Workers inflict blow after blow on the tottering Tories

by Socialist Worker Political Correspondent

BRITAIN'S DOCKERS went back to work on Tuesday having achieved one of the most magnificent victories in the history of the labour movement. Their country-wide strike action in support of the three ship stewards convicted with jail by the Industrial Relations Court inflicted a major political defeat on the Tory government.

They proved that militancy, solidarity and determination at rank and file level can break the anti-union laws. Even more important, they showed that if similar action were taken in union by workers in all the key industries then the Tories could be driven from office.

No one should underestimate the severity of the defeat inflicted on the Tories. The centerpiece of their policies is the Industrial Relations Act, designed to break the power of the trade unions where they are most powerful — at the workplace.

Last Friday, as the dockers said, was the 'turn', the call for support from all sections of the movement in support of the three stewards met with instant response. Every indication was that there would be an explosion of rank and file solidarity strikes until all the proceedings against the stewards were dropped.

OFFENSIVE

The government went rapidly into reverse gear. The Court of Appeal quashed the prison sentences on the ship stewards and the 'Official Solicitor' discovered in a confidential filing cabinet.

The direct action of the dockers addressed the workers' case in the two years of committee-room上诉 from before the Industrial Relations Court.

The Tories have spent two years in a determined attempt to undermine and destroy the standards and organisations of the working class. The key sections of society were forced to front the Wall for more investment and bigger profits.

Unemployment has been boosted, prices have soared, welfare services slashed and charges increased, wages restrained, unemploy

ment increases planned for the autumn — all an intensification of the policies of the previous Labour government. The whole was underlined by the Industrial Relations Act.

All was going well for the Tories. Then came the miners, the railmen and now the dockers.

'CONCERNED'

The fight back has come from below. We have seen nothing but compromise, misrepresentation and retreat from the solidly-led leadership of the trade unions.

With three dockers found guilty last week, Jack Jones said he was 'gravely concerned'. He made no declaration that he would mobilise the 1 million members of his union if the court order was upheld.

Viscount Feather appealed to the Tories to put the Act 'on ice'. No declaration by him that the TUC would mobilise all its members to support the dockers.

While they differ and search for common ground, it is becoming increasingly clear to millions of workers that the Tories are tottering and can be kicked out. Many of their policies are in ruins.

They have a major balance of payments crisis. Another devaluation is on the cards, to be followed by further massive price increases. Investment is not going up, the success of the miners and railroad means they cannot hope to attack wages as brutally as before.

And the Industrial Relations Act has been shown to have all the force of a ruptured balloon when faced by determined opposition.

The Tories must not be allowed to recover. Any hesitation will give them time to prepare fresh attacks, exploit weaknesses and divisions in our ranks and cook up an 'income policy' deal with the leaders of the trade unions.

The workers have shown that they have the industrial strength to topple the Tories. The fight must be intensified.

Any further threats from the NIRC must be met by massive strike. Substantial wage demands to beat down the rising cost of living must be backed by the open and declared threat of industrial action.

The workers' movement and the trade unions must unite and prepare for open warfare against the 'Fails Rents' Act this autumn.

INTENSIFY

From all these struggles, we must redouble our efforts to build independent, fighting organisations of workers that will challenge the government's policy of attacks on our standards and freedoms by any government.

If the Tories are kicked out we face the return of a Labour government thrust into office at a time of major political and economic crisis. It will use that crisis to rob off any demands for reform and unless put under pressure from organised workers will be used by the employers to continue and intensify the attacks of the last eight years.

That is why it is vital to build genuine councils of action, powerful combine committees and wide-ranging trade union organisations NOW to fight the Tories and to insist that the struggle against the employers' offensive goes on unimpeded by the false words and phoney promises of the Labour leaders.

A tremendous opportunity now exists to forge from all these struggles a new, mass-based socialist party dedicated to the total transformation of our present society into a run and controlled in the interests of working people, not profit.

HOW DONALDSON GAGGED THE PRESS: EXCLUSIVE PAGE 10

Monday's mass meeting of London dockers at Tower Hill. They pledged strike action to back any workers threatened by the law. Picture: Mike Cohen
University students challenge Greek junta

by George Giosis

Their demands for free elections in the university developed into demands for free elections in the country as a whole.

In March a strike of technical students spread from Athens to Thessaloniki, and in the end 31,000 students were involved. Their militancy was so great that the junta’s representatives were forced to hop on a train that carried them to Athens to meet them. The students were driven back by the army, but the army was not enough to suppress them.

The junta’s main concern was to prevent students from participating in any opposition. Their tactics included harassment, surveillance, and intimidation. They also attempted to discredit the movement by linking it to outside influence.

The students’ movement was largely driven by their desire for a democratic future and their opposition to the regime’s policies. They were supported by many Greeks who shared their goals and aspirations. The movement gained momentum as it spread across the country, and the students’ demands for free elections were met with increasing support.

The junta’s ultimate goal was to maintain its grip on power and prevent any challenge to its authority. This led to a series of violent crackdowns and arrests, which only served to fuel the students’ determination to continue their fight.

