

# Socialist Worker

For workers control and international socialism 138 18 September 1969 every Thursday 3d

## Strike wave hits Europe

Richard Kuper

WAVE AFTER WAVE of strikes have occurred in France, Italy and Germany in recent weeks. The German have been the most interesting.

Unofficial strikes broke out in the German steel industry in North Rhine Westphalia, spreading to coal mines in the Saarland, to the shipyards of Kiel. They led to almost half the trade unions preparing substantial wage demands.

The unofficial actions forced the tame German unions into action. Steel workers have received wage increases of 11 per cent backdated to September 1st, coal miners increases of up to 13 per cent.

In two weeks the unprecedented 'stability' of the German economy has been shattered. The working class has returned to the scene.

**exclusive** 'Troubleshooters' secret Birmingham report

# CIR TELLS BOSSES 'GET TOUGH WITH MILITANTS'

From SW Midlands Industrial Reporter

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT's 'trouble-shooting' Commission on Industrial Relations has told a leading Birmingham car components group to get tough with militant workers and to re-assert its control of the factories. This is the first important intervention in industrial affairs by the CIR, which is chaired by George Woodcock, the former TUC general secretary.

It is clear from the Commission's interim report, which has not yet been published, that its role is to carry out government policy of cracking down on trade union militants, holding back wages and boosting profits. In spite of the trade surplus, the drive goes on to squeeze more from the workers.

## Mersey take-over called off

A MASS MEETING of English Electric workers from three Merseyside factories voted on Wednesday against occupying their plants and running them under workers' control.

The vote was a bitter blow to the shop stewards' joint action committee which had been preparing the take-over for several weeks in a bid to stop the GEC-EE combine from sacking 3000 workers.

The factories under the Weinstock hammer are at Netherton and Fazakerley. Two of them will close completely if the planned redundancies go ahead.

Six stewards from each factory formed the action committee to fight the sackings. Their call for a factory occupation during which time the workers would continue production marked an important rise in the level of rank and file militancy and would have posed a tremendous challenge to the employers.

Inspired by last year's factory occupations in France, the stewards planned to go a step further than French trade unionists. By running the factories they would have shown that it was the management who were redundant, not the workers.

But it was clear from the anger at Wednesday's mass meeting that the stewards had not sufficiently discussed their plans with the shop-floor workers. There were complaints that the stewards had met in secret and had not liaised with their members.

But in spite of Wednesday's vote, the fight against the redundancies must go on. Workers at the English Electric factories must decide whether they want militant action or the sack - there is no other choice for them.

Most of the workers who face the sack are skilled and will be thrown out to join the already long queue of jobless in the Merseyside area. Their strong organisation has won them comparatively high wages and good conditions and redundancy money will not make up for the demoralisation of the dole queue or the grind of semi-skilled work in bad conditions.

The CIR gives three main reasons for disputes at the three motor casting plants of Birmid-Qualcast:

1. The attitude and style of the management.
2. The pay structure for the hourly-paid workers.
3. A lack of clearly defined 'procedures'.

The CIR believes that the management is not skilled enough in labour relations and should receive special training. It also recommends the employment of more personnel staff and work-study men.

And the report adds that the foremen do not have enough authority and that the company must really manage the plants by re-imposing discipline.

The Commission is also critical of the Birmid pay structure. It believes that the management does not sufficiently control the earnings of the men.

It considers that the company has given in to too many strikes and that a new pay structure should be negotiated.

The annual report of the Engineering Employers' Federation for 1968/69 explained that the most important job for the bosses was to stop piecework earnings from continually rising.

A Birmid Qualcast director, Mr Brindley, is a member of the Federation's general council and he clearly has plenty of ideas about what a new pay structure should be like.

And that structure will be one where piecework earnings would not keep going up.

In its evidence to the CIR, the company complains that the shop stewards had no idea of how to compromise. The CIR's conclusion is that the



WOODCOCK  
CIR chairman

shop stewards should be trained.

This means that the stewards should be 'educated' to understand the bosses' point of view.

The Commission will discuss new factory procedures with the unions when it publishes its final detailed reports - one for manual workers, and a second for staff employees.

The CIR is outspoken in its criticism of the management. But Socialist Worker said this would happen during the original investigation.

The Commission is tough on the bosses because they are not firmly in control of the plants. The workers are pushing up wages and forming strong union organisations - actions unfavourable to either government policy or employers' profits.

If the CIR visits other factories, shop-floor workers must demand that its investigations be held in public so that the workers themselves can challenge the bosses' allegations.

If this demand is refused then union officials must be told to boycott the private discussions and strike action should send the CIR packing.



Striking coal miners in Saarbrücken burning a copy of their union newspaper.

## Wealth shift

Since the 1950s the German economy has been run in the 'national interest'. Fantastic economic growth has been accompanied by an equally fantastic shift of wealth from the workers towards capital - from owning 53.5 per cent of personal wealth in 1950 the employers' share had risen to 72.5 per cent in 1967, with a comparable decline in the share of the workers from 40.5 per cent to 23.9 per cent.

The 'national interest' has also been symbolised on the political level with the participation of the Social Democrats in a coalition government for many years. The German 'industrial miracle' has been at the expense of the German workers.

This is the example the Labour government always point to as an indication of what their policies are designed to achieve. The current German balance of payments surplus, the envy of Wilson, Castle, Jenkins and company has been accompanied by soaring profits and growing inequality.

## 'National interest'

British workers are squeezed to increase exports, German workers are squeezed to prevent Britain cutting into German markets - each in the 'national interest'.

In this sense the German strikes are highly significant. They have cut through the ideological straitjacket which has held the German workers prisoners of the capitalist myth - the myth that the welfare of workers in one country depends on them being able to undercut the position of workers in other capitalist countries.

They point the way to a realisation that the interests of the workers are everywhere the same - against exploitation and production for profit, for co-operation and production for use.

East London tenants get ready for eviction battle - page 2

## VICTORY AT SHELLSTAR

ELLESMERE PORT: - 95 workers at the giant Shellstar site returned to work victorious last week after a 10-day stoppage.

