

Socialist Worker

FOR WORKERS CONTROL AND INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM

Budget
aids rich,
soaks the
workers

John Palmer

WITH THE BROKERS from the central banks looking over his shoulder, Mr Roy Jenkins took a few more swipes at working-class living standards in his Budget.

The effect of the tax changes he announced will be to take some £300m purchasing power out of the economy. The price of this will be unemployment for thousands more workers and increased prices in the shops.

And the government have clearly shown that they will not be deterred by pleas from the TUC leaders from introducing anti-strike laws at the earliest opportunity.

PRIZES

It is clear that Mr Wilson and his banker masters place the greatest importance on these laws. It was the offering he made to them in order to get continued support for sterling now that his devaluation strategy is failing to produce a balance of payments surplus.

The few sweets in the Budget are no more than an insult to the men and women who put Mr Jenkins in his plush job.

Old age pensioners are to get a few shillings more, but this rise will totally disappear when the price increases which will result from the higher selective employment tax and corporation tax are added to those which have been introduced in the shops in recent months.

INSULT

At the other end of the scale, the government have handed out substantial prizes to the rich. In future the rich will not have to pay capital gains tax on the profits they make by buying and selling government stocks.

And they will also be able to export even more capital out of the country to buy shares on foreign stock exchanges.

Although the outflow of capital has had a much greater impact on the balance of payments than the strikes which so infuriate Jenkins, the Chancellor reserved all his venom for the working man's attempt to keep pace with the rising cost of living. No wonder the top-hatted Gerald Nabarro and the Tory opposition could afford to smile and welcome large parts of the Budget.

HINTS

The measures announced this week are not the end of the story. Mr Jenkins has given clear hints that substantial national insurance deductions are on the way.

The deductions are not just to pay for the pensions increase. The government have decided to stop subsidising the national insurance fund out of general taxation.

This can only mean that a big wage cut is being planned for the autumn. Trade unionists will remember this when the government introduces its anti-strike plans this summer.

Having put the labour movement in an economic straitjacket, the government is now preparing a lock and key.

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May Day
greetings

Is a line—proceeds to
Fighting Fund
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Panicking government to rush anti-union Act

MAY 1st STRIKE VITAL TO STOP BALL-and-CHAIN LAW

EDITORIAL

THERE IS A RAPIDLY GROWING RESPONSE to the call for a strike on May Day in opposition to the Labour government's attack on the trade unions. Shop stewards' committees, union district committees, trades councils and even some union executives are supporting the call for some action on May 1st.

The proposed legislation is a direct attack on the workers' ability to defend themselves and their hard-won conditions of work on the shop floor. In the White Paper In Place of Strife unofficial strikers are threatened with fines, unions with a 28-day cooling-off period and compulsory ballots before strikes where the Department of Employment and Productivity can word the questions.

All this is proposed by a Labour government. In almost indecent haste Wilson and Barbara Castle are trying to rush legislation through before trade union opposition can build up.

The Labour Party is in a state of deep crisis as open splits appear among the leaders. In an atmosphere reminiscent of 1931, it looks as though the government will depend on Tory votes to get the legislation through Parliament as a large number of Labour MPs threaten to vote against it.

REASON

Wilson is determined to go ahead, even at the cost of destroying the Labour Party.

But the left wing MPs don't offer the working class any real alternative. Like Michael Foot they see the present policy as just a 'mistake': if only the Labour leaders could be made to see reason!

Yet the Labour leaders are seeing reason — capitalist reason. When they came to power they made their choice. They were going to modernise capitalism and run it even better than the Tories.

But running capitalism better means running it more ruthlessly, with higher unemployment, greater exploitation, harder conditions of work — while all the time prices and rents rise and the only way to maintain living standards is for workers to sell conditions of work under notorious 'productivity' deals.

MYTHS

The illusions of the left wing MPs have been sustained by two myths. One is that an incomes policy in capitalist society can be used to redistribute income towards the lower-paid and less well organised workers.

The other is that we live in a society which really isn't capitalist any more: employers, trade unions and the state are the three parties to every bargain.

Neither of these myths has any foundation in reality.

