Sorialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

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PAY REVOLT HITS SCHOOLS

THE TEACHERS deserve the enthusiastic support of all working people. One of the most damning indictments of capitalist society is the crude exploitation of the dedication of such groups as teachers and nurses. Remember, the teachers are fighting not just for more pay (and they deserve to win: after three years' training, a teacher takes home £13 a week) but for smaller classes, more schools, more teachers and the restoration of the government's cut-backs in education. While almost half the 5-11 year old children in Britain are in classes of 36 or more, thousands of teachers are being declared redundant by local authorities because the Labour government (the party with 'soul') has reduced education grants.

The teachers are part of the trade union movement. They are not a group apart, 'professional' people who are above strike action, as Harold Wilson's sister has claime. (She is a headmistress who, significantly, is scabbing on the strike.) Like other groups of workers, teachers have learnt that only militant action can win pay increases from the bosses' government. They are fighting for the future of YOUR children. Support them today and every day of strike action. Send messages from trade union branches and places of work. Invite them to speak to your labour organisations. Solidarity will inspire them. Their fight is your fight, too.

The grass-roots upsurge

by Duncan Hallas President Wandsworth Teachers Association

THURSDAY'S STRIKE by London teachers will close practically all the capital's schools apart from a small number of grammar schools. The National Union of Teachers, with some 12,000 members in the area and the National Association of Schoolmasters with about 2000, are both backing the strike officially.

It will be the biggest of the token strikes by teachers to take place this month. The executives of both unions are preparing to call out selected schools in various parts of the country for 14 days from 1 December in support of the claim for a £135 interim pay award on the basic scale.

The NUT executive meets this Friday (21 November) to pick the strike schools and there will be the usual battle between left and right, with the right trying to restrict the campaign to merely symbolic proportions.

Action is taking place before negotiation with the employers has broken down. The situation is unprecedented.

The grass-roots pressure that has driven the usually ultra-cautious executive of the NUT into such an apparently militant position is due to the absolute decline in the real value of teachers' pay. Teachers today are substantially worse off, in real terms, than they were two and a half years ago.

The salary award which operated from April represented a 6.1 per cent increase on the basic scale over the 1967 award. The rise in the cost of living for that period, according to official figures, was 10.5 per cent. And, of course, the example of the dustmen and the firemen has had its effect on the rank and file teachers.

All this has enabled Left-wing militants to exert a much greater influence on union policy. In fact, the militants find themselves in the unusual position of having the executive outbid them in militancy, in words at any rate.

Of course there is a catch. It is called the Remuneration of Teachers Act. This remarkable piece of legislation provides that, in event of a breakdown in salary negotiations, compulsofy arbitration follows. There are three arbitrators, one nominated by the unions, one by the employers and a chairman

Christmas Cards

STORMING OF THE WINTER PALACE 'SANTA' KARL MARX/LENIN (1970 anniversary card) 1s (inc envelope) each or 10s a doz. Cash with orders to Socialist Worker, 6 Cottons Gardens, London E2.

nominated by the real employer, the Department of Education and Science. The decision is binding on the unions but not on the Secretary of State. He can alter an arbitrated settlement to suit the Treasury and this was done in 1963.

This is why the right-wing majority on the NUT executive have allowed themselves to go as far as they have. They know very well that in December a breakdown will be declared on the Burnham Committee (the negotiating body) and that compulsory arbitration will follow.

Then they will turn round and say 'We have made our protest. Now our hands are tied. You can't fight the law'. And it has to be added that, on past form, the 'lefts' will content themselves with verbal protests and will not carry a serious fight among the membership.

It is a very significant fact and one that has not been reported to the members, that the executive meeting on 10 November rejected by a large majority a motion to call a Special Conference before 31 December. The point is that at such a conference, militant local associations will try to commit the union to refuse to nominate an arbitrator or to present arguments to the arbitrators and to continue with a campaign of prolonged strikes. The executive committee knows that given the feeling in the union, such proposals stand a very good chance of being carried. They are trying to delay calling a conference until after the issue is

Radical transformation

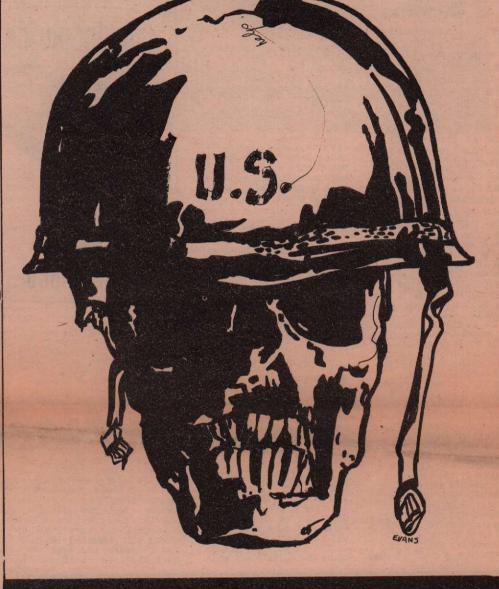
Everyone who has been active in the union over the years recognises that there has been a radical transformation in the consciousness of the ranks. This time there is a hard core of militants who have no illusions and some influence. For the first time ever there is growing unity between NUT and NAS militants at 'shop-floor' level.

One thing is certain. The campaign

One thing is certain. The campaign has proved to teachers that militancy pays. In the spring the executive assured the membership that not another penny could be obtained from the employers. Fortunately they were voted down and the mere threat of action produced an offer of £50. This offer is sure to be increased before the final breakdown.

This is decisive for the long-term outcome. The illusions that were harboured by many teachers that genteel, 'professional' attitudes made them in some ways superior to other workers are on the way out.

This radicalisation gives the promise of important successes for militants in the years ahead.



Victory to the NLF!

March for defeat of US imperialism in Vietnam.
Sunday 23 November Hyde Park 1.30pm to
Trafalgar Square via US Embassy and Downing St

Rugby violence in Swansea

APPALLING VIOLENCE came to Swansea last Saturday when police and rugby vigilantes acted so viciously against Anti-Apartheid demonstrators at the Springboks' match that a government enquiry was ordered. The crowd of students, trade unionists and townspeople was a militant one, shouting 'Paint 'em black and send 'em back', 'Jack-in-the-'Boks' and 'Swansea Shame'.

It was impossible to say how fighting broke out, but what is certain is that the 1000 police and the rugby fans who pitched in with them acted like hired thugs against a crowd that had no protection from their brutality. The Deputy Chief Constable punched a girl in the face and said it served her right for being on the demonstration. People were invited out of the crush by the police and then dropped in the path of rugby fans arriving for the match, with predictably violent results.

Girls were weeping with shock and anger at what they saw. The only reason we weren't trampled by police horses was because the road was too narrow. Thirty people were taken to hospital and more than 200 injured.

When 100 or so demonstrators bravely rushed on to the pitch just after half time, the brutality of police and grinning vigilantes was even worse. People were kicked, punched time and time again then pulled by the hair and thrown over the railings. Police were dumping demonstrators into clumps of vigilantes, saying 'Who wants this one?' A demonstrator had a spike rammed

in his chest.

After this bloodbath 67 people were held in the Guildhall for hours and eventually charged, most of them with assault or threatening behaviour! The press, who swooped on the violence like vultures, hardly bothered to report the injuries to the crowd and onlookers until an enquiry was ordered and concentrated instead on the 'stabbing' of a policemen who was later said to be not stabbed and not even seriously hurt. In fact he was injured with a wooden banner, probably because of the force with which the police rammed into the crowd.

We are treated this brutally when we demonstrate against one of the most.

We are treated this brutally when we demonstrate against one of the most repressive regimes in the world, one headed by ex-Nazis and operating with utter sayagery against the mass of its people. Some of the policemen said they agreed with Anti-Apartheid but must carry out their orders. We would remind them that many Nazis, including Adolf Eichmann, argued the same way.

the same way.

There comes a time when you must either say 'No' to what is the law of the land or lose your humanity. Demonstrate to stop the tour. Send this white South African team back to their racialist fatherland knowing just how disgusted we are by their acquiescence in apartheid and the authorities that protect them here.

THIS SATURDAY: demonstrate at Twickenham against the Springboks. Assemble 1,30 pm Twickenham station, match starts

EETU: the union where the militants have to wear masks...



