will try every ploy they know to avoid industrial action. Even the sabre-rattling used by the T&GWU in the recent dock strike would normally be too much for them. With the rank and file breathing down their neck, they may think it sufficient to buy off the militancy. It would be a wrong calculation: the men are angry and they have had more than twenty years of the "old boy" negotiations. As in 1926 change is the order of the day. Only this time there is not twenty years to wait.

Malcolm Ball

- (1) R. Heath: *T/U Register* 1969, p.189-191.
(2) L. Daly: *The Miners and the Nation*, p.13.

Year	Man-power	Output*	No. of collieries	Oms.t
Jan. 1950	690,000	200.7	912	23.4
Jan. 1960	624,000	192.5	732	26.9
March 1969	340,000	153.0	317	42.5

* In million tons
† In cwt.

CADE'S COLUMN

DON'T FOLLOW THE LEADER, WATCH HIM!

The *Sun* on April 24th 1970 printed an item entitled "The Secret behind Lord Carron's £30,000 will". It appears Lord Carron amassed a small fortune by breaking a trade union rule. Carron, known when he was alive among T.U. militants as Lord Carrion (dead-flesh) retired in 1967 after 11 years as President of the AEU; his private fund-raising activities never came to light until after his retirement.

The AEU has a rule which clearly states that "the president shall devote all his time to the affairs of office...."

Lord Carrion, who died December 1969, had his finger in many pies; in addition to his known directorship of the Bank of England, he was a director of Fairfields Shipyard, Glasgow (1966-68), London Branch of the Co-op Society (1956-68) and part-time director of the East Midlands Gas Board 1967. His other money-making rackets in T.U. time included TV appearances (advising how to break unofficial strikes) and lecture tours in the pursuit of personal wealth.

Nothing can be done about Lord Carrion's abuse of trade unionism, but it should serve as a warning to the rank and file that T.U. leaders' activities need to be as closely watched as those of the employers.

SOLIDARITY FOREVER

Last month the Californian United Farm Workers Union received a Liberty Bell, which had been cast at the famous Whitechapel London Foundry where the original Liberty Bell was cast.

THE UNION WHERE MILITANTS WEAR MASKS

On Wednesday 2nd September Glasgow witnessed one of the most militant workers' demonstrations seen for several years. 1,000 electricians and plumbers marched through the city streets chanting "JIB Out," "Cannon Out", "Blairford Out". The JIB is of course the notorious productivity-bargaining body covering electrical workers, and which is now being extended to deal with plumbers. Cannon and Blairford are respectively President and Scottish E.C. member of the EETU-PTU—the electricians' and plumbers' super-union. The march was the latest development in a growing

movement inside the union against the ultra-right-wing and bitterly anti-communist regime of Cannon & Co.—with its collaboration with employers and Government, victimisation of militants and strangling of democracy in the union.

The demonstration and a meeting which preceded it were to protest against the calling to Union HQ for "disciplinary action" of five Scottish militants accused of organising an "unofficial" demonstration against the latest decisions of the JIB last June. At least one of the men is generally regarded as having had nothing to do with that action. Coincidentally however, he is the most serious challenger to Blairford at the upcoming E.C. elections.

overpaid and underworked and advises, "An immediate cut in teachers' salaries... We would like to see the top rate reduced to £1,500. Even at this figure our teachers would be handsomely paid." This follower of Christ further suggests a reduction of the school-leaving age to 14, an increase in the cost of school meals, and concludes that "We see boys and girls who can neither read nor write, long-haired students 'demonstrating' on every conceivable issue instead of getting down to work, problem children being pampered by the State instead of being given a darned good hiding, and teachers overpaid at £1,700 a year, clamouring for a rise to £2,300.

"A halt needs to be called, and the news that the new Cabinet proposes to economise on education fills us with an unholy joy."

Having read his suggestions for economies in the social field, I would like to add a few ideas; that the wealth of all churches in the country be confiscated and be used for the building of schools, hospitals and homes for the benefit of the people who this con-man of the cloth is at present exploiting for his own personal gain. That all collection-plate totting bums be immediately made redundant and retrained in useful work. In his long-winded article, this peddler of medieval superstition suggests teachers don't work hard enough. We extend our columns to him to explain what socially necessary labour he performs that entitles him to eat, and to run the huge car and multi-roomed mansion in which he suffers his Christian martyrdom while his congregation live in one of the most dilapidated housing areas in London.

Glasgow Moles who attended the meeting and demo were impressed by the men's determination and militancy and by the ability of their unofficial leadership. The news that the E.C. had circulated a letter to stewards ordering them to stop the workers striking to go on the march was greeted with derision. Speakers from the platform and the floor—many wearing masks to make identification difficult and underline the police regime in the union—attacked the JIB and the union leadership and explained how the employers' attacks could not be adequately fought without getting rid of the class collaborators on the E.C. A proposal that workers should leave the union as a protest was opposed by the stewards, one of

whom cited the Pilkington example, and was defeated by a margin of about 20-1.

It is clear that there is a rapidly developing movement in the EPTU to democratise the union, kick out Cannon & Co., and begin to fight the employers again. All revolutionaries have a duty to give any support they can. The EPTU is regarded by many sectors of the ruling class as a "model" union—an example of "constructive" trade unionism. A victory for the militants here would be a victory for the whole working class.

—Red Clydeside Moles

JONES THE MILITANT

In Wales the good solid name of Jones is so common that the various Jones's are known by their professions, e.g. Jones the Milk, Jones the Bread, etc. The national press of Sunday September 6th is full of comments by Jones the Militant (Jack Jones, Gen. Sec. TGWU) expressing surprise at the Tories' proposed "provocative" use of troops in the impending municipal workers' strike. Surely Jack Jones with his vast experience of trade union matters must be aware that not only will the present Tory Government be as provocative as possible, but they will use every means in their power to smash militant trade unionism, including press, television, police, troops, and if necessary, fascist thugs.

Brother Jones, our leaders at Westminster Gas works, popularly known as the House of Commons, are fully aware and confident that despite your loud militant noises, should our brothers in kfiaki be used in strike-breaking activity, you will do nothing but make louder noises. You and your fellows at the TUC sold the seamen out in 1966, you have reneged on the dockers many times, and you swallowed the lot in the recent dock strike. All you and your Cde Hugh Scanlon have to do is to tell the bunch of Old Etonians in the Cabinet that any more attacks on working class conditions, work practices and wages, will be met by a national transport strike; in their own words, "Action not Words!" You may fool some of the trade union movement with your empty threats, but your rubbish won't wash with socialists, Mr. Jones.

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—Red Clydeside Moles

LETTERS

MARXISTS AND THE NATIONALIST QUESTION?????

It is time that an up-to-date Marxist analysis was given to the question of Nationalism in the British Isles. In dictionary terms a Nationalist is one who wishes to assert his National rights. In political terms this word means different things to different people. In Scotland, for instance, as elsewhere, the different "Marxist" groups seem to range incredibly in their interpretation of any situation and spend so much time in their cosy hobby of hair-splitting debate that local revolution dies a theorist's death. As Marx himself said, "When I see the numerous people that call themselves Marxists, all I know is that I am not a Marxist."

The troubles of the "Celtic Fringe" nations should be well enough known to avoid allusions here. Any interested Mole can refer to the historical aspect in books like Tom Johnstone's *History of the Working Classes of Scotland* (out of print but still available in some libraries), *The Treaty of Union 1707* by Professor Oliver Brown, *Scotland's Scrap of Paper* by the same author. This booklet not only lays out the text of the treaty word for word but contains an excellent section of comment on the broken articles—all of them—and can be had from Clyde Bookshops, High Street, Glasgow, or S.N.P., H.Q., 59 Elmbank Street, Glasgow.

For works on Ireland—apart from Marx—James Connolly on *Labour in Irish History*, and his other works seem well enough known and fairly easy to obtain.

Wales seems to be neglected in this sphere. Perhaps our Welsh Moles will soon remedy this. "Socialists" in Scotland seem fairly content to pay lip service to the scene in Sorbonne and Saigon and are annoyed to be reminded of the struggle on their own home front. The Labour Party reformists are really incensed by the more left-wing Nationalists for exposing their Conservative rumps and are viperous in their condemnation at being "outletted". The consistency of their attacks range from accusing the S.N.P. publicly in the Glasgow City Chambers of being Maoists, MacLeanists and Tartan Tories.

The Tory press in Scotland last year carried very witty headlines like "Karl MacMarx in Oban". Some joker in the S.N.P. actually proposed Profit Sharing at the Annual Conference in Oban. Profit sharing as we all know is a purely liberal idea and in direct contrast to Marxist theory. However, this smear had the desired effect of frightening the "blue" Nationalist voters, as intended.

The most tragic smear of all could only be used in Scotland and Ireland where the people are long conditioned to fighting among themselves. Fortunately it hasn't been necessary to create a MacEnoch to divert the locals on the minority coloured population. The only real colour problem is Orange and Green and anti-Home Rule propaganda goes down like a bomb in the right quarters with such phrases as "Home Rule means Rome Rule" or "A Free Scotland means a Free Kirk". So take your pick, Scots Proles, your favourite prejudice is reason enough to prevent you having your own Duma or anything else that really matters. You can always fight on the terraces of Parkhead (Celtic Park) and Ibrox (Rangers Park), or the poky pubs and dingy streets, then return to your "single ends" or room and kitchens and blame each other for your troubles. You can always send your M.P.s down to London on the Monday train and watch them slink back on the Friday with their bags packed like coolies. That'll show 'em!

What does it matter, international socialists, if Glasgow has the worst housing problem in Europe? (Did someone say Naples? Congratulations.) The problem's far too parochial to deserve more than a passing thought.

Remember those lovely phrases like "...The Scottish Nationalists are petty bourgeoisie"? It couldn't be that the S.N.P. deliberately avoids policy arguments to avoid an undue split between the homogeneous factions of Left and Right, or that the people of Scotland will decide that issue themselves after independence. After all, it was all right for Mao Tse-Tung to ally himself with Chiang Kai-Chek and accept American Aid to rid themselves of Japanese Imperialism. It wouldn't be an "international" situation if parochial Scotland achieved Home Rule, her own destiny.

It was also "wrong" of James Connolly in Ireland to attack British Imperialism and ally himself with the Green Tories. He should have waited till the English proletariat threw off their chains and rescued their Irish brothers. Isn't time nothing in history? Our Ulster brothers might like to testify to that.

How could Connolly betray international socialism by saying Irish capital must come into Irish hands before Irish Socialism could come into being? How parochial.

Comment from "foreign" Moles on this

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topic will be welcome—including Sassenach Moles.

Yours for the Revolution,
Donald Anderson, 27 Wilton Drive,
Glasgow N.W., Scotland.

BOB PURDIE REPLIES:

Comrade Anderson is right to raise the issue of Scottish Nationalism for discussion by revolutionaries. As a Tartan Mole in exile I must confess that I have for long intended to write something on the question have never got round to it.

Many comrades will wonder why the issue is important at this time; the bourgeois press gave the impression that the SNP was soundly trounced in the General Election and that Scottish Nationalism is no longer an issue. The fact is that it is only now that it is becoming a real issue. Two years ago there was an artificial boom in support for the SNP, due to discontent with the Labour and Tory Parties. That tide has receded, but it has left a substantial residue of support for the Nationalists (so far as I know the SNP is still the largest political party in Scotland) and more important, a greatly increased interest in the issue of the future of the Scottish nation.

Two new factors are going to mean a resurgence of support, probably in new forms, for Scottish separation. They are the election of a Tory Government, and British entry into the Common Market.

Obviously the EEC will mean a rundown in Scottish industry, as big capital is drawn away to the more lucrative investment areas in or near Europe. This will throw many Scots out of a job, and limit the prospects of a decent life in Scotland.

Many Moles probably do not realise the significance of the Tory victory for Scotland. The fact is that Scotland, like Wales, overwhelmingly rejected the Tories, as it has done traditionally. It is quite understandable then that when faced with Tory attacks on the organised working class, many Scottish trade unionists will ask, why do we have to have a Tory Government?

What should the attitude of revolutionaries towards such ideas be? I think that we should make a separation between the attitude which Sassenach and Scottish comrades should take. Revolutionaries outside Scotland should defend the right of the Scottish nation to self-determination; the Scottish people have the democratic right to separate from the British state and that right should be supported.

But it is a different matter for Scottish revolutionaries. We have to very carefully weigh up the implications for the Scottish workers of the demand for separation and it is on this that I think Don gets confused.

The confusion (which is undoubtedly caused by inexperience and lack of knowledge on the comrade's part) is shown when he gives us the examples of Mao Tse-Tung and James Connolly.

Whether it was all right for Mao to ally with Chiang Kai-Chek and U.S. Imperialism against the Japanese is a complex question that I won't go into here. I will merely state that I don't think it was all right. But the real significance of the Chinese experience is this: when the Chinese revolutionaries had built their own independent army, and acting independently of the Kuomintang, went on, having defeated the Japanese, to defeat and drive out Chiang Kai-Chek in the teeth of U.S. Imperialism, and destroy capitalism in China; then, and only then, were they able to achieve real independence for the Chinese nation. A couple of decades previously under the tutelage of Stalin's Comintern the Chinese Communists submerged themselves in the Kuomintang and worked completely under the domination of Chiang Kai-Chek. The result was tragic; Chiang turned round and without warning massacred thousands of Communists, forcing them to flee into the mountains.

Don is mistaken, too, about Connolly. It is not true to say that he allied with Green Tories; the people who fought beside him in the Easter Rising were radical democratic nationalists. If they were not conscious socialists, they were certainly very far from being Tories. A contributory factor in forging the alliance was the support that people like Padraig Pearse gave to the workers of Dublin, in the 1913 general strike.

But much more important than this is the fact that before going into the alliance, Connolly had laboured for years to build an independent Irish working class movement, and to build an independent armed workers' militia, the Citizen Army. Not only that just before the rising Connolly told the C.A. to hang onto their rifles, that they were out to go further than the others, and that independence for Ireland meant a Workers Republic.

So the lesson of these two examples are quite different from what comrade Anderson seems to think. If applied to Scotland, they indicate that the first responsibility for Scottish revolutionaries is to strive for the independence of the working class. Everything else, including Scottish independence, is subordinate to this.