The students’ movement was eventually successful, and free elections were held in 1974. The results were a clear victory for those who had supported the movement, and the junta was forced to resign. The students’ movement played a key role in bringing about this change, and their legacy continues to inspire those who seek to bring about change in Greece and around the world.
SWEETHEARTS

THE COMFORTABLE MYTH that wage increases are the sole cause of rising prices disproves relentlessly from the wage mass. Ignored almost totally are the hidden and blatant swindles cooked up by giant monopolies to rock the housewife and the indifference or connivance of the government. A sweet case of such crookedery has been discovered by a close look at the report of the Public Accounts Committee for 1971-72. One reason why the price of sugar has soared by 40 per cent in the last five years, so that a 2lb bag now costs two bob, is that the British Sugar Corporation has allowed 260,000 tons of sugar best to be refined in an inefficient way as a result of an agreement it has with Tate and Lyle. As the government owns 36 per cent of British Sugar, which buys up all the home-grown beet, Ted and his lads are up to their necks in this swindle. The figures look like this: British Sugar has 18 mills with ample capacity for processing 900,000 tons of sugar a year. But only 600,000 tons are refined completely. The rest is sent off to Tate and Lyle in a semi-refined state, although it would take little extra planning for British Sugar to refine the whole lot. Instead, Tate and Lyle finishes the job, adding to the cost which is passed on to the luckless consumer. That is not the end of the tale. A further cause of rising sugar prices throws an interesting light on the government’s commitment to a “free market economy” with no aid for firms that can’t keep up with the rap race. The domestic sugar market has long been divided up between three concerns—Tate and Lyle with 70 per cent, British Sugar 25 per cent, with the rest going to a small company called Marmite and Garton. When Marmite and Garton broke this gentleman’s agreement and boosted its share of the market it threw Tate and Lyle’s profit structure. To redress the balance, Tate and Lyle has repeatedly demanded government permission to increase prices in order to reach its profits levels. Tate and Lyle, fierce champions of “private enterprise”, last year contributed £200,000 each to the Tory Party, the British Economic League and the Aims of Industry. Just sweeteners...
A not-so-quiet old firm cashes in on the property robbery

IF YOU ask anyone in the City or a reporter of the capitalist press about the New River Company, they will probably tell you the quaint story of how the New River Company was saved from bankruptcy by a small group of shareholders who bought it on the Stock Exchange and founded in 1619 to dig the canal and build the town of London. The company was then taken over by London. At the opening cere-

Such stories are convenient tools both for admiring the 1940s. But they are either too valuable to reap the rewards of profiting from their properties and this showed a value of £4,340,000, compared with £1,784,000 in 1945. This is what makes even Harry Hyams green with envy.

MAKE WAY FOR THE FASHIONABLE RICH

The growth is even more surprising considering that in 1971 the directors estimated the company’s worth at £5,000,000. So where is the property, those properties are not really as dramatic as this.

Most of the City’s buildings, Blackfriars and Kings Cross. Much of it is residential, other parts are commercial, which is probably the most valuable class of property. The New River Company has many flats and houses standing empty which it is estimated would have been worth £7,000 a year because the rentroll falls as the rent in the area has increased, and these are valuable leaseholds.

The New River Company now has more profit from its properties than it had the number of shareholders. People get more profit from selling a dispossessed class in a house in a fashion-

WHO CARES FOR THE HOMELESS?

The recent Socialist Worker feature on housing showed how the “expected” (expected) report by the Select Committee on Housing and Local Government said that the average house in Notting Hill, Maxwell Joseph, the man who runs the management, Great Magdalene-

Rosa Luxembourg

BY PAUL FROLICH

Rosa Luxembourg was one of the greatest figures produced by the international working class movement. Both a profound and original thinker and a brilliant speaker at party group and mass gatherings, she embodied all that is best in the revolutionary tradition.

In 1939, more than 30 years, until her murder in Berlin in 1919, she was continuously in the forefront of the working class struggle—
in Poland, Russia and Germany.

Unسلاحاً للغة في طليقة:

Many of her friends have attended as many anti-war rallies as she has anti-interventionist meetings and anti-fascist and anti-apartheid meetings. I have spoken at the stand in Munich under the shadow of the Führer, but I’ve had the privilege of being in the company of people who are fighting for the very things which many have wished to let alone, others have not dared to speak out about and still others are in danger of their lives.

PRE-PUBLICATION OFFER

I WOULD like to add the article “Alfred Schuricht, a Slovak Socialist Worker. I am the ‘schooeholder,” that I was the one who started it even though I was not even in college, having been expelled from the university. The whole of the Daily Mail article is full of lies, but the lies which are calculated to the reader simply didn’t make sense. In the story that can be printed in the Daily Mail that even painted a picture of the National Union of School Students yet managed to remain silent.

Why the Mail is afraid

system is built on repression that it is difficult to imagine how a student of the discipline of dressing and building implies in the Daily Mail has not been attacked in the course of our daily lives is controlled democratically by us instead of this false democracy we live in.

Walter and Margaret Edgington,

KENDALL RENYARD (17 July), Preston, Lancs.
PERHAPS no other group of men in the country are as well supplied with the good advice of their opponents as the trade union leaders. From Fleet Street editorial offices, the law courts and the cabinet rooms itself comes an unending chorus of appeals to their ‘responsibility’, ‘good sense’ and ‘statesmanlike qualities’.

Nor are these appeals aimed partly at maintaining the non-union fibre of these worthy leaders themselves, since, apart from an understandable weakness for the more intoxicating refreshments and the good life in general, most of them remain upright and worthy citizens.

