BRITAIN'S LEGACY OF OPPRESSION

NORTHERN IRELAND once again faces an intense political crisis. Its second prime minister in three years has resigned. Extra British troops are being sent to 'restore order'. All the indications are that more British fighting can be expected.

But most workers in Britain have little idea what is happening. The press, radio and television talk of 'riot', 'excesses' and 'religious bigotry'. They print a picture of general chaos in which only the British government and 'mobs' are depicted. The Worker stands for reason.

The reality is quite different. The situation is basically economic. For hundreds of years most of its wealth and most of its industries have been owned by members of the same small ruling class that owns more than 80 per cent of the wealth in Britain. The results can be seen in Northern Ireland today. The average level of unemployment is above average per cent, more than twice as high as in this country.

In Derry, one man in four cannot get a job. On the Ballymurphy housing estate, one man in three is without work. Housing is disastrous for most workers. In Derry 40 per cent of homes are substandard and 54 per cent have no baths.

Yet every year, vast sums of money flow abroad from Northern Ireland. In 1967, £45 million drained away to maintain the British balance of payments.

And that figure takes no account of much larger sums that big landowners like Christie-Clark, businessmen like Brian Faulkner and their British counterparts take out of Ireland in search of bigger profits.

In the past such people set out deliberately to create religious bigotry. By turning one group of workers against another they aimed to stop any united movement against their control of the wealth.

SUPERIOR

The Protestants of the north-east were told that they were inherently superior to the Roman Catholics. They were given marginally more jobs and housing than the Catholics in order to stop them recognizing how bad their own conditions were.

For example, in Belfast's biggest single industry, Harland and Wolff's shipyard, Catholics are permitted less than one job in 12, although they make up a third of the city's population.

The Orange Order was built up to embitter this position of apparent superiority of Protestants. The rest of Ireland, eventually won a degree of independence from Britain in the early 1920s.

But six counties in the north-east, where most of the industry lay at the time, were excluded from this. This boundary of this separate province was carefully drawn to ensure that Protestants were in the majority.

The running of it was handed over to the Unionist Party, controlled by the landowners and industrialists.

A few years ago the British government was compelled to change this policy. British big business found that it could profitably build up industry under its own control in southern Britain.

The southern government had given them their independence and independence it told.

THREATENED

Continuation of the policy of discrimination and repression in the north threatens the most prosperous industries that might create profit potential for the south. And so, under Wilson and now under Heath, the attempt has been made to remove the most obvious examples of official anti-Catholicism in the north.

But such measures have upset the Protestant bigots who control the ruling Unionist Party. That is why they forced O'Neill to resign as prime minister.

That is why pressure developed to force out Christie-Clark.

Ordinary Protestant workers feel threatened as they see the privileges taken away that keep them marginally better off than the Catholics. Unfortunately, they do not yet draw the necessary conclusions.

They do not yet fight against those responsible for miserable conditions that make small privileges so important. Instead of moving towards a social position, they tend to support their leaders and protest against any Catholic action.

All this means that it becomes more and more difficult for British big busi- nesses to keep Northern Ireland in control. It dare not let the Protestant bigots retain their old influence.

But it knows no easy alternative. It has tried increasingly to alienate the Orange Order by sending the British army, armed with 90 gas, riot and tear gas, into the Catholic areas. Houses have been torn apart and unarmed workers killed as the army searches for weapons.

This does not please the Protestants but does infuriate the Catholic workers, who know that such acts are the only means of defence against any armed Protestant attack. Such an attack killed eight and left hundreds homeless 18 months ago.

For Protestant and Catholic work- ers, the way out of their problems is not the 'moderation' and 'reasonable- ness' preached by Heath and his big business friends.

There will be no solution until united action takes the wealth out of the hands of the British ruling class. And that means kicking British big business and its troops out of Ireland.

Many Catholic workers are beginning to see this. It is a confused manner.

They understand that the British army is not there to protect their interests. That is why they are willing to support the IRA that fights to keep the army out of their area.

But most Catholic workers do not yet see that behind the British troops stands a British ruling class that has material interests in both north and south. Now, they understand that only united action by the whole working class can really throw out this ruling class and its Irish hangover.

HYPOCRISY

In any case, our own Tory government has difficulties in fact because it is not really solving. The working class in Britain should have no sympathy with its dilemma.

They arise from the long history of the exploitation of Ireland by the British ruling class. A history that is far from over.

We must reject the hypocrisy of those who then send troops to Ireland to protect such exploitation with violence, and then cry out when those troops occasionally get hurt.

And finally, we must give our sup- port to those who are trying to solve the problems of Ireland in the interests of the workers of Ireland.

Our solidarity is needed by those who are attempting to build a move- ment in Ireland to remove it from the control of the minority that lives off the backs of the workers of this country too.

by CHRIS HARMAN

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5000 CONDEMN BILL

by MIKE CAFFOOR

MORE THAN 5000 black workers and socialists, including a large contingent of International Socialists, marched through central London last Sunday in a militant demonstration against the Tory Immigration Bill. The march, organised by the Indian Workers' Association, included con- tingents from all parts of the country. The largest groups marched under the banners of the HLA, but there were also Pakistani workers, West Indian organisations and Black Power groups.