It is important to understand also that the position of Scotland's greatest revolutionary, John MacLean, who did call for Scottish separation, was no different. He came out with this position when it was clear that the Scottish workers were much more revolutionary at that

particular time than the English workers, and that if Scotland remained tied to England this would prevent a workers revolution, and that if Scotland separated it could mean the Scottish workers seizing control in Scotland. (1)

Why is independence for the working class so important? I think an examination of Scottish history will show us why. Just before the Treaty of Union in 1707 Scotland was developing as an independent capitalist nation; this was extremely difficult due to the hostility of the more powerful English capitalism. The breakthrough for Scottish capitalism was to have the "Darien Scheme", the attempt to plant a Scottish colony in the isthmus of Panama. This was wrecked by a combination of disease, inexperience of the settlers, stupidity of their backers in Edinburgh, and the deliberate policy of William of Orange to prevent assistance to the colony by English ships and settlements. The result of this collapse was the ruining of a very large section of the Scottish bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie, this led directly to the Treaty of Union, which was sold to the Scottish Parliament in return for compensation to the Darien shareholders. The result of this was the fusion of the Scottish capitalist who remained with the English capitalists to form the British capitalist class. Then the agonising process of destroying the Highland peasantry, and replacing the people of large tracts of Scotland with sheep or game (and incidentally creating the modern Scottish working class out of the melting pot of the industrial lowlands, into which were thrown Highland and lowland peasants and thousands of Irish immigrants).

So 1707 was not a simple case of English perfidy riding roughshod over the Scottish nation. That nation was split into two sectors, the poor peasants and embryonic working class who had nothing to gain from the Union, and a lot to lose; and the bourgeoisie, whose ineptness led to its own ruin, and whose greed led to acceptance of English bribes to sell their nation. When Burns wrote, "We're bought and sold for English gold/such a parcel of rogues in a nation", the nation was Scotland and the rogues were the Scottish bourgeoisie. (2)

And Scotland is still split; still one section represents the interests of the vast majority of the Scottish nation, the working class; while another section is interested only in its own profit. By this I mean the higher echelons of the Scottish petit-bourgeoisie, who either oppose separation for economic reasons, or support it because they feel the pressure of competition from England or other foreign capitalists.

And that is why the Scottish National Party is split also, because it attempts to combine these two mutually opposed sectors. That is why one the one hand it contains peoples like the SNP Provost of Stirling, who presented a trophy from Stirling Town Council to the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders for their role in trying to crush the independence struggle in South Yemen, and people like comrade Anderson, who is a genuine working class militant. And that is why it cannot take the step of declaring for a Scottish Republic, but wishes to retain the English monarchy after independence. And that is why it can never do anything for the Scottish people, because it can never take any unambiguous decisions.

The only way Scotland can have real independence is if the Scottish workers take control of everything, from Gretna Green to Lerwick; if we have that Scottish Workers Republic that John MacLean preached. Only the working class has no interests other than the interests of the majority of the Scottish people, simply because they are the majority.

If we accept that principle we then have to discuss the tactics by which this can be achieved. Immediately we have to say that the interests of the Scottish workers are closely tied up with the interests of the English and Welsh workers, and with the immigrants who work side by side with us in Scotland and in England. This is because we are all exploited by the same class, the British capitalist class, who also exploit other nations like Ireland, India, African nations etc. We have close interests with the workers and peasants there. And since our enemies ally themselves with others of their ilk in suppressing and exploiting the people of Africa, Asia and Latin America, we are linked to the liberation struggles in Indo-China, Southern Africa, Latin America, etc., and in the context of EEC entry, we must link with the workers of Europe.

In other words, the success of the Scottish workers is very much dependent on the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist struggle in the rest of the world. It is obvious that we could not seize power in Scotland without the military power of British imperialism being broken elsewhere. And our victory will be consummated only if the Scottish Workers Republic is allied with our fellow workers of Ireland, Wales and England in a Socialist United States of Europe.

Therefore the question of whether we call for separation now must be approached from two angles. What kind of Scotland do its advocates desire? And how would it affect the alliance, actual or potential, between the Scottish and other workers? From this standpoint we must reject the SNP's policy; it is the policy of petit-bourgeois people who would not be able to stand up to the might of British capitalism if it opposed them, and which even if it succeeded would mean the kind of fake independence under which the workers are suffering in the 26 Counties of Ireland. We must say also that unlike in MacLean's day, there is little sign that the Scottish workers are nearer taking power than the English workers, and that we must emphasise the need for unity with them; the demand for separation at present does not have much revolutionary significance.

However, I sympathise with Don in his impatience with those Scottish "Marxists" who dismiss the question out of hand, without

serious examination, and with a boorish dogmatism which it is hard to find anywhere else. I know, and have clashed many times with, these people. I must state clearly that my own ideas on this subject are partial and incomplete, and require much discussion and research. In particular we need to understand the important differences between the class struggle in Scotland and in England, and the special problems of Scottish workers, and the embryonic national consciousness that they retain, in order to work out a programme for the struggle in Scotland which can heighten their class consciousness. An important step towards the Workers Republic would be the creation of an independent, critical and active Marxist tradition in Scotland. The lack of it has led to the kind of fragmentation and confusion which facilitated the growth of the SNP.

However, the claymore has been picked up, let the battle commence.

Dolle Minas

Dear Mole,

With reference to Ian Fraser's article (*Red Mole* no. 6) on the Dutch women's liberation movement, "Dolle Mina", I think that comrade Fraser was not completely correct in his account of Dutch affairs, nor does his opinion of the future of "Dolle Mina" seem to be too realistic!

a) Comrade Fraser is wrong in writing that an elaborate programme has been accepted by the first congress of DM. Only a short resolution was accepted, the contents of which coincide approximately with Fraser's "on the basis that the biological distinction between man and woman does not justify their role assignment, the goal of DM is: social change, to bring about equal development chances for all, irrespective of sex." The rest of the paragraph in Fraser's article consists of quotations from the programme proposed by the Amsterdam majority group. This programme has been discussed but has not been carried by the national congress.

b) The members of the Socialist Youth (SJ) who initiated DM are still members of their organisation. They just did not report on their activities to the organisation, although the general line adopted by them in DM does not conflict at all with the general line of the SJ.

c) DM is not growing any more. DM has consolidated its position outside Amsterdam, but has been torn to pieces by factional differences in Amsterdam.

d) Ian Fraser's account on the future possibilities of DM bears an astonishing resemblance to the views of the by-now-leading group in Amsterdam, affiliated to the student Karl Marx Group (KMG). Unfortunately this group is neither leading DM, because the local groups are autonomous both in theory and in practice, nor does this group, which has by the way close connections with the original DM group, represent the majority of DM in Amsterdam. In fact different branches of DM coexist quasi-independently in Amsterdam. The numerical force of each does not exceed some 10 or 12 militants. The only way the KMG-Dolle Mina's can be said to lead DM is in their chances to get their views printed by the Socialistische Uitgeverij Amsterdam. But in my opinion this printing press leadership is of no value. Fraser's article does, however, represent a certain value, because of Fraser's exposing—consciously or unconsciously—the political views of the KMG-SJ "leadership". These views are centrist in character. The KMG-SJ wants to wage struggles on the level of the partial demands. Afterwards, a solemn declaration follows that this or that struggle does not stand on its own, but is part and parcel of the global anti-capitalist struggle. This leads to either a reformist activism (notably SJ) or complete separation from the actual struggles and notably to isolation from the masses. The latter development appeared in DM, where the KMG has destroyed the actual movement rather than share a part of their "leadership" with other tendencies.

e) The future of DM, for the reasons mentioned above, will never bring us a more or less large affiliation of the DM-masses to a future Leninist party. SJ is openly anti-Leninist, KMG's Leninism consists in quoting abundantly from *What is to be Done?* But a Leninist organisation is not built on a large number of quotations from the "Sacred Books". Leninism means something different. It is a pity that comrade Fraser did not understand your excellent Lenin Centenary issue. Leninism in Holland has been harmed rather than helped by the behaviour of the KMG-SJ "leadership" of Dolle Mina. Furthermore, what exactly is a combat party of the Leninist type? Leninist parties are not characterised by their combativity alone. A revolutionary party has a revolutionary theory, a revolutionary programme. And this is exactly what the KMG-SJ "leadership" in DM is lacking. The building of a revolutionary Marxist party in Holland will pass along a much more difficult road than comrade Fraser is suggesting.

Revolutionary greetings,
Herman Pieterse,
Amsterdam.

WOMEN'S LIBERATION

Women's Liberation is entering a new phase. Ever since it recovered from the shock of seeing 600 women at the Ruskin Weekend, it has on the one hand been trying to find a certain amount of common ground among the varied groups, and on the other hand has accepted that it can, and must, be a mass movement.

The Women's National Coordinating Committee includes every Lib group that agrees to join. In spite of disagreements it represents the bravest attempt on the left to work in unity. It is not a single-issue campaign (to say that it is would be to seriously misunderstand Women's Lib) and the movement includes a wide diversion of interests, yet at the meeting on 5th-6th October agreement was reached on a good number of points. The groups have agreed to work on three campaigns—for free contraception and abortion on demand; adequate nursery facilities to free women from their total responsibility for child-care; and equality of opportunity in education and training—and the main demands and slogans of these campaigns have been accepted. Considering that complete agreement is necessary before the Committee can do anything in its own name (which does not exclude any group from simultaneously pursuing its own line in its own name) a tremendous amount was agreed upon. At the same time dissatisfaction was expressed that there was no campaign around women as workers, and it was agreed to start a written debate and to discuss again at the next meeting. The Committee has an uncensored journal, *Women's Struggle*, produced by groups on a rota basis. How many male-dominated organisations could cooperate at this level?

One of the highlights of the weekend was a report from Jo O'Brien (of *Socialist Woman*) on her North-East American speaking tour. What emerged was that the American movement is rapidly becoming a mass movement and is taken so seriously by the media that every newscast, every paper, contains some report of it. Of course there are tremendous differences between our movement here in Britain and the States; Jo explained one aspect of this—the often virulent anti-male attitude of many American groups—by recounting some of her experiences on the streets of New York. Here in Britain at least male chauvinism wears a polite face, although it makes it harder to recognise sometimes.

Her account inspired the meeting at its second session to take the mass media by the horns. Women's Lib already numbers several media women amongst its adherents, and from their reports we know that 1970-71 is going to be the Year of Women's Lib (replacing Pollution as Number One Issue). As part of this campaign to become a mass movement, the Committee agreed to hold a conference in London in the spring of 1971 and a mass demonstration around the same time. What is important is that the Coordinating Committee is seen as the leadership of this movement rather than those women who pontificate from the sidelines and who are readily interviewed at the moment. Even more important is for the Left to accept the importance of Women's Lib, otherwise the Women are going to reject revolutionary politics. Women's Lib is already coming out of its separatist phase, but where will it go from here? That is in the hands of the Left.

Leonora Lloyd

*The interim address of the WNCC is c/o 3 Rona Road, London N.W.3.

Following renewed attacks on Pakistanis in Slough, an *Anti-Racist Campaign* has been formed in West London to coordinate opposition to racism and physical attacks on Black people. The recent Slough case is significant because the police not only arrested the Pakistanis and charged them when they were under attack from Skinheads, but they allowed the Skinheads to go free and indeed used them as prosecution witnesses. Lawyer David Offenbach successfully defeated the prosecution aided by the fact that one police witness was rash enough to declare to the magistrates that he "liked a good punch up now and then". The address of the *Anti-Racist Campaign* is c/o Tom Mole, 23 Brackley Road, London W.4.

Comrades in the Nuneaton area may be interested to know that there exists a club "dedicated to the Red Mole". *Red Mole* is sold there regularly and though the reports we have received are a bit garbled there are regular discussions on a whole variety of subjects. Its address: The Red Mole Hole, c/o The Hearty Goodfellow Inn, Arbury Road, Stockingford, Nuneaton.

EVENTS

EVERY MONDAY: Birmingham Red Circle meeting, 7.30 p.m. at the Black Swan, Birmingham 5.

WEDNESDAYS: Stafford Red Circle, Dog & Partridge, South Walls, 8 o'clock.

THURSDAYS: Glasgow Red Circle meets, Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, 7.30 p.m.

SEPTEMBER 11th: Irish Red Circle meeting. Speaker Tariq Ali on "Ireland and the World Revolution", 8 p.m. 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1 (nr. Kings X)

SEPTEMBER 12th: International Socialist Public Meeting. "The International Revolutionary Movement in the '70s." Speakers from USA, W. Germany, France, Italy & Ireland. 2.30 p.m., Conway Hall (Red Lion Square, nr. Holborn tube). Admission 2/-.

SEPTEMBER 14th: West London Anti-Racist Campaign inaugural meeting. 7.30, The Anchor, West Ealing, Middx. Contact Tom Mole, 23 Brackley Road, London W.4.

SEPTEMBER 17-18th: "Tunnel Warfare", film, 8 p.m. Camden Studios, Camden Street (Mornington Crescent tube). How the Chinese used tunnels in defensive & offensive warfare against the Japanese invasion. 5/- entry, 2/6 membership. Angry Arts. Ring 263 0613.

SEPTEMBER 20th: NJACWER General Meeting. With Chris Norwood gone, it may be possible to revivify this organisation which is the only national T.U. based organisation for women's equal rights and pay. To affiliate and attend, send £2 to Mrs. Jean Watt, 4 Raisbeck Court, 26 Rosendale Road, London S.E.21.

SEPTEMBER 22nd: Socialist Woman London Group meets, 8 p.m., Conway Hall (North Room), Red Lion Square (nr. Holborn tube). Women only. Ring 574 7407 for details.

RED CIRCLES/RED MOLE CONTACTS

If you live in or near any of the areas listed below, you can contact these people for any queries about The Red Mole and for information on distributing the paper and sending in local reports. In a number of these areas (asterisked), functioning Red Circles already exist. Others will be added to the list as they are formed. If there is no Red Circle in your area at present, write to us here at 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

- *BIRMINGHAM: George Wright, 72 Cambridge Road, Kings Heath, Birmingham 14.
- CARDIFF: Oliver New, 23 Black Oak Road, Cyncoed, Cardiff CF2 6Q7.
- *COVENTRY: John Presland, 27 Paynes Lane, Coventry, Warwicks.
- *DERBY: Bruce Bebbington, 41 Leopold St., Derby, DE1 2HE.
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- *GLASGOW: Ian Stevenson, 3 Doune Gardens, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow.
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- *HULL: John Bearpark, 88 Park Street, Springbank, Hull.
- KIDDERMINSTER: Nigel Brown, 44 The Deansway, Kidderminster, Worcs.
- *LEICESTER: Alan Lenton, 18 West Street, Leicester.
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- *NORTH LONDON: Teresa Hayter, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.
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- *WEST LONDON: Tom Mole, 23 Brackley Road, W.4.
- LOUGHBOROUGH: Ann Black, 4 Russell St., Loughborough.
- *MANCHESTER: Steve Cohen, 43 Brantingham Road, Whalley Range, Manchester 16.
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- *STAFFORD: Chris Pailthorpe, 43 Fairoak Avenue, Parkside, Stafford.
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Middle East for Revolutionary Socialism. Latest issue (No. 3) obtainable from Peter Gowan, c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. 1/5 p.p. Subscription £1 per year from M.E.R.S., 3 Beachwood Ave., London N.3.