The purpose of the advice is to ensure that these heads of millions of workers keep control over their organisations and members, so preventing ‘industrial anarchy’ and the breakdown of law and order.

The success of this strategy can be judged by the gratitude shown by our rulers in the honours lists. Nearly half of those elected to the TUC General Council in 1970 had won recognition in this way. Ten Commanders, three Orders and Two Members of the Order of the British Empire (of course) were joined by four Barons. At times the House of Lords must resemble an old boys’ reunion of General Council executive members.

DIVIDED

These men of great power and influence are driven into the arms of the establishment by their own personal desires for titles. They are individuals represent and express a basic contradiction of the trade unions’ movement itself.

On the one hand, trade unions grow and develop to improve and defend the conditions of all who labour. These improvements were seen as within the framework of the capitalist system itself.

So while the unions were organisations of the working class, they reflected the division of labour under capitalism and were divided along capitalist lines.

On the other hand, the collective organisation and struggle of the workers could not be seen as the spontaneous rooting of the workers towards their collective control of industry and society as a whole.

CONFLICT

This contradiction shows clearly in times of economic crisis when no concessions can be won within the framework of the capitalist economic system.

At such times the ‘engine of trade unionism’ — the mass action of the workers — conflicts stupidly with the drivers at the steering wheel — the trade union leaders, who do not reach much beyond what is available within the system itself. These leaders then side openly with the ruling bourgeois organisations and the capitalist system.

TRADE UNION LEADERS are a very different group to the workers they claim to represent. Their interests, outlook and lifestyle are generally closer to those of the employers than the workers.

One survey showed that only five per cent of trade union leaders ever returned to the shop floor. For most others their union movement is a way of life. They contribute to the organisation’s dues but neither seek promotion within it nor even wish to serve as elected representatives.

The work of the leaders is in the service of the trade unions themselves: their main interest is to maintain and improve the internal organisation of the trade unions.

The rank and file, and with no affiliation to the broader social or political role of the trade unions, have a very different view of the union leadership as a ‘special social group’ in an organisation of the International Socialists.

As an article in the Morning Star (2 May) by Dave Price makes clear, the trade union leaders are members of the International Socialists, which he alleges, in both policy and practice, is more dangerous in its practical conclusions.

The leaders are not so much the ‘product’ of the rank and file, and with no affiliation to the broader social or political role of the trade unions, have a very different view of the union leadership as a ‘special social group’ in an organisation of the International Socialists.

We must now see how unions reflect in general the influence of individuals. Lenin quoted De Leon’s phrase describing unions as ‘the labour lieutenants of capitalism’.

The rank and file are not subject to the same elements of bureaucracy in our trade union movement, and they need to be fought. But the fundamental problem is that they are political, not organisational.

To break this right-wing domination of the movement we have often to challenge bureaucratic methods, but the main enemy remains the right-wing policies which often result from bureaucratic domination of what’s going on.

The ‘leadership’ in the big-time position is a stepping stone, if not to the House of Lords, then to government and nationalised industry posts or positions in private industry.

Les Kesley, full-time Transport Union official and representative on the Foul debate committee, who was forced to resign under rank and file pressure during the 1969 Ford dispute, moved into an £8,000-a-year job as a labour relations man for Carline Ltd.

The trade union bureaucracy balances between the interests of the big employers, the state and their own rank and file.

Caught between the employing class and the working class they try always to act as mediators. In this role they run internally into the arms of the state, which appears to them as a neutral body.

The road from Trafalgar Square to the corridors of power has become a race track as trade union leaders rush to collaborate with government and, now ever more closely, with the Industrial Relations Act.

But the relationship between the leaders and the workers is sometimes clouded by apparent big differences between the political beliefs of these leaders.

Some, like Lord Crooke, represent the most moderate reformism—someone who during his right wing period was a Labour Party member and who has fought against the erosion of trade unions’ rights.

LENIN outlined the strategy of the ‘left’ wing of the Labour Party and the left wing of the Trade Union Congress, which would fight for the union movement.

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Special feature by CHRIS HARMAN

Such weaponry is not only immensely dangerous. It is also immensely costly. Some 6½ per cent of the total wealth of the world is spent on arms. That might not sound much, but it is greater than the combined income of the poorest half of the human race.

The US alone spends a sum on its military budget nearly twice as large as the total national income of India's 540 million population.

HOLLOW

British's own arms expenditure does not get much attention, either from those who are always screaming about 'excessive government spending' or from the Labour Party. Last year the cost was about £200 million, but the amount of money saved by abolishing free school milk is in the same league.

According to the propagandists of the 'differentiated' theory of the arms race, it is because of the 'necessity of defence'.

The hollowness of such claims is easily shown. It has been estimated that even if the American government did not feel well in a nuclear war, 95 million people, or nearly half the population, would be wiped out. This ignores the countless numbers who would die in subsequent years from the effects of radiation.

On a small island like Britain hardly anyone would survive. Yet the government spends £250 million a year on arms.

The most technologically advanced and expensive kind of weapons have even less to do with defence in the real sense of the word. There is a great deal of money spent on anti-ballistic missile systems (ABMs) and cruise missiles, costing tens of billions of dollars, to overcome ABMs and cruise missiles, costing tens of billions of dollars, to overcome.

The ABMs are designed to defend against Russian SS-20 missiles, which in turn are a response to American MBFR (more aggressive) missiles. This is a race downwards, with both sides trying to outdo the other.'The same is true about all the other vital capitalist states.