Migrant workers on the march included 'kill the Bill' and 'Smash Racism'. The marchers were aware that both Tory and Labour govern- ments had been responsible for introducing racist immigration controls and using black immigrants as a scapegoat. The demonstration should leave the Tories in no doubt as to the anger that is felt by the black community at the naked racism of the government. And socialists are united with them in their fight against racism.

JAIL FOR CZECH SOCIALISTS

SEVENTEEN Czech left-wing socialists who were on trial in Prague have now been sentenced to terms of imprisonment. One of the leaders of the group, Peter Uhl, is to be jailed for four years and the others from between one and 23 years.

The official charge against the 16 was 'subversion'. Their real 'crime' was to have organised a political group, the Revolu- tionary Socialist Party.

They called for the overthrow of both the 'communist' regime of East- ern Europe and the capitalist system of the West. They supported an organisation of society based on workers' control and workers' councils. Their slogan was 'socialism yes - bureaucracy no'.

In the courtroom they denounced bravely those who put them on trial. Socialists and trade unionists in this country must condemn such vicious treat- ment of those who fight for the same aims as us. Members of the Communist Party, in particular, should demand that its leaders, who claimed to oppose the invasion of Czechoslovakia, 16 months ago, now denounce the repression against the left.
TUC decisions must be implemented

TENS OF THOUSANDS of militants up and down the country are now faced with a major problem: What is to be done further to fight against the anti-communist terrorism during the de Ceaucescu week's TUC conference? It is quite clear that the TUC did not opt for a fighting policy against the Bill. It refused industrial action, and the council of social unionists (CSU) that do not co-operate in the implementation of the new laws.

All these decisions did decide to recommend to unions that they fight the government the cold shoulder. But right-wing union leaders are already preparing to break with that recommendation, even if they voted for it. And some left-wing leaders are beginning to explain that if some unions register they will be compelled to follow suit in order to protect their members and their funds.

If a policy of non-cooperation with the laws was really followed by a number of sizeable unions, it would make the government's legislation unlawful. The government would not only be impeached by a head-on collision with millions of organised workers. It would not be able to divide and rule.

But because they fear that in a collision of that sort their own special positions of privilege and power might be undermined, many national union leaders shy away from such a prospect. In practice they will ignore every aspect of the law they can, negotiate with the law, and make it easier for the government to isolate and defeat those who do fight. All this means is that a struggle has to be started by the trade unions for implementation of the TUC recommendation of non-registration and non-co-operation. And a campaign should begin now for a further one day strike against the new legislation on Sunday.

This would not be just one more token strike. It would be a massive gesture of defiance by hundreds of thousands of workers against legislation against the working class stands together, united and determined. It would give new heart to the work force struggling against the evident collapse of the apparent power of the law.

Such policies cannot be won by relying on national union leaders. Fighting for the national movement must be in every locality that can make the rank and file of every union aware of the need for determined struggle against the laws.

When the local 'liaison' or 'action' committees exist, they must be strengthened. Where they do not exist, they must be built. Now is the time to make the battle into rank and file bodies. But the bill is not to flag.

Every effort must be made to turn these into representative fighting organs, recognising the disputes from all branches of industry, into 'councils of action' from which every element of tiredness, bureaucratic indolence and full of talk, but nothing removed. We think that the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions recall conference on 24 April can play a key role in bringing together these concerns and in putting them in the context of such policies on the national unions. We think every rank and file body should prepare now to be represented at this conference.

In this new phase, leadership will be those by whom were running away from the battle. The Liaison Committee conference should be a gathering of the most independent of activists.

But we can do only on one condition — that the opportunity exists for as many rank and file militants as possible, regardless of title, honour, or democracy, to make the national movement takes the point of view and determine the future policy and organisation of the Liaison Committee.

LAOS ROUT: NEW SETBACK FOR US IMPERIALISM

THE AMERICAN-BACKED invasion of Laos has failed. Even the western press has been forced to admit the truth as the invading forces attempt to avoid complete destruction with a headlong retreat.

The US and its allies were thrown into Laos in a desperate attempt to salvage its whole position in Vietnam. All its efforts to subdue that country's population has been met by a new National Front, which it has found that American big business is unable economically to afford the cost of the war, while ordinary people in the US are less and less prepared to tolerate the loss of life.

Nixon has had to start a slow withdrawal of US ground forces. But America's rulers are afraid to admit the truth. The US and its allies are incapable of winning the war.

The population of Laos, like the invasion of Cambodia a year ago, was immediately and with the full support of the people, which is now described as a 'Soviet-dominated country'. They fought for both crushed, the US and colonialism, the big businesses, large companies, that it is a war of the people.

It is necessary to make the centre of his programme hostility to India a 'thousand year war' as he once put it. But for the East, the problem is not battling India but keeping what it has in the face of robbery by West Pakistan. Indeed, the Ekers' wants trade with India, a truce break as far as the Punjabis are concerned.