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REVOLUTIONARIES AND

"If hard factual evidence was really needed to confirm that industrial relations remain in a parlous state at a time of acute economic difficulty, no thinking person could do better than study the official returns on stoppages of work through labour disputes, published today... More than 1m. workers are involved in stoppages in the first seven months of 1970, representing the loss of over 6m. working days, more than double the level of 1969..." The Times Business News, August 28th, 1970.

"The trade unions hitherto concentrated their attention too exclusively on the local and direct struggle against capital. They have not yet completely realised their power to attack the very system of wage slavery and present-day methods of production..." From a resolution passed on trade unions by the First International, Geneva, 1866.

According to the press Britain is in the midst of an unprecedented strike wave (the number of strikes being the highest on record) combined with a wages explosion (£9.84m. up per week in the first seven months of this year as against £1.75m. in the same period last year, according to DEP figures).

We don't intend to counter capitalist propaganda by explaining that *actually* the unofficial strikers aren't *really* holding the country to ransom—on the contrary; in fact one of our complaints is that the trade union movement isn't doing just that.

It is more important to consider some of the problems facing trade unionists, and how revolutionary socialists should relate to them. We have a situation in which very large numbers of workers are willing to go into militant action against the employers, the state, and very often, their own union leaderships; however, all this militancy is doing little more than maintaining their present standard of living. Such a consideration will involve taking a look at the history of trade unions, their leadership, their role today, the problems they face and, most important, what revolutionary socialists should do.

Trade Unions Yesterday and Today

Trade unions are the basic organisation of the working class. They arise from the first steps in working class consciousness. The proletariat (i.e. whose whose sole and normal method of gaining their livelihood is selling their labour power) face the bourgeoisie as atomised units. Dispossessed of the ownership of the means of production, they face a class, the bourgeoisie, which has the monopoly of their means of livelihood. For most of the proletariat's history it has faced the additional pressure of the reserve army of unemployed. In the elemental class struggle (directly over the rate of exploitation) workers would have been in an absolutely hopeless position but for their power of combination. Trade unions represented, in their origin, the placing on a permanent basis of those powers of combination and unity.

At first the British bourgeoisie responded by trying to break up and smash these organisations. The most dramatic and heroic episodes in the history of the British working class were concerned with the struggle to maintain the unions. Once the employers had learned that it was impossible to destroy the unions without provoking a permanent civil war, they sought to come to terms with them. This change of attitude encompassed many years and was accompanied by a continual tug-of-war in which the employers sought to restrict and emasculate the unions. The capitalists were only prepared to grant full legalisation to the unions when they were certain that by a combination of bribery of strata of workers (the so-called aristocracy of labour) and integration of the leadership of the unions into bourgeois society they could contain them.

The change in outlook is well illustrated historically: Ken Coates in *Trade Union Register 1969* compares the 100th Congress of the TUC:

"A solemn and vast concourse, it followed a series of gargantuan celebrations in which, it seemed, practically all the English Establishment were ready to join. Her Majesty, flanked on all sides by the responsible statesmen of the General Council whom she had ennobled, dined before television cameras to greater honour of labour..." with the "first congress, a meagre gathering of 34 virtually unknown men, convoked...with difficulty to meet an unprecedented offensive against the unions..."

One could add that the 1968 circus was a far

cry from the TUC resolution of 1868 which recommended the First International "to the support of the working men of the United Kingdom, especially of all organised bodies, and strongly urges them to become affiliated to that body."

Since the development of mass trade unions in the advanced capitalist states, the bourgeoisie has followed this unceasing policy of trying to integrate the trade unions into bourgeois society—aided and abetted in most countries by social democratic leaders. At the height of imperialism's power, this policy was intricately woven into the process of granting reforms—legal, negotiating rights, etc.—which ensured a "place in society" for the trade unions. In social terms this meant institutionalising the social role of the trade union bureaucrat.

The Trade Union Bureaucrat

The trade union bureaucrat is grateful for his enshrinement—he is always ready and willing to stop or moderate rank-and-file struggles. In time of full employment he restrains the workers from taking full advantage of the shortage of labour. In time of war, from his office desk, he assists in the raising of cannon fodder, and he does his best to replenish the depleted labour force from women, the young, the old, and the untrained. In time of capitalist decline he persuades the workers to accept sacrifices "in the national interest". The trade union bureaucrat can be relied upon to discipline "wild-cat" strikers. As the Donovan Report noted:

"Many trade union leaders have gone on record unequivocally as being opposed to such breaches (of negotiating procedures), and we have no doubt of their sincerity in the matter. On occasions when their active intervention in an unconstitutional dispute has become necessary, they have almost inevitably sought to persuade strikers to go back to work..."

Indeed, the trade union bureaucrat is obliged to attack any rank-and-file action outside his control. His whole social position depends upon him being able to "deliver the goods". If he cannot control the rank and file, he is no use to the bourgeoisie. But this very need to control the rank and file means that he must also "deliver some goods" to the workers as well. Thus the trade union bureaucrat's manoeuvres are determined by his social position.

But we have to face the fact that most people who end up as trade union bureaucrats commence their career as militants (in fact the most effective ones from the point of view of the bourgeoisie very often started out as socialists or even revolutionaries). What goes wrong?

As noted in Rakovsky's famous essay on the dangers of professionalism in the workers' organisations, there is a built-in tendency for the emergence of "professional" or "bureaucratic" interests in the workers' movement which are in contradiction to those of the rank and file membership. This is especially the case in times of comparative class peace and the corollary: low participation by the membership.

Trade unions in advanced capitalist countries are especially prone to this danger. Continuous contact with employers (who turn out to be quite pleasant personally), accompanied by a middle-class standard and style of life, psychological pressures such as praise from both employers and government, make a powerful impact on full-time trade union officials. And, of course, unofficial rank-and-file action is in direct conflict with the routinism of a trade union office, disrupting the possibility of a quiet, smooth life.

The best of left-wingers find these pressures extremely difficult to resist. Only a revolutionary ideology, backed by a revolutionary organisation and revolutionary discipline, can enable people to resist integration in such circumstances.

This situation makes doubly criminal the action of those tendencies (starting with the Communist Party)⁽¹⁾ which concentrate upon winning union positions as a strategy against the right wing. This policy is "rewarded" by sensational renegades: witness Will Paynter and Dave Bowman, who chose precisely the time of sharpened class struggle to resign from the Communist Party and openly ally themselves with the right wing.

The answer is not, of course, to refuse to stand for union positions—such a policy would severely inhibit the chances of influencing large numbers of workers once a firm trade union base has been formed. On the contrary, the answer is to go for union positions (when there is rank-and-file backing) but to demonstratively

refuse to be integrated into the middle-class style of life union officials enjoy. A revolutionary trade union official should openly donate large sums of money (all his wages above that of the average member he represents) to left organisations. He should campaign constantly—even to the point of resigning his position should this be a positive step—for regular election of officials, the reduction of trade union officials' wages, and the right of recall by those who elected him. Failure to do this, even on the grounds of preserving a base to "do constructive work", will inevitably begin a process which will end in degeneration.

Shop Stewards

Shop stewards have been the target of the hatred of the capitalist press which is a sure indication that they are more in tune with the rank and file than the trade union bureaucrats. In general they can be distinguished from trade union officials by the fact that they are lay-members and in practice are usually directly elected and even often recallable. Because of the relative increase in the importance of shop-floor bargaining the role of shop stewards has become more and more decisive. In much capitalist propaganda the shop steward is pictured as a wild militant. This propaganda effects some on the left, particularly middle-class students and lecturers who tend to romanticise the working class as compensation for their own guilt feelings about their class origins. The truth is much more complex. The Donovan Report had this to say about management's attitude towards shop stewards:

"Only 2% of managers held that shop stewards were unreasonable, 95% taking the view that they were either very reasonable or fairly reasonable. Four managers out of five thought that shop stewards were either very efficient or fairly efficient at their job. Nearly a third of them thought that shop stewards were a lot of help to management, and most of the remainder that shop stewards were of some help..."

The objective position of shop steward makes them much more responsive to rank-and-file control than trade union officials but it would be a big mistake to assume that they will, because of this, automatically and spontaneously become militants, let alone revolutionary socialists. On the contrary, the best shop stewards will be the politically formed ones and even shop stewards are subject to tremendous pressure in their functioning.

Revolutionaries must explain that the present offensive against shop stewards is designed to weaken rank-and-file control over bargaining and union organisation. The left in the trade union movement must fight tooth and nail against moves to integrate shop stewards into the union apparatus (by making them full-time, for instance). It must explain that the obsession of the capitalist press with "unofficial" strikes is because these strikes are the ones which enable workers to directly respond to changes in their situation quickly and decisively. They are the strikes least controllable by the trade union bureaucrats.

Still Workers' Organisations?

Certain people have argued that just as the Labour Party is in its essential function a bourgeois formation so are trade unions basically props for the status quo. Of course trade unions have gone far from their original role—it is not now a question of workers creating trade unions to meet the bourgeoisie, the worker now finds the trade union already in existence with its own apparatus and bureaucracy. In many cases a worker will be unable to find employment unless he is a member of the appropriate trade union. In some unions, this is used to control militants, e.g. the ETU. The example of Pilkingtons and the way the GMWU collaborated with the bosses in trying to smash the newly formed General and Glass Workers' Union is fresh in all our minds.

One can have considerable sympathy with these views but they are extremely mistaken. Whilst the trade union bureaucrats have control of the unions they still have to be responsive to rank-and-file wishes. In many trade unions there is a polarisation between "left" and right in the bureaucracy and real battles are fought out. Whilst we must not create illusions in the Jones's and Scanlons, it must be noted that the victory of the tendencies around them in the two largest unions in the country was a big blow to the plans for integrating unions into capitalist planning. Their verbal militancy,

furthermore, helps to make for greater rank-and-file action. Undoubtedly one of the big factors in the present strike wave is the fact that millions of workers believe that their union leaders favour militancy. Thus in a distorted way workers exercise control over their organisation.⁽²⁾

A further test of the essential differences between the Labour Party and the trade unions is shown by a simple fact: no one anywhere in the political spectrum, no matter how right wing, has suggested legal sanctions against the Labour Party. Why? Because it presents no challenge whatsoever to capitalism (instead it is propping it up) and is in no way an obstacle to British monopoly capital's attempts to modernise itself (on the contrary, it attempted to do the job for capitalism). The main social role of unions today remains defending workers' interests.

Some Structural Problems

Trade unionists face many particular problems today:

1. The growth of unemployment which seems certain to increase still further even in the absence of a recession. Unemployment is now roughly double what it was before Labour came to power—one of the few lasting monuments to Wilson's term of office! Because the economy is so stagnant, unemployment will tend to increase (if production does not increase at least as fast as productive potential unemployment will increase).

2. Whilst year-to-year figures vary, there is a built-in tendency for the proportion of trades unionists in the total labour force to drop. The main explanation of this is that many of those sectors which have been traditional strongholds of trade unionism have tended to decline—mining, railways, shipbuilding, etc.—whilst many of the new industries which have replaced them are more difficult to organise. This factor has outweighed the growth of white-collar trade unionism and the tendency for more women to join unions.

3. Whilst there has been a huge concentration of capital and growth of monopolies, union organisation still corresponds to the old employer/employee relationship. The growth of international monopolies and especially the developments likely should Britain join the Common Market have had no corresponding response whatsoever from the trade unions.

In general, trade union militants should respond to these problems by fighting for a bold and militant policy of:

(a) total opposition to redundancies. End haggling about redundancy compensation rates and instead demand no sackings, but work sharing. Every worker sacked is one more unemployed, every trade unionist "on the stones" is a blow to trade unionism.

(b) a large-scale recruiting campaign especially directed at the young, women, white-collar and new industry sectors. Trades Councils would be the ideal local bases for such a campaign. It goes without saying that such a campaign would be a formality unless the unions can demonstrate by their militancy that unions are worthwhile.

(c) a campaign to link up trade unionists in combines, industries and internationally. There should be a call for a European rank and file conference to work out a unified response to the attacks of international capital upon workers' conditions.

(d) a campaign for the social ownership of the "commanding heights" of industry under workers' control.

Present-Day Attacks on the Trade Unions

The bourgeoisie has always, of course, sought to limit the role of trade unions either directly by legal sanctions, victimisation of militants, etc., or indirectly, by persuading trade union leaders to collaborate with them. However, there are a number of special reasons why capitalism is at this stage trying to directly control and shackle the unions.

Firstly, we live in an era of sharpened international competition, and victory in this struggle will go to those who can use the most up-to-date techniques. This means bigger and bigger units, round-the-clock shift working, rationalised division of labour, the sweeping aside of all obstacles to the introduction of new techniques and methods, the more and more rapid replacement of plant and machinery. The normal functioning of "free" trade union bargaining and especially workshop negotiations over the control of conditions is a major obstacle to this process.

D THE TRADE UNIONS

Secondly, the operation of modern capitalism means that there must be a strong element of "planning" because of sharpened international competition and the huge risk involved in new investment. This means that every element of cost must be planned in advance. "Free" wage bargaining introduces an element of uncertainty and unpredictability. This is one of the reasons for the capitalists' hatred of the so-called wage drift (the gap between nationally-negotiated wage rates and actual wage rates determined by local and workshop bargaining).

Thirdly, after a long period of comparatively full employment certain sections of the working class have become extremely well-organised and have imposed upon the employers an element of control—workers in some large motor industry factories, dockers, sections of the printing industry, etc. One of the recent aims of the employers, especially under the Labour Government, has been to change the relationship of forces in these fields.

Fourthly, also arising from comparative full employment and the strength of working-class organisation, there has been a shift of importance from nation-wide bargaining to local bargaining. This has lessened the use of payments by results schemes to the employers and enabled certain sections of workers to obtain quite high rates of pay. The corollary of this is moves for parity with other sections of workers in the same industry—giving rise to the famous leap-frogging effect. It also strengthens union organisation at factory and local level as opposed to the power of national organisation and the trade union bureaucracy. As the Donovan Report wistfully noted (page 32), "For a brief period between the wars the conjunction of industry-wide bargaining and heavy unemployment gave trade union leaders an unusual ascendancy in their own organisations"—Things have certainly changed.