Cannon (left, but only in the picture) with Mark Young, EETU man at Ford

by an electrician

WITH the elimination of rank and file control over the employment of fulltime officials, the selection of trustees and the executive's domination of the appeals committee, the leadership of the Electricians' and Plumbers' Union (EETU/ PTU) has succeeded in reasserting its absolute control after the setbacks to its authority at the delegate conference earlier in the year.

the delegate conference earlier in the year.

The Isle of Man conference — the first one held by the new amalgamated unionsaw the plumbers' section resolutely rejecting the rules revisions proposed by the executive. With the support of the old ETU left wing, all the proposals were rejected.

The Les Cannon leadership immediately announced that it would ignore the conference decisions and hold a postal ballot of the membership. Free from collective discussion and decision, a majority of the members who voted in the ballot gave Cannon and cothe power to appoint officials and trustees instead of electing them by the rank and file.

Members who are now expelled by the executive can appeal to an appeals committee made up of the executive minus the president and secretary!

In its conference statement on In Place of Strife the executive said, 'It is the function of trade unions

in society to check the abuses of management powers and it is essential to retain the complete independence of workers' organisations' (my

organisations' (my emphasis).
Contrast this with the real situation in the contracting industry where the executive's policy of integration with the bosses has been carried to its logical conclusion. Following the executive's acceptance of the Joint Industry Board agreements, electrical agreements, electrical contracting is now run by a joint board of seven employ-ers and seven 'trade

BLACKED

The board has the power

The board has the power to fine workers for 'unconstitutional action'— any action against the bosses' interests— and has a policy of blacking militants. Because of their union's intervention, some electricians have been unable to obtain work for the last two years.

In the union at present all criticisms must be anonymous or the executive withdraws the card and thus the livelihood of the critic. Demonstrators have been forced to wear hoods before going to their headquarters to lobby their representatives and militant shop stewards have had their credentials withdrawn for the flimsiest of reasons. The very clause in the rule book designed to protect the union against blacklegs is being used as a weapon to expel militants. being used as a weapon to expel militants.

The EETU/PTU is held up by the ruling class and

Cannonpride

GRADED SPARKS MAKE

A JIB PRODUCT

publicised through the mass media as a 'model' union. While the bosses peddle productivity deals and their philosophy of speed-up and redundancy, their collaborators in the Labour government redouble their efforts to shackle the unions.

One thing is certain:In Place of Strife need never have been written if all the unions were like the EETU/PTU. The sooner all trade unions are like the EETU/PTU the happier the bosses will be. In fact to help this process along they are willing — as in the case of the JIB — to agree to substantial pay rises if the unions will voluntarily step into the chains and 'sell' the hard-earned conditions

of work that are the heritage of a hundred years of struggle.

A pay rise now in return for the men sacrficing the ability to fight for a pay rise in the future is seen by the bosses as a good invest-

the bosses as a good investment.

All supports of this newspaper will agree that the only way of 'maintaining a working class independence' is to have a revolutionary leadership in the unions. But this can only be achieved through a long, hard struggle around a consistent proletarian programme. As yet the seeds of this struggle have not even been planted in the EETU/PTU.

The existing underground

The existing underground opposition in the union is a small, amorphous, communist Party dominated group calling itself the Joint Action Committee.But its lack of influence is not due only to the CP's deplorable record in the union

union.

It has no will to fight for It has no will to fight for a real change. Its only programme is to 'smash the right' and it sees the solution to the vast problems as being merely a change in personnel.

It is the looseness of the JAC, the fact that it has nothing new to offer the membership, that restricts its influence. The struggle to provide an alternative to Cannon and a different conception of the union can only be carried through by consistent and co-ordinated intervention around a clear programme for the union.

TASK

Given the tradition of militancy in the ETU that even Cannon has been unable to destroy, the urgent task now is to democratise the union. The main content the union. The main content
of any programme for the
EETU/PTU must necessarily
be a 'bill of rights' for the
membership.
The JAC and all
socialists inside the union
must demand:
The return of area committees.

ittees.

The election of all officials and trustees.

That the executive be mandated by conference policy decisions.

That shop stewards' credentials can only be withdrawn by the members who elected them.

That no political group be barred from office.

That all delegates (and not just the executive) have the right to bring amend-

ments to rule before any conference.

That the union be organised to prevent the possibility of ballotrigging or bureaucratic manipulation by any party.

That no delegate can be barred from industrial conferences, which must be held regularly and be mandatory on the executive.

That a full discussion, with all views fairly represented, be instituted on the concept of the union as an independent working-class organisation and on whether it should be a craft, industrial or general union.

That whenever the whole of a union shop takes strike action, official recognition will be granted and that all officials are elected subject to the members' right of recall.

ISSUES

Of course any programme will have to go beyond this bill of rights. An anti-bureaucratic stand is not sufficient.

There are many issues on which socialists must take a stand in the union. We must have a position to put on the questions of organisation of youth in the union, the relationship of the union to the Labour Party, the role of the union press and propaganda and many other points which are being raised by the rank and file members.

raised by the rank and file members.

It is important that we do not oppose the rightwing leaders with a similar left grouping. The growing opposition must be organised around a programme which ensures programme which ensures that the union will be controlled by the politically conscious workers and not bureaucrats of a different

shade.
Finally, if we are to have a perspective of change in the EETU/PTU we must look at the proposed amalgamation with the General and Municipal Workers Union.
Clearly the matter is still in the balance, but with the Labour government giving Cannon the enthusiastic

support that it usually reserves for people like Weinstock and mergers in other fields, we should not be surprised to find ourselves members of a reactionary general union in the near future.

This new union combine would have several obvious advantages for the ruling class. Not only would more than a million workers be consigned to the forced passivity of the 'model' union, but a right wing block vote bigger than the AEF's would make its welcome appearance at conferences.

A secondary advantage for the employers would be the ease with which they could carry through labour rationalisation in the supply industry.

The virtual certainty of

rationalisation in the supply industry.

The virtual certainty of this merger poses major questions for socialists in the union. Should the Left continue an internal fight or should the struggle be to build a new union on a democratic basis—a struggle that would get support not only from the many militants who are already raising the idea but also from a large block of quite backward, craft-minded members.

STRATEGY

There can be no immediate answer to this question of strategy. There are still too many unknown factors. Most socialists would be unwilling to give up the fight in a millionstrong union for the backwaters of independent unionism.

waters of independent unionism.

It is possible that the merger will have a radicalising effect on the GMWU membership or bring a change in personnel which would assist our struggle. On the other hand, it is conceivable that a strengthened and entrenched bureaucracy would leave us no alternative but to start again.

Either way, our immediate task is to build a strong base within the EETU/PTU so that in the future we can pose a real alternative to Cannon and the 'model' union.

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CAPITALISM has nothing to offer mankind but exploitation, crises and war. The ruling classes of the world—a tiny minority—subordinate the needs of the vast majority to the blind accumulation of the blind accumulation of capital in the interests of competitive survival.

competitive survival.

Imperialism condemns twothirds of mankind to famine
and calls forth movements of
national liberation which
shake the system and expose
its essential barbarism. The
constant and mounting preparations for war and the development of weapons of mass
destruction place the survival
of humanity itself in the
balance.

of humanity itself in the balance.

The increasing intensity of international competition between ever-larger units drives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is



of workers' councils workers' control of

production.
Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unpreceddrives the ruling classes to new attacks on workers' living standards and conditions of work, to anti-trade union and anti-strike laws. All of these show capitalism in deepening crises from which it can only hope to escape at the cost of the working class and by the destruction of all its independent organisations.

The only alternative is workers' power — the democratic collective control of the working class, over industrial to structure of the working class over industry and society through a struggle against the society in which the unprecedented forces of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois. International Socialists therefore fight for:

Opposition to all ruling-ions.

Workers' control over production and a workers' state.

The working class gains of national liberation.

Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

ruling class through the mass organisations thrown up in the course of that struggle.

To overcome the unevenness with which this experience is gained, to draw and preserve the lessons of past struggles and transmit them for the future, to fight against then for the future, to fight against the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offencies a revolutionary offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embrac-ing the vanguard of the work-

ing the vanguard of the ing class.