The Punjabi war is now over, but the (West) Punjab is still divided. The Ekers' rule in West-Pakistan is by students and middle class professional people, but with increasing support from industrial workers. Its hero was the ex-foreign minister of Ayub's Government, Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

And the most important new factor is the so-called Left in East-Pakistan. It is made up of the whole Bengali population, and for long made the political majority of the national movement.

Yet, in every respect, it has been the bulwark of the national government. With the 1948 partition of India, East and West Pakistan, the majority of the Muslimeen of what is now the East swapped the dawoodi Muslimeen, and became Bengalis, of the whole West-Pakistan for that of the Muslims of the Punjab.

The further to the Pakistan explosion are two parallel issues. First, the struggle of the population against the military and the new class against the old class of movement.

Second, the revolt of the Bengalis and oppressed national groups in the West (Shindhi, Pathans, Balouchi) against Punjabi domination.

promise

Only exceptional revolutionary situation has led to the widespread political struggle for their independence that is not the result of a struggle for the programme.

The two movements in East and West Pakistan are not the one and the same, but a division. The big business and its military in both countries are again at war.

The so-called new term, a new military regime — with General Yahya Khan as its leader — has taken power. It can only survive by promising a general amnesty to all political prisoners. But it cannot do this unless it promise an end to the universal suffrage in Pakistan's history and a speedy transfer of power to the people.

Last December, the elections showed a clear split, the military spirit as well as the contradictions militiaman and police officer. The Rightist and religious parties took a heavy beating the biggest Islamic party won five of the 140 seats contested.

In the East, the Awami League swamped the polls and secured a majority in the Assembly (167 seats). Bhatto in the West won 53 seats.

WINDY

Both Bhatto and Mujib ur-Rahman won as much as they did because of the support of the Leftist rhetoric. They are both for extra- political parties, but their support by the masses.

But we can do only on one condition — that the opportunity exists for as many rank and file militants as possible, regardless of title, honour, or democracy, to make the national movement takes the point of view and determine the future policy and organisation of the Liaison Committee.

BOYCOTT

In consultation with Yahya, he announced that he would boycott the Assembly unless Meng would agree to democratization of the state. He would refuse Yahya the excuse to postpone the Assembly, and weaken Mujib's position before it meets.

This was the only headlines. For the East, the popular feeling exploded. But it was not only the political, but also the social and economic popularisation of the national movement.

The only obstacle to the declaration of complete independence seemed to be the Alma Matrix. When Yahya postponed the Assembly, Mujib did not call his own East Assembly in defiance.

If proclaimed independence now the West could not hold the East in military force. But probably Mujib would not hold the East, either. Once the popular movement was given its head, it would keep forward to a revolutionary conclusion.

The new regime is revolutionary or does he have an organised political force capable of damping it down?

So just as Bhatto is effective to the workers, and the people in the West, so in Mujib, the East. Bhatto, by contrast with the Ekers, has the mass, the money and encouraging Pahangi and the population.

Bhatto needs the army, otherwise he would be unable to meet popular political demands, to the pressure of the organised workers' movement and the people of the East. Without the demands of the East, he pushes popularisation, and the people of the East.

In Pakistan, a molotov revolutionary situation is dominated by entirely unrevolutionary leaders. The demand by the East for national self-determination and unity of the nation, is the only revolutionary demand in the country.

If it was achieved, it would not just unlock the class revolutionary, but in spite of the best efforts of the West, it would also rock the foundations of nationalism in the Western world.

At the moment, the situation of the state of Yahya Khan is in danger. But the President's wishes a cutting edge. Perhaps a massacre will do what appeals cannot.

But Bhatto cannot move too fast to sell out, for he has a powerful movement which could turn on him if betrayed. But he cannot play it too tough, or the West Pakistan ruling class might decide that the present Pakistani unity is too high and Bhatto should be allowed to rot in its own power.

CRIPPLED

In the short term, West Pakistan's capitalism is in a desperate state in the East, the situation in the short term. Yahya Khan has announced the meeting of the Assembly for Thursday, 2 July, to take place in Dhaka. He has the chance to show his independence.

All that is needed is whether terms will attend, and conditions before attending the Left — the various groupings of the National Awami Party — has been crippled by its failure to grasp the cause of the Bengali national independence. Without such a demand, it cannot exploit the failure in Dhaka, and so win the support of the Bengali independent socialist republic.

The weakness of the Left — symmetrical withdrawal from the elections last December — has given the opportunity of the Bengali and Western officials this chance. It is still not too late to send a delegation to the Left.

NIGEL HARRIS
Rank and file have lost a battle, but they can still win the war

THE Croydon TUC decisions were a defeat for the left and for the whole working class movement. There can be no glossing over this. The joy of the millionaire press and the bosses, the Trade Union leaders, and radio commentators was fully justified.