Productivity Deals

It is in this context that productivity bargains have to be set. The achievement of a full system of productivity bargaining would be the capitalists' ideal solution. All measures of rationalisation would have to be accepted by the workers before wage increases were granted. Moreover productivity bargains would ensure the complete planning of wage costs. It must be noted that a complete system of productivity deals is utopian from a capitalist point of view, even in the absence of workers' resistance. Uneven rates of development in industry, the need to "lure" workers from one sector to another, etc. would introduce instability into the system—modern capitalism is quite unable to overcome the inherent anarchy of the capitalist mode of production.

In their efforts to get workers to accept productivity deals, employers very often offer what appear to be very high wage increases. Of course, the catch soon becomes apparent: massive redundancies and a terrible speed-up. The most important long-term effect is the loss of control over conditions. The establishment of productivity bargaining, measured day working, etc. on a complete scale would be a big defeat for the working class and should be vigorously fought by all socialists.⁽³⁾

Building a Revolutionary Nucleus in the Unions

In this situation the central task of socialists is to link the extreme militancy of big sections of the working class to the revolutionary struggle against capitalism. If anything emerges from the present stage of British capitalism, it is the strength of the working class and the weakness of the bourgeoisie and its agencies. The mainly "economist" nature of the present strike wave means that after it is over the class relationship of forces will, at best, remain unchanged. Moreover, whilst the struggle is limited to wage demands there is the danger that a whole series of productivity agreements will be the main outcome.

Whilst completely supporting the wage struggles, revolutionaries should seek to insert into them transitional demands and should advocate the complete rejection of all strings.⁽⁴⁾ Similarly all redundancies should be opposed and work-sharing counterposed. Shop stewards should take advantage of the present militancy to assert their control over hiring and firing, shift working, overtime, promotion procedures, etc. There should be total opposition to any state control over unions.

The job of putting these demands into the current struggles is extremely difficult in view

of the small size of the vanguard groups, their isolation and the absence of worker militants to put them forward from *inside the movement*. The winning of workers for revolutionary organisations thus becomes an imperative necessity. However, it is extremely important that these worker militants are won for a total revolutionary position. The concept of winning militants on the basis of industrial struggle alone and then dealing with the political questions is extremely misguided.

The Communist Party has, over the years, won tens of thousands of militant workers on the basis of "servicing" their struggles and needs via industrial fractions and its press. This led to the accruing of a large inactive membership, the majority of whom could not be further politicised because they did not attend meetings. This also led to the phenomena of a large, virtually syndicalist wing in the C.P. which was never integrated into the Party. No revolutionary organisation can afford to have within its ranks unintegrated forces. At time of sharp political crisis when "unpopular" stands have to be taken (e.g. supporting the Arabs in the 6-day war) such elements will be the source of considerable instability and exert an opportunist pressure on the organisation. The C.P. discovered this at the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia.

It is precisely by fighting in all industrial struggles for transitional demands that consciousness will be heightened and the basis of winning militants for revolutionary ideas will be laid. Fortunately we are aided by other factors:

1. that young workers have been affected by the youth radicalisation and many of them are attracted by revolutionary ideas.
2. the Communist Party has now lost its virtual monopoly of the allegiance of political worker militants; and
3. that other sectors have come on the scene which are more politicised than the average militant—Irish workers, black workers, etc.

Revolutionary Consciousness and Trade Union Consciousness

Of course, trade union consciousness by itself will never automatically lead to revolutionary consciousness. Indeed this is one of the most important contributions made by Lenin in his theory of the Party⁽⁵⁾. However, this does imply the acceptance of the propagandist argument that this revolutionary consciousness will be inserted into the workers' movement by propaganda from the outside. On the contrary, whilst propaganda for ideas of revolutionary socialism is vital at all times, the way of winning masses of people (and especially industrial workers) for revolutionary ideas is by revolutionary praxis. The popularising of transitional demands and the creation of nuclei capable of winning masses of people to fight for those transitional demands and taking these masses of people through an experience is the way to develop revolutionary consciousness on a mass scale.

Getting a Local Base

At a time when revolutionary forces are weak in the trade union field and in many areas confined to one or two areas (and then very often white-collar unions), membership of Trades Councils will give activists contact with a variety of unions and industries. Although at the present stage Trades Councils tend to be conservative, and what left there is tends to the C.P., in time of sharp crisis they can easily become focal points for coordinated militant activities. Revolutionaries should, anyway, try to convert them into instruments for generalising class struggles on a local level. They should be in the forefront of campaigns to break down non-unionism and should become organising centres for local solidarity. Although there are many weaknesses in the Liverpool Trades Council, it has played an important role in this respect over the last few years.

Before one can do serious trade union work or help a living struggle one has to build up a certain minimum of resources. Whereas the strength of ideas can by themselves be very effective in university and intellectual circles, in industry it is the size of one's organisation and the scope of one's press which together with correct ideas is decisive. To effectively assist a living struggle a small group will require a relationship of forces in which it is not swamped. This means that in the first stages the greatest successes will be obtained in those fields where the scale of the struggle is small and the strength of opponents (especially the trade union bureaucrats) is weak. After successes

have been registered, revolutionaries will gather sufficient experience and forces to move into even more important sectors.

United Action Committees

In the absence of a revolutionary party but the presence of burning and immediate tasks which a revolutionary party should tackle, the tactic of the united action committee is paramount. This is usually called the united front tactic, but this is a little misleading. More correctly, the united front refers to the unity of mass organisations of the working class. The united action committee, on the other hand, consists of bringing together on a single issue (or a very minimum programme) all those forces which accept a principled position on the issue. In this way some of the consequences of the fragmentation of the left are overcome and the workers' and anti-imperialist struggles are assured greater solidarity than if every group did its mite on its own. Making this distinction between united action committees and the united front in no way exonerates the refusal of such sectarian organisations as the SLL and CPB (ML) for refusing to take part in them; on the contrary, this concept makes it *more imperative* and brands refusal to take part in principled campaigns utterly reprehensible.

It is essential that revolutionaries spare no effort in forming united action committees to assist present trade union struggles. The call for solidarity in all major struggles should be made. These calls for solidarity should be generalised in the formation of permanent trade union solidarity committees. It is clear that at the present stage it is impossible to do much more than aid each struggle as it comes up and make general propaganda for the idea of permanent solidarity committees. However, sooner or later a crucial struggle will come up, one in which, for instance, the Tories will attempt to—in the words of *The Economist*—"stand firm" against wage increases. The miners could easily be the victim of the Tories' endeavour to end the present wave of wage increases: they are in a comparatively weak position as compared with the dockers, for instance. In such an event the committee of solidarity could become a living reality.

The Institute of Workers Control

The Institute of Workers Control has done extremely good work in popularising the ideas of industrial democracy (for a study of this see the September issue of *International*). However, it has never clearly defined itself or decided whether it is to be a purely educational organisation or an action-orientated body. (And a real workers control campaign needs to be linked with living struggles). On many occasions it fizzes over ideas (in popularising the ideas of Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon, when the latter's definition of industrial democracy equals workers' participation and increased productivity combined with high wages). Seeing "left" trade union leaders as a bridge to the rank and file, many elements in the IWC are extremely reluctant to criticise these trade union leaders. At the same time, association with the workers' control movement gives such people as Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon a left coloration. Failure to criticise them in these circumstances can assist them in keeping this left coloration even at a time when they damp down rank-and-file struggles.

Revolutionaries should continue to support the workers' control movement but it is essential that they do nothing to assist "left" trade union bureaucrats keep their radical reputation. Indeed, a struggle within the workers' control movement for a transitional programme means combatting and freely criticising the ideas of Jones and Scanlon. Such criticism has to be both sensitive and non-sectarian, otherwise it will be incomprehensible to sections of the rank and file which look upon "left" trade bureaucrats as real militants. It is best, by far, if such criticism comes from trade union militants.

Conclusion

In the present stage of the decline of capitalism, when far from being able to grant reforms it has to seek to take back existing workers' rights, the era of classical trade unionism is over. Either the unions become instruments of political struggle and emancipation of the working class or it is their fate to be integrated into the state machine and be used more and more to police the working class—no third way exists. And

nowhere is this more true than in Britain. Living proof exists of this general proposition in the experience of the struggle against the penal clauses in 1969. We had two political one-day strikes which had the perspective of growing bigger and bigger. A network of trade union defence committees sprung up and there was a huge demonstration in London on May 1st. But because this movement was restricted to defensive demands and the main one was conceded everything collapsed like a pack of cards. The present strike wave could suffer the same fate.

This makes the struggle against limiting the movement to "economist" demands (i.e. bread and butter issues) absolutely imperative. A political struggle combined with transitional demands is essential if anything at all is to be gained.

This is not to say that the trade unions should be converted into political parties. The unions have a different function from that of a political party. They are in essence the elementary organisations of the working class in which workers receive their first lessons on organisation. They can be much more than that, however. They can become the great working class school in which all political struggles in the class are fought out. They can become the arena in which workers learn to distinguish between opportunism and revolutionary politics. The task remains, therefore, to build up nuclei of revolutionary workers in each industry and trade union, working through united action committees.

Pat Jordan

Footnotes

(1) Although this is not the main criticism to be made of the Communist Party's trade union policy. The C.P., despite some muted criticisms of the Russians over the invasion of Czechoslovakia, still basically follows the political line of the Kremlin. This expresses itself in the trade union movement in a special form of "peaceful coexistence" between the C.P. and "left" trade union bureaucrats.

(2) But there is a reverse side to the coin: the "left" reputation of these leaders enhances their ability to defuse struggles at decisive moments. It is extremely doubtful, for instance, whether Deakin could have called off the dockers in the way Jack Jones managed.

(3) Tony Cliff, ideological leader of the International Socialists group, has written an interesting and informative book on this topic. As a former workshop activist I can appreciate that this study would be of value. The book's main weakness, as I see it, is its "economist" orientation, especially its almost complete ignoring of the question of "workers' control".

(4) A transitional demand is one which bridges the gap between the consciousness of people in struggle as they are now and revolutionary ideas. It is distinguished from the most militant democratic or minimum demand by the fact that it always involves the eroding away of capitalist power and the subsequent enhancing of workers' power. It is distinguished from the maximum or full programme demand by virtue of the fact that it has to seem reasonable to those to whom it is directed, here and now at their present level of consciousness. It is distinguished from the most radical reformist demand by virtue of the fact that it is impossible for the bourgeoisie to grant it. As Trotsky explained:

"It is easier to overthrow capitalism than to realise this demand (for a sliding scale of wages and hours) under capitalism. Not one of our demands will be realised under capitalism. That is why we are calling them transitional demands..." *Discussions on the Transitional Programme*, Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1938-39.

However, the most well-thought-out transitional demand will remain a propaganda slogan unless it is linked to action. It remains at that level unless it is actually mobilising workers in struggle.

A typical transitional demand is that of workers' control over hiring and firing. An element of this already exists in well-organised sectors in times of comparative prosperity. However, when management wishes to sack workers because of slackening of demand or in the interests of rationalisation, a very apt slogan will be that of no sacking, but work sharing. It will appear reasonable to the workers and yet cut into capitalist power. Of course, it will not be fully transitional unless it is linked with a refusal to accept a cut in wages when work is shared. If the capitalists then say they cannot afford this, a demand for the opening of the books to verify this should be the response—if then, as is very unlikely, this demand is granted and the bosses really cannot afford to pay full wages, the appropriate slogan will be for the workers to take over and run the factory themselves.

The job of working out precise transitional demands is, of course, that of the revolutionaries involved in a particular struggle. Only they will be able to judge the exact mood of the masses. However, a revolutionary organisation should seek to insert the method and concept of transitional demands into every struggle it can influence.

(5) However, one has to be on guard against the crude and one-sided presentation of Lenin's ideas on this topic in the C.P. and SLL (not to speak of some extreme Maoist groups). Lenin explained that when he combatted the ideas of the Economists, who had "bent the stick one way", he had to "bend it the other way" in order to straighten it.

In reality, the phenomenon of developing revolutionary consciousness and the effect on workers in taking part in struggle is a very complex process.

IRELAND: Two Interviews

In these brief interviews leaders of the Irish Republican movement explain the policy and strategy of their movement. Maurin De Burca is the joint Secretary of Sinri Fein, the movement's political wing in the 26 counties, and Malachy McGurran is the chairman of the 6-counties regional executive of the Republican Clubs.

INTERVIEW WITH MAIRIN DE BURCA

1. How would you describe the Republican Movement to someone who knew very little about it?

It's a traditional movement, and it's a new movement. It is the old movement for struggle against British imperialist oppression of Ireland, stemming from the Fenians and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. But today we realise that people who might be physically free might not be politically and culturally free.

Therefore we involve ourselves in the struggles of the people, supporting strikes, such as the cement strike; housing action in Dublin; we run advice bureaux where people can get help when faced with trouble from landlords, their employers, the state bureaucracy, etc. Our fish-in campaign attempts to break the monopoly of overseas absentee landlords and fishing clubs over the fishing rights on Irish rivers and Loughs; in many cases small farmers farm land through which fishing rivers run, but are forbidden to fish them. We organise mass illegal fishing to highlight this. Recently in Dublin we discovered that an Archbishop owned a private park for which he sold keys to selected families, at four pounds a time. We got hold of a key and passed out copies to slum families, then we organised a picnic and sports day in the park, which everyone but the Archbishop enjoyed thoroughly. In the North of course we have been in the civil rights struggle since it started.