The struggle to build such a party is only part of the wider struggle to create a World Revolutionary Socialist International, independent of all oppressors and exploiters of the working class, whether bureaucratic or bourgeois.

International Socialists

Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the paper.

International Socialism 40

The American working class

Italy in crisis Early history of the **British Communist Party** 'Orthodox Trotskyism': Socialist Labour League

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VIET NAM

by Stephen Marks

THE WAR in Vietnam continues. But in recent months an easy but false impression has gained ground that all is over bar some admittedly murderous shouting.

The papers have given heavy coverage to reports of American troop withdrawals. Few have noticed or have been told how many of these were regiments due for withdrawal in any case at the end of their term of duty, or how many were halting half-way at the convenient staging point of Okinawa

True, the papers have been filled with reports of the massive demonstrations in the United States itself for the withdrawal of the troops. But the support

troops. But the support these demonstrations received from sections of the US establishment, including senators and congressmen, encouraged some to the easy view that the war was all but over.

Few of these respectable gentlemen could have supported the demonstration's official demand to withdraw American troops immediately. Nor had any of them taken any steps to stop the war even within the limits of the official parliamentary game, such as voting against funds for the war or, perish the thought, impeaching the President. But none of this stopped them from

the President.But none of this stopped them from jumping on the bandwagon of the growing movement against the war.

The growing chaos the war has produced within America itself, the black rebellion and the campus revolt, increase the pressure on America's rulers to try and find a way out. and find a way out.

Real situation

But even without
Nixon's latest speech and
the disappointment it gave
to the 'doves' in the
American ruling class, a
closer look at the real
situation gives us reasons
for rejecting this view. At
the present rate of rundown,it will take until
February 1972 before the
number of US troops in
Vietnam falls as low as
250,000 from its present
total of more than 500,000,
without counting the level of
other troops such as
Australians, Thais, South
Koreans, etc.
The US government's real

The US government's real motives seem political. Fifty thousand young men due to be drafted in November and be drafted in November and December have had their call-up postponed and with General Westmoreland touring West European countries to examine all-wolunteer armies, the probability is that the Americans have merely shifted their strategy to one of reducing call-up and casualties to what they hope will be a politically 'safe' level by reducing the number of troops and going over to a 'defensive' strategy. Strategy.
Not that this 'defensive'

posture will lead to any let-up in the obscenity of the war; of the bombing of the South which is currently running at a level equal to two Hiroshimas a week; of the chemical poisoning of thousands of square miles

In an age when the arms budgets of the 'wealthy' one-third of the world exceed the total national income of the remaining two-thirds of the world, the resources which could provide the Vietnamese peasant with the means of a decent life are instead rained down on him in the form of metal bombs

which will remain uninhabitable and uncultivable for decades; and of the systematic destruction of whole villages with, at best, the resettlement of their people in concentration camps.

All this means is that the direct involvement of American ground troops in the fruitless effort to eradicate a force which can not be distinguished from the mass of the people themselves, is to be scaled down, lest the domestic repercussions get out of control. But the central objective of American imperialism in Vietnam will remain: to prevent anything that can be presented as the defeat of the most powerful country history has known, by a people it has made into one of the poorest.

In itself and in isolation Vietnam would not be essential or even important for American imperialism. What America is fighting against is the effect of a complete defeat in Vietnam on the stability of her world position. Not only would revolutionary forces everywhere feel heartened by such a victory, and not only would the forces of order feel weaker.

Aside from such factors of

weaker.

Aside from such factors of morale, it would become almost impossible politically for America's rule rs to for America's rulers to pretend on any future occasion that another such war could ever be engaged in with the slightest hope of victory. And the immediate economic effect within South East Asia would be considerable on American puppet regimes in such places as South Korea and Taiwan, which have undergone an unreal phantomboom on the strength of the economic 'fall out' of the war and the tremendous market it has created for various precarious various precarious mushroom-industries.

Though these stakes are high, some might argue that their consequence need not be to force America to pursue an impossible 'victory' in Vietnam, but rather to settle for a 'decorous' withdrawal that can be presented as something less than a complete rout. Even such an outcome as this would represent an immense and

obvious defeat; but in any case a 'respectable' way out cannot be found.

cannot be found.

For a further contradiction in which the Americans are caught is that a prerequisite for withdrawing without loss of 'face' is a new 'government' in Saigon. But so scanty and unstable are the few corrupt hangers on that America can find in on that America can find in South Vietnam, that any attempt to replace the present clique will almost certainly lead to a total collapse of the Southern



regime, which is precisely what America wishes to

avoid at all costs.

Though in passing we might note that the pretence that the United States is in that the United States is in Vietnam at the invitation of a local 'government' received its final blow when, in response to a request from Senator Fulbright of the Senate's Foreign Relations' committee to see the document in which such a 'request' was made, a State Department official told the Washington Post that 'we could not find a specific document' and there was no 'formal diplomatic request' for the troops.

troops.
The war therefore will continue for the foreseeable future, until the strains it has produced have become even less bearable. It will continue to affect us all through its effects on the world monetary system and on the economic and social stability of the world's most powerful capitalist country.

The considerable military interests involved in the war are in any case those which have enabled America's have enabled America's economy to enjoy its generation of unprecedented boom, based on the massive diversion of otherwise unemployable resources to the production of arms and to the consequences of this spending on the rest of the economy not only directly but through its effect on the rate of technical innovation rate of technical innovation in the most advanced sectors of industry. The chickens of war-economy imperialism are coming home

In an age when the arms budgets of the 'wealthy' one-third of the world exceed the total national income of the total national income of the remaining two-thirds of the world, the resources which could provide the Vietnamese peasant with the means of a decent life are instead rained down on him in the form of metal bombs, burning jelly and chemical death. His stubborn refusal to accept the verdict which this perversion of man's productive forces represents has called the whole seemingly unalterable seemingly unalterable set-up into question, and disrupted the "stability" which was based upon the preparation of his destruction.

But this perversion-based stability affects the peasant ov Vietnam in other ways thanby confronting him with

thanby confronting him with its murderous foundation. It has also muted the expression and stunted the development of the only alternative to capitalist barbarism on a world scale — the organised political strength of the working class.

Such a force was created out of the world's only successful workers' revolution in Russia in 1917 — the Communist International. When Russia's few and isolated workers lost power in the aftermath of the isolation of the revolution and their new bureaucratic rulers divided the world with Western bureaucranic fullers divided the world with Western imperialism at Yalta in 1945 the foundations were laid of the new burst of capitalist expansion whose products the Vietnamese are resisting and defeating

today. And this affected the course of their own revolution.

The Vietnamese are a

peasant people. Traditionally organised in autonomous village communities, they have throughout their history shown a great ability to defend themselves and resist attacks from and resist attacks from foreign invaders and from domestic tyrants. But their fragmented way of life has meant that like peasants anywhere, they could only be welded into a force capable of taking political power at a national level by some cutoid force.

at a national level by some outside force.

In their almost continual history of struggle against Western imperialism, they were at first led by elements of the old mandarin class, who welded them together behind a recommend a who welded them together behind a programme of a return to old times. The defeat of these traditional movements at the turn of the century meant that the leadership could only be taken by one or other! of the new classes created in the towns by French colonialism; either the new urban working class, or else, as the French deliberately prevented the growth of a native business class, by the new and growing lower-middle class of government functionaries, civil servants and others. Their interests were opposed to those of an imperialism which limited their future by preventing an independent growth of the national economy.

Main basis

Under either leadership the peasants, with their unbelievable heroism and initiative, would form the main basis of the revolution, would have won national independence and would have carried through a rural revolution by abolishing landlordism and breaking up the big estates. But under the big estates. But under the leadership of the workers the possibility would exist of going further, of establish-ing a revolutionary democracy of going further, of establishing a revolutionary democracy based on workers' and poor peasants' councils and in devoting the main strength of the new regime to the spreading of the revolution to other countries, without which a poor country like Vietnam can find no lasting solution to its problems in a hostile capitalist world.

This was the course taken by the Russian workers and peasants in 1917. Unhappily the strength of Stalinism in Vietnam, in the last analysis a function of its world strength, ensured that

world strength, ensured that the programme of the movement led by the Vietnam-ese Communist Party under Ho Chi Minh was quite different.