Short of totally unexpected developments the Bill now becomes law and the TUC will not lift a finger to stop the sole further action they propose — a lobby of parliament - is so pathetic that even the British Empire, didn't pretend it should do any good.

But the defeat was not a rout. We lost the battle. We haven't lost the war.

Sliding out

In order to defeat the left the General Council was compelled to put forward the claim that, if vigorously pursued, can make it as difficult to enforce the provisions of the Bill as it was to enforce prohibition in the States.

If vigorously enforced — that's the point. Right wing speakers at Croydon made it pretty obvious that they had every intention of sliding out of the commitments they voted for.

The only thing to be done is to compel them to stand by the policy of total non-cooperation and resist the inevitable setbacks.

The best way to start would be a massive strike on the day the Bill becomes law. It would show just how helpless the government and the employers are in the face of united working class resistance. It would increase immensely the confidence of advanced workers.

This demand should be pushed vigorously at the Liaison Committee Conference of 24 April.

The front of the General Council resolutions stated: 'Affiliated unions shall be required to make a good faith effort to enforce the provisions of the Bill or be expelled from the TUC'. But it went on to make provision for unions to register non-cooperators, provided they 'inform the General Council of their reasons for doing so'. It granted the General Council the opportunity to set the terms of expulsion.

Even if the General Council wasn't aware of the 'view' that registration is undesirable there is no obligation on a union to pay any attention. This was shown by the SGB resolution of 3-4,384.000. What it means was spelt out by many speakers.

Jack Jones, Transport Workers' general secretary, called it: 'It is an escape route for registration'. Danny McGeever, RAILworkers' president, called it: 'An excuse for those “moderates” who want to capitulate'.

Norman Stagg, Post Office Workers' deputy general secretary, said: 'This new union to register will be breaking the dam - and will be seen to do so by all our enemies. Non-registration should be a condition of TUC affiliation'.

Perhaps the most telling point was that of Hugh Scanlon, Engineers' president: 'The Municipal and Suburban Union also has a good deal about loyalty. I ask them to keep to their commitment. If they do not, the Union will carry them to register without delay'.

Complete silence from the GWMU Engineers.

An attempt was made by the right to make the issue appear one of meeting the special difficulties of white collar unions. Disgusted with speeches by Walter Anderson of the Local Government Officers, who threatened to take his union out of the TUC if the General Council was defeated, and Sid Green of the National Union of Teachers powered in this myth.

In fact it is quite clear that this was just another excuse to surrender. The ball was let out of the bag by Sid Green of the Railwaymen and Frank Chapple of the Electricians.

We can't see, said Sir Sydney, 'what the advantages are of regis-

SIO GREEN: 'What advantages?'

tration or deregistration. You are going to be registered anyway.'

We say, the Bill is unworkable, said Chapple. Why don't we co-operate and prove it? Why do the Registrar's work for him? This got the allow handclap and the noble Lord Cooper had to come to the rescue from the chair.

Defying the law

Apart from Resolution 2, 'The General Council shall work from the Parliamentary Labour Party an explicit and unconditional assurance on the repeal of the Act', the whole programme of 'non-cooperation' hungs on non-registration.

The proposals themselves are correct. No signing of legally bind-

ing agreements, no cooperation with the Commission on Industrial Relations or the National Industrial Relations Court, defence of the Bridlington Agreement — which, as Scanlon correctly pointed out, means defying the law — no application to the NIRC for recognition rights or an agreement to shop non-trade unionist to serve on Industrial Tribunals, CIR or NIRC.

But once registration begins the rest is history. It will be too late but on the left as well, the cry will be there registered, we have to be the same as self-defenders, and if we register we have to cooperate to some extent.

This can and must be stopped. Every militant has the duty to do his utmost to force his union to stand by total non-cooperation.

It has been clear from the beginning that the real object of the Bill is not to hamper the shop floor organisations and to strengthen the union movement. It has been clear from the beginning that the real object of the Bill is to hamper the shop floor organisations and to strengthen the union movement.

The struggle for democratic control of the unions by the members and the struggle against the Bill is inseparable.

We have to fight to defend existing role books against the anti-democratic attentions of the Registrar who will always tend to weaken control from below.

We have to press for the elementary democratic demands — elections and periodic re-election of officials, officials pay to be tied to wages agreements, national policy, stop to representatives elected bodies.

The job of Councils of Action is to be the spearhead of the whole anti-co-operation movement that is part and parcel of the struggle on the shop floor, that assists the struggle, that extends and generalises it and that can enable the working people of this country to stand on their own two feet and ensure the fundamental demand we make of the bosses.

Get off our backs!

Hugh Scanlon at Croydon: Supporting the Bridlington Agreement will mean defying the new Tory anti-union laws.

There are other jobs too. What has just been said is 'inducement to unfair industrial action' under the Bill which would, if the Bill was law, render the writer and this paper illegal.

The Councils of Action will be vital here. If the Bill becomes law all affiliated unions should be urged to affiliate to the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions and to fight for militant policies within it.

This government is out to cast -}

the working class movement by economic and social forces. The Councils of Action can be the starting point of such a movement.