The management wanted to make 18 pipe-trade workers redundant, but instead of operating the principle of 'first in - last out', they attempted to sack workers for having the odd day off, or for being late.

The men demanded that the management prove the need for redundancy.

The management realised that the newly-elected Strike Committee meant business when the committee organised a determined picket at 5.30 in the morning which blocked roads in all directions and reduced the whole of the industrial estate to chaos. The employers capitulated.

# Middle East: the '6 Day War' goes on

## Rachel Matgamna

THE 'SIX-DAY' war is not over. Last weeks hit and run attack on Egypt was only the latest in a series of savage raids, including raids on Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

It shows that Israel is still unable to establish and stabilise the status quo.

The grabbing, greedy infant of imperialism in the Middle East has grown to be an insatiable gangster. Every new territorial acquisition it immediately tries to consolidate by creating para-military settlements armed to the

teeth against the Arab civilian population.

These areas are being forcibly integrated into the Israeli state and economy. Israel is in the process of transforming them for its own purposes, as it did with the other half of Arab Palestine after 1948.

Its very first actions were aimed at gaining 'vacant possession' of the West Bank and the Golan Heights. And yet the Israeli government also wants to use these areas as a pawn and extract a ransom for them: a guarantee of its own 'safe conduct' as a

militaristic one-race state, forever closer to US imperialism than to the Arab masses who inhabit the Middle East.

Right from the start the Jewish settlement in the Middle East set itself up at the expense of the native inhabitants. Right from the start it turned to the imperialist masters of the areas (Turkish, British and then American) to back it up.

And in return it has acted as a brake against the swelling tide of Arab nationalism which since the 1930s has tried to shake off the exploiting grip of imperialism and

lift the region into the 20th century.

Israel has of course had her own fish to fry and since the 1940s its ability to act 'independently' has grown. But it remains an island. Because of its history of hostilities towards its neighbours, it remains permanently at war with its surroundings.

All trade and financial relations are directed westwards. Attempts at independence can go only so far. For example, the military and aviation industries form the largest industrial ensemble in the country, with an annual

output of £120m. But the total defence budget for 1969/70 is £300m.

To the Arab masses imperialism spells poverty and backwardness. Not initiative, but imported dollars, German marks and technical expertise have gone to make Israel 'a flower blooming in the desert', a modern powerful technological state.

But for the Arab states, particularly those where feudalists rule hand in glove with the US oil companies, their entire wealth and potential is drained out along the to back page

# Cumnor - where the heat is on no-union workers

FRENCH AND COLLETT is a small factory in Cumnor, about five miles outside Oxford. It employs a couple of hundred workers and makes mainly car components - axle bearing retainers, bumper arms and the like.

The main manufacturers that it supplies include Ford, Smiths, Rootes, BMC, Pressed Steel Fisher, and Morphy Richards.

There is no union in the firm and wages and conditions would make Lord Shaftesbury turn in his grave.

by Steve Bolchover and Bob Arnold

Women workers are particularly badly paid. On time-rate jobs they get 5s an hour. On piece-work the rate is about the same - on one job the rate was 9s 3d per thousand and the actual rate achieved was only about 490 an hour.

Men are paid more - a male labourer can earn more than a female operative.

Working conditions defy description. In wet weather the roof leaks. The only ventilation is from windows and in summer it gets very hot.

During the heat wave in July the Press Shop - not the hottest in the factory - reached a temperature of 94 degrees F. The heat provoked a walk-out when the oil circulating round the lathes reached 240 degrees F.

But the management are very nice when it's hot - they give you cooled lemon juice twice a day.

## Head split

Managerial meanness shows itself again in a lack of safety precautions, old machinery and inadequate equipment. Skips used to carry off scrap metal weigh about 3 cwt. empty and carry about 1/4 ton of scrap.

The only machine provided for this job is a broken down fork lift truck. One worker had his head split open when a skip fell off the truck.

The ventilation in the plating shop does not work properly and the atmosphere is heavy with fumes. The fumes include cyanide gas given off from the sodium cyanide dissolved in the liquid in the vats.

Generally the machines are old and unreliable - very few jobs go through without a breakdown. Conditions are filthy. Recently the grease had to be cleaned off the press shop floor because the fork lift truck kept getting bogged down in it.

# N. Ireland: fine slogans and

## The contradictory role of British troops gives Catholic workers time to arm against further Orange attacks

RECENT EVENTS in Northern Ireland have seen a strange reversal of traditional attitudes.

Irish nationalists and republicans behind the barricades who have been brought up on the history of Britain's bloody record in Ireland, expressed relief when the arrival of British troops gave them a breathing space from the threatened pogroms of Paisleyite armed mobs.

And fanatically loyalist and Union Jack waving Orange bigots massing last Sunday for new pogroms raised the slogan 'British troops out! B-Specials in!' as the soldiers stood between them and their victims behind the barricades.

How has this odd turn-about come to pass and what should the attitude to it be of those who oppose the whole presence of British imperialism in Ireland in any form?

As Socialist Worker has always pointed out, it is British imperialism which lies at the root of the present crisis, by imposing the partition of 1921, by erecting a semi-fascist Orange police state in the six counties which denied the oppressed Catholics the most basic rights, and by keeping whole areas of the six counties in misery.

And British troops in the occupied area of Ireland, as anywhere else, are there in the interests of British imperialism and for no other reason.

But what are those interests? It is precisely because there are conflicts among the supporters of those interests that the troops are there today between the barricades and the Orange gangs. And those conflicts are about whether to maintain British interests in the old way or in a new way.

The old way was that established in 1921, when the 26 counties were allowed their 'independence' under a tame middle-class leadership, while Britain kept the six North-Eastern counties, with their industries, geared to the British market. There Britain still ruled directly by dividing the working class on religious lines and arming the Protestants against the Catholics under the leadership of the Orange bosses.

## CHANGES

The Ulster statelet is the Orange Order in arms. But over the years there were changes. Today Ulster's traditional industries of shipbuilding and textiles are declining, and Britain has more money invested in the South than in the North.