The programme of the Vietminh addressed itself to 'rich people, soldiers, peasants, workers, intellectpeasants, workers, intellectuals, employees, traders, youth, women' — in other words to all those whose interests were opposed in any way to imperialism, and under the leadership not of the working class but of a party hierarchically organised from the top down and with a programme not and with a programme not

of world revolution but or

of world revolution but of the independent development of the Vietnamese economy in a still capitalist world—an aim that could only be achieved in the last analysis by a ruthless exploitation of the workers and peasants themselves.

Thus when in 1945 the Vietminh leaders believed that such a goal of an independent development of the Vietnamese economy could be obtained by compromise with France, they concluded an agreement with the French and allowed their troops to return to Vietnam. This followed their seizure of power in the vacuum of Japanese defeat, in which the Vietminh allied themselves with the parties of the local ruling class and suppressed the workers of Saigon when they tried to prevent the landing of allied troops.

Broke their word

At this time those, mainly the Vietnamese
Trotskyists, who stood for a continuation of revolutionary struggle were denounced as 'fascists' and 'provocateurs' and ultimately murdered by the Vietminh leaders. Only when the French broke their word and attacked the Vietminh did the independence struggle begin, and only then did the Vietminh leaders resume the revolutionary mobilisation of the peasants.

This record, as well as the North Vietnamese ruthless suppression of the peasant revolt in 1956, shows us the uselessness of unfounded illusions in the nature of the Hanoi regime. It is not socialist but nationalist. The fact that an independent national development in the present era requires state ownership of

ment in the present era requires state ownership of property to be effective does not alter the radical difference in the nature of the state developed by a worker-led socialist revolution and that built by

revolution and that built by a petty-bourgeois nationalist regime such as that in Vietnam, or for that matter in China or Cuba.

The fact remains none-theless that a victory for the Vietnamese people even under their present leadership would represent a great gain for revolutionaries everywhere. By defeating the biggest and most reactionary capitalist power in the world it will deal a blow at our common enemy and at our common enemy and deter it from new repressions against popular movements elsewhere, whatever their

character.

And for the peasants of Vietnam it will mean an end to landlordism and a removal of the oppressive burden of foreign exploitation. Why then raise the question of the nature of the Vietnamese leadership at the present time when all should be united against the common enemy? This ignores the fact that among the most important effects of the Vietnamese struggle has Vietnamese struggle has been the mobilisation through the anti-war move-



NLF prisoners chained like animals by American troops

to page 4

Social security: the workhouse has been abolished but its spirit lingers on...

by Jim Kincaid

AT THE BEGINNING of November the old age pension was raised by 10s to £5 a week for a single person. Married pensioners are now to get £8 2s a week between them.

In fact these are only paper increases that do little more than restore the purchasing power of the pension eroded by rising prices over the past two years.

past two years.
In announcing these changes, the government made it clear that pensioners need look for no further pension increases for another two years. Mr Richard Crossman, the minister responsible, has recently been making a great many speeches about pensions but neither he nor any other member of the government has explained

any other member of the government has explained how old people are expected to manage on such a pitifully low income.

In fact since the present national insurance scheme was set up in 1948 there has not been a single official enquiry to establish whether income levels among the elderly are sufficient to whether income revers among the elderly are sufficient to allow an adequate diet or to heat a home properly. No survey has stated what necessities cannot be afforded on £5 a week.

Poverty line

Anyone with an old age pension and no other income to live on is in fact below the government's official poverty line and would qualify for a supplementary allowance.

But contrary to what the readers of the Daily Express are encouraged to believe, the Supplementary Benefits Commission is not the 'last of the big spenders'. The single pensioner with no more than the basic £5 will get a supplementary pension that is only large enough to pay the rent and give him an extra 6s a week.

pay the rent and give him an extra 6s a week.

A married couple get even less: rent plus 5s a week (5s a week between them, not 5s each!).

Last year, out of a total of seven million old people, nearly two million had to explicit for supplementary. apply for supplementary pensions to bring their income up to the poverty line.Furthermore, recently line.Furthermore, recently published figures show that if the poverty line were only £2 a week higher (ie rent plus £7 6s a week for a single person) then three out of four of all pensioners in the country would qualify for supplementary assistance. If the poverty line were only £1 a week higher, then four out of five of all widows over the age of 60 would be entitled to an income supplement, which is

income supplement, which is another way of saying that the vast majority of old people have to exist on people have to exist on incomes at the poverty line or only a shade above. Only a minute four per cent of old people have incomes that reach the average earnings of manual workers

in industry, currently £24 a

in industry, currently £24 a week.

The Supplementary
Benefit's Commission is not the most friendly and approachable of official agencies. Recently, for example, the government has admitted that the average time people have to wait for attention in these offices is 2½ hours. The means tests used are not quite as ruthless as in the inter-war period but still the general assumption is that the applicant is a potential swindler until he can prove otherwise.

otherwise.

The applicant is liable to severe penalties, including imprisonment, for giving false information to the Ministry. But the Ministry is not penalised for mistakenly holding benefit.

Indeed, it is impossible for an applicant to know whether or not he has been given less than he is entitled to, since the detailed rules governing entitlement are not made public by the Ministry. The same Official Secrets Act which guards the nation's atomic secrets also applies to the rule book used by the Supplementary Benefits officers.

Even the number of people employed by the Commission is kept secret from the public. A good guess would put the figure as high as 25,000.

Nearly two million pensioners can only achieve a bare subsistence income by claiming supplementary benefit. This involves filling in complicated forms and being interviewed and means-tested by a category of civil servant allowed more freedom of individual decision than any comparable group in the public service.

An appeal can be made against a decision of the Ministry but only to a local tribunal meeting in secret and not to any national court. No individual cases concerning supplementary benefit can be raised in the law courts or in parliament. The goverment maintain the convenient fiction that no Minister of the Crown is directly responsible for the operations of the Commission.

Formed a union

After 150 years of struggle, most employers in Britain have been forced to accept the right of workers to organise themselves and negotiate through representatives such as shop stewards or unions. But the Ministry of Social Security insists on dealing with each applicant as an isolated case.

Millions of people

Millions of people
who are partly or wholly
dependent on the social
security system for an
income because of old age, or handicap, or other incapacity for work; are refused any right to pool experiences or bargaining strength. So far as the Ministry of Social Security Ministry of Social Security is concerned, an applicant does not negotiate — he gets told. The workhouse has long since been abolished but its spirit



Recently in Birmingham a large group of people depending on so cial security have formed a union to help claimants secure their rights, not just to money that is desperately needed, but to a little respect as well. This is a welcome development, deserving the support and encouragement of every socialist. But a tough struggle lies ahead before there is an effective and powerful

lies ahead before there is an effective and powerful claimants' union covering the whole country.

Reports from Birmingham suggest that local social security officials are taking the same line as employers did in the 19th century when faced with the rise of workers' organisations—refusal to recognise the unions' right to exist and refusal to negotiate with the union.

refusal to negotiate with
the union.

For people above retirement age, the welfare state
amounts to this: They
qualify for a pension but this
can be reduced if they
continue to work and earn.
The pension awarded on
retirement is well below
even the stringently-defined
poverty line but to achieve
a bare subsistence income
two million old people
must apply for supplementary
benefit.

Most serious of all, and

benefit.

Most serious of all, and not surprisingly, there are also large numbers of old people who choose to stay away from the Poor Law atmosphere of supplementary benefits. Surveys suggest atmosphere of supprehending benefits. Surveys suggest that something like 400,000 pensioners live below the poverty line because they are unwilling to apply to the Ministry or are unaware of their rights.

The inadequate living standards inflicted on the old go largely undiscussed

by the capitalist press. The impression created by the mass circulation newspapers is that the typical client on supplementary benefit is a man in good health who is too lazy to hold down a steady job.

The facts are very different. 70 per cent of all supplementary allowances go to old people, another 12 per cent to men who are sick or disable d, and nine per cent to fatherless families, mainly widows with young children. widows with young children.

Vast majority

Vast majority

Only eight per cent of supplementary allowances go to men who are unemployed and research studies have shown that the vast majority of this group are elderly men, often handicapped and mainly living in areas of high unemployment where the jobs are hard to come by even for men in their prime.