Things may seem to be different in Russia and in the so-called Communist countries. But in reality the same sort of small minority holds power there, too.

They exercise a tight control over the state, using the crudities of police methods to intimidate anyone who challenges their power. And the state in turn owns all industry.

The ruling classes on both sides of the 'iron curtain' get their wealth not just by exploiting their own population, but also by dominating other countries economically or politically.

Crude force

So the minority who own Britain's wealth also own a large part of the countries of South Africa, the oil wells of the Middle East, the rubber of Malaya.

The great American corporations like General Motors, Ford, ITT, Standard Oil and Du Pont, operate in every corner of the world. American corporations operate in every corner of the world. American corporations total 52,000 million dollars bigger than the wealth of most countries.

Since World War Two the rulers of Russia have come to exercise control outside the boundaries of the USSR. The events of 1956 and 1968 demonstrated that in the last resort, crude physical force alone enables them to dominate countries like Hungary and Czechoslovakia.

More recently their interests have spread to countries like India (where they armed against China) and Cyprus (where they helped put down a socialist rebellion).

Each ruling class worries that it will lose control over the sources of some of its wealth, whether to the populations it exploits or to other ruling classes.

Lives in fear

The US has ensured Vietnam and the Russian rulers invaded Czechoslovakia because each feared the 'domino effect' that successful resistance to their dooms by one small country would encourage rebellion elsewhere.

That also explains why the Russians have intensified their forces along the Chinese border ever since Peking first raised their authority.

Each great power lives in fear that the other will secretly develop such superiority that it will force the other to side with smaller of its arms. Each therefore feels compelled to spend as much as it can on developing arms. In effect the other does the same.

This pressure has not become worse in recent years by the way that other powers may start joining in the game. The Chinese so far have very few arms and a score or so of missiles. They also have been enough to prevent both the Russians and Americans to plan massive ABM systems.

The Japanese could build both missiles and ABM's in less than two years if they wanted. All that could be built would be an arms race while to build at the rate of a nuclear one. That would make temporary the nuclear arms race while to build arms in any case one of our arms.
The race goes on despite Moscow

Nixon's and Brezhnev's agreement, signed in Moscow a month ago, has been hailed as bringing the cold war to a final end. Yet within days of its completion, the American Secretary of State was pushing for still higher levels of spending on "offensive nuclear programs.

The Moscow agreement does limit the development of certain kinds of arms on either side. It places an upper limit on the number of Intermediate Ballistic Missiles the US and Russia can deploy.

And it restricts them to building two ABM defense systems each.

What drove Nixon and Brezhnev to the conference table was fear of the massive costs of the most modern weapons. This cost has been threatening to escalate to an unmanageable level.

The development of ABM systems gave both sides the idea that with a little more military expenditure they would be in a situation where, if they launched a nuclear first attack, they could protect themselves completely against any missiles the enemy launched in retaliation.

Prospect

Both sides felt compelled to develop these systems in order to stop the other side doing so first.

The cost of the ABM system alone was hundreds of millions of dollars. Building full-scale ABM would have meant both the Russian and American ruling classes cutting wages and welfare benefits.

Inflation would increase on an unprecedented scale. Massive class struggle would be the inevitable result on both sides of the iron curtain.

Rather than face such a prospect, Nixon and Brezhnev preferred to make an agreement with one another.

But the agreement does not stop the relentless competitive drive of the great powers. It has merely deflected it to other areas of the arms race.

The Americans, for instance, are arguing that the limitation on the total number of missiles they can have means that they have to spend huge sums to make existing ones more accurate.

Overthrow

The Russians no doubt are even more concerned.

There is only one way in which the arms race, and its horrific cost of social dislocation, can be brought to an end. That is by the organization of workers in every country to overthrow the rival ruling classes.

For several years this seemed an unlikely and difficult project. But today things are changing. Capitalists, who are sensitive to arms spending, are beginning to see that they do not face the massive slumps of before the war, every country there is rising prosperity which is becoming better attacks by the ruling class on the workers.

For the very future of humanity...
ALGERIA: DEVASTATION OF THE CIVILISERS

TEN YEARS AGO THE Algerian war began. The story of this war is rich in lessons for the national liberation struggles of today—not least at a time when the North of Ireland is being called 'Britain's Algeria'.

French forces colonized Algeria in the first half of the nineteenth century, and the Algerian territory officially became an integral part of France, sending members of parliament to Paris. This was a legal fiction to be much exploited later on. French politicians often liked to speak of France’s 'civilising mission' in Algeria. Nothing could have been further from the truth. In 1834 a French general had noted: 'Nearly all the Arabs can read and write in each village, there are two schools.'

French colonisation meant annihilating the native cultures. In 1954, when the war began, only a third of Algerians were literate. Algeria had fewer doctors per head than a 'backward' country like Egypt, and the death rate among Algerians was between three and four times higher than among European settlers.

TRAMPS

But the most catastrophic effect of French colonisation was the human cost. Since 1830 Algeria’s population had grown from two million to ten million. But so little had the French developed the country’s resources that it could still only produce enough food for two million people.