The Ulster police state is an embarrassment and an obstacle to their ultimate goal: a united capitalist Ireland subjected as a whole to the domination of British capital, possibly in the context of the Common Market.

And a necessary prelude to this was to 'liberalise' the Ulster statelet to facilitate closer co-operation with the regime in Dublin.

These cosy prospects were disrupted by two factors. First a new generation in Ulster no longer prepared to remain on its knees and with



Slogans behind the Protestant barricades: they want the troops to leave to uni

## by STEPHEN MARKS

the example of the Civil Rights struggle in the USA, the May events in France and the protracted heroism of the peasants of Vietnam before it, began to stand up for its rights.

The 'reforming' Unionists hoped to buy this struggle off by concessions to its moderate leaders, but the pace was too slow and unconvincing to hold off the explosion.

But the Unionist right wing saw these developments as a threat. A Westminster-Dublin deal would leave the Orange Order with no reason for existence and the Civil Rights movement posed a threat which could not be met so easily in the old way, with cries of 'Fenians and IRA' and a few quick blows with an RUC baton.

Now the eyes of the world were on Ulster. The result was the Paisleyite backlash.

That was why Catholic workers demanding their rights fought back last year and last month against the threat of pogrom and why the barricades went up in Derry and Belfast. The situation had got out of hand and 'order' could only have been restored by mass mobilisation of the B-Specials and their use against the barricades - in other words by civil war.

Britain may have been prepared to tolerate this prospect in the 1920s when the Ulster colons were relied on by Britain. But today the implications were too serious and the troops went in to freeze the situation and allow Callaghan and the Westminster cabinet a breathing space.

Both the Paisleyites and the army are opposed to the interest of the Catholic workers. But the Paisleyites and the B-men stand for attacking them now when they are defenceless.

At the time the British troops arrived only a handful of weapons stood between the defenders of the barricades and certain death at the hands of the Paisleyites. The British troops, however stand for the strategy of British capital as a whole, as opposed to its local one-time representatives. Their strategy is to defuse the situation by bringing together the 'moderates on both sides' while leaving the basic repressive structure untouched. In the course of doing this they must freeze the situation and will act against anyone who wishes to change it.

## REFUSE

This means that they may well move against the barricades if their defenders refuse the appeals of moderate leaders to take them down, though they may also simply wait until the men behind the barricades disperse through disillusion.

But in the short run their 'freezing' role means that they stand between the barricades and the Orange lynch-mobs. To identify the two is therefore quite false. To demand 'disarm the B-specials! Withdraw British troops!' is to equate the two and to say that the presence

or absence of B in the existing makes no difference to the struggle.

Defenceless armed mobs, with the advent of this new class situation the troops, as a contradiction between Paisleyite colons and the effect of which the defenceless barricades can defend themselves and posing attempts to weaken the defence politically into a defensive.

To fail to take of this temporary is the extreme of course, this increases the need on every occasion of a political role the British playing, and which they must come down.

But those who that raising the withdrawal in situation must follow, do not up difference between da and agitation strategy and tact.

Marxism is not a descriptive but a guide to slogans are not a session of the firm those who utter a stylistic device summing up of argument. For in a struggle to action. To immediate enemy the British troops At the present Paisleyites who murder and, in p

# Socialist Worker

6 Cottons Gardens London E2  
Tel: 01-739 1878 (editorial) 1870 (business)



a state of workers' councils and workers' control of production. Only thus can the transition be ensured to a communist society in which the unprecedented productive forces thrown up by capitalism can be used to assure an economy of abundance. Only the working class, itself the product of capitalism, has the ability to transform society in this way, and has shown its ability to do so in a series of revolutionary struggles unprecedented in the history of all previous exploited classes. The working class gains the experience necessary to revolutionise society by

constant struggle against the 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 the pressure of bourgeois ideas in the working class, and to bond the fragmentary struggles against capitalism into a conscious and coherent offensive, a revolutionary Marxist party of socialist militants is required, embracing the vanguard of the working 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 therefore fight for:

- Opposition to all ruling-class policies and organisations.
- Workers' control over production and a workers' state.
- Opposition to imperialism and support for all movements of national liberation.
- Uncompromising opposition to all forms of racialism and to all migration controls.

## The GLC's bailiffs will meet barricades and

# Determined tenants ready for East London battle against eviction

by FRED LINDOP

'SUFFOLK ESTATE - We are not paying' says the notice. It has been in the window since summer 1968. 'We've no intention of paying' says Irene Lane, secretary of the Hackney (East London) Federation of Tenants Associations. 'We've been flooded with notices to quit, final demands and the like. We're just taking it as a matter of course now. We've all come this far, we're not going back now.'

There is no mistaking the determination of the tenants on Suffolk Estate, Hackney or several dozen more estates in Hackney and Tower Hamlets to resist the increases of rent imposed by the Greater London Council last October.

They are well aware that it is not simply a question of 7s 6d or 10s. The Tories at County Hall have not given up their plan to raise rents by 70 per cent.

Flats are being relet - at much higher rents than the existing ones. The flat next door to Mrs Lane's, for example, stood empty from May to August; it was then relet for £117s 4d a fortnight more than the other tenants would pay with the increase.

How many tenants are holding out? The GLC says less than 5000 since the latest round of threatening letters induced several hundred to pay. Even 5000 must give them cause for concern. 5000 evic-

tions will cause a great deal of trouble - even if the tenants were not determined to resist, even if there was no reaction at all from the dockers, bus workers, post office workers, car workers who have promised support if evictions take place.

But the tenants' leaders are completely contemptuous of the GLC's figures which they see as a weapon in the war of nerves.

## Sudden rush

'They can keep quoting them, we're not interested,' says Alf Toys, leader on Trowbridge Estate at Hackney Wick, another new, high rent estate. 'We all know how they can be twisted.'

'Like in July they claimed there was a sudden rush of people paying up. Perhaps no one had told Cutler (the housing chief) that most people pay two weeks in advance before they go on holiday. They paid - without the increase.'