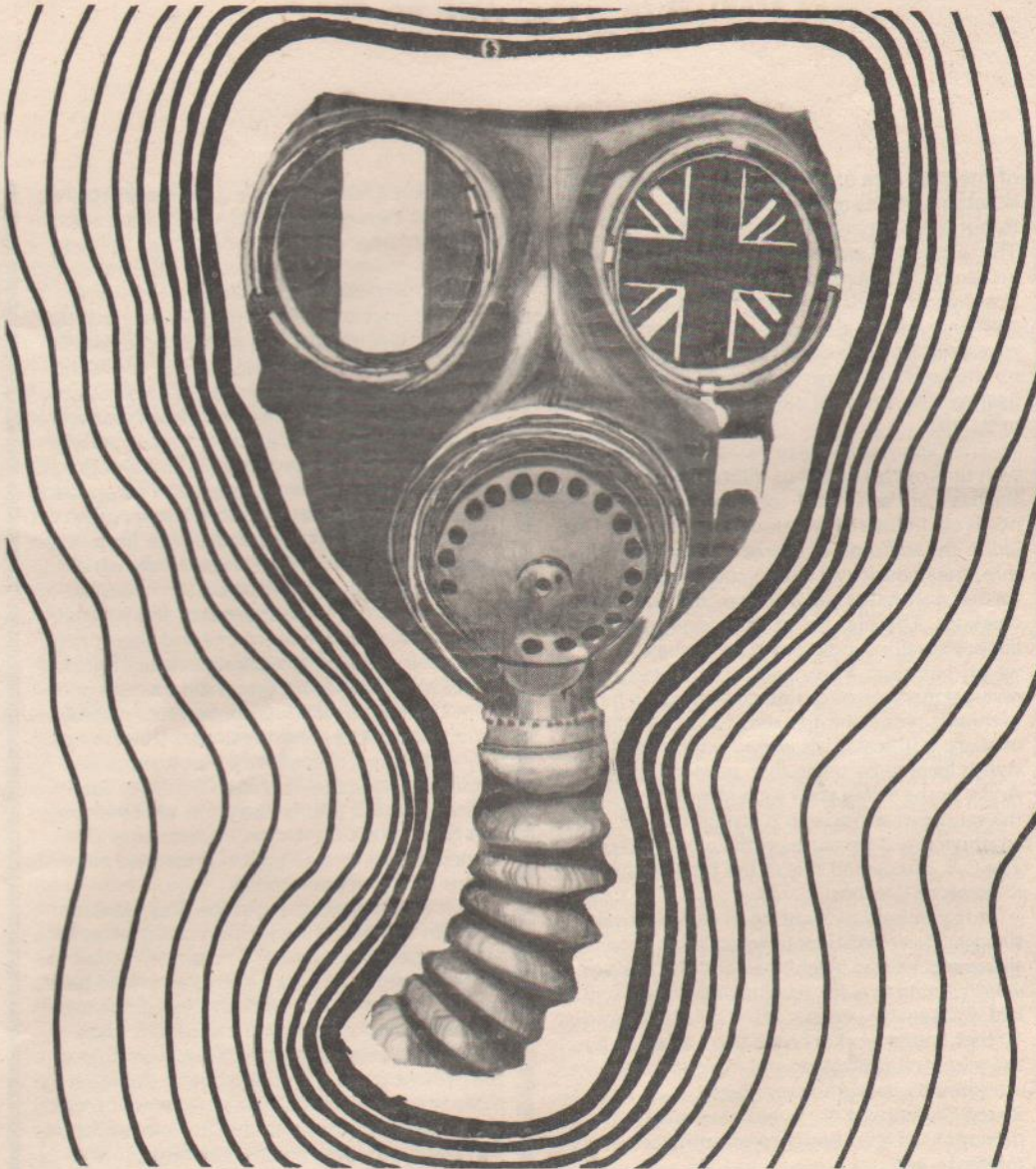
We are trying to do today what we did in the '30s, at the time of the Republican Congress: fight for national unity and independence, but in a socialist context.

2. What other organisations in Ireland do you see as allies, and what forms of cooperation do you have with them?

We cooperate with many people; for instance we work with many members of the Labour Party in the housing action campaign, but as individuals, not as a party. We can cooperate on limited objectives with the Communist Party of Ireland, although many of our younger members consider that they are a very conservative party, almost reactionary in fact; nevertheless we can work with them, particularly with their youth group, the Connolly Youth. The Irish Communist Organisation were active in the housing struggle for a while, but then they demanded that we expel members of the Labour Party from the campaign; when the campaign refused, they walked out. We work with the Gaelic League, particularly for civil rights for the Gaelic-speaking areas. We work of course with the Civil Rights Association. We co-operated with a number of organisations in the Cement Strike Ad-Hoc Committee, to support the strike. We work with local fishing clubs on our fish-ins. And we are involved in a united campaign against entry in the Common Market, which is a very important issue here. In short we will work with anyone who is going in the same direction or will go part of the way on any issue with us.

3. What is your attitude towards Marxism and Marxists?

I'll speak for myself on this; there are a lot of people



in the movement who are Marxists. Personally I find that it is too doctrinaire; I won't hold with any theory that binds one to a rigid course of action.

4. What is your attitude towards struggles in the Third World, particularly the Vietnamese and Cuban revolutions?

I'm all for them—passionately. We recognise that our struggle is part of the world struggle against imperialism. We think that our best contribution to these struggles is to overthrow imperialist domination at home; similarly if British imperialism were to be defeated, say in South Africa, this would greatly assist our struggle.

When Ho Chi Minh died I sent a telegram of condolence to Hanoi; some people in the movement protested at this—it was these same people who split from us at our conference last year.

5. What do you think is the best way for revolutionaries in Britain to help the struggle in Ireland?

To make their own revolution. Short of that they can of course put pressure on their own government, have demonstrations, sit-ins etc. in solidarity with us. But the most important thing is to make their own revolution.

INTERVIEW WITH MALACHY MCGURRAN

1. Why do you think the Unionist government has put a ban on parades?

I hate to give credit to the British Government, but I think that Maudling put his foot down after the expense of the July 12th precautions. With the possibility of using troops in the British docks, and Britain's economic difficulties, they just felt that they couldn't afford the luxury of letting the Apprentice Boys march.

Another factor is the fact that August, September and October are traditional times for civil rights activity; within this period too you will have the release of Bernadette Devlin. So the ban will hit particularly at civil rights demonstrations during this time.

The Republican movement has stated that everyone should be allowed to march provided they do not indulge in sectarian provocation.

Other factors are of course the economic situation in Northern Ireland itself and the effects of any trouble on employment etc.

It's up to all radicals and progressives to make it clear that in their opinion the Apprentice Boys and the Orangemen are not the enemy. The real enemy is

the bourgeois clique which leads them, or for that matter leads the Ancient Order of Hibernians. It is against these people that we have to organise.

2. Do you think the Unionist Government will last much longer?

I'll rephrase that: the present Unionist Government. I don't think Chichester-Clark will last the autumn; his most serious rival is Faulkner, who is the most dangerous man in the set-up. He will be the next Prime Minister of a united Unionist Party. Some "liberal" elements will be driven out into the New Ulster Movement, leaving a government which would unite the Party by being well to the right of the present one. Such a government would go easy in the first stages, to avoid direct rule, but they see their natural allies in power now in Britain, and they will try to hold back change.

But things can never be the same in Northern Ireland again, because elements on both sides won't accept that the old way of running the province should be re-introduced.

3. We have seen the changed attitude to the troops in the Falls; is this general throughout Northern Ireland?

Yes, although not with the same intensity as in Belfast, but it is general.

4. Is there any sign that the Protestant workers are beginning to change their attitudes?

The turn to Paisley. His support comes from the Protestant workers, plus people like small shopkeepers, businessmen and farmers, people who feel oppressed by the monopolies and entry into the E.E.C.

The Protestants have felt disillusioned ever since the British Army attacked Shankill, and with the giving of minor concessions to the civil rights struggle. They turned to Paisley, who was the nearest expression for their grievances to hand. He fought his election campaign on a seemingly radical platform, he called for better housing, and denounced the big landlords. Paisley would have been elected in any Unionist constituency.

5. What effect do you think the struggle in the North is having on workers in the 26 Counties?

In the main, very little. Because of economic problems, unemployment, low wages, bad housing, etc., the average worker has more immediate things on his mind.

Republicans would want them to fight these problems and not to get so emotionally involved in the conflict in Northern Ireland as not to fight Fianna Fail in the South.

Also they are not helped in gaining an understanding of the situation by the power politics of Fianna Fail, such as the activities of Blaney and Haughey (people who have persecuted Republicans in the past). It was because Blaney and Haughey feared a reaction from the people over the situation in the North that they took the action they did, in order to head them off.

6. What do you think revolutionaries in Britain can do to help you?

In the first place I would think of what Irish people in Britain can do; they can build a mass movement of Irish immigrants, fighting against the British government for the withdrawal of British troops, and to defend those who are fighting at home. I think it would be important to build links with British workers, to get their assistance too, and here British revolutionaries could help. But even if only the Irish in Britain organised economic resistance, for example strikes, they could force the British government's hand. This would also expose Fianna Fail, and bring out the issue as one of exploitation.

In the very long run a revolution in Britain would of course be the greatest help.

The Irish introduced Christianity into Europe. I would hope that we can play a similar role in the future by starting off the socialist revolution in Western Europe.

On Ralph Schoenman

IN DEFENCE OF RALPH SCHOENMAN

Several months ago, when some of us were still associated with the *Black Dwarf*, we published in its pages an article by some revolutionary militants exposing the ANC to which they had once belonged. The publication created a furore on the Editorial Board. It led to the resignation of Adrian Mitchell (who has since rejoined) and established the political basis of the split which led us to establish *The Red Mole*. At that stage some of us argued that Mitchell and his friends were capitulating to the pressure of the liberals and the C.P. The subsequent turn of the *Dwarf* has vindicated the position we adopted and the few doubts one might have had have been swept aside by the publication of the article "dictated by Russell" on Ralph Schoenman. The appalling liberalism in the *Dwarf* introduction (e.g. "isolated Russell from the Peace Movement", "Russell's political work was vilified because of his secretary" etc. etc.) comes to us as no surprise. A revolutionary critique (not well-written we agree) of the ANC is not acceptable to the *Dwarf* Board, but a dying liberal philosopher's critique of his secretary, a revolutionary militant, is a different matter (apart from everything else it's so well-written).

The new policy of the *Dwarf* as they themselves put it is to move away from "traditional revolutionary rhetoric". In the moving away process they try to outdo the bourgeois press in publishing scoops, etc. The political nature of the scoop is not as relevant as the "scoop" itself, and with Ralph Schoenman, of course, you can hit the jackpot.

As someone who has known Ralph Schoenman for a long time and since the British ruling class refuses to let him enter the country, it is necessary to set the record straight, if only in brief. Ralph is not likely to take this combined assault on his integrity by the bourgeois press and the *Black Dwarf* go unchallenged, and he is the best person to answer his liberal critics in detail.

Ralph Schoenman was and remains today a revolutionary militant dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism and bureaucracy. Like everyone else he has his weaknesses. On many issues I used to argue with him quite fiercely, but these disagreements remained political. They were not marred by subjectivism brought about by Ralph's personal traits: an excessive individualism and a refreshing bluntness. The latter earned him lifelong enemies on the British left. But no one can take away from Ralph the fact that it was he who conceived of both the

Vietnam Solidarity Campaign and the War Crimes Tribunal. Russell accepted these ideas and lent them his enormous prestige, but they were first and foremost Ralph's ideas. Both Dr. Malcolm Caldwell and I would testify to this fact before any enquiry. Ralph also had an idea for a revolutionary newspaper much like the early *Dwarf* as long ago as 1966. He discussed it with me several times. Even the name had been decided (*The Spokesman*) but the Tribunal very correctly diverted his energy.

Ralph Schoenman's hatred of bureaucracy forced him to criticise in no uncertain language the regimes in the USSR and Eastern Europe, and this at a time when it had not become fashionable to do so on the revolutionary left. He was hated and despised by the Stalinists in London, in Moscow and in the Eastern European embassies throughout the world. He was even bold or tactless enough to question Chou En Lai about the Trotskyists imprisoned in China and demand their release.

All these things made Ralph extremely unpopular with a whole variety of people. Therefore we ask the question: Does the publishing of a personal statement by Russell (all this talk of "political testament" is crap designed to cater to the needs of the bourgeois press) on his relations with Schoenman help the

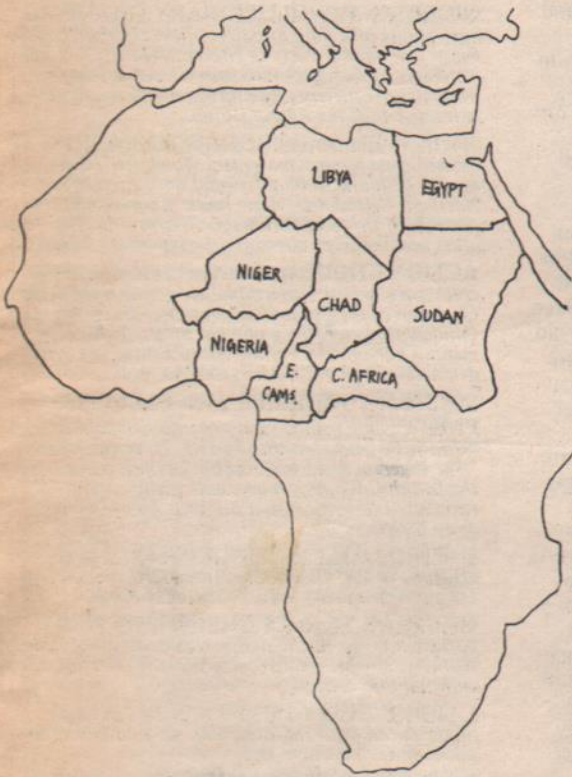
revolutionary movement and further the cause of socialism? We say categorically: NO. It only helps the bourgeois mass media which loathed Schoenman's guts because he treated bourgeois journalists with the contempt they deserve (an amusing incident I witnessed at the first session of the Tribunal: Barrett of 24 Hours was filming an interview and asked Schoenman an extremely insulting question to answer which in any way would have meant accepting the premise of the questioner. Without batting an eyelid Schoenman countered by asking: "When did you last fuck your wife...." The question was deleted and exit a furious Michael Barrett.)

It helps the Stalinists whose hatred of Ralph caused them to spread the rumour that he was an agent of the CIA and was "harming" Russell's cause. *Black Dwarf* will no doubt be quoted approvingly by *Pravda* and similar rags in the rest of Eastern Europe.

In printing this text the *Dwarf* has degenerated even more than we had anticipated when we established *The Red Mole*. For us this is the time to declare our solidarity with Ralph Schoenman.

Tariq Ali

CHAD: An African Vietnam?



Political History

Before the French colonised Chad, the sultans in control of feudal states dominated the entire country. Constant raids into the southern part of Chad were organised by the powerful Muslim 'tribes' in the North, in order to procure slaves.

The first successful colonising expedition by the French was the Gentil mission which reached Lake Chad in 1897. The Franco-British Convention in 1898 allotted the Lake Chad area to France which turned it into a centre for its other colonial activities. Proper colonial administration started in 1913 when Chad was fully constituted as a French territory. France concentrated its efforts on the South and began a process of "Christianisation"; the Muslim North was largely neglected. Today nearly 50% of the population of Chad are Muslims, 45% are animists and 5%, mainly in the South, are Christians.

Francois Tomblabaye, a former teacher and a staunch Southern Christian and a leader of the Chad Progressive Party, became President when Chad became 'independent' in 1960. In 1962 Chad declared itself a Republic and all opposition parties were immediately banned. Since 'independence' the southerners have always dominated the central government and discriminated against the Northerners both politically and economically.