Fundamental demand

But only the starting point. By themselves they are not enough. We are not syndicalists. We do not believe that trade union action alone can do the job.

The point made by some right wing speakers at Croydon that political action is needed, was correct. The right wing are sitting on their bottoms until Heath and Company start trying to divide the working class. We see political action as the beginning of a campaign of struggle that requires the whole movement that is part and parcel of the struggle on the shop floor, that assists the struggle, that extends and generalises it and that can enable the working people of this country to stand on their own two feet and ensure the fundamental demand we make of the bosses.

Dave Stone, AEWU

WHERE DO THE ENGINEERS GO FROM HERE?

THE ENGINEERING UNION has led the mass political struggle against the Industrial Relations Bill. It has also led the opposition against the moderates of the TUC.

After Croydon the Engineers continue to lead the battle against the Tories' savage attacks on the working class. Or will their leaders at back and executives they have dominated defeat them and do to us what they themselves were so anxious to do to others?

It is not secret that Hugh Scanlon speaking at Limehouse on his visit to London as a member of the delegation not to accept the line of the TUC General Council on the question whether to allow their affiliated unions to gain a majority for a militant policy against the Bill.

At the 21 February Trafalgar Square rally held to demonstrate against the move to accept the Bill's terms, the Engineers' strikers were not against the Bill. It is difficult to overthrow the government without a new social order but to demonstrate the union's total opposition to the Bill.

He also stated that if the TUC voting against the action the Engineers would work on an all-out basis.

The impasse of the executive's decision was the result of the special national conference of the AUEW. The national conference is the lay policy-making body of the union. It voted 64 to 5 in favour of action.

Scanlon's executive's decision, Scanlon has campaigned for industrial action. But he has never made it clear that it was based on his personal views on using the strike weapon.

The following Saturday at an Engineers' national assembly in Birmingham, Scanlon was tackled over his promise.

He replied, in an impasioned speech, that there was no question of the leadership. He considered that there was no chance of getting the vote for industrial action but there was a possibility of making non-registration a condition of affiliation to the TUC.

Even if Scanlon never made his promise, the executive council will not recommend strike action in the present situation. They feel that this would lead to isolation from the rest of the movement.

There has also been disillusionment because there were no tangible results. The two attempts of strike action would create demoralization and the AUEW right wing, claiming to be TUC loyalists, would organise mass retros to the cap in the industrial position.

The National Committee of the AUEW's engineering section and the main force in the national conference of the AUEW, will not eject, today or at a future date, the executive council. It is virtually the same body that last year rejected the execu-

DUNCAN HALLAS

tive's proposal to suspend the union's control over the strike.

The executive also stated that general secretary Sid Green was entitled to voice personal objections.

What Hugh Scanlon said at Trafalgar Square about changing the policy of other unions is correct. But the line is not over just because one vote is lost.

3. The reason for the isolation of the political nature of the strike is half true. The main reason is the failure of the council's propaganda and no political alternative. That is the reason for the disillusionment.

3. The Bill is aimed at destroying the trade union movement as we know it. The power must be strengthened.

4. The only way to counter the attacks are the trade unions must organise to defend themselves and defeat the Bill.

These four points can only begin to be tackled by the union controlling all of its district committees to actively and many strengths of local Action.

The union journal should act as the co-ordinator of this movement. In con-

fused was the view he was to the executive council must be to throw overboard the whole of the conflict of interests that has existed for many years. The result of the strike.
Exclusive: move to crackdown on wages and step Solid front down in Scotland

Engineering employers’ secret plan to dodge equal pay for women

What we stand for

The International Socialists is a democratic socialist organisation. Membership is open to all who accept our main principles and are committed to a policy of internationalism. Capitulation is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and owe no allegiances except to the profit motive and the economic system they maintain. In the words of Common Market has been justified for the sole purpose of the trade and profit of these multinational firms. A single capitalist can only be overcome by international organisation of all workers and all workers and all other countries coming together as a single bloc. In addition to building a revolutionary socialist organisation in this country, we believe it is necessary of forming a world revolutionary federation of the international independent of either Washington or Moscow. This is a socialist revolution which the ruling class relations with a number of other similar movements throughout the world. We believe in rank and file control of the trade unions and the regular election of all full-time officials. We are firmly opposed to secret negotiations and believe that all settlements should be agreed by mass meetings. We are for 1£ per cent trade union tax by the defence of shop stewards. We are against anti-trade union laws and any attempt to outlaw strikes. We support the strike as a weapon to obtain wage and working conditions. We are against productivity deals and job evaluation and for multi-work and joint shop stewards committee in plant and on a continental basis. We support all demands for equal pay and a better deal for young workers. We believe that there should be a minimum wage of at least £25 per week. We are opposed to unemployment, redundancy, layoffs and the support of the demands of workers, work or five days per week. We support all struggles in support of the weak militant groups within industry. We are opposed to recrimination and police victimisation of black workers.