How many are still withholding? 'We don't really

know. We keep hearing of people getting notices to quit on completely unorganised estates, so we reckon that there's probably quite a lot we don't know about,' Mr Toys adds.

The organisation of the United Tenants Action Committee, the central organisation of London tenants, centres mainly around the East End. From there the Anti-Eviction Committee and the 'Flying Squad' operate.

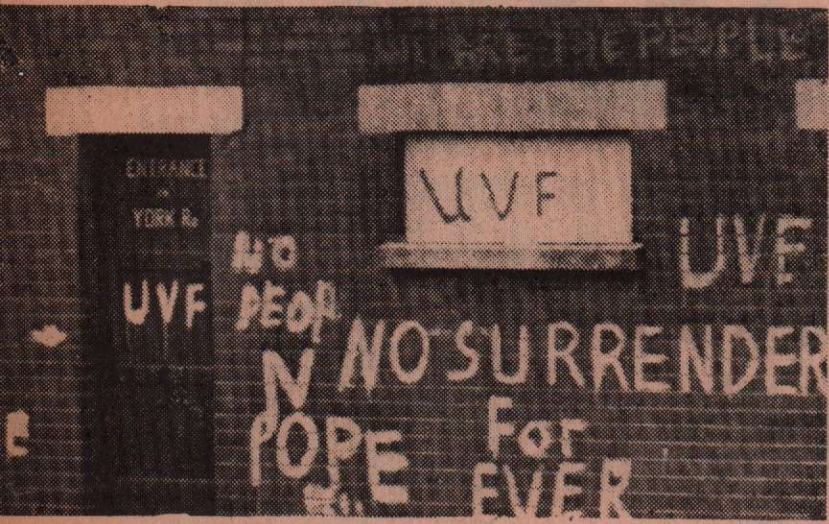
'We don't want violence,' say the leaders of UTAC, 'but we will certainly meet violence with violence. For every tenant to be evicted, we'll try to evict a GLC councillor.'

Their first test looks like being in Becontree, where a tenant has had a possession order given against him. He is due to be evicted on 26 September.

'The Flying Squad' Becontree Co-ordination Committee are working in collaboration to evict a tenant. The Anti-Eviction Committee in Hackney Federation's action confined to fight. In fact, that fight much a part of that it is rarely r

**Eyesore**  
The Federation are at present in the fight about 'halfway houses' for tenants from their home. Particular eyesore, Duncan House - assisted by Squads, have organised themselves to demand demolition of the last one in Hackney was three times when were refused a fact,' said one tenants, 'we to

# and grim reality



ash a new pogrom of the Catholics

British troops in the situation of the Catholics face the certain ahead. In the presence of the result of the between Pais- Westminster buying time. ends of the firm to defend also, by oppy 'moderates' defence, rearm turn military political off-

physical elimination of those in whose hands lies the key to any future socialist strategy for Ireland. To prevent illusions in the role of the troops and to prepare for a future turn in the situation when the demolition of the barricades may be needed in the interests of British capital itself, and not merely of its local retainers, socialists must constantly explain the role of the troops, as Socialist Worker has done. But those who would raise the demand for their withdrawal now must explain in what way they would implement the demand if they were behind the barricades in Belfast or Derry. Would they fire on the troops now, and encourage others to do the same? If so they would merely add their bullets to those of the Paisleyites and provoke an immediate clash in a situation which would lead to massacre.

## DIFFICULT

But if they would not take this responsibility upon themselves they would presumably be reduced to getting the troops out by persuasion—a difficult task! To combine a demand for withdrawal with a demand for the arming of the Catholic workers is to solve the problem only at the level of the mouthing of slogans. In real life the two demands are in contradiction if both raised at the present time, for the arming of the Catholics is dependent on the preservation of the precarious breathing space the presence of the troops provides. But if the demand for withdrawal in the present situa-

ion does not flow from a false evaluation of the relation of forces, it can only mean one of two things: Either the conscious advocacy of a massacre now, presumably as a means of raising the level of the struggle (a demand we would invite its supporters to raise behind the barricades). Or else it could be justified with the excuse that raising the slogan will not lead to the departure of the troops and therefore we need not reckon with the consequences. On this we need merely say that those who do not take their own slogans seriously cannot expect others to do so.

In the present situation then, time is of the essence. If a new pogrom does come, Catholic workers in the North must appeal to Southern workers to help them by occupying British-owned factories and farms as hostages for the freedom of the North, and thus, by transforming a national struggle in the North into a class struggle in the South, change the form in which the question of a United Ireland is posed to the Protestant workers of Belfast.

For us, the purpose of slogans is as a guide to action and not to save the souls of those who utter them. We are concerned to save the lives of the oppressed and heroic defenders of the barricades so that in the time given them by the contradictions between Paisleyism and British capital, they can rearm themselves physically and politically and at last place on the political map the demand for the only real solution: a United Workers' Republic.

## LETTERS/ Ireland/ union officials/ Ceylon

# 'The men in overalls who are on our side...'

SEAN TREACY (4 September), in 'Why the British Left must back Catholic workers' states that 'the false consciousness of large numbers of Protestant workers places them on the side of reaction'.

Of course it does, but as Eamonn McCann said when he addressed the Burntollet marchers on 4 January, 'They (the Protestant workers) are the men in overalls who are on our side, though they don't know it yet. It is our job to make them know it and the only way we can do this is by asking them what they have in common with Catholic workers and the answer is that they are both exploited by the same bosses.'

'We declare to the Orange workers of Belfast that we stand for the right of all the people in Ireland to rule as well as own Ireland and cannot conceive of a separation of the two.'

Regarding the border, I believe that Ireland will only become stable economically when it is united, but further that it can only become united when it becomes socialist.

A better life for the Catholic workers of Northern Ireland will only be won when they stand with Protestant and dissenter workers together behind the barricades, united against the land-owning Tory clique in Stormont castle.