Far too many people are taken in by the absurd theory that the living standards of millions of old people and widows can be improved by toughening up on benefits supposedly handed out to largely mythical scroungers. Last year the Ministry held a much-publicised drive to weed out the scroungers. Out of nearly three million applicants they managed to find only 88 cases in which legal proceedings were taken and prison sentences were obtained for only 17 men.

Given the pitiful living

men.
Given the pitiful living standards which are inflicted on millions of old people, the government's complacency is almost inhelievable. Legislation is being introduced in the present session of parliament to change the whole basis of

the existing state pension

the existing state pension scheme.

When the new pattern comes into operation, people are to get a pension that will be higher or lower depending upon the level of their earnings throughout their working lives. The new system will have certain merits as well as a number of disadvantages over the present scheme. over the present scheme.
These will be analysed
more fully in future articles.
What needs to be stressed

What needs to be stresse again and again is that the new pension scheme offers absolutely nothing to existing pensioners. They are completely excluded from benefit under the new earnings-related principle. The basis of the proposed legislation is that a person will get a bigger pension than at present only to the extent that he has built up a bigger record of contributions.

Future generations of pensioners will have some-what larger pensions simply because they will have paid more into the scheme. The new legislation represents a new legislation represents a further move away from the welfare principles that people benefit to the extent that they are in need. What underlies the Crossman plan for social security is the capitalist principle that people should get only what they have paid for.

Under this strict logic, the existing generation of pensioners do not qualify. They have not handed over enough hard cas h during

their working lives to justify any increase in the level of pensions currently being paid.

being paid.

Mr Crossman has
proclaimed his National
Superannuation Bill as a
revolution in welfare
provision, a social advance
equal in significance to the
introduction of the Beveridge
Scheme in 1948.

In socialist terms,
Crossman's scheme is in
fact a skilfully disguised
retreat. Under the technical
complexities, the earningsrelated pension scheme
marks a reversion to the

related pension scheme
marks a reversion to the
principle that governs
commercial insurance. A
worker's pension will be
determined not by the degree
of his need in old age, nor
by the contribution he has
made to society by his skill
and effort over the years.
Only one sort of contribution
will count, the amount of
money which the government
will take from him and from
his employer week by week
throughout his working life.

What consolation?

The government claim is that an adequate pension will be paid when their scheme comes fully into operation in 1992. What consolation does this prospect offer to the present generation of old people, or to anyone else who cares about their fate?

And what political forces can be mobilised to force a change in the order of priorities dictating the policy of the present government?

VIETNAM

from page 3

ment of hundreds of thousands of young people who have gone on to take up a position of opposition to the whole system that produces the war.

The future political development of this generation is of crucial importance to the future of the world socialist movement. Those who believe that the present leadership of the Vietnamese movement must inevitably turn against what is now its mass base have a duty to prevent the disillusion which this development will undoubtedly produce.

It is our duty to make plain that we support all movements against imperialism whatever their leadership or nature. Those who sow unfounded illusions about about the nature of regimes with limited options in the name of 'not dividing the movement' can only weaken the revolutionary movement in the future in the same way that uncritical Stalinists did in the 1930s.

British duplicity

British duplicity

The war is to continue
so must our opposition to it.
The demonstration called
for 23 November is an
important opportunity to
bring home to people in
Britain that the war continues and so does our struggle against it. The emergence of a would-be 'dove' element within the American establishment will make it easier for the Labour government to cover up the facts of British duplicity by

cheap and empty statements of support for 'men of good will' in Washington.

This makes our task all the more important. Of course mass demonstrations are not the only form that solidarity. the only form that solidarity action can take. Our duty to

action can take. Our duty to be in solidarity with the Vietnamese is based on the fact of their continuing struggle, and does not therefore alter over time.

However to deduce from this that the form our action takes must be equally unchanging is as unreal as the opposite error on the Left, which is to assume that since the best help we can give the Vietnamese is the rewolution in Britain, no revolution in Britain, no

special action on the Vietnam question is required, or is even a diversion. vietnam question is required, or is even a diversion.

As the survey conducted by New Society showed, the vast majority of the 100,000 on last 27 October's VSC demonstration marched not only from solidarity with the Vietnamese but from a general opposition to capitalism.

It is the duty of revolutionary militants to point out the continuing relevance of solidarity action to a continuing war and to point out to those on the streets last October that if mass demonstrations are

if mass demonstrations are not an end in themselves they are still an essential part of an ongoing total strategy.

Tide of protest

This can best be done not only by activity specifically related to the 23 November demonstration but also by raising the question of the demonstration, and of the important rising tide of protest in the USA.

That the numbers

That the numbers
mobilised on the single
issue of Vietnam will
fluctuate with the apparent
intensity of the crisis in th country as presented by the ruling class press is not surprising. If the perspect-ives of this article are correct, the future will correct, the future will see, if not more spectacular events on the lines of the Tet offensive, though this cannot be ruled out, then a continuing and deepening morass for American imperialism, in which the direct connection of Vietnam with the heart of the general crisis of the system will become more and more become more and more evident.
With the prospect of

With the prospect of rising industrial struggle here at nome, this must be the perspective of the solidarity movement in Britain. But since it is never enough to rely on the ruling class to make our connections for use messive turnout ions for us, a massive turnout for the 23 November demon-stration is the most immediately relevant way in which the intimate connection of the intimate connection of the struggle of the people of Vietnam and the struggle of all those fighting for revolution throughout the



Northern Ireland: socialists and left republicans spearhead the fight as civil rights 'moderates' do a deal with Unionists

by John Palmer

TO JUDGE from the virtual blackout of news from Northern Ireland in Britain in the past two months, it might be imagined that the civil rights movement has disappeared, perhaps in spontaneous gratitude for the actions of the British government and the 'reformed' Unionists. This is not the case.

It is true that the It is true that the oppressed people of Northern Ireland have won a significant if partial victory in their struggle against the Stermont regime. The Unionist government has agreed to introduce a set of 'reforms' and in the process has won the hostility of extreme rightwing and Paisleyite forces who believe that forces who believe that these concessions to the Catholics spell the begin-ning of the end of the

Orange regime.
Socialists, on the other hand, should be clear about these reforms. The aim is to introduce into Northern Ireland the conditions of 'normal democracy' found in most capitalist countries. In practice this means a system of elections free from sectarian ballot-rigging and gerrymandering the abolition of religious sectarian control over the allocation of houses and public appointments and the 'secularisation' of the state security forces

the 'secularisation' of the state security forces.

The fact is that all of these reforms are essential if British imperialism and British capitalism are to continue to effectively subjugate the economic and political life of both parts of Ireland to their interests.

OBSTACLE

The existence of a blatant Orange dictatorship in the north of Ireland has become an increasing obstacle to Westminster's plans for control of both parts of Ireland. These plans involve the total reintegration of the whole Irish economy back into British capitalism. This integration is necessary if Britain is to meet the Britain is to meet the competitive challenge posed by entry into the Common Market.

Total re-integration is not, however, possible within the existing constit-utional and political relationship between West-

minster and Dublin. The present set-up in the 26 counties has permitted some penetration by rival capitalisms.

capitalisms.

It seems that most British politicians favour some kind of federal link with a reunited Ireland, but the situation in the North has prevented serious progress being made to this end. For as long as the Orange regime ruled in such a blatantly discriminatory fashion, there was little chance of the Dublin government being able to sell 'rapprochement' with Britain.

Britain.
Part of the deal for closer links with Britain had to include the destruct-ion of the Paisleyite power bases of the Stormont state-

bases of the Stormont statelet. Westminster wanted
gradual progress to
'reforms', but the upsurge
of the mass civil rights
movement (largely a product
of the world-wide upsurge
last year) changed all that.
When it became clear to
Westminster that civil war
was a possibility and
consequently the whole
basis of imperialist and
capitalist domination of
Ireland might be undermined,
the Labour government the Labour government stepped in to enforce such democratic reforms as were necessary to preserve the

In return, the leaders of the Catholic middle-class — mainly the Nationalist Party and the Labour and civil rights right wing — guaranteed to deliver the street-based civil rights movement bound hand and foot to the state Leaders like John Hume and Ivan Cooper promised Chichester-Cooper promised Chichester-Clark that they would restrict their activities to the cloistered irrelevance

of the Stormont parliament.
Within days the right
wing leaders of the Civil
Rights Association (largely aided by the Communist Party 'moderate' leaders) started a purge of civil rights militants — mainly the People's Democracy and left republicans. It now seemed that the civil rights battle had been won, that the suffering of the homeless or the slum dwellers no longer had a place in the civil rights programme and imperialism had, as if by magic, disappeared

overnight.
Not only the avowedly right wing forces, but sections of the republican movement, apparently backed by some elements from the Southern Fianna

Fail party, have also jumped on the Stormont bandwagon. Both Dublin and the Northern right wing desired, in common with Stormont, to contain and isolate the challenge from the socialists and left republicans within the civil republicans within the civil rights movement.