In the last month it has been made quite clear that both their assumptions are utter nonsense. The purpose of the incomes policy is to modernise capitalism — to solve British capitalism's

Strike halts Fleet Street

TWO THOUSAND Fleet Street printers stopped the presses on Saturday night when they staged a lightning strike against the government's anti-union plans.

Production of all Sunday papers was disrupted as the men, members of the London machine branch of the Society of Graphical and Allied Trades, marched to Clerkenwell Green for a mass meeting, where a call was made for support for the May Day strike.

If the SOGAT men can get support from electricians, there is a strong chance that the millionaire press may grind to a halt on May 1st.

problems by making the workers pay.

The trade union leaders are now being told that their role is not to sit as equals at the top tables — they may be allowed in to pick up crumbs after the feasting is over.

Not surprisingly those trade union leaders who have any pretensions to represent their members are up in arms and furious about the whole business. The sweeteners (such as compulsory recognition of unions by employers) which were in the White Paper have been jettisoned. Only the attack remains.

The union leaders' statements of opposition are welcome. But they don't go nearly far enough.

It is not enough to make verbal statements of opposition. A consistent campaign must be mounted to make opposition a reality.

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Youths in Battipaglia display trophies won in clashes with police

Italian shootings mark growing crisis of regime

Norah Carlin

THE SHOOTING of two people — one a bystander — during a battle between police and workers at Battipaglia in southern Italy last week underlines once again the violence of the class struggle in Italy.

Workers' and students' demonstrations are frequently turned into pitched battles by the brutality of police and carabinieri. When deaths occur, as at Avola in Sicily last December, it is the demonstrators who are accused of homicide — this ludicrous charge was actually brought against 150 striking labourers at Avola.

Deaths hit the news, but there have been several battles and a number of political arrests in Italy since December. 'Law and

order' is the excuse of the ruling class for their repressive use of the state machinery, and they point to the threat of direct action by fascist groups if the state fails in its 'duty'.

This is a real threat in Italy, but the police in fact failed to save Naples University from serious damage by fascists in January.

PROTEST

Last Friday, workers all over Italy responded to the unions' call for a three-hour general strike in protest at the Battipaglia events. Many — such as the Venice watermen — stayed out for longer than this brief period

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Bandwagon gathers speed

IN SPITE OF strong pressure from the right wing, Liverpool Trades and Labour Council reaffirmed on Monday its decision to call for a massive one-day strike against the government's plans on May Day.

Workers at the Shardlow engineering factory in Sheffield have voted to join the strike, along with the shop

stewards' committees at two other Sheffield factories, Turton Platts and Firth Brown Tools.

The London no 1 docks committee of the Transport Workers' Union has unanimously voted to give full support to the May Day strike.

Tens of thousands are expected to stop work on

Clydeside. Among organisations backing the stoppage is the Workers' Action Committee.

A MANCHESTER May Day Campaign Committee has been formed to press for a one-day stoppage on May 1st. The committee includes members of the AEF, AUBTW, ASW, ASTMS, ATTI, ETU, NUPE, NUR, NUT, NUGMW, TGWU.

Council court move will spark London rent strike

SW Reporter

MILITANT TENANTS voted this week to call a total rent strike in London if the Tory-controlled Greater London Council take legal action against people who have refused to pay an increase since last October.

The strike call came from the United Tenants' Action Committee, which represents associations on all the major estates in London. Last week the tenants won a major victory when Housing Minister Greenwood vetoed the GLC's plan to increase rents again this autumn.

Now the GLC have hit back at the tenants by threatening court proceedings unless 'arrears' — the withheld rent increase — are paid up within seven days.

Fight goes on

The letters from the GLC's solicitor have gone only to a handful of tenants. The move is clearly designed to isolate individual militants and to scare the main body of tenants into giving up the fight.

If that fails, the GLC will attempt a showdown with evictions and heavy fines in order to smash the tenants' movement.

But the tenants are determined to fight on. They will win further support this month as the struggle moves to the local borough council estates where sharp increases are due to come into operation.

Even before UTAC met on Sunday, tenants on the vast Suffolk estate in Hackney, East London, called for a rent strike when they heard that one family had received the GLC's 'Pay up or else' ultimatum.