Finally, the next time you urge the British Left to support Catholic workers, please remember Wolfe Tone and Robert Emmet. - GRAEME CRAWFORD, Glasgow Campaign for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland.

## PARTITION

MUCH AS I agree with Sean Treacy, I feel he failed to spotlight the central issue transcending all else in the current crisis — the issue of partition.

Until Ireland is united all ideas about a 'socialist workers' republic' etc. are futile. Without the numerically large Protestant working class aiding them, the Southern workers can never make a proletarian revolution.

As matters stand, the middle classes in the 26 counties are too powerfully entrenched at all levels, from the Dublin Stock Exchange and Daily downwards, to be moved by the various agitations that

**ULSTER'S JACKBOOT TYRANNY - WHY THE BRITISH LEFT MUST BACK CATHOLIC WORKERS**

SW headline, 4 September

develop from time to time. And helping to maintain the status quo in the south is the large agricultural community which has become very prosperous in recent years — the small farmers and labourers having been largely squeezed out on to the emigrant ships.

Thus it transpires that when Mr Callaghan says that partition is to remain he is ensuring that there will be no Cuba to the immediate west of Her Majesty's United Kingdom. - PAT O'DONOVAN, London N1.

## Jones' success in Coventry

JOHN FOSSICK (11 September) referring to my previous criticisms of Jack Jones of the TGWU, seems to lack the understanding of the economic situation which prevailed during the war and into the 1950s.

Until 1939 there was mass unemployment in this country, which made recruitment into general labour unions very difficult. It follows that prior to 1939 the AEU would be one of the major unions in Coventry, since skilled men found it easier to find a job in the fiercely competitive rat-race which is always evident when there is mass unemployment.

The war changed the economy to comparatively full employment. A check on the Ministry of Labour handbook that is issued at irregular

intervals will prove to comrade Fossick that in any period of boom union membership improves and vice-versa during slumps. Therefore it is not surprising that Bro Jack Jones was able to engage in a massive recruiting campaign for a general union.

I never said that it is easy to gain economic advances. However, John Fossick must agree that it must be relatively easier in a full employment period, particularly when a country is on a war footing and cannot afford militant action. Also at the time the scarcity of labour upped the price.

Like comrade Fossick I do not believe in magnifying every failure made by so-called left-wing union leaders. It is peculiar that up and coming union officials act militantly on the matter of recruitment. But even here their attitudes are contradictory; for example, prior to the Barbican strike, when the building workers' Joint Sites Committee did a wonderful organisation and recruitment job, both the AEU-TW and the TGWU smiled benevolently upon them. Yet both these unions, in collusion with the employers, engaged in massive press propaganda against the militants during the strike.

Trade union leaders are forced by the nature of capitalism into ambivalent posturing, on the one hand to meet the demands of the rank and file whom they claim to rep-

## Bowing before Buddha

VB's letter (4 September) strikes a number of false notes and one true one.

I did not ('Tropical Trotskyism', 3 July 1969) justify the LSSP programme, or their coalition politics, or their past and future betrayals of the Ceylonese working class; I explained them. I did not say that the LSSP — who, whether we like it or not, are called Trotskyists in Ceylon — are still socialists; but the contrary — they are not, they 'bow before the Buddha', they have allowed their isolation in Ceylon and the isolation of Ceylon to destroy them as a revolutionary force. But VB is right in one thing: I did not answer my question 'what can a revolutionary do in a country like Ceylon?'

It seemed gratuitous. After all, he does there what he does here: he fights for independent working-class power and for the organisational underpinning of that power. He does so in the teeth of representationism, lesser-evilsism, pay-now-enjoy-laterism, coalitionism and all the other traps and blinds we know so well ourselves.

It's a difficult enough fight here. It is vastly more difficult there. For not only is the working class small and isolated within Ceylon, but because of the gradual dissolution of the bonds between that country and the countries of advanced capitalism, it is increasingly isolated from the international working-class movement.

As Trotsky pointed out, using Britain and India as his examples, 'the internationalism of ... proletariats does not at all rest on an identity of conditions, tasks and methods, but on their indivisible interdependence' (introduction to the German edition of Permanent Revolution). - MICHAEL KIDRON, Lund, E. Yorks.

resent and on the other to placate their masters in the government for the purposes of supporting such fictions as the 'national interest'.

The histories of so-called militants such as Ben Tillet, Tom Mann, Keir Hardie, Ernie Bevin or Frank Cousins will show how union leaders are used by the system to bolster up a sagging economy where necessary. And this will continue until union leaders are elected, subject to recall at average members' wages. - TERRY BARRETT, Tilbury Docks TGWU.

## strike action

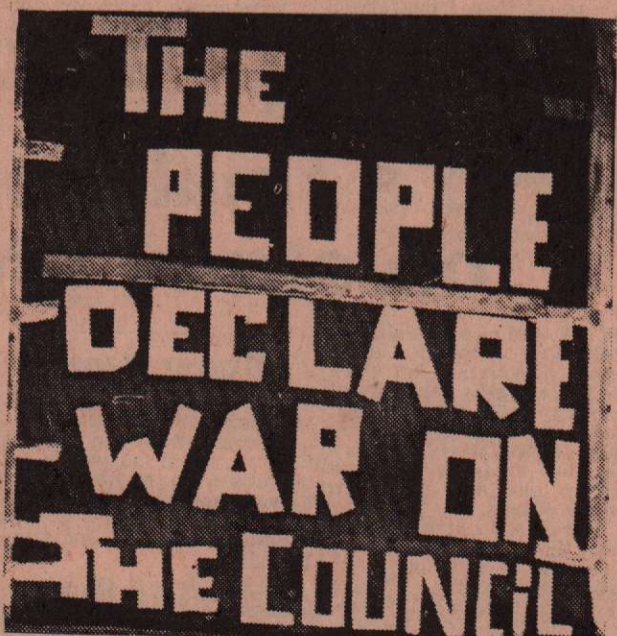
# ts are London ctions

quad and the nation Com- in close prevent this ing,' says mber of Suf- mittee and Committee. least, the vity is not g the GLC. has been so everyday life rred to.

meeting. You've never seen anything like it.' Few councils have had a tougher ride than Hackney's Tory council this past year.