Outside this unholy political air. A stand the revolutionary and its allies) and the left wing republicans. As can be seen from their paper. wing republicans. As can be seen from their paper The United Irishman, a large section of the republican movement is now committed to developing an anti-imperialist movement into an anti-capitalist movement in the struggle for a workers' republic

republic.
What the socialists and the left republicans say is that the only kind of civil rights movement left is one which challenges the imperialist domination and imperialist domination and Imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation of Ireland and champions the cause of working-class civil rights — Protestant and Catholic, north and south.

UNITED

They understand that it is only by building a movement on this basis that the ment on this basis that the working class can be united and imperialism defeated and 100 per cent civil rights achieved. In a sentence, this is the struggle for the workers' republic.

Of course the problems of regrouping the Irish left are considerable. For some 'marxists' there is a sectarian reluctance to help

'marxists' there is a sectarian reluctance to help build a broad revolutionary movement and there remains the danger that some section of the left may get hopelessly embedded in the Labour reformist organisations.

People's Democracy itself is still evolving from the politics and features of its student origins but it remains the most hopeful nucleus of the socialist regroupment in Ireland and its attempts to establish a 32-county organisation with a national paper is of the greatest importance. PD's relationship with the left republicans, who include many trade union militaris. many trade union militants, will partly depend on loyally working together against imperialism and for civil rights and partly on PD's success in raising the whole theoretical level of the Irish revolutionary move-

ment.
The fact that the national

Chichester-Clark at an Orange Order rally: backbone of the police state Green Tory and social democratic leaders have abandoned the civil rights movement and the attempt to confront imperialism, means in effect that only the socialists and left republicans remain fighting for the oppressed people of Northern Ireland. As socialists we were

Northern Ireland.

As socialists we were always specifically in solidarity with the Irish socialists, however uninfluential they may have been, but for the wider solidarity movement it is also true now that in practice it can only be in alliance with the left republicans and socialists. Since the Irish

socialists. Since the Irish bourgeoisie has abandoned the struggle against imperialism the only forces fighting for self-determination for the Irish people—that is, against imperialism—are those fighting for

a workers' republic.

At the same time it remains true that the vast majority of Irish and British workers in this country, including those sympathetic to militant civil rights, do not yet see this. It would therefore be sectarian for the Irish Civil Rights
Solidarity Cambaign to Solidarity Campaign to demand socialist convictions as a pre-condition for supporting a policy of solidarity with the militant civil rights movement.

PROVED

Equally, our support for the right of self-determinat-ion (the defeat of imperialism) has to be unconditional. We cannot accept therefore as a matter of principle that solidarity. of principle that solidarity has only to be with the socialist and left republican forces. In practice only through a workers'

republic can 100 per cent

republic can 100 per cent civil rights and the goals of Easter week be achieved but these conclusions have to be proved in real life.

At the same time it would be quite wrong for the programme of the solidarity campaign to lag behind the general civil rights movement in Ireland or to be to the right of the advanced Irish workers in Britain.

For this reason, the International Socialists intend to press the comrades of the ICRSC to accept the following 12 point programme of aims. With such a programme we believe it possible to involve in solidarity action large numbers of Irish workers in Britain and to unite the militants in the wider civil rights movement in a militants in the wider civil rights movement in a campaign to open a second front in Britain.

THE 12-POINT PROGRAMME

1. One man, one job.
2. One family, one house.
3. Full support for Catholic and Protestant workers fighting low wages and employment of exploited cheap labour.
4. Full support for Catholic and Protestant tenants fighting rent exploitation and slum landlords.

5. Full support for the right of Catholic and Protestant workers to join and organise trade unions.

6. Immediate and unqualified abolition of the Special Powers Act.

7. Abolition of all special reserve police and military forces and para-military Paisleyite terrorist groups. 8. Support for those organisations seeking to protect Catholic and Protestant workers and their families against intimidation by Stormont or Paisleyite

9. The immediate and unconditional release of all civil rights and republican

prisoners.

10. Support for the struggle for civil rights in the 26 counties and for those fight-

ing oppressive legislation by the 26-county government 11. Support for those fighting British imperialism and its capitalist agents in Ireland and for the withdrawal of British troops. 12. Support for the unconditional right of the whole Irish people to decide their own future, free of imperialist domination, in the domination, in the knowledge that it is the socialist and left republican forces inspired by Connolly's workers' republic who are leading this struggle.

Join the International Socialists

ABERDEEN Pete Drummond
19 High Street Aberdeen
ACTON Bob Cartwright
27 Bath Road W4
ANGEL Barry Hugill
154 Downham Road N1
ASHFORD Phil Evans 'Eastside'
Ham St Nr Ashford Kent
BARNSLEY Joe Kenyon
120 Standhill Crescent
BATH John Whitfield
17 Burlington Road
BECKENHAM Mervyn Smith
9 Alton Gardens Copers Cope Rd
01 658 6552
BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster
128 Yardley Wood Rd B'hm 13
BRADFORD Neil Patterson
25 Fernhill Grove off Park Rd
BRIGHTON Ingrid Rose
58 Old Steine
BRISTOL B R Horlock
26 Elmdale Road Bristol 8
CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham
12a Metcalfe Road
CAMDEN EAST Richard Kuper
45 Falkland Rd NW5
CAMDIFF Nigel Walby
35 de Burgh Street CAMDEN WEST Robert MacGibbon 22 Estell Rd NW3
CARDIFF Nigel Walby 35 de Burgh Street
CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell
The Flat St Thomas' School
Eastworth Rd Chertsey Surrey
CLYDEBANK Eric Duncan
1221 Dumbarton Rd Glasgow W4
COLCHESTER Ian Noble
12 Coach Rd Arlesford
Wivenhoe 272
COVENTRY Dave Edwards
53 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon
CRAWLEY Joanna Bolton
17 Park View Rd Salfords
Horley Surrey
CROYDON Jenny Woodhams
26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon
DEPTFORD John Ure
172a Deptford High Rd SE8
DONCASTER George Yarrow
39 Jossey Lane Scawthorpe
DURHAM Jane Mackay
15 Wanless Tee Durham City
EAST LONDON Bob Light
2 Oster Toe Southcote Rd E17

EDINBURGH Brian Lavery
41 East London Street
ENFIELD Ian Birchall
109 Croyland Rd N9
ERITH Paul Wildish
30 Poplar Mount Belvedere Kent
EXETER Granville Williams
Town Tenement Farm
Clyst Hydon Cullompton Devon
FULHAM Brian Rose
49 Schubert Road SW15
GLASGOW North-Ian Mooney
4 Dalcross Passage W1:
South-S Morris 4 Elphinstone
Street Glasgow SW1
GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters
c/o 1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex
HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker
36 Gilden Road NW5
HARLOW Hugh Kerr
70 Joiners Field Harlow Essex
HARROW Kevin Simms
56 Salisbury Road
HAVERING Terry Ward
91 Heath Park Rd Gildea Pk
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD John
Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane
HORNSEY Chris Russell
131 Alexandra Park Rd N22
HULL Dave Gate 90 Bristol Rd
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16 Madras Rd Ilford 014787311
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104 Westbourne Road 16 Madras Rd Ilford 014787311
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104 Westbourne Road
KILBURN Geoff Woolf
27 Sherriff Rd NW6
KINGSTON John Owen
4 Sandown Court Esher
LANCASTER Don Milligan
56 Norfolk Street
LAMBETH Andy Smith
Flat 6 126 Streatham Hill SW2
LEICESTER Barry Thomas
39 Lower Hastings Street
LEEDS Vince Hall
Flat 3 25 Bagby Rd Leeds 2:
LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss 82 Blackheath Rd MANCHESTER-J Sutton 11a Rowan Ave Walley Range M16: Joni Jones 15 Parsonage Road Manchester 20