Ulster cops armed

IN A STEP BY STEP preparation for mass repression, Ulster's Tory police force were ordered at the weekend to carry arms on all duty except traffic control.

The RUC have also been issued with the Shortland armoured car. The Belfast-built Shortland was made to order for the RUC, who saw the need for a street-fighting armoured car

Already the District Committee of the AEF has issued a call to support the May 1st and the Carrington Shell construction workers have voted to participate.

NURSES in Manchester's hospital group are planning protests against a new scheme that makes them pay for their meals.

A book you should read

Why the workers must organise for power

State and Revolution by V.I. Lenin

LENIN'S PAMPHLET is the best short statement of the marxist theory of the state yet written. Like many of his writings, it is a polemic, a criticism of the ideas of turncoats who tried to hide their desertion by socialist sounding phrases.

Consequently State and Revolution is rather heavily loaded with quotations from Marx and Engels. This doesn't make it very easy reading but it does have the advantage that practically everything the pioneers of scientific socialism had to say on the subject is reproduced in a compact form.

What is a state? It is 'an organ of class rule, an organ for the oppression of one class by another (it creates "order") which legalises and perpetuates this oppression by moderating the collision between the classes'.

The essential point is that the state is not a 'natural' or inevitable thing. Stateless societies have

existed in the past and they will exist again in the future. The state is a specific product of the class struggle.

As Lenin puts it 'the state is the product and manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms. The state arises when, where and to the extent that class antagonisms cannot be objectively reconciled. And conversely, the existence of the state proves that the class antagonisms are irreconcilable.'

Fundamental divide

The basic features of any state are a standing army and police force separated from society as a whole, a bureaucracy and the various 'material appendages, prisons and coercive institutions of all kinds'.

Lenin, following Marx, denies the possibility of transferring the control of this repressive apparatus from the ruling minority to the mass of the workers. The destruct-

ion of the military and bureaucratic machine is essential to any real revolution. This is the fundamental divide that separates revolutionary socialists from reformists and centrists of all kinds.

Of course Lenin did not suppose that there was no difference between the various states that exist or that it was a matter of indifference to socialists whether civil liberties and representative institutions exist. On the contrary, he argues 'democracy is of great importance for the working class in its struggle for freedom against the capitalists'.

It is something to be fought for and defended against reactionaries. But even the most 'democratic' state remains an instrument of class rule. Its elimination is a necessary step for the achievement of workers' power.

How does the idea of a 'Workers' State' fit into this? Against the anarchists, some of whom would accept much of what has been said so far, Marx and Lenin both argued

that even though a state machine can be very quickly liquidated, coercion cannot disappear overnight.

Even the most popular revolution has to defend itself. And to the extent that coercion still exists, even coercion, by the vast majority, of a small minority, a state of sorts, 'in the shape of the armed masses of the workers' still exists.

Different definition

This is a workers' state. It is essentially transitional. 'The more democratic the "state" of the armed workers - which is no longer a state in the proper sense of the word - becomes the more rapidly does the state begin to wither away.'

Some years later Trotsky introduced a radically different definition of a workers' state. For him the essential thing was the state ownership of the means of production. Even though the workers have lost all effective control over their work situation, even though the 'bureau-

cratic and military apparatus' has been recreated, a state originating in a proletarian revolution remains a workers' state, though degenerated, as long as their is no return of the ownership of industry to private hands.

This view cannot be adequately discussed here and will be considered in a later article. Meanwhile it is to be noted that it constitutes a major revision of Marxist theory.

Of all Lenin's writings State and Revolution has received the most hostile treatment from bourgeois and social democratic writers. This is not at all surprising. It goes to the heart of the matter.

The renegades Lenin attacked are long dead and largely forgotten but the message of the book is as alive and important today as it was in 1917. It is a book that every serious socialist must study.

Duncan Hallas

'I could kill you here - no one will ever know': a B-special to Ulster civil rights fighters

THE PICTURE was taken on January 4 in a field above Burntollet Bridge, a few moments before the ambush by Paisleyites was launched on a People's Democracy march from Belfast to Derry.

The police officer on the extreme right is Head Constable Patterson, chief