The tenants leaders, in Hackney at least, are contemptuous of the existing political parties. The Tories are positively hated and Labour long ago exposed itself as interested more in pleasing the bankers than in winning tenants' votes, if forced to choose. The local Liberals exposed themselves by supporting the Tories' housing programme of rent increases and a halving of council building.

The suspicion of 'politics' and of the involvement of political groups in the struggle was deepened by the action of the Communist Party. From the start it supported the very passive National Association of Tenants and Residents which played a splitting role in the campaign and was widely regarded as a front for the party. This position effectively nullified the work done by a few members of the CP in



A rent rebels' poster

tenants' associations which were affiliated to the Action Committee. Pressure of events recently forced NATR to join the Anti-Eviction Committee.

The leadership of the struggle is made up of a number of disillusioned Labour Party members — whose attachment to the Party has led them to vacillate at some stages — and of formerly 'apolitical' militants, whose lack of experience and traditional attachment to any organisation meant that they were willing to go much further.

They have come through experience to a limited but clear understanding of the politics of the housing question. They have a tremendous self-confidence and a sharp, raucous class line that embodies the best of the East End tradition — and the working class tradition.

The middle class members of the GLC will find, if they have the nerve to go through with their threats, that Suffolk, Trowbridge, Lansbury (Poplar) and other estates will defend themselves with a determination and on a scale that has not been seen since the 1930s.

## Join the International Socialists

- ABERDEEN Pete Drummond 19 High Street Aberdeen
- ACTON Tom Hillier 59 Denzil Road NW10
- BARNSELY Joe Kenyon 120 Standhill Crescent
- BECKENHAM Mervyn Smith 9 Alton Gardens Copers Cope Rd 01 658 8552
- BIRMINGHAM Godfrey Webster 128 Yardley Wood Rd B'ham 13
- BRADFORD Neil Patterson 25 Fernhill Grove off Park Rd
- BRIGHTON Andrew Moir 14 Upper Wellington Road
- BRISTOL David Rose 25 Sydenham Rd Bristol 6
- CAMBRIDGE Tony Needham 12a Metcalfe Road
- CAMDEN EAST Lee Kane 26 St Paul's Crescent NW1
- CAMDEN WEST Robert MacGibbon 22 Estell Rd NW3
- CARDIFF Nigel Walley 35 de Burgh Street
- CHERTSEY Kevin O'Connell The Flat St. Thomas' School Eastworth Road, Chertsey, Surrey
- COLCHESTER Ian Noble 12 Coach Rd Arlesford Wivenhoe 272
- COVENTRY Dave Edwards 58 Palmerston Rd Earlsdon
- CRAWLEY Babs Ward 59 Banks Road Poundhill Crawley Sussex
- GROYDON Jenny Woodhams 26 Braemar Avenue South Croydon
- DONCASTER George Yarrow 39 Jossey Lane Scawthope
- DURHAM Pam Law 16 Hartfield View
- EAST LONDON Bob Light 2 Oster Tue Southcote Rd E17
- EDINBURGH Brian Lavery 41 East London Street
- ENFIELD Ian Birchall 109 Croyland rd N9
- FULHAM Brian Rose 49 Schubert Road SW15
- GLASGOW North Ian Mooney 4 Dalross Passage W1
- South-S. Morris 4 Elphinstone St Glasgow SW1:

- Clydebank- Ken Shanks 6 Glen Road Old Kilpatrick
- GLOUCESTER Tom Butler 36 Brook Street Gloucester
- GRAYS & TILBURY Alf Waters c/o 1 Russell Rd Tilbury Essex
- HAMPSTEAD Chris Barker 36 Gilden Road NW5
- HARLOW Hugh Care 70 Joiners Road Harlow Essex
- HARROW Kevin Simms 56 Salisbury Road
- HAVERING Terry Ward 91 Heath Park Rd Gidea Pk
- HEMEL HEMPSTEAD John Barrett 20 Belswaines Lane
- HORNSEY Valerie Clark 18 Dickinson Rd NS
- ILFORD Lionel Sims 16 Madras Rd Ilford 01 478 7311
- IPSWICH Brian Mulvey 104 Westbourne Road Ipswich
- ISLINGTON ANGEL D Phillips 2 Chapel Mt Grant St N1 BRU 1026
- KILBURN Valerie Lloyd
- KINGSTON John Owen 4 Sandown Court Esher
- LAMBETH Andy Smith Flat 6 126 Streatham Hill SW2
- LEICESTER Lynette Allham Stanford Hall Stoughton Drive South Oadby Leics
- LEEDS Vince Hall Flat 3 25 Bagby Rd Leeds 2
- Woodhouse-Viv Hopkins 25 Midland Rd Leeds 6
- LOWESTOFT Trevor Moss 82 Blackheath Rd
- MANCHESTER-J Sutton 11a Rowan Ave Walley Range M16: Joni Jones 15 Parsonage Road Manchester 20
- MERSEYSIDE Mick Talbot 15 Sifton Park rd Liverpool 8
- MERTON Fred Milson 119 Molsay Crescent Morden
- NEWCASTLE B Hardy 25 Coach Road Wallsend Tyneside
- NORTHAMPTON Mick Bunting 25 Witton Rd Duston N'hampton