Scotland:

Albermarle/Clydebank/Dumbarton/Edin.
Aberdeen/Elgin/Brigton/Grampian/Staffordshire/Scottish/Scottish/Scottish/

North East

Newcastle/Middlesbrough/Sunderland

North

Manchester/Derby/Derbyshire/Nottingham

North West

Manchester/Cheshire/Liverpool/North Wales

Liverpool/Welsh/Nottingham/Sheffield

What are the branches in the following areas:

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Wales

Chester/Neath/Swansea/Port Talbot/Pembroke/Merthyr/Taff CORPORATION

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Solid front down in Scotland

After the collapse of Tom Jackson and the UPW executive, Ford workers are left in the forefront of the fight against Tony Blair to hold down wages. Southampton is not an area noted for its militancy but a group of Ford workers responded solidly both in the 1965 strike and in the present battle for parity with car workers in the Midlands. I talked to AUEW shop steward Rupert Martin.

How did the strike start in the Southampton plant?

Contrary to much of the talk in the press, the stewards had no part in it. The lads just walked out. When the shift boss heard about the management’s £2 offer, they just put those costs on and headed for the gate. That offer was just an insult.

What is your reaction to the current slightly improved offer of 1.6 per cent?

As far as we’re concerned it’s not really an improved offer—it’s just a ploy to fool the public but it doesn’t fool the workers. The act does not come into force until 1975, but the Engineer-
Women workers are doubly exploited — and the engineering bosses want it that way...

**Design for revolution**

Art in Revolution, Hayward Galleries, London, 7 April - 1 May 1977. "Monument to the Third International" by Pablo Picasso. Painted in 1937, this work is a response to the Spanish Civil War. It depicts a group of soldiers, with banners and guns, fighting against the fascists. The work is a powerful symbol of anti-fascism and the fight for revolution.

**Southampton...**

At least the English have never sold their Dirt to the American oil companies. The country was more important than the oil companies. The English have never sold their Dirt to the American oil companies. The country was more important than the oil companies.

**Jail strike, the old...**

Negotiating Committee was not only weak but actually under the thumb of the Ford management — the then TWPU negotiator Les Kenway said that.

No, the TUC should do something to resist the Ford management. They should stand up to the Ford management and resist. The TUC should resist the Ford management and resist.
MINING in Ireland today amounts to licensed banditry by a bunch of lawyers and Irish political leaders. This is revealed in a carefully documented report just released by a Resources Study Group that investigated the Irish mining industry.

The group succeeded in unravelling the secrecy surrounding the alleged illegal exploitation of Irish resources. Their report provides an indictment of the exploitation of a nation's wealth.

The report notes the unparalleled wealth of Irish reserves of lead, zinc, copper, silver and many other valuable minerals which have been completely ignored.

The report notes that large scale mining is taking place, but is being used to benefit the Irish people or provide a basis for natural industrial development, to the pockets of foreign investors in a handful of North American companies.

In recent years, Irish governments have attracted foreign interests with offers of unrestricted profits, the industrial development of the country, and the promotion of a network of government officials and officials who are concerned with the protection of these interests.

So in rushed the 'developers' like wolves around a sheep pen. By the time the presently-mined mineral resources are exhausted — mainly within 10 years — Irish mining companies will have exported profits of between £250-300 million out of Ireland. This sum represents a profit of between £12,000 and £15,000 on every person employed in the mines.

Urgent demand

The combination of a new demand for the nationalisation of the mining companies, without compensation, and a new legal and political action and demand for the Irish government to put an end to the mining companies, which are required to carry out all prospection, extraction, mining and marketing processes. This is simply a call for an end to government compulsion in the rape of a nation's wealth.

Dublin conference agrees on new left alliance

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Great music unhappy composer

UNTIL we live in a socialist society, it is inevitable that artists will remain a tiny minority of society. It seems equally likely that creative workers will continue, both in their work and in their own lives, to reflect the tensions of the wider society in their most extreme form.

The difficulties of ‘this fine madness’ of being an artist is a theme that Ken Russell has dealt with frequently both on television and on the wider screen. His latest film, The Music-Lovers (Odeon, Haymarket) is a most original of this problem, seen in the context of the life of the Russian composer Peter Tchaikovsky.

Tchaikovsky’s life lends itself well to dramatic presentation. He was a homosexual who, partly to satisfy the demands of society, married a woman who turned out to be a virtual psychiatrist. At a very early age he had witnessed the death by suicide of his mother caused by the ravages of cholera and the experience remained to haunt him until his own identical death. Finally, the two women who were closest to him, his wife and his patron, Madame von Meck, both died insane.

The great merit of Russell’s film is that he succeeds in fused these facts succinctly into the composer’s life story without either flinching from what might appear sensational or, conversely, indulging in sensationalism.

Constant theme

He follows Tchaikovsky’s development as a composer and, underlying the one constant theme in the composer’s troubled life - his almost obsessive need to express himself through music - is the music in its given prominence in the film, serving to illuminate all the features of Tchaikovsky’s tortured existence.