One French sociologist spoke of a nation reduced to 'debased slavery'. Algeria remained an agricultural nation, producing wine and cereals, though lately recently oil was discovered in the Sahara. When an Algerian Assembly was set up in 1947, voting was in two colleges. The first college included all those who were over 21, and the second included those who were unmanhood, unmanhood and women. As a result, the first attempts to organise against French rule came from the working people.

In 1955 Messeli Hadji, an Algerian who had been a Paris factory worker and for a time a member of the Communist Party, founded the North African Star, which was very widely supported among Algerian workers in France.

BREAKAWAY

Despite repression by the French authorities, the FLN (National Liberation Front) movement grew and grew. In 1945 at the beginning of the war against Germany, pressure from the French government, which had called for Algerian collaboration with the Vichy government, the French left-wing ministers. More than 40,000 Algerians were in France. In 1953 a split emerged in the Algerian nationalist movement, when Messeli Hadji, who had now moved away from Marxism and had been converted by the Muslim religion, although he still maintained a certain relationship with the younger nationalists, headed by Ben Bella. Bella went on to become the leader of the kind of nationalism being developed by Nasser in Egypt.

It was this breakaway which constituted the FLN (National Liberation Front). French imperialism had just suffered a crushing defeat in Indochina, and the French government were negotiating independence for their other North African colonies, Tunisia and Morocco. In order to take advantage of the situation and take the initiative from Messeli, who still had wide support, the FLN decided on immediate armed struggle.

On the night of 31 October 1954, there were about 70 terrorist attacks—bombings, ambushes and armed raids. The war had begun.

The FLN FORCES were small — a leadership of intellectuals, with only two or three thousand fighting men, not all of them armed. Soon they succeeded in winning over much middle-class elements as Ferhat Abbas, who for many years had demanded reforms, and not independence at all.

An Algerian population of 5 million, the vast majority were agricultural workers and their families, many of them unemployed for part of the year, and almost all on the brink of starvation.

Those who had moved to the towns scarcely enjoyed any better conditions. One observer described their conditions... "bands of men, women and children armed, almost totally naked, whom misery and fear of death has pushed towards the cities and who, each morning, search the garbage piles, disputing with dogs and even the remnants of food, that rag and the empty tin casings."

In fact, it was scarcely possible to speak of an industrial working class in Algeria at all. But there were Algerian workers about 400,000 who had emigrated to France to find work and food. Money sent home by these workers supported two million Algerian people.

More important, even though these workers were the victims of low wages, appalling housing and widespread racialism, their experience in France constituted decisively to raise their level of expectations and aspirations.

The tradition of independent working-class organisation was strong. The French authorities had made Algerian trade unions illegal only in 1932. As a result the trade unions became satellites of the nationalist organisations. Messeli’s organisation, the MNA (Algerian National Movement) was stronger among Algerian workers in France, but the FLN built a rival trade union federation in Algeria.

TROOPS

But the FLN’s main strategy was not fixed at the working class. The plan was first of all to build up guerrilla strength in the mountainous areas, and then move towards the towns. When they did begin to operate in the towns, the tactics were those of terrorism—specifically, the throwing of bombs into European crowds. By 1956 the FLN had gained control of much of rural Algeria, and had set up its own government there, with its own currency and its own administration.

The response of the French authorities was firstly to deny that there was a war at all, and secondly to increase massively the French troops in Algeria. By 1958 France had more than 400,000 soldiers in Algeria, greatly outnumbering FLN armed forces.

The French Army adopted the so-called ‘gendarmerie system’, involving heavy concentrations of troops in the main cities and towns. Eight large inter-armament camps were built to impress 6000 Algerians. Tactics were widespread: methods ranged from electric shock treatment and the freezing of fingers with berths.

During 1956 the FLN had built up great strength in the Algerian countryside, a massive attack which served as a base for invasion in the rest of the country. But in 1957 a force of paratroopers under General Mounier moved in and effectively smashed the FLN organisation.

This was a serious setback for the FLN, who were forced back into the countryside.

SETBACKS

Many FLN units operated from over the border in Tunisia. The French Army had put up an electrical barrier along the frontier, but courageous FLN squads armed with improvised weapons regularly broke through.

But despite the courage of the FLN fighters, the war was not being won in military terms. In fact, in purely military terms the FLN reached its highpoint in 1957, and the began to suffer serious setbacks.

RAGICALLY, Algerians could not count on the support of French workers. There were elements of spontaneous anti-Algerian feeling among French workers. Young workers were conscripted to fight in Algeria and while they were away, they were still paid by the Algerian government. But France had two political parties which claimed to be Marxist and internationalist—the Socialists and the Communist Party. Between them, they got more than two-fifths of the vote in the 1956 elections.

If these parties had taken a clear stand they could easily have dispersed any element of working-class tactics. Unfortunately they did not.

After the 1956 elections a Socialist, Guy Mollet, became prime minister. Mollet went to Algeria to study the situation, and presented the French government and the European settlers, organised by fascist elements. They need not have worried. Mollet and friends were and remained the most loyal defenders of French rule in Algeria.

The Communist Party did not even have the excuse that they were part of the French government. When the deputies broke out, they were at first silent, directing most of their propaganda to the question of German reinstatement. They even issued statements in which criticism of most methods was toned down far more than eft of the Algerian people to struggles.

Since the FLN working-class organisations had united the real opposition in France against the bourgeoisie, students and youth. Late in 1955 there were last anti-imperialist by young students. They tried to obstruct troop movements by pulling the communication cables in trains and sitting down on the lines. The Communist Party publicly discouraged its militants from such actions. It even forbade French and Algerian Communists to contact each other.