- NORWICH Gerald Crompton 220 College Rd NOR 54F
- NOTTINGHAM Tony Evans 289 Derby Rd Nottingham
- OXFORD Steve Bolchover 181 Ifley Rd Oxford
- PORTSMOUTH Jason Hill 2 Edgeward Rd Milton southsea
- POTTERIES Dick Pratt 27a North Street Newcastle Staffs
- PRESTON J Prus 72 Lower Bank Rd Fulwood Preston
- READING Miriam Belsey 22 Redlands Rd Reading
- RICHMOND Edward Brown 4 Gheyny Ave Twickenham Middx
- SELBY John Charlton 12 Thatot Close Selby Yorks
- SHEFFIELD Christine Wilkin 15 Raven Rd Nether Edge
- SOUTHAMPTON John Fisher 144 Thornhill Park road
- SOUTHCOTE Chris Pease 13 Stirling Ave Leigh-on-Sea Essex
- STEVENAGE Michael Downing 57 Trumper Rd Trots Hill
- STOCKPORT Geoff Hodgson 73a Forest Range M/C 18
- STOKE NEWINGTON Mike McGrath 28 Manor Road N16
- SWANSEA Dick Jones 19 woodlances Tee
- 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 Ohalliner 34 Whiteside Ave Hindley
- YORK Bob Looker 22 Hobgate
- VICTORIA Tony Dunne 14 Carlisle Mansions Carlisle Place SW1

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Send to 6 Cottons Gardens London E2

# \* Socialist Worker

## BELFAST SHOWDOWN Wilson moves against Catholics

Chris Harman

BY SENDING IN British troops to dismantle the barricades in Belfast, Wilson and Callaghan have conceded completely to the demands of the Stormont regime. They have shown how little they care for the security of the mass of the Catholic population.

While the decision to remove the barricades was being taken, hundreds of Catholics continued to live in fear of their lives. In less than six days, 600 threats were reported to the authorities.

Even officials of the Orange regime acknowledged that 'the majority of those intimidated are Catholics'.

Nor are these idle threats. Although often unreported in the British press, the use of petrol bombs continues.

The presence of British troops may provide some sort of temporary protection against large mobs of Paisleyites. They provide little against the bomb or gunshot from a fast-moving car.

The barricades have represented another sort of protection - against the return to the 'normality' that culminated in the death of eight people at the hands of police, B-Specials and armed thugs five weeks ago. For the Catholic workers, the barricades were the only effective means of exerting pressure to ensure the disarming of those responsible for the murders and for doing away with the arbitrary powers in the hand of the government that ordered them into action.

### PRESSURES

Wilson and Callaghan have shown that although they have disagreements with the Stormont regime, they will support them against the mass of the Catholic population. And the Stormont regime has shown that although it has disagreements with the Paisley and Buntings, it still needs them and will give in to their pressures.

A month ago, when he met Chichester - Clark, Wilson announced that the B-Specials were to be 'phased out'. Right-wing unionists protested and Clark denied that this meant the Specials were to be either disbanded or disarmed.

It did not take Wilson long to forget his own words after this.

Three weeks ago, Orange extremists, unable to get at the Catholics in their customary manner, began to erect barricades of their own, often across important roads, not to protect themselves but to force the hand of the Stormont regime. They did this in order to have all barricades dismantled, in particular the

ones protecting the Catholics. First Stormont and now Callaghan have given in to the Orange pressure.

Behind the lines of British troops, the Stormont police regime continues to operate. The Special Powers Act continues in force. Those who fought to defend themselves against the police and Orange thugs are still being brought to trial and imprisoned.

The British troops may have prevented repeated murders of the Catholic population, but now in removing the barricades they are taking away the only defence the Catholics had.

The British government has made it clear by its words and its actions that it wants the Stormont regime to remain - but without the 'excesses'.

The Catholic workers, however, know from bitter experience that these 'excesses' - discrimination, police brutality, periodic murders and pogroms, are an integral part of the Orange regime. That is why they have been attempting to defend their barricades against both the RUC, B-Specials and against the troops.

### ABANDON

At present they may be forced to abandon their barricades because they are too weak to take on both troops and Orangemen, but they have no choice but to prepare for a prolonged struggle to defend themselves.

For this they need both funds and solidarity from British and Irish workers. In the 26 counties in particular they can be aided by republican and socialist agitation for the seizure of British-owned factories and estates as hostages for the freedom of the North and for the opening of the Free State arsenals to supply arms to the Catholics in the North for self-defence.

Union Brownlow Hill. Also March in support of civil rights, from Islington Sq. Saturday 28 Sept. 28 10.30 am. Speakers at Piarhead 11.30 am, inc Mike Farrell, People's Democracy, Belfast.

TROTSKY on Germany, Fascism, Stalinism and the United Front, 1930-34. Special double issue of INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM contains selections from Trotsky's brilliant analysis of German politics that is still highly relevant to the modern working-class movement. 5s 6d (inc post) - IS, 38, Gilden Road, London NW5.

Published by the International Socialists, 8 Cottons Gdns, London E2. Printed by SW (Litho) Printers. Registered with the GPO. Annual subscription 22.



## Six Day War goes on

from page one

oil pipelines: that is, all but the means to fuel the private fortunes, harems and police of the feudal rulers.

Any moves to change this situation have seen the Israeli state first into the fray on behalf of imperialism. The feudalists in turn have known their friends and only made sham moves against Israel under extreme pressure from the masses they rule. The latest raid on Egypt was partly triggered off by Israeli annoyance at the fall of one of their friends in the Arab world, King Idris of Libya.

### ROBBERY

The Arab masses have double reason to put an end to Israel in its present form: its persecution and robbery of the Arabs within its immediate reach and its part in helping imperialism subdue and exploit the area as a whole.

It is for fear of the workers and peasants that even the more progressive Arab regimes take up the fight against Israel - and they do it badly and inefficiently. The real spearhead of the struggle against Israeli domination are the masses themselves, and foremost among them those most directly exploited - the dispossessed and persecuted people of Palestine, organised in the guerrilla forces which strike directly at Israel's security.

As long as Israel continues in its present form and in its present role, it must get no 'safe conduct' either from the Arab masses or from socialists in the west. But we are not the racists that the Zionists are and neither are the Arab guerrillas.

Our programme is for a multi-racial Israel, with full guaranteed rights for minorities, which will ally itself with the masses of the Middle East to combat imperialism and develop the whole area.

Then, and only then, will Israel win the right to consolidate its existence.

THE DEATH of nationalist or revolutionary leaders should demand of marxists not sentimental eulogies but careful analyses of their ideas, activities, achievements and mistakes. Socialists can draw from such analyses important lessons that will aid their own campaigns.