Peter Walker, the composer of the music, is skillful in creating a world of image and sound against the depressing backdrop of incessant quarrels with his wife and the general lack of understanding from a hostile conservative music establishment.

Once again we are given startling evidence of a man transcending the miseries of his immediate surroundings.

Though Richard Chamberlain is extremely adequate as the composer, Glenda Jackson gives yet another brilliant portrayal as Tchaikovsky’s shrewdly witty onomatologist. So convincing is she that we are left with more sympathy for her than history would actually deserve.

But in the final analysis what remains is Tchaikovsky’s music as a permanent monument to his trials and sufferings. Lost, albeit sentimental, mauvish even - none of them have detracted from the staggering popularity of this mild, unhappy musical poet of emotion.

One is left, quite fittingly, marvelling at how one can write about Tchaikovsky with humanity and how the human creativity triumphs over all adversity.

In the lives and work of all great artists we can see a glimpse of all that human beings can and will achieve. Tchaikovsky was no exception to this rule.

Martin Tomkinson

PETER WALKER, boss of the admirably titled ‘Ministry of the Environment’ is in charge of Tory housing policy. He told local Tory-run councils not to go on building council houses for ‘seemingly good reasons’.

So arrogant disregard for the plight of the homeless doesn’t stop Tory ministers acquiring vast slices of property for themselves. Mr. Walker has just bought a country house and farm near Devizes.

The farm has 270 acres, the house contains four bedrooms, and the grounds include two spare cottages. The cost is thought to be in the region of £40,000.

Some eight council flats could be built for the sort of money. But if you feel like protesting at Mr. Walker’s disgusting quiescence, be warned - the grounds of his new estate contain an ancient whipping post for dealing with naughty peasants.

CENSORSIP is so virulent in ‘people’s’ Czechoslovakia that even the most revered of socialist playwrights, Bertolt Brecht, has come under attack.

The Communist Party cenzor ordered cuts to be made in Brecht’s play ‘Mother Courage’ that dealt with the Thirty Years War of the 17th century. A reference to King Gustavus of Sweden, the conqueror of Poland and Germany, was considered a bit too up-to-date.

A character says of the King: ‘At first he wanted only to protect Poland from all people, particularly the Kaiser. But then his appetite increased as he ate and he protected all of Germany’.

The censor’s nervousness is understandable. The official reason for it for a couple of weeks each year in a foreign country.

An executive who works for two weeks in Switzerland is paid a separate salary to his British one. He opens a basic bank account and his ‘second’ salary is then exempt from British tax.

The foreign accounts are used to buy luxury goods such as yachts, expensive cars and country villas. Big combines such as Shell and British Oxygen use this dodge to swell the earnings of their top men.

The City Editor of The Guardian estimates that this international tax dodge makes nonsense of the claims by top executives that their vast salaries are meaningless because of British tax. One top company director who has let it be known that tax reduces his income to a mere £7000 or £8000 actually rakes in something like £38,000.

Who are the patrons?

MEANWHILE back at the class struggle, a heartwarming little tale about Lord Cooper, head of the General and Municipal Workers’ Union, that will restore your despondent faith in trade union officers. A paragraph in the GMWU journal tells us that the noble Jack and Lady Cooper have a ‘truly and amusing travelling companion’ - Maxie, a six-year-old bulldog who often accompanies them on their road shows by union business.

According to Lord Cooper, the bird recognizes landmarks and knows all the turnings on the M1 and M6. It is rumoured by GMWU malcontents that when the Cooper couple approaches St Helen’s, Maxie screeches ‘keep right, keep right’.

IN SPITE of the continuing cold, evening concerts are still given at the BBC. June to September are promised a pretty splendid viewing figures and emphasis on old plays, serials and comedy shows.

But we are already into the season of summer. So BBCs plays have all been seen before but there is an element of the pretext of being the best. If this is the case - a classical and embattled debate is likely to go on about Liverpool by Alan Owen - is an example of the best the Corporation has to offer, there should be a call for a new barrage of licence money in protest.

If it is one valid claim for the BBC is that it can offer the public a ‘good’ programme and a ‘bad’ programme for the audience to choose between, which is the case with the current Saturday night offering of the BBC’s Great Britain’s Imperial Palace, popular and boring epic about life in a five-star Las Vegas hotel in the 1920s.

The book is a product of the period when the adventures of the idle rich are considered of great interest to the ‘lower classes’. Capitalism may remain but at least that part of its sub-culture has been thrown onto the scrapheap.

A backhanded production, that has no feel of the 1920s, and wooden acting underlines the emptiness of the plot, with gay young things flitting from Paris to London, rich tycoons powdering their noses and the sleek-eyed manager maintaining iron discipline over the hotel’s vast staff.

When one of the hotel workers has the temerity to say that their hours are rather long - 9am to midnight, with a half-day off every week - the manager holds his head despondently. What is the world coming to, he asks. What indeed.

I have no nostalgia for the 1920s. The 1950s marked my formative years and I am glad to see the return of Robert Rodmilton’s The Titfield Thunderbolt at 8.30 on Thursdays. I find the politics - about little men in Anthony Eden’s blazers and moustaches - boring and irrelevant.