By early 1956 the war had reached a huge scale, and the prospects for Algerian independence were far from hopeful.

NEXT WEEK:
Victory and defeat

WHY is it that the TUC has capitulated so quickly and so utterly to the government attack on trade unions? Why has ex-decker Jack Jones deserted his former brothers on Margate sands and does he not have the courage to protect their jobs? What can be done about it?

These are questions that industrial militancy is failing to raise. There are ones that revolutionary socialists must be able to answer.

In this chapter the reappearance of J T Murphy’s pamphlet, The Workers’ Committee, after some 50 years is welcomed. For this pamphlet published by the Sheffield Workers’ Committee in 1917 was an attempt to come to grips with a situation in many ways similar to that we face today.

After heavy defeat in the lock-out of 1897-8, the leaders of Britain’s engineering unions, the AUEW, pursued a policy of class collaboration. Shortly before the First World War the rank and file revolted against the betrayal and voted in an executive judged to a policy of aggressive action against the employers.

But during the war this new leadership also felt the pressure of circumstances, adopted anti-strike legislation and restrictions on the freedom of movement to move between different employers. They also refused to put up any real fight against government schemes for dilation of labour — allowing the workers to do their job minimally reserved for the skilled.

This led to a complete breakdown in the trade union movement in this way, and, more generally, why it was that the ‘rationalism’ of the year of revolutions, of revolutionary speeches, which strangely contrast with those of a late date after a period of office?

REMOTE

Attempting to answer this, Murphy begins to sketch a theory of trade union bureaucracy. The essence of the problem, he believes, lies in the changed social role a mass necessity adopts when it becomes a fighting force.

As a man in the workshop he feels even exchange; the workshop atmosphere is his atmosphere; the conditions under which he labours are primary; his trade union constitutes is secondary, and sometimes even remote. But let the same man get into office. He is removed out of the workshop, he meets a fresh class of people and brushes a different atmosphere.

These things which were once primary are now secondary. He becomes buried in the constitution and of necessity looks from a new point of view on those things which he has ceased to feel actually.

These are perceptive and important ideas, and were to be elaborated a few years later — partly as a result of study of the French shop stewards movement by the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci.

Murphy’s proposed solution to this problem are also distinctly similar to Gramsci’s. They can be summed up in the words of the shop stewards of Clydeside, the other centre of industrial militancy during the First World War:

We will support the officials just as long as they rightly represent the workers, but we will act independently immediately they misrepresent them.

He proposes that workers should act independently by the creation and strengthening of democratic shop stewards committees fully responsible to:

Where do the miners get their splendid solidarity?

PIT LIFE IN COUNTY DURHAM: Rank and File Movements and Workers’ Control, Rustkin College History Workshop Pamphlet 6, by David Downie.

ANYONE looking for the roots of the miner’s splendid solidarity in the recent strike, or interested in the development and experience of his own class will find this pamphlet interesting, although confusing in its approach.

It is written by a leading millitant in the Durham coalfields and starts by looking at the origins of the miners to mark out and defend their independence in the face of continual attempts by management to crush their organisation.

In the early days of coal mining, the fact is almost certainly the miners were not the first to shout ‘stop’. The miners were the only one who had the numbers to make any difference. The real difference was that the miners not only fought the mines but took the edge of this lack of political awareness. As the strikes of 1919 a year that saw the miners of Durham, Yorkshire and Lancashire to the pits. In the face of such a mass force, the money could not extract more work, not even the ‘lockout’.

Though the pitework system had been improved the miners had to be supervised down, both under the old and new conditions. It is said that around too much rank and file militancy. And then came the war, which related wages automatically to the price of coal.

Aliances

The Durham Miners’ Association was formed in 1871 because it supported the miners’ conditions. It was the only workers’ organisation that tended to coal mining. And the growth of rank and file militancy. And the growth of rank and file militancy.

Despite this, several branches opposed the miners’ struggle and these branches led the way in organised anti-strike activity. The same happened in the Second World War. The miners were exploited by those who controlled the executive to try to supress the miners’ obvious fighting mood. But this time the miners broke out in several villages, and a motion of council on the miners’ strike. The miners’ strike was only defeated by 44 votes to 338.

Richard Croucher

This pamphlet is available from IS Books, 6 Cotton Gardens, London E2, or from the IS History Group, 65 Arden Street, Coventry, price 10p, plus 3p postage.

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The International Socialists is a democratic-unionist whose membership is open to all who accept its principles and who are willing to pay cash, as well as to work in one of its organisations.

We believe in independent working-class action to eradicate the exploitation of capitalism and its replacement by a classless society of production for use and not for profit.

We have a strong mass organisations of the working class and are firmly committed to a policy of internationalism.

Capitalism is international. The giant firms have investments throughout the world and own no allegiance to any one country, so the economic system they maintain.

In Europe, the Common Market has been formed for the sole purpose of increasing the trade and profits of these multinational firms. These international power of capitalism can only be overcome by international action of the working class.

A single socialist state cannot fight alone against the immense power of the working people of other countries, as the workers of this country, who are part of a world revolutionary socialist international, to which we belong. Washington or Moscow. To this end we have close ties with millions of other socialist organisations throughout the world.