MERSEYSIDE Janice Humphrey
96 Princes Rd Liverpool 8
MERTON Pam Kelsey
47 Richmond Avenue SW20
NEWCASTLE Barney Hardy
13 Eslington Terrace Newcastleon-Tyne 2
NORTHAMPTON Mick Bunting
25 Witton Rd Duston
NORWICH Gerald Crompton
220 College Rd NOR 54F
OXFORD Steve Bolchover
181 Iffley Road
PORTSMOUTH Alan Sandham
43 Marmion Rd Southsea Hants
POTTERIES Dick Pratt
5 Grosvenor Rd Newcastle Staffs
RICHMOND Nicky Landau
Flat 3 44 Church Rd
SELBY John Charlton
12 Thatch Close Selby Yorks
SHEFFIELD Rick Osborn
159a Rustlings Rd Sheffield
S11 7 AD
SOUTHAMPTON W Maxim
Ashley Court Hulse Road
STOCKPORT Geoff Hodgson
73a Forest Range M/C 19
STOKE NEWINGTON Mike
McGrath 28 Manor Road N16
SWANSEA Dick Jones
37 Bryn Road
TEESSIDE Phil Semp
72 Mersey Rd Redcar: 37 Bryn Road
TEESSIDE Phil Semp
72 Mersey Rd Redcar:
Rob Clay 33 Pasture Lane
Lazenby Teesside
TOTTENHAM Laurie Flynn
374 High Road N17
WANDSWORTH Mark Hutton
87 Broderick Road
Wandsworth Common SW17
WATFORD Paul Russell
61 Carpenders Avenue
Carpenders Park
WIGAN Ray Challinor
34 Whiteside Ave Hindley
YORK Bob Looker 22 Hobgate
VICTORIA Tony Dunne
14 Carlisle Mansions
Carlisle Place SW1

Defence squads against fascists

THE FRONT-PAGE article (6 November) 'Racialists plan to disrupt A-A rally' was, I feel, not in keeping with the revolutionary aspirations of the paper. The

aspirations of the paper. The whole tone was one of passivity more in line with the moralisers of Tribune.

No doubt the report of a National Front meeting and the activities of the St. George's Society is useful — but only if we use the information to combat this vermin.

If we take seriously the remark that 'The 9 November demonstration may (my emphasis) give the society

emphasis) give the society its chance to practice what it preaches . . .' then we don't stand idly by.

The only way to fight fascism is to smash it. The revolutionary movement has

learnt this lesson at horrific

As the article pointed out, the press and police won't do anything to stop the menace. They're too busy scandalising and dispersing the

LETTERS

left, respectively. Therefore we have to rely on our strength.

Any march that is threat-ened by fascist thugs must be protected. The only way to do this is to form our own defence squads. Socialist Worker should have put out a call to all revolutionary and anti-fascist organisations for the formation of such squads.

I hope this takes place when future fascist violence threatens. - PHIL SEMP, Teesside.

I KNOW that Ian Birchall's article (13 November) was meant only to show exactly how badly British workers fare compared to workers in

This he does only too well, and he is obviously correct to say that What matters is how British workers can improve their conditions' — and to point but I am amazed that he can say that Britain's entry into the Common Market 'isn't the problem for British workers'. It certainly is a mighty big problem! Don't the massive price increases which would almost inevitably follow British entry matter to Ian? They certainly will to most housewives.

Of course we know that

Of course we know that entry into the Common Market is just one means by which British capitalism could try to solve its problems at the expense of workers' real living standards.

But wouldn't we oppose any other weapon the employers and their government (Labour or Tory) adopted? Don't International Socialists fight for corposition to all ruling 'opposition to all ruling-class policies: and organisations'? Why make an exception for the Common Market? - MARTIN SHAW, London N1.



Please send further details of the meetings and activities of the International Socialists to:

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SIE STWORKER

TENANTS PREPARE FOR NEW BATTLE OVER RENT

SW Reporter

A MASS MEETING of Greater London Council tenants on Monday night decided to launch a campaign to win more support for their battle

more support for their battle against rising rents.

The meeting, at Friends House, Barnet Grove, attended by 400 to 500 people, was called by the United Tenants Action Committee, which will lead a drive in the new year to get more GLC tenants to refuse to pay rent increases.

Another sharp increase is expected in 1970. Horace Cutler, Tory housing chief of the GLC, has already said that he will be demanding more from the tenants than Housing Minister Anthony Greenwood will allow.

Not depressed

The enthusiasm of the meeting showed that the tenants were in no way depressed by a court judgment sarlier in the day in favour of the GLC. The council had taken legal action for repossession of property

aken legal action for repossession of property against four tenants who had refused to pay October 1968's rent increase.

Tenants packed Bow Court and 100 demonstrated outside when the judge granted possession of the tenants' homes to the GLC. But the order will not become effective for seven weeks

A MILITANT WORKER at Enfield Rolling Mills, North London, has been victimised in an attempt to smash the union. Alan Woodward, who recently established a large branch of the Clerical and

Administrative Workers Union, has been singled out

ERM have rushed through the sacking, ignoring their previous practice of giving advance notice and consulting the affected unions. Union attempts to suggest alternative jobs were ignored and it is the clear intention

to weaken the newly-formed union by getting rid of the chief representative

The bosses are worried by the success of CAWU in

for 'redundancy'

and this period will be lengthened by an appeal against the judgment.

lengthened by an appeal against the judgment.

The judge was clearly reluctant to give the GLC immediate re-possession as the legality of the 1968 rent rises is being challenged in the High Court, where a decision is expected shortly. If the increases are judged illegal it would affect the GLC's right to evict.

The judge, in his summing up, was also sharply critical of the activities of Mr Cutler. The Tory housing spokesman has continually attacked the tenants during the campaign and grossly underestimated the extent of UTAC's support.

He has also systematically jacked up the rents as flats become vacant. In some areas, new tenants have had to new

become vacant. In some areas, new tenants have had to pay as much as £3 a week more for a flat than the previous

occupants.
After Monday's court verdict, Mrs Irene Lane, secretary of Hackney
Federation of Tenants
Associations, commented:
'The judge hasn't given a decision one way or another.
The tenants will fight on.'

We regret that in a report on 6 November, Socialist Worker said that hundreds of GLC tenants were withholding rent increases. The figure should have been 'thousands'.

CLERKS' LEADER

MADE REDUNDANT



Car parts firm in bid to smash militant union

by J.C. Ure

recent months, in particular its continuing recruitment and declared intention to make an open pay grading scheme the next item on the agenda.

Leaflets are being distributed to all workers pointing out the consequences of the sacking on CAWU membership. Weakened by such a defeat, the union could be replaced by a 'staff association' that would be a source of scab labour during disputes and a recruitment organisation for transferring militants to safe, staff jobs. ZENITH Carburettor of Deptford and Lewisham, South London, are using the pretext London, are using the pretext of 'necessary redundancies' in a bid to destroy the militant Amalgamated Engineering and Foundry-workers' Union. Sixty men from the testing departments ('blowing sections') — all the AEF men in the factories — were 'sacked' three weeks ago.

staff jobs.
Only a one-day or longer strike, causing loss of production, will make the management re-think their victimisation plan. Stewards will consider strike action if negotiations fail. ago.

The management told the press, 'We think the decision to make these men redundant was a necessary one. We have installed new equipment immediately to test the carburettors and keep up demands. This new operation is far cheaper than the old one.'

A RIOT CHARGE against

A RIOT CHARGE against seven anti-apartheid demonstrators, including Enfield IS member Sean Thomson, was thrown out by a jury at the Old Bailey on Monday after a mammoth fourweek trial estimated to have cost the state more than £100,000.

Two of the defendants, Ed Davoren and Ken Murray, were found guilty on charges of assaulting two policemen and received suspended sentences of six months each. All the other charges including attempted burglary, assault and possessing

assault and possessing offensive weapons arising out of a demonstration outside South Africa House last

The failure of the state to anyone taking part in a demonstration. The decision will come as a blow to the police who in recent weeks have been throwing riot charges at almost every demonstrator in sight.