It was with this view in mind that the International Socialists readily agreed to participate in the Vietnam Solidarity Campaign's memorial meeting for Ho Chi Minh in London last Saturday. Unfortunately, the other organisations represented at the meeting seemed to think that protestations of grief were sufficient and that any criticism of the late Vietnamese leader was sacrilegious.

Chris Harman, the IS spokesman, stressed the vital importance of the Vietnamese struggle. He said that Ho's fight against western imperialism had inspired other countries to take up arms against their oppressors.

He stressed the courage and heroism of the Vietnam liberation movement and said that revolutionaries could best aid that liberation movement by building organisations to

## Dockers' no to manning dodge

Terry Barrett

THE PORT of London Authority and Ocean Containers Ltd have attempted to break a union ban on package deals at Tilbury Dock by means of a trick.

The ban was imposed by the No. 1 Docks Group of the Transport Workers Union over a year ago to prevent the employers introducing mechanisation through package deals at isolated berths operating with a greatly reduced labour force. The ban stays until all dockworkers get a deal based on equal opportunity.

The employers' trick was to make a tentative offer from the PLA to OCL that the berth in question should be operated under conventional manning. But the employers' idea of conventional manning was very different from the men's.

Conventional manning means to a docker that each hatch be manned by a 12-handed gang, while on the PLA's definition one 12-handed gang would transfer from hatch to hatch.

Tilbury IS dockers, in co-operation with other militant trade unionists, issued a leaflet deploring such a deal.

At a mass meeting called by Harry Battle (Tilbury Docks TGWU delegate), there was a unanimous decision that a further meeting would be called to discuss what form of militant action would be taken if the PLA attempted to break the ban.

Maintaining bans on isolated package deals is a method which must continue to be used as a weapon in the struggle for a better deal for every dockworker.

Roger Protz

take power in the west.

Harman went on to say that it would be wrong for socialists to mislead themselves about the nature of the Vietnamese struggle. It was a national one, not socialist, he said.

He added that North Vietnam was not a socialist state and that Ho's basically nationalistic attitudes had led him to liquidate in 1945 the Vietnamese Trotskyists who argued that the national struggle against imperialism should not be divorced from the class struggle for socialism.

At this stage a few Maoists left the meeting in protest but the platform speakers made no comment. Bob Purdie of the International Marxist Group (the British section of the Trotskyist Fourth International) then spoke in praise of Ho.

A Maoist returned to demand that Chris Harman should be forced to apologise for his remarks. Not to be outflanked, Mr Jack Woddis, the Commun-

## Go it alone threat by AEF in Ford pay talks

SW Reporter

REG BIRCH, left-wing spokesman for the Engineering Union at Ford, said on Monday that the AEF might break away from the present negotiating machinery and seek separate wage talks with the company.

This latest move follows months of haggling over union representation on the National Joint Negotiating Committee.

Before last February's strike, each union represented at Ford had one official on the NJNC. This meant that unions with only a handful of members had as many votes as the giant AEF and Transport Workers.

Shop-floor pressure for a more democratic structure led to the AEF and TGWU being given five votes each. They have now objected to the General and Municipal Workers and the Vehicle Builders being allotted three votes each.

Reg Birch, executive member of the AEF and present secretary of the NJNC, said on Monday: 'There is no basis in terms of membership or importance for these two unions to have three seats.' He added: 'If this is not changed we will withdraw from the committee and invite the TGWU to join with us in seeking direct negotiations with the company.'

The GMWU and NUVB warned the AEF that they will call in the TUC to stop the giant unions getting a larger vote on the committee. A GMWU spokesman commented that the rows over representation were preventing the unions from getting on with the 'essential business of looking after the workers' interests.'

GMWU members at Ford will be glad to hear that the officials are concerned with their interests. The union has traditionally been opposed to militant action and many of their members left for the TGWU during the last big strike.

The expression 'looking after the interests' will also stick in the throats of militants at Ford. They want to look after their own interests by having the decisive voice in wage negotiations.

### CORRECTION

JIM LAMBORN, SW Ford correspondent, writes: 'The statement in my article last week on the NJNC that 'some convenors have already made it clear that they WILL follow the policy of shop stewards' committees' unfortunately got transcribed as 'some convenors have already made it clear that they will not follow the policy.' May I apologise to all concerned for this error, which although small in itself, completely destroyed the point which I was trying to make.'

## Ho's final plea falls on stony ground

ist Party speaker, suddenly came to life, said he did not intend to see dirt thrown on Ho's grave and left the platform as a voice from the floor enquired what else could be thrown on a grave.

Bob Purdie, spokesman for the very world organisation whose comrades were killed by Ho in Saigon, then moved that the meeting should dissociate itself from Harman's remarks. The demand was echoed by Tariq Ali, another IMG member.

There was no clear-cut vote on Purdie's motion and, in some confusion, the meeting heard Tariq Ali's eulogy to Ho. In the course of his speech, Ali said that socialism was being built in North Vietnam, a remark that would seem to call in question the need for the Trotskyist World Party of Revolution.

The meeting ended with a reading of Ho's last testament which included the demand: 'Within the party, achieve broad democracy and the practice of self-criticism, and criticism regularly and seriously is the best way to consolidate and develop the union and unity of mind in the party.'

## NOTICES

KINGSTON IS public meeting: Tony Cliff on the Labour Party: What it is, and where it's going. 8 pm, Sunday 21 September 'The Three Compasses', Eden St, Kingston-on-Thames.

MANCHESTER IS public meeting: Paul Foot on Powellism and how to fight it. Friday 26 September 8 pm Labour Party rooms (above the Co-op) Princess Rd, Moss Side.

JUST OUT - 'Germ's Eye View', a new socialist magazine for hospital workers 8d inc postage (6 or more post free) from Jack Sutton 11a Rowan Ave. Whalley Range, Manchester 16.

LIVERPOOL ICRSC public mtg: film show and speakers, Sunday 22 September 7.15 pm at Students