FROLINAT AND THE TOMBLABAYE REGIME

The organisation leading the struggle against the reactionary government is *Frolinat* under the leadership of Dr Abba Siddick. The latter knows Tomblabaye well: for 13 years they worked within the same party. It was only in 1968 that Siddick joined *Frolinat*. The split was basically on the question of nationalism. Tomblabaye is a liberal admirer of the 'free' world, i.e. France, USA, Britain and W. Germany. Siddick is a progressive nationalist who strongly denounces 'neo-colonialism' and cites the French military presence as a sure sign of the regime's political affiliations.

Frolinat is a united front of two banned organisations, the Chad National Union, a militant anti-imperialist national movement with Marxist elements and the conservative and Muslim influenced General Union of the Sons of Chad. It is clear, however, that it is the

left-wing elements who dominate *Frolinat* and are coming into contact with the dynamics of the permanent revolutionary process. Tomblabaye explains the revolt with a simplicity typical of imperialist puppets throughout the world: "If we must admit that errors have been committed by the representatives of our administration in the North, it is clear that these were merely a pretext for certain people to satisfy their personal political ambitions. Among the Chad Muslims there is a long tradition of cattle-stealing and pillage. Those who claim they are leaders of the rebellion are simply trying to profit from our difficulties, and have no political programme to propose."

Abba Siddick replies that the Chad regime practices a systematic and conscious oppression and discrimination against the Muslim half of the country and at the same time attempts to build a new Christian southern bourgeoisie linked to and depending on Western European finance capital.

WHAT DO THE 'EXPERTS' TELL US

According to the 'africanists'—the Western white experts on Africa subsidised in some way or the other by imperialist intelligence organisations—the 'problem' in Chad is simply a clash between Christianity and Islam. It is a 'tribal' conflict between the Arabs and the Negroes and only foreign military intervention can solve the issue by establishing law and order and reforming some aspects of the country's administration. (Compare to attitude of British ruling class to the anti-imperialist struggle in Northern Ireland).

The French Foreign Minister is quite blatant on the reasons for intervention: "*Chad is in the heart of Africa. Any threat to its integrity must be of concern to its neighbours.*" (like France?)

Frolinat gets a large part of its trained recruits and money from the Chadian refugees living in Libya. But the recent French sale of 100 Mirage jets—a£1000 m. business deal—has prevented Libya from giving any help to the rebels. Only recently the Libyan leader, al-Qaddafi expressed his desire to be neutral, saying that the situation in Chad was not clear. It is obvious that al-Qaddafi has bowed to French pressure and promised to remain neutral in the dispute.

The guerrilla army which originated from a few dozen ill-equipped and untrained groups, has become extremely well-organised and relies more and more on the masses. Its not inconsiderable successes give the lie to the myth that guerrilla warfare depends

solely on suitable terrain. *Frolinat* is able to recruit from, melt into and get material support from the masses. Their weapons include both spears and muskets as well as modern sophisticated weapons captured or liberated from the French and Chadian armies.

The first Liberation Army of *Frolinat* operates in the east and centre, taking in the Biltini, Wadai, Chari-Baguirmi, Moyen Guerra and Salamat areas. The Second Liberation Army operates in Bet and Kanem.

After the direct intervention by French troops the reactionaries had hoped that the revolt would be brought to an early end and reforms would be introduced to ease the plight of the Northern Muslims. But the young militants of *Frolinat* are now no longer prepared for piecemeal reforms and their military strength permits them to continue their anti-imperialist stance.

In an attempt to wean the Muslim masses away from *Frolinat*, the Chad government tries to follow the advice of the French: to reinstate the Sultans and make use of them and other traditional leaders who were maintained by the government during direct colonial rule. The Chad government now pays these 'leaders' a heavy subsidy and gives them weapons to fight against the guerrillas, but this only has the effect of hardening the anti-feudal core of the movement.

Frolinat continues to wage the struggle on its own: the Soviet Union has needless to say refused all help: they have made it clear that they would prefer negotiations between the two sides and a constitutional struggle. The Soviet bureaucracy, of course, thinks that it is madness to wage armed struggle in an 'independent' African state.

In most African countries where neo-colonialism is still strong, the collaboration between the educated African bourgeoisie ruling elite and international capitalism is being challenged. The fact that 'independence' was a sham is becoming more and more obvious to growing number of militants inside Africa; they are also beginning to realise that a liberation movement organised entirely on a nationalist basis is doomed to failure and that an anti-capitalist ideology and leadership is essential for success.

In future issues of *The Red Mole* we will provide information on the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist struggles in Uganda, Lesotho, Congo-Brazzaville, Southern Africa, etc and a glossary of the organisations conducting them, the nature of the leaderships and the support which they are being able to win.

Chen Chimutengwende

SOVIET UNION: The left opposition

"The complete pragmatism of the regime is one sign of its weakness. Their whole time is taken up thinking about short-range questions like ensuring an adequate supply of farm machinery for the coming year rather than probing economic failures at their root. Even in foreign policy where they appear to be more active, all they are really doing is to follow up initiatives instigated in the West as in the Middle East or with the German treaty. Unfortunately I must say that we in the Opposition have so far betrayed exactly the same weakness. We first became active in 1966 at the time of the Daniel and Sinyavsky trial when we realised that deStalinisation from above was over. These last four years we have been so involved in fighting issue by issue that we have not developed any theoretical perspective on what we are doing. We have been fighting every issue on a civil rights basis appealing to a conception of democracy which is not widely diffused among our people. Perhaps it ought to be but at the moment it is not. We have got to be more than a 'democratic movement'—that is General Grigorenko's name for us—and we have got to see beyond the next trial. As it is the repression this year has been very bad; many Oppositionists have been sent to prison, labour camps, or, worst of all, to mental hospitals."

The Opposition of which my friend was speaking is politically of great significance but it is numerically tiny. For the first time since the '30s the Party leaders do not exercise a monopoly on politics. The main publication of the Opposition, the mimeographed *Chronicle of Current Events*, circulates only among a few thousand readers though it has now regularly appeared fourteen times. "Some Western reporters have said that we have a wide network

extending to every Soviet city. I'm afraid this is not true; actually the small size of those actually engaged in producing the *Chronicle* has helped to protect us."

It is well known that the politics of dissident intellectuals in the Soviet Union are very diverse; after the decades of Stalinist repression of all independent political thinking this is not surprising. One can for example meet Soviet intellectuals who, perhaps partly to shock, advocate the restoration of Tsarism. But it must be emphasised that none of those active in the Opposition engage in this sort of whimsicality. To be active at all in prevailing Soviet conditions one has to be in deadly earnest. In fact it would be quite mistaken to identify the Opposition with the intelligentsia. Many prominent Oppositionists like Marchenko and Bukovsky are workers and in general the bulk of the intelligentsia does not allow its grumbling to get anywhere near open opposition. Because so much of the opposition's activities have centred on attacking the arbitrariness of Soviet "justice" the implicit assumptions of the opposition have often appeared purely liberal. However, the Opposition has already gone beyond this. Solzhenitsyn's writings, for example, contain a savage attack on bureaucratic privilege and the pervasive inequality of Soviet society. And of course many leading Oppositionists, such as Pyotr Yakir, are avowed Marxists who challenge the regime which it proclaims.

Since its continued existence depends on preventing the masses becoming aware of any socialist alternative to bureaucratic domination, the regime is prepared to go to any length to stamp out opposition and to take the most elaborate precautions. Thus the Arts Faculty of Moscow University which used to be housed

next to the Kremlin has now been moved out to the suburbs. So far the oppositional movement among students has been very weak, at any rate in Moscow, but the authorities are taking no chances.

Beyond its need to preserve its political monopoly the Party leadership also knows that there is growing popular discontent, and that in these circumstances the Opposition could be the spark to ignite the prairie-fire. Despite a further rise of 15% in the prices paid to the peasants this year, there is still a massive shortfall of staple food products. In consequence there is a lively private market outside the State farm system altogether. In Moscow I saw one of the immense and crowded covered market areas where this private produce is sold, and sold at astronomical prices. The peasants who are able to turn their private plots to such profit are naturally happy with this system. But for the mass of Soviet workers it makes life much more expensive than official indices claim. It also makes everyday shopping a very wearing exercise for the customer since it frequently entails prolonged queuing. In Leningrad I saw a queue quarter of a mile long for towels which had mysteriously been in short supply.

The question which must be answered is why an advanced industrial economy is continually running into troubles of this sort. The main cause is lack of any genuine mass involvement in the running of the strategic political and economic institutions. The Soviet leaders cannot supply material incentives to the working population and they cannot command any political enthusiasm. The result is an underlying stagnation of the conditions of life of the mass of the population despite the continuing growth of heavy industry. At the moment

there is still a gulf between the everyday preoccupations of the masses and the more esoteric concerns of the minuscule opposition groups. But when the regime worries that this gulf might be bridged they are, for once, being far-sighted.

Robin Blackburn

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NIGERIA: The class war

The civil war in Nigeria which reflected the crisis of the new neo-colonialist states of Africa ended in a realignment of imperialist forces in central Africa. Unfortunately, many progressives, socialists, etc. in the West are still confused and mystified over the events which compelled them to team up with Fascist Spain and Portugal, racist South Africa and the Pope on one side of the Nigerian Civil War. Efforts by revolutionists in Nigeria to make fellow revolutionaries throughout the world see the civil war as a historic occasion for turning it into a revolutionary struggle against imperialism and for liquidating the neo-colonial class structures seem to have been unsuccessful. Thus more than ever the task which confronts the revolutionary Left is one of concretely analysing the concrete situation.

Real Cause of the War

In Nigeria a nascent bourgeoisie is dependent on the monopoly capital of the world cartels. It could not evolve into an independent ruling class. Despite the feudal, merchant, comprador appearance of this ruling class, it displayed a unity of interests because all its components were under control of the imperialist monopolies. After all, for ten years up until 1965 these elements ruled Nigeria jointly by maintaining a coalition government at the centre and by dividing up the various provinces amongst the different parties which comprised that coalition. In 1966 there were possibilities of a nationalist-democratic type revolution overflowing but this possibility was reversed by the combined action and pressure of the foreign monopolies and the feudal and comprador elements of the indigenous ruling class. It was no accident that imperialist pressure coincided with the discovery of oil reserves in Nigeria. However, the ruling class could not hold onto power in the same way as they did before 1966. A blatant and conscious regionalism and tribal separatism which had been used in the past was not quite applicable to a situation which was continuously producing general strikes, peasant uprisings and armed struggle. The imperialists fighting amongst themselves as well in a mad bid to reach the oil encouraged the re-balkanisation of the richest and largest country of Africa. Nigeria is the most neo-colonialised state in Africa. It holds the most battle-hardened toiling classes including an urban proletariat which is probably the most advanced in Africa—it has been developing since the incursion of capitalism a century ago; it contains a large peasantry which is used to armed struggle and a revolutionary cadre force drawn from all the oppressed classes, from all the nationalities, and free from the ideologies of social-democracy and Stalinism. It acts after making a revolutionary appraisal of the concrete situation. It was in this background and expressly in order to prevent the development of these revolutionary potentialities that the neo-colonialist civil war was started.

The Civil War

The civil war was a defence of the class interests

of the ruling class with a mixture of confused nationalism. It is no secret in Nigeria that the most reactionary and backward movements in Nigeria gave support to the Biafran ruling class and regime once the positions of the latter were clear and once the Biafran "leadership" had imprisoned and shot revolutionary cadres and leftist junior army officers to make clear to their international backers where exactly they stood. This then is the sad irony of the situation. While many left-wing circles in Europe were collecting aid for starving children, their money was used to feed and clothe the Biafran ruling class and their real comrades were being shot dead. The contradiction of British, Soviet, Israeli and French arms did not deceive the Nigerian working masses in the same way as they did not deceive the Spanish workers in the late 1930s.

The Nigerian government represent the liberal wing of the bourgeoisie rallied to fight the war. Following the counter-coup of General Ironsi in January 1966, many revolutionary forces decided to use the East as a base for overthrowing the neo-colonialist class. It was to the Eastern Region (later Biafra) that left-wing army officers and the trade union leaders from the Nigerian Labour Party had fled. In the East these forces organised the Youth Brigade, the workers, the farmers, into organisations. Soon after the creation of Biafra, Ojukwu liquidated the topmost leaders of these forces under the charge of treason. For some time he continued to use the mass movements they had created, but soon after he started to detain the middle-level leaders for "consorting with the enemy". It is significant that the fall of Biafra followed immediately upon the complete withdrawal of support of the Biafran masses. The original intention had been to convert the Eastern Region into a revolutionary base after January 1966 but the exact opposite happened. An ideology called Blackism (see glossary below) was inflicted on the Biafran masses. It was precisely during this civil war that the reactionary Nigerian ruling class felt that its hegemony was threatened by the toiling masses. In 1969 there were peasant rebellions against the feudalists and the government was forced to satisfy one of the more important subsidiary demands: therefore in the fiscal year 1969/70 the western peasantry had to be exempted from the poll tax before they agreed to lay down their weapons.

The result of the civil war was a defeat undoubtedly for the colonialists who were hoping to see a permanent division of the country, but the entire structure of the Nigerian ruling class emerged from this war badly bruised and shaken.

After the Civil War

Immediately after the war the giant U.S. cartels followed by their Common Market rivals arrived in Nigeria and are today competing with the British giants for a share in the "post-war reconstruction", in oil-boom and for control of the economic base of the country. It must be remembered that both during and after the civil war the agitation of the workers and peasants has not ceased. The military government today confronts a classic neo-colonial dilemma. Either it will be overthrown by the old ruling class

whose economic strength is increasing and who will undoubtedly, given its history, not be completely disinterested in regaining political power, or a people's struggle led by the urban and rural proletariat will remove it from office.

The agents of imperialism are quite openly in search of a candidate who will ensure "stability" in Nigeria for the next period. Unfortunately for them there is no leader of sufficient popular appeal available, who has not been discredited for making war profits and whose climb to power would not result in an immediate confrontation. The Right fear the second civil war more than anything else. A civil war that will be a class war opening the road to a socialist revolution. There exist today contradictions between the "Nasserite" military government and the old ruling class which have to be resolved to ensure the hegemony of one or the other.

The Perspectives

The sufferings of the Nigerian toiling masses are such that they may easily back a "Nasser" type demagoguery promising popular reforms. This is where the need and the role of a revolutionary leadership becomes paramount. If Nigeria reverts back to the old and openly reactionary role of a neo-colonial stooge, which certainly remains a possibility, it will lead to the second civil war. On the other hand the imperialist elements (particularly British imperialism) could well try and back a regime with the "left" face...a military reformism that will keep the real left down by false promises, etc. This is the only real danger for the left. It will lead to an era of illusions, which can only be combatted by a strong working class leadership. Whatever happens, the ground is being laid for revolutionary struggle. What the length of the interval will be depends on which faction of the ruling class gains ascendancy. What is clear is that Nigeria is seeing the opening up of a new revolutionary theatre which could well set the stage for the rest of Africa.