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convict these seven-militants of riot, despite the use of the of riot, despite the use of the chief state prosecutor (official title Chief Treasury Prosecutor) and the calling of Elwyn Jones, head of Special Branch as star prosecution witness, is a major victory for the Left. It is clear that the trial was seen as creating a precedent which would allow the police to bring a charge of riot (maximum penalty life imprisonment) against almost anyone taking part in a

Zenith want the AEF out because the men have been on a work-to-rule for a wage increase. Present wages average £19 a week over an eight-week period, working five weekends out of eight.

Between June £1968 and March £1969 productivity increased £100 per cent — from 50 to 100 carburettors a day. Yet Zenith's reply to the wage claim was to invite outside works consultants to devise an incentive scheme.

even after their own works
department had declared such
a scheme totally inapplicable
to the blowing section.
Bill Parish and the lock-ou
committee are determined to

committee are determined to fight. There is a growing solidarity among members of the General and Municipal Workers' Union towards the AEF men, but as yet the GMWU official has done nothing. These men must come out in full support if the AEF men are to beat the lock-out.

The AEF has already called for the blacking of the Zenith works in Deptford and Lewisham and the men hope the Stanmore factory will support them. The Stanmore management has prevented Bill Parish from contacting the shop stewards there either by phone or in person.

capitalists and small shop-keepers . . . '
The so-called left turn in the trade unions, exemplified by the election of Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon and the dubious decisions of the TUC are seen as flowing from the initiative and the activity of the party. Productivity bargaining, the logical followon from Incomes Policy and In Place of Strife, was seen by industrial organiser Bert Ramelson in his report, as something requiring 'More something requiring 'More attention'. The central feature in the wages situation of millions of workers and the cardinal principle of Jones and Scanlon

Communist Party in

begins to melt

movement of their policy.

congress: the iceberg

Its ageing membership is in decline and the circulation of the Morning Star has fallen by 5000 copies since the last congress. The leadership's

by Jim Higgins THE 31st Congress of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which took place last weekend, marked in the form and content of the deliberations its final demise as a party in any way dedicated to revolutionary change.

merits no more than 'more attention' from a party that has pretensions of becoming the leadership of the British

the leadership of the British workers.

A badly organised attempt by the Surrey opposition to mount an attack on the party's electoral preoccupations (at the expense of industrial work) was soundly defeated, achieving only 47 votes in a conference of 400 delegates.

Central feature The most hard fought debate at the congress was

debate at the congress was
that on the executive's
opposition to the Warsaw
Pact countries' intervention
in Czechoslovakia. The
executive won handsomely
by some 295 votes to 118.
In a very real sense,
however, the opposition (led
by such unreconstructed
Stalinists as Sid French,
Palme putt and Andrew
Rothstein) were more

Rothstein) were more consistent in their approach. They showed that the central feature of party policy in the past had been support for the Russians.

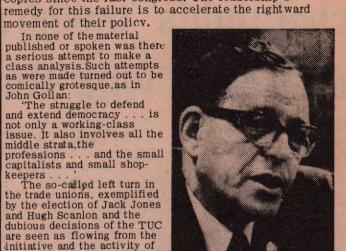
the past had been support for the Russians.

It was implicit in their contributions that if there was no threat of counter-revolution in Czechoslovakia to merit the intervention, then why did the great 'mother of socialism' intervene? This question was not answered and cannot be until the CPGB comes to terms with its Stalinist past and its reformist present.

It is clear that predictions of a large-scale split in the party, made in the capitalist press, are premature. But the iceberg is beginning to melt.

In their frantic search for respectability and an accommodation with reformism in the Labour Party, they must deny their history and call into question their current policies.

A more detailed analysis



RAMELSON: 'more attention' to prod deals

DATA men out for a month

NORTHAMPTON:-Thirty draughtsmen at the Express Lifts Co have been on strike for a month through the refusal of the management to give the men 7s 6d above a £1 a week rise.

a week rise.

DATA immediately declared the strike official and the men are receiving financial support equivalent to 80 per cent of their weekly wage. Their 50 colleagues, nearly all DATA members, are continuing with a policy of 'working without enthusiasm' and it is likely that some or all of them may also decide to take strike also decide to take strike

The Express Lift Co. is a subsidiary of GEC. It has enjoyed some of the highest profits within the GEC group, that its

profits within the GEC group, but its wages are among the lowest. This is the first ever strike of a staff section at the factory

A full picket is being mounted and the draughtsmen have been successful in stopping a number of lorries carrying goods and raw materials into the works.

Messages of support to:

DATA branch sec. C. Brenton, 5 Glebeland Road, Dallington, Northampton.

NOTICES

IRISH CIVIL RIGHTS SOLIDAR-ITY CAMPAIGN members mig. The struggle for civil rights and the future of ICRSC. Sat 22 Nov, 7 pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, near Holborn tube.

CLIFF on permanent revolution, Kidron on imperialism, highest stage but one — in one pamphlet from Cambridge IS. 1s inc post or 10s a doz. c.w.o. Tony Needham, 12 Metcalfe Road, Cambridge. FULHAM IS Sun 23 Nov 7.30 pm T. Cliff on How to get a wage rise. Wetherby Arms, 500 Kings Rd,SW10.Buses 11, 12, tube Fulham Bdwy.

SWANSEA IS: Early history of revolutionary left in Britain. 28 Nov. 7.30 pm, Elysium Building. All welcome.

LONDON REGION IS: 29 Nov, Africa Centre, King St, 3 pm Moshe Machover on struggle in Middle East.

Not tested But the three new machines installed are duds. Ten old machines which have been moved into the Deptford shop have been stripped down and out of action for the last week. And the carburettors, which go mainly to Sweden for Volvo, have not been tested at all. Shop steward Bill Parish told me. 'This isn't redundancy, it's a lock-out. Even with the new machines, Zenith would need workers to operate them, yet the whole blowing section, which is AEF, has been kicked out. We are determined to fight this lock-out.' Zenith want the AEF out because the men have been on a work-to-rule for a wage Bill Parish from contacting the shop stewards there either by phone or in person. Messages of support and donations should be sent to the AEF Lock-Out Communities, and the AEF Lock-Out Communities, and the Carburettors, which go mainly to Sweden for Volvo, have not been tested at all. Shop stewards there either by phone or in person. Messages of support and donations should be sent to the AEF Lock-Out Communities, and the carburettors, which go mainly to Sweden for Volvo, have not been tested at all. Shop stewards there either by phone or in person. Messages of support and donations should be sent to the AEF Lock-Out Communities. A more detailed analysis of the Communist Party's industrial policy will appear next week. French lother hatfour density into question their current policies. A more detailed analysis of the Communist Party's industrial policy will appear next week. French lother hatfour density into question their current density into question their current policies. A more detailed analysis of the Communist Party's industrial policy will appear next week. French the Labour Party, they must density and call into question their current policies. A more detailed analysis of the Communist Party's industrial policy will appear next week. French the Labour Party, they must deny their history and call into question their current policies. A more detailed analysis of the Communist Party's industrial French police swoop on left-wing groups

All were released on Saturday evening.

Among those arrested were Pierre Frank, a long-standing Trotskyist militant and Henri Weber, a leader of the Ligue Communiste, In some cases where auspects were absent from home, their wives were arrested instead.

The wife of Gilbert Mury, well-known Maoist intellectual, herself quite uninvolved in politics, was kept overight in a cell where it was impossible to lie down. Less

impossible to lie down. Less

protest strike was called at the school where she teaches. No complete list of those arrested is available, but French radio referred to Lutte Ouvriere, the Ligue Communiste and Maoists. The pretext for the questioning was an investigation into the reconstitution of groups banned in June 1968.

Any charge of reconstitution would be highly dubious in legal terms, for it would involve censorship of those carrying on the ideas of May

carrying on the ideas of May 1968. In fact, the police measures were intended to

damp down the Vietnam demonstrations held on

demonstrations held on Saturday.

In a climate of industrial unrest and peasant disturbances, the government could ill afford a big militant demonstration in Paris. The hypocrisy of the French government, which has made moralising criticisms of US policy in Vietnam, scarcely needs to be pointed out.

The French Communist Party, to its credit, refused to be dissuaded from demonstrating. Nonetheless, the French authorities seem to realise that the CP's current 'left turn' will not go beyond certain limits and that even small groups on the left do offer a real threat. left do offer a real threat.