We believe in the necessity to unite socialist workers with the dynamical workers who are forming struggles of working people and thereby the need to tend to improve the organisation and self-organisation of the working class.

We fight for: 
- for rank and file control of the trade union and the election of all full-time officials.
- against secret negotiations. We believe that the trade union and the defence of shop stewards
- against anti-trade union laws and any curbs on the right to strike, whether the strikes are official or unofficial.
- against productivity deals and job evaluation which aim to divide the trade union and job shop stewards committees between trade unions and a joint sounding board.
- for a minimum wage of at least £25 a week.
- for unemployment, redundancy and lay-off. We support the demand: five days work for five days pay.
- for all workers in struggle. We seek to build militant groups within industry.
- against racism and police victimisation of black workers.
- against immigration restriction.
- for the right of coloured people and all oppressed groups to organise in their own defence.
- for real social, economic and political equality for women.
- against all nuclear weapons and military alliances such as NATO and the Warsaw Pact.
- against secret diplomacy.
- against all forms of imperialism. We unconditionally give support to and solidarity with the struggle for national liberation movements.
- for the nationalisation of the land, banks and major industries without compensation and under workers' control.

We are opposed to all ruling class policies and programmes. We work to build a revolutionary workers' party to bring about the end of the old order and to end the support of all unity of all revolutionary groups.

The struggle on the continent is the central struggle of our time. Workers' power and workers' solidarity, on the increasing of men's power over women, and the abolition of the power of man over men, certainly worth fighting for. It is no use just talking about it. More than a century ago Karl Marx wrote: "The philosophers have merely interpreted the world. The point is to change it." To change it we must build a world and build socialism, join us.

THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

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THE PRESS QUIETLY HIDES ITS GAG

by Laurie Flynn

FOR a newspaper to support dockers maintaining the black on containers would be contempt of the National Industrial Relations Court. But the NICR does not declare it will not object to any amount of press propaganda aimed at influencing the way workers vote in court-ordered ballots.

This is the official but off-the-record position taken by John Donaldson, the court's registrar, at a meeting with daily and Sunday newspaper industrial correspondents.

Donaldson summoned the journalists to the NICR offices in Chancery Lane, London, on Thursday 8 June, ostensibly to give them a statement on press freedom and the NICR's "record" of disputes in which the court has intervened. The following are the summary of the meeting's newspaper headlines:

"No gag on press" (Daily Mirror)

"Press may comment responsibly on NICR Court" (The Guardian)

"NICR bill to allay press contempt fears" (Daily Mail)

No newspaper reported that any meeting had been held with dockers in the NICR. Donaldson and the journalists, far less this what this anti-socialist independent 'non-political' judge said.

Donaldson opened the meeting by saying that the press and all traditional areas of comment during industrial disputes are now closed, a rather marked contrast to the newspaper headlines published above.

Warning

It would be wrong, said Sir John, for any paper to say that there was no "gag on press" when the government was claiming there was one, in order to get a cooling-off period from the court.

This was not in the context of the law, which is presumably to give the government and employers cooling-off periods when they want them.

But, the statement saying that dockers were right to keep on blacking-out, Sir John was talking in a way so as to regard an attempt to bring down the court, he added.

Sir John also outlined the kind of reporting and comment which, though not necessarily contemptuous, might be confusing. "If," he added, irresponsibility would only be allowed to enter the field.

Donaldson then discussed the situation in detail. He made it quite clear that the press should not only refrain from interfering in the railway situation and press coverage.

He explained why he had telephoned the Daily Mail about the subject of a news report which showed three railways workers being observed by the NICR officers. Their actions were not objects to the court orders, he continued, as they had no intention either, and if the court wanted to be obeyed then Sir John would have to come and close them up and down the platform.

The prospect of such a task apparently appalled Sir John.

He told the assembled journalists that he was both an anti-socialist, these remarks as well as all political parties had just agreed that the court's orders should be obeyed." He said that he felt the statements were too extravagant than they might have been because they were being made in front of television cameras.

Amazed

With a cooling-off order freshly imposed, there was, he said, a real danger of a collapse of law and order as a result of mass disobedience, the NICR would have to take up the "very responsible role, and the danger had been averted," he added. Donaldson was of course speaking before the dockers got to work.

Rounding off the session, Sir John declared himself amazed that there had been no talk of "gagging" and of the way railwaymen's minds during the dispute.

"The court would not object to anyone working for the NICR, but I intended to show that the railwaymen's mind during the dispute," he said. And, if a "gag on press" was used unilaterally, he added, irresponsibility would only be allowed to enter the field.

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Critical wages struggle is ignored at conference

THE conference of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers did not discuss the present wages dispute in the engineering industry. Organizers of the union have now reached a critical stage. Instead only proposals have been made from the technical advice Relations Act and the Common Market were discussed. The centre of the debate was on the problem of wages and salaries.

The real problem of the conference was the lack of effective positive steps toward complete amalgamation of the four sections. They continue to be basically autonomous and keep their different rate books. It is clear that the same areas there is big co-operation between the officials of the different sections, which makes the union unable to deal with specific problems.

Some delegates believe that the need for a single union for the whole engineering industry. Organizers of the union would be the proper partner with the Electrode Workers in mind. Referring to this, Mr. Cornwell, the right-wing general secretary, said that he felt obliged to point out the rule concerning general election of all full-time officials. After members of the union are going to have to ensure that this one rule is not from any new book.