They get in the way of the really good stuff - the Brylcreem boy, and Stanley Matthews and the Wizard of Dribble and the other star names that recall the days of short-cut-and-under-the-knee socks.

Last week we had a glimpse of the radio show Educating Archie, with Peter Brough and Archie, and a programme of radio featuring a ventriloquist and his dummy that nobody could see.

Like most of television today, it is like a sketch from Monty Python.

David East
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RAIL UNION CALLS WORK TO RULE BUT DISUNITY THREATENS WAGES CAMPAIGN

The train services may come to a standstill from Monday in a bid to force a settlement with the ASLEF. The three-day's strike has been called in the hope that the union members will be able to strike for higher wages. The ASLEF and the railway bosses (TSR) have some contract to discuss the strike on Monday. The union has offered a 9 percent increase in all their current contracts to be less than £1.50 for rail workers.

Selling by power unions

SW Reporter

The agreement reached on Monday between the unions and management in the power industry adds up to a sell-out for the workers. The talks have dragged on for weeks, following a widespread strike by the power workers' work-to-rule last December. The Electricity Council insisted on reducing its workforce for a wage increase. There was widespread opposition to this among the workers.

Monday's agreement says there will be no compulsory redundancies until 31 December this year. But in the meantime, any worker who leaves the industry will not be replaced.

VICTIMISATION

Management expects 10,000 workers to leave in this way this year.

The only real reason for compulsory redundancies in 1971 will be those who do not cooperate with the productivity schemes the Electricity Council will try to bring in. If successful, the scheme will lead to the victimisation of millions and will result in more bitter strikes.

The agreement is completely contrary to the interest of the power workers. It is not, as the Communist Party's paper The Morning Star says, a 'conciliation' won by the union negotiators.

The unions responsible for the sell-out are Frank Chappel of the Electricians and Thomas Hingley of the Transport and General Workers' Union. Their conduct has proved that power workers will not be an important force to pay and conditions unless a militant policy is adopted and a serious fight for internal democracy

NOTICES

LIASON COMMITTEE Conference 24 April, 6.15 p.m. at the Palmeira, 137 Wandsworth Park Rd, SW11.

KILL, the Industrial Relations Bill: How it affects you. A public meeting on Wednesday, 18 March, 7.30 p.m. at the Hotel Maidstone, Maidstone.

NEARLEST 15 public meeting, Paul Keating on his resignation in the TUC, Friday, 20 March, 7.30 p.m. at the St Nicholas Hall, Braintree.

MURRAY 16 public meeting Fight the Retail Bill. Speakers: Mike Chappel and Prof. Paul A. Aspinall, 9.30 a.m. at the Community Hall, West Green Rd. REIN.

N LONDON- Women's Group meeting 23 March, 9 p.m. at 30 Venice Rd, NW4. All welcome. Enquiries to 01-438 9003.

15 WOMEN'S Newsletter. All contributions to Ann Parson, 31 Etherfield Rd, London E11 2HY. New issue out by conference.

HAYNES 17 public meeting. Francis Haynes on the General Electric and the Thatcher regime, 20 March, 2.30 p.m. at the Four Winds Club, Hammersmith.

STONEKE MANCHESTER 3 i public meeting. MPs' speeches in support of the hill farmers, designed to attack the stonewalling tactics used by the Thatcher government. 22 March, 7.30 p.m. at the City hall, Manchester.

STOCKTON 19 public meeting. MPs' speeches in support of the hill farmers, designed to attack the stonewalling tactics used by the Thatcher government. 22 March, 7.30 p.m. at the City hall, Manchester.

SW Reporter

POLICE ATTACK PROTESTERS AT HEATH MEETING

EDWARD HEATH was great Spencer at the Sheffiel Cutlers' Unions Annual Free and Lind Thursday — an event of local industrialists and bigwigs. The event included bank, tourism, prominence, plateau, rose version and lemon sorbet. The party was held at the Heath House. The 300 staff workers and houseswines were certainly mem- bered by the Heath House. The party was held there.

The event was called outside the Cutler's Hall against the Industrial Relations Bill and the Whistow, the conference was called to attack the stonewalling tactics used by the Thatcher government. The conference was called to attack the stonewalling tactics used by the Thatcher government.

THANKS FROM S. AFRICA

BRISTOL Trades Council gives a way which will be shown to John Garewe of the South African Congress of Traders Union when he talked the council for their action that helped turn away a cargo of South African coal from Avonmouth docks.

The conference was called to attack the stonewalling tactics used by the Thatcher government.

Corruption

Last week's issue reported on a dispute at Enfield Rolling Mills, North London, and the strike was part of the Delta group. This is incorrect. Enfield Rolling Mills has not connection with Delta. We regret the error.

GRABBED

The police had other ideas. They moved a child from the crowd as a perp-trap, preventing developments and improvements. 'Standard' of demonstration. It sparked a fight between the crowd and grabbed from viciously.

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