Waki Waka

GLOSSARY

NIGERIAN ARMY: A 9,000-strong regular volunteer army staffed by Sandhurst-trained officers before the 1966 nationalist coup. Now 150,000 strong with bulk of senior officers trained in Britain, Canada, India, etc. Low-ranking officers trained locally during the war. Rank and file mainly peasant, many of whom were conscious politically and refused to surrender their arms after the war and instead took part in the peasant rebellion.

NIGERIAN LABOUR PARTY: Founded in 1964 during a General Strike that created a brief dual power situation. At mass rallies the strikers demanded a working class party. The first congress was held in September 1964 where a Central Committee was elected, consisting largely of cadres of the Nigerian Working People's Party that had existed underground till then. Also elected to the Central Committee were all the members of the political bureau of the Revolutionary Socialist Labour Party, whose leadership were tried in court after the collapse of the strike for plotting to overthrow the government by violent means (the famous trial which involved a Dr. Allen of Leeds University). The Labour Party had 10,000 card-carrying members before it was banned in 1966. Its cadres constitute the vanguard elements on the left.

M.A.O. IMOUDU: The father of West African trade unionism. Was a foremost leader of the nationalist movement who brought the working class into the anti-colonialist struggle by organising the General Strike of 1945. Exiled and jailed by the British several times.

Is at present leader of the industrial country-wide union front—Labour Unity Front. Chairman of the banned Nigerian Labour Party. A Marxist-Leninist fighter.

NIGERIAN REVOLUTIONARY GROUP: An amorphous collection of cadres of the Nigerian Labour Party, Communist Party of Nigeria (Maoist), Communist Party of Kano, revolutionary elements from the peasantry, Trotskyists, Guevarists and those on the extreme left of the Action Group.

Northern Elements PROGRESSIVE UNION: A banned mass peasant movement whose leaders are now to be found in six provincial state governments in Northern Nigeria and whose leader Aminu Kano is a member of the Feudal Military Government. The Union at its peak had a good record of combatting feudalism.

ACTION GROUP: middle-class based social-democratic party whose leader Chief Awolowo is the Deputy Chairman of the Federal Government's Executive Council. However, the group has some left-wing elements a million times to the left of British left social democrats like Foot, Heffer, Newens, etc.

SOCIALIST WORKERS AND FARMERS PARTY: Tiny middle-class party known popularly as the Moscow party which is correct. Its programme: "The Nigerian Road to Socialism", which is based on the British C.P.'s programme with qualifications for a national democratic revolution stage before we move on to socialism.

UNITED LABOUR CONGRESS: Trade union affiliated to the ICFTU. The American Federation of Labour helps run its Lagos "Labour" College.

NIGERIAN TRADES UNION CONGRESS: Affiliated to the WFTU and in Nigeria to the Socialist Workers and Farmers Party (surprised?). Well organised with full-time cadres.

LABOUR UNITY FRONT: Led by Imoudu; united nation-wide industrial unions: communication, mines, docks, railways, etc.

WORKERS UNITY COMMITTEE: This unites cadres, shop stewards and independently paid secretaries from the Councils of Labour that politicised the General Strike of 1964. Attempts to break the control of the Fronts, to organise a rank and file movement based on workers' assemblies.

ADVANCE: reformist organ of the Moscow party and the "theoretical" journal of NTUC.

NIGERIAN SOCIALIST: Described as an "Organ for Revolutionary Action". Editorial Board composed of elements from banned Labour Party and NEPU. Banned for "libelling" the capitalist class as "exploiters". In many places NS clubs are legal form of united revolutionary cadres and new militants.

YOUNG TOILERS BRIGADE: founded by the youth wing of the banned Labour Party. Noted for its "liberation" tactics such as liberating peasants from debtors by encouraging the burning of moneylenders' books.

NIGERIAN YOUTH SOLIDARITY COUNCIL: Led by young trade unionists. Unites young peasants and workers on an anti-imperialist programme. Non-student.

THE NEO-COLONIALIST CLASS: An amalgam of various sections of the ruling class, namely:

(i) **Giant Monopolies.** The Directors of imperialist enterprises in the country very much part of the ruling class in Nigeria. Politically and economically props up the other sections.

(ii) **The Feudal Class.** Chieftains, Emirs, landowners who are putting their money accumulated in the countryside into monopolist enterprises in the cities.

(iii) **The Compradors.** The bourgeoisie; a merchant class dependent on imperialist enterprise and political support. Invests surplus value gained from city implantations and cottage industries.

(iv) **Upper Petty Bourgeoisie.** Comprise the intelligentsia: directors of universities, Churches, Mosques, Army, Civil Service, Public Corporations. Educated middle-class salaried elements whose ambition is to embezzle money from public funds by legal means and invest it in industry and in real estate. Many of the present breed of politicians both civil and military are recruited from this class.

TA THU THAU

Vietnamese revolutionary

Ta-thu Thau has always been a revolutionary militant. He died in extremely suspicious circumstances... (Ho Chi Minh declaration to representatives of *La Verite*, journal of the French section of the Fourth International, in 1946.)

In 1931 Ta-thu Thau, expelled from France, created a group of Indochinese Bolshevik-Leninists, in liaison with the international left opposition. Strongly implanted in the industrial centres, the Trotskyists followed for several years a united front policy with the Stalinists of the Indochinese C.P. and some unorganised elements, a policy which expressed itself through the regular publication of the journal *La Lutte* ("Tran-Dauh") and the election of two candidates to the Saigon Municipal Council. In 1935 under pressure from the Comintern, the Stalinists' turn towards the Popular Front broke up the United Front, but the *La Lutte* group had meanwhile four new candidates returned to the Saigon Municipal Council. The split came over taxes intended for "defence" when the two Stalinists elected capitulated before the bourgeoisie and the Trotskyists were the only ones to vote against.

The C.P. lost a lot of its influence on this occasion and Ta-thu Thau's comrades became a majority in *La Lutte*, then gained again in the elections of 1939. In 1940 with the onset of imperialist war the repression struck more brutally than ever before: 6,000 dead in the Saigon massacre, 40,000 Vietnamese sent to France where 20,000 perished at the Front. Ta-thu Thau was sentenced, imprisoned in Saigon, escaped to Singapore, handed back to the French police by the English, interned in the notorious prison of Poulo-Condore and tortured. He was freed only at the end of the Japanese occupation, half paralysed because of the tortures he had received. The International Communist League (Indochinese section of the Fourth International) organised at this time the People's Revolutionary Committees and the Workers Militias of Saigon-Cholon under the leadership of Nguyen Hai Au. It was in 1946 that most of the leading Indochinese Trotskyists together with Ta-thu Thau "disappeared". They had numerous enemies: French colonists, the native bourgeoisie and a section of the Indo-Chinese C.P. which was under direct orders from Moscow and was led by Tran van Giau. Though

no real evidence is available suspicion centres on Tran van Giau and his group and not on the Ho faction of the Indo-Chinese C.P. Hence all talk of "Ho Chi Minh's murder squads" which one hears from the I.S. and SLL is an over-simplified distortion of an extremely complex situation.

In paying tribute to Comrade Ta-thu Thau, we cannot help but note that it was only when the Viet-Minh practised the policies he had laid down that the Vietnamese revolution was able to move forward. The policies of the Viet-Minh in 1946 (when they organised welcome committees for occupying British imperialist troops led by Gracey), in 1954 (when they accepted the 17th parallel partition of Vietnam under pressure from both Peking and Moscow) were based on the reformist policies of Stalinism. Today the decomposition of Stalinism (e.g. the Sino-Soviet split) and the lessons learnt from the past have made it clear to the Vietnamese that the only way out is by revolutionary struggle. So today while the Vietnamese talk in Paris, in Vietnam the struggle continues and is gradually being extended to the whole of South-East Asia. The process of revolution cannot be interrupted.



MOLEHILLS

HOW THE WORKERS DEMYSTIFY BOURGEOIS LAW

Construction workers at Shell and Burmah Oil at Ellesmere Port have been on official strike since the beginning of July. An attempt is now being made to deny them the elementary right, supposedly guaranteed in the Trades Disputes Act of 1906, of peaceful picketing. On July 16th, forty-five pickets were arrested, and since then police have been harassing pickets outside the Shell and Burmah oil works. On Monday 24th August, 6,000 workers in Liverpool, including electricians, plumbers, draughtsmen, engineers, miners, construction workers from sites where work stopped for the day and workers from Pilkingtons, marched in solidarity with the arrested pickets and held a mass meeting on the Pier Head (at which, incidentally, John Potter from the Pilkington strike committee was loudly cheered when he appealed for solidarity among all workers in fighting the employers, the government "and even attacks from our own union leaders").

On August 28th, forty-one of the pickets were tried at Chester Castle, seat of feudal power and English bastion against the Welsh "hordes" for many centuries. Chester Castle now lives out its oppressive role as the seat of the local Assizes and Magistrates' courts. 200 workers took it over for the day.

The public galleries were crowded out with workers showing solidarity. Many sat in the aisles on the floor and a large overflow crowd waited in the Castle yard. The prosecution evidence was given by Cheshire Assistant Chief Constable Rennie, well-known for his intimidatory role during the Roberts Arundel dispute at nearby Stockport, when workers were savaged by police under his direction. Rennie now shares with Palfrey, Chief Constable of Lancashire, the role of harassing strikers in the North West. (The neo-fascist Palfrey being a frequent dinner guest at the table of Lord Pilkington, owner of St. Helens.) The trial showed clearly that the only reason for the mass arrests was intimidation of what had been highly organised and effective picketing. Lorry drivers arriving at the Ellesmere Port plant had been induced to fuck off with their loads and the police had had to call in a helicopter to regularise traffic chaos in the area. A whole column of strikers, marching to relieve the early shift on the picket line, was surrounded by the police under Rennie's personal direction, told to disperse and in the same breath a command was issued to arrest them. Many workers were trying to disperse but as they were surrounded by the fuzz they had no avenue to use. One man was even arrested whilst sitting nursing a sore ankle on railway sleepers at the road side!

"Better than Brian Rix"

In court, the proceedings were as unjust as the event that had given rise to the trial. The three degenerate fossils on the bench were indistinguishable from the dusty portraits of ancient barons who surrounded the walls, and to whom the chairman of the bench appeared to look for guidance on several occasions. At one point a worker cried out that the proceedings were "Better than Brian Rix" and towards the end of the two-day trial, defendants and public alike lost all semblance of respect for the proceedings. Not even the works convenor could induce people to stand for the exit or entrance of the Bench—the many police in court having long given up this task. As a result the amount of pomp and bullshit was reduced to a minimum.

Needless to say, all were found guilty—itsself a statistical improbability—even assuming the existence of "impartial" magistrates. But there was no impartiality, indeed the magistrates seemed to have great difficulty in even understanding the proceedings. For instance, Defence Council was at pains to point out that whereas most of the police "evidence" concerned obstruction of traffic, the charge was one of obstruction of police, and that these were different offences. Nevertheless after a five-minute retirement the magistrates announced their decision on the basis of the inconvenience that had been caused to traffic.

The Workers Take Over

All were fined £10 and given four months in which to pay—the magistrates' estimate of the duration of the strike. But in addition all were required to be bound over in the sum of £50 for two years. And this was the difficulty. Immediately and rightly the workers said this was a denial of their right to picket in the future. They shouted out their objections: "They've got us now on a trumped-up charge, so they'll get us again." The magistrates clerk intervened and asked the Bench to explain the alternative. Three months imprisonment! Total uproar. A man in the gallery rose to his feet and hollered "Fascist Pigs". A defendant rose and exclaimed that he would serve his sentence as he would wish to feel free on release "to slip on a banana skin" without risk of being hauled before the court. The defence solicitor hastily asked for an adjournment and the magistrates cleared off again. At this point the proceedings

for the first time became democratic and a workers' council ensued with speeches being made by the defendants, workers in the public gallery and even a contribution by a Mole correspondent who had gained admission to the press box by a subterfuge. Speeches for and against going to prison were made and men rose to denounce the travesty of justice to which they had just been subjected. At the end of this plenary session the convenor (who had been bound over the previous day) made a plea for "no martyrs" and the magistrates were invited to return. All, with a bad grace and much truculence, agreed to the humiliation of the binding over. They are all to appeal.

Outside, while the magistrates apprehensively accelerated away, angry men declared their disbelief in the judicial system and announced their resolve to harden the strike.

Bob Gregory
Teresa Hayter

PILKINGTONVILLE PICKINGS

The heroic struggle of the Pilkington glass workers is well known and will doubtless feature in the industrial history of the decade. Known also is the cooperation that took place between Lord Pilkington, Lord Cooper and the local police in crushing the dispute and hounding the militants. But some of the details of this cooperation are particularly harrowing and as our Moles have been burrowing about in the shit heap left behind by these monsters, we would like to cleanse ourselves by passing on some of the choicest titbits.

The GMWU owes its continued existence in Pilkingtonville to Lord Pilkington. He retains the union. Those of the 600 workers sacked by Pilkington's who have been reemployed, have had to rejoin the GMWU as a condition of reemployment. Despite this the glass workers' union has had an effect far outside the town. Requests for membership have even come in from groups not connected with the glass industry, engineering workers in Manchester and chemical workers at Widnes. In the North West there are now many who have learnt by the GMWU treachery and are disaffected with Lord Cooper's strikebreaking.

Many will wonder at the remarkable ease with which the GMWU was able to parallel the company propaganda machine. How did the GMWU come to be using the ground of St. Helen's Rugby League Football Club for its mass meeting? We should not, without permission, divulge the name of the Rugby Club Director who is a close buddy of Lord Pilk, but you could call the GMWU and ask them how they thought they came by the ground.

And again there is the scandal of the letter sent out by Pilkingtons to their workers on May 12th. Side One was written by the company and concerned damage to the future of the glass industry, etc. Side Two was an attack on the rank and file committee and a eulogy of the GMWU. In fact this backside of the leaflet was written by the GMWU, and passed off as a company handout, after the company PRO had done his best to polish up the peculiarly persistent flavour of bureaucratic trade union argot. It could be believed that this was the reason why Pilkingtons, when submitting their written evidence to the Court of Enquiry, carefully omitted to photocopy the reverse side of the leaflet so that the Court was deprived of this choice prose. Contempt of court? Through-out, the company Press office acted generally for the GMWU. Many journalists were able to save themselves a second sixpence "...we have a statement by the union you might care to hear."