Tory rent, robbery and how to fight it

Don't miss this vital pamphlet
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18 (B) Pest 6 Cottages Gardens, London E2 8DU

GLASGOW: 2500 workers at Weil's Pumps, Cumbernauld, have begun a rent strike against the company's refusal to pay respect to the terms of the National Industrial Relations Act.

The workers, who are employed in the company's plant, are demanding a 25 per cent increase in their wages. Support for the workers has been given by the National Union of Workers in the Group, which is involved in the same dispute.

Next, the strike will be held on the factory, and the workers will be given support by the National Union of Women and Children, which is involved in the same dispute.

IRISH: Danger of sell-out increases

BELFAST: The Terun have had some success in their efforts to revitalise their role in Northern Ireland in the past week. The Social Democratic and Labour Party is following in the tradition of so many other moderate-nationalist Irish parties and is preparing to set out the struggle against the Unionist government. The party has set up a special committee to examine the state machine at local council level. The committee has been investigating the links between the Unionist machine and its rents, rates, and election strategies—something which it has been doing on all levels.

At meetings at the factory this week the demand has been made "occupy" and "blow up all work being done to Tring Minster, Tredylte"—the unions are demanding that Terun workers defend their jobs.

Hostilities

The lack of opposition in the North of Ireland is because the Republican organisation, who quite rightly want to continue the struggle against British domination, are offering so little opposition. The Provisional IRA bomb campaign seems to be growing, new groups are being formed to offer an alternative to the official Sinn Fein, and are supported by the IRA in general.

The Tory and Ulster last week rejected the Provisional's offer of an end to hostilities on the ground that they would continue the struggle. They are afraid of a high moral tone they still manage to talk about. It is a shambles by the Provisionals without much leadership, which is to be tantamount to an admission of defeat, and gives them the narrow Friedland peace zone to build for the SDLP to pose as the champions of peace.

The South

But there is another alternative or more bombings—a political solution to the situation, and this would still leave a crucial role for the pro-peace group to work within the framework of the official political struggle.

A cabinet of the Provisional's offer of an end to hostilities on the ground that they would continue the struggle. They are afraid of a high moral tone they still manage to talk about. It is a shambles, which is to offer a new development to the SDLP to pose as the champions of peace.
No union aid for black strikers

by Anne Clark

WE'LL DEFEND ACT, PLEDGE 800 STEWARDS

by Steve Jefferys

National glassworkers strike in the offering

EIGHT HUNDRED stewards, representing all the major factories in the West of Scotland, pledged themselves to defeat the Industrial Relations Act at a meeting in Glasgow on Tuesday.

The meeting was called at 48 hours notice by the Scottish Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions when a member of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders shop stewards' co-ordinating committee was summoned to appear before an industrial tribunal. An ex-worker from UCC had tried to use the Industrial Relations Act against the steward for operating the co-ordinating scheme of giving funds to workers' groups. At Gorran Shipbuilders to those still involved in the 'work-in'.

After hearing speakers call for continued vigilance against the working of the Act, the meeting voted unanimous support for the declaration carried at the National Liaison Committee.

In particular this means immediate action if any trade union is jailed under the Act, no matter how small its effect on industry. It also means starting campaign now for a nationwide strike when the tribunal begins its hearing.

Similar meetings must be organised throughout the country. As one speaker pointed out at the Glasgow meeting, they should be held at least a week prior to the strike to ensure continuous activity at its present pace.

Their task is to link and file movement is to build that would guarantee the national strike against the black listing of the trade union leaders.

Mass picketing at whisky factories

Town hall workers' union moves towards the left

THF annual conference of the town hall workers' union (NALGO) reaffirmed its anti-racism and anti-sexism stance.

The leadership of the union has decided to stop using the word 'woman' in any of its documents. It has also decided to stop using the word 'worker' to describe anyone who is employed by the council.

The union's executive committee has decided that all future meetings will be held at 9am on Wednesday mornings.

 anti-internment demonstration

Socialist Worker regrets that in last week's editorial the names of one of the two who faced charges under the Public Order Act after an Anti-Internment League demonstration in London last February were omitted. They are Kate Hume and Tony Evans, both members of the organising committee for the demonstration.

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LONGANNET 13 CLEARED

THIRTEEN pickets arrested at Longannet Power Station in Scotland during the miners' strike were acquitted of all charges brought against them by the Scottish Electricity Board (SEB).

I was pleased when I walked out of the court yesterday evening after a fair trial which had lasted nine days.

But at no time was the verdict in any doubt in my mind. From the moment the jury were summoned all doubts were removed. They would not see me as anything other than a man who had worked in the mining industry and for whom this strike was a matter of principle and an attempt to win justice for our fellow workers.

The majority of the jury had decided to vote not guilty and from then on we were smiling and walking free.

The trial had its low points too of course. There were times when all felt that we'd been sitting there for years. But we didn't bother anyone for too long, to just want to sleep and do all the things we couldn't do.

Everyone knew that the evidence was irrelevant anyway.

FIFE-180 tug men at Rousay naval dockyard are demanding social services and social security benefits. For working on nuclear sub we demand that the same pay be given as other industrial workers. If not we'll have an extra for this but not the tug men, and if we're not given the same benefits as others we'll have to have an extra for this too.

The men were due to meet on Monday to consider an offer from the Admiralty.