The RED PLOT never really got off the ground, although the Pilkington family, at a loss to understand their sudden loss of popularity and deference in their town, to this day still believe with all honesty that they were the unwitting victims of outside trained agents. The Special Branch tried hard to disabuse them of this romantic notion after a team of detectives had spent three weeks checking employee records without finding anything of interest (although they added to their own files in the process). Even the specialist muck raker from *The People* returned to London empty-handed.

The uniformed police were not found wanting, however, and when the GMWU approached the company with an organisational problem they turned up trumps. The GMWU, short of public address equipment for a meeting, approached management with this difficulty. Could the company please do anything to help? Well, come back tomorrow and we shall see. No

promises, mind you. In the event the company were able to borrow loudhailers from the police and so help out the nice GMWU. But it didn't work anyway, because the rank and file strike committee turned up with their own superior equipment (which they had borrowed from local building workers) and drowned them out.

Of course throughout the period, Palfrey, Chief Pig of Lancashire, was in close contact with the Pilkington family. He dined with Lord Pilkington in the family mansion on Sunday May 8th and thought of a brilliant way of moving in large police reinforcements under cover of hustling 40 gypsy families who had just arrived in the town with quite propitious timing. His brainwave was to use the police mobilisation as a dress rehearsal for an all-out effort against the mass picket. In the event Palfrey got pissed out of his mind the night before this secret operation, let out the secret, and thus boasted the operation out of existence.

But back again to the Special Branch. They are not really all that good. In fact one plain clothes dick seen observing the picket line with intent casualness was the former secretary of a Lancs Branch of the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign. Sadly for him he was spotted by a VSC militant who also worked at Pilkingtons. This comrade crossed the road, smashed him on the side of the head and proceeded to put in the boot for good measure. The uniformed officers could do little but watch.

Over the last two or three years revolutionary, anti-bureaucratic currents have been developing in Eastern Europe, especially amongst students and young people. We have received the following article, taken from a student paper in Slovenia, which shows the direction being taken by students in Ljubljana. For the benefit of the Yugoslav bureaucracy, the author has not asked us to print the following article. When printed in Yugoslavia the article raised a storm of protest in bureaucratic circles.

Students in Ljubljana are more politically active both on ordinary student issues and on international political problems than they have been for the last few years.

At the end of May 1970 the students union began a series of teach-ins, where students' problems were discussed, together with political questions. Attendance at the first teach-in was not as good as it should have been, but there were some professors there too.

The first question was that of the students' social problems. Analyses of the social structure of the students has resulted in great dissatisfaction that less and less come from working or peasant homes, and that those who do have very low scholarships. Because of this, it was proposed that there should be a new basis for scholarships, with the establishment of national funds for grants. The discussions on this led to deeper analysis of the Slovene social questions. Further analyses and discussions, in which a greater number of students took part, had shown that words and phrases like democracy, self-management and equal opportunities for all are now only found and used in statutes, documents, resolutions and constitutions. In fact, self-management, celebrated for so long as especially Yugoslavian, although no country in the world has it, is now a meaningless phrase which is used by different kinds of political and technocratic groups so that people understand what they are talking about.

Furthermore, the social analyses showed that working class children are nearly always condemned to be workers, whereas the children of the leaders are going to have higher education whether or not they are cleverer. Why do we have so many social inequalities in a "socialist" country? The fault is in one thing—our social structure.

This year and last year students have had meetings like this, but the public has not been informed. This is because the Yugoslav press give information only on what interests the important political groups. An article was therefore written by some students, which accused the press and TV of not giving out enough information, owing to their ignorance of the Slovene public. University reforms were also discussed in this article, but is it possible to carry out these reforms without the reform of society as a whole?

There is an abysmal lack of good militant songs in the culture of the British Left; this is a reflection of philistinism and chauvinism, for just a few miles across the Irish Sea there is a living tradition of revolutionary music that can scarcely be equalled anywhere else in the world.

There are concrete reasons for the existence of this tradition: a long struggle against oppression, a mass peasantry, a working class which is only a few generations away from its peasant roots (the remarkable Behan family is a product of this), and a Celtic culture that was strong enough to assimilate and absorb wave after wave of English planters. The songs show many

influences, and, like all good folk songs, they have been fashioned out of the materials that came to hand, rough and ready songs forged in the heat of some battle or incident, or ancient songs polished by singer after singer over the centuries.

These records* are an excellent introduction to this music. They include such lovely old songs as "The Croppy Boy", and such lively new ones as "The Long March" (about the People's Democracy march from Belfast to Derry, January 1969). One L.P., which is dedicated to James Connolly, contains the beautiful "James Connolly the Irish Rebel", and (fantastically) a poem about Connolly's execution written by a soldier who was on the firing squad.

Buy these records, learn these songs, sing them at parties and on demonstrations. In learning them you will learn much also about the history of the Irish revolutionary struggle. And they are intensely political; Dominic Behan's "Rifles of the I.R.A." contains this message to General (shoot to kill) Freeland, and his army of occupation:

"We're not free yet, but we won't forget
Until our dying day,
How the Black and Tans like lightning ran
From the rifles of the I.R.A."

Bob Purdie

*"Irish Songs of Freedom"; Vol. 1. LP7001, Outlet Records, Belfast.
Vol 2. LP7012, Outlet Records, Belfast.
"James Connolly: the Irish Rebel". TOL102, Outlet Records, Belfast.
"Irish Civil Rights Songs". BOL4008, Outlet Records, Belfast.

And three singles:
"Bernadette Devlin" & "We're on Our Way to Victory". OUT026.
"Battle of Bogside" & "Behind the Barricades". OUT029.
"Fleath at Bogside" & "Bernadette in Command". OUT030.

Available from the Premier Record Store, 63/67 Spithfield, Belfast BT1 1JD, Northern Ireland.
Or order through Red Books, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

Incident at the Notting Hill demo: one salient incident, witnessed by scores of people, was that of a white brother who was dragged into a police coach (after going to the aid of a black sister who was being held by four policemen—one of whom was punching her viciously in the stomach), thrown onto the floor and brutally beaten, punched and kicked by six policemen, one of whom was shouting "You fucking bastard." A white photographer outside the coach began to take photographs of this incident and was in turn punched in the face and stomach by Police Constable X 563. There are several witnesses we can provide. Information supplied by Vijay K. Singh (Indian Marxist Leninist Organisation).

We would recommend to readers seriously interested in developments in Asia to study carefully a new journal which has appeared on the scene: Journal of Contemporary Asia. It is edited by Dr. Malcolm Caldwell and is available from: P.O. 49010, Stockholm 49.

Transport Workers Non-Combat Guide

A hard policy for literally tens of thousands of shop stewards and trade union activists has just emerged from the esteemed leadership of the Transport and General Workers Union. Two new pamphlets distributed widely to the members, set out at some length the T&G attitudes to each and every major development in shop-floor level wage bargaining now facing shop-stewards in their daily conflict. Socialists should get these pamphlets, (*Plant Level Bargaining and Plant and Productivity Bargaining*; T&GWU, Transport House, Smith Sq, SW1), read them and note the following:

Right from the start they concede that management initiatives in the form of Measured Day Work, Pre-Determined Motion Time Systems, Share of Production Plans, can, repeat can, be swallowed by trade-unionists. A healthy suspicion may run throughout these policy statements, but suspicion is not opposition to the variety of new employer techniques for removing shop-stewards and trade-unionists' day to day wage bargaining positions, through the dangling of "carrots" in the shape of immediate cash awards.

Basically what the T&G says is: accept these plans, but remind management at all times that they are **continually re-negotiable**—the principle of "mutuality"—in terms of their effects on pay and conditions.

Despite this, the new methods of capitalist control are listed and outlined and this is of value. But this is not enough. To appreciate their long-term effect in reducing "labour costs" is a start. The next step is infinitely more important: **HOW TO COMBAT THEM.**

forward to a red europe!
 combat the europe of the monopoly capitalists!

RALLY OF EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONARIES

21-22 november -brussels



Capitalist Europe is today in a crisis. The economic difficulties: inflation, the capacity to overproduce, inter-imperialist competition, recessions, are becoming more and more serious. The workers are reacting by sharpening the class struggle: the May '68 upheaval in France, the "hot" autumn and winter in Italy in '69-'70, the wave of unofficial strikes in Spain and West Germany, in Britain and in Belgium. Even Sweden, the "social-democratic paradise", has been involved in the dynamics of the class struggle and the militancy of the miners and dockers there has reached a new peak. It is clear that the conditions for a new revolutionary upsurge on a European scale are ripening.

The crisis is a deep-rooted social crisis. The whole of the relationships of capitalist production are being shaken. That is why the struggle against these relationships of production and of exchange is *not* limited to the traditional industrial proletariat, but is beginning to involve broader layers, namely, technicians and intellectuals, not to mention the student revolt which is becoming more generalised. The right of capitalists to own and dispose of men and machines and all the other forms of exploitation, oppression and alienation is beginning to be seen as more and more of an anachronism; the increase in unemployment, misery, social inequalities, appears even more scandalous and outrageous; the waste of resources, the colonial wars of oppression (Indo-China, Angola, Chad, Latin America, etc.), the threats to human environment, appear all the more barbarous particularly as we are living in an epoch when science and technology have created the material conditions necessary to allow everyone to enjoy the rights and privileges which extend only to a few.

The bourgeois class of Western Europe is frightened by the mounting crisis and it reacts in its own way. By trying to consolidate and extend the Common Market, by reinforcing its military apparatus with the view to create a European nuclear force under the absurd justification of "Many hands on the nuclear trigger are better than one." It prepares to pool together its military and economic resources in order to face up to the challenge of rival imperialisms (United States and Japan), the threat of the masses in motion and of the bureaucratized workers states of Eastern Europe. Because the costs of all these operations will undoubtedly be borne by the workers, the bourgeoisie uses its repressive force to try and pass anti-trade union legislation, laws against unofficial strikes and "violent" demonstrations, and thus begins to prepare itself for the possibility of setting up a strong state—of the type that exists in Greece and Spain.

Since the mid-'60s the growing crisis of bourgeois ideology has produced in Europe a new vanguard composed largely of youth in virtually every country in Europe. The main inspiration of this vanguard has come from the anti-imperialist struggle. An inspiration which crystallised around the international movement of solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese people and their fight against American imperialism. This vanguard has assimilated the struggle against imperialism and has learnt from it the need to develop an anti-capitalist consciousness. The Vietnam solidarity movement has helped it discover the social contradictions

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which are tearing apart the fabric of European capitalism. That is why this vanguard seeks to link itself to the increasing industrial struggles which are taking place. The failure of bourgeois ideology to maintain its grip on these youth and the complete disdain which these youth have for the traditional and ultra-opportunist leaderships of the working-class organisations (C.P. in France, the Labour Party in England) constitutes a major success for revolutionary Marxism.

However, it is necessary to recall that these vanguard elements which yesterday were both large and active (such as UNEF in France, the SDS in Germany) are today mere shadows of their own past and have been reduced to helpless impotence. Some of them have disappeared altogether, a victim to their own failures to work out the political and organisational steps necessary to define a coherent revolutionary strategy both on a national and on a European scale, leave alone on an international scale. Those groups which have not disappeared (various "spontaneist" groups and Maoist currents in Italy and France are *declining* rapidly) because of their absurdly isolated actions which have no impact on the masses because of a total lack of strategy.

It is evident today that we are faced with an extended internationalisation of economic, political and cultural life; faced with the increasing grip of multi-national trusts on the life of the people of capitalist Europe; faced with the capacity of these trusts to rapidly transfer orders, investments and research projects from one country to the other. In this situation any response from the mass or its vanguard which is confined within national boundaries can only be a weak one. With the objective internationalisation of the class struggle, any organisation which sticks to a purely national routine will always be paralysed. That is why more and more revolutionary organisations adopt revolutionary Marxist positions and join the ranks of the Fourth International—the only force really organised on an international scale. The only force which develops the theory and practice of the world socialist revolution, a necessity which has to be confronted by many individual militants and groups who regard themselves as internationalists but do not see the necessity for creating and building an international organisation.

The crisis which shakes the official communist parties has its roots both in the refusal of their neo-reformist leaderships to confront capitalism either nationally or globally and by the new rise of the anti-bureaucratic political revolution in Eastern Europe and the USSR. A crisis which started in East Berlin in 1953, continued in Budapest in 1956 and Prague in 1968, and is now knocking on the doors of the Soviet heartland itself. This crisis increases the chances for a political breakthrough of the revolutionary vanguard in Europe and imposes on this vanguard the extra duty of solidarising with and helping the victims of Stalinist repression.

Faced with all these problems, the organisations which have signed this appeal think that it is necessary to analyse the practical experiences of the struggles of the working class, the student and anti-imperialist movements over the last few years in order to work out a common strategy for a Red

Europe. The conditions for the generalised success of the struggle lies in the rapid organisation of a revolutionary vanguard, in its programmatical and organisational unification and in the struggle for a socialist revolution in Europe.

That is why we call on all those who approve of the general line of this appeal to participate in:

THE INTERNATIONAL RALLY OF EUROPEAN REVOLUTIONARIES — 21/22 NOVEMBER 1970 — in BRUSSELS.

The two main discussions will centre round the theme of: The Struggle for United Socialist States of Europe and The Construction of a Revolutionary Party. There will be eight commissions which will discuss: *Workers' Control, The Student Movement, The Anti-Imperialist Struggles in Europe, The Struggle against Bureaucracy in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, The Struggle against the Dictatorships in Greece, Spain and Portugal, The Struggle to build a Revolutionary Vanguard.*

The rally will try therefore to define a common strategy for the European vanguard in the next period in the light of the recent experiences of the working class and revolutionary movement. This strategy will have a view to smashing the capitalist system and ensuring the emancipation of the working class through its own action and organisations.

**DOWN WITH THE EUROPE OF THE EXPLOITERS!
 Forward to a RED EUROPE!**

La Ligue Communiste (France)
 Jeune Garde Socialiste (Belgium)
 International Marxist Group } — (Britain)
 Spartacus League }
 Revolutionary Marxist Group (Switzerland)
 Gruppi Communisti Rivoluzionari (Italy)
 Gruppe Internationale Marxisten (Germany)
 Revolutionaere Sozialister (Denmark)

(Initial signatories)
 14 August 1970

If you are interested in attending the International Rally and need information and details regarding costs of travel, etc., please fill in the form below and post it to:

RED EUROPE (Tel: 01-278 2616)
 182 Pentonville Road
 London N.1.

Name

Address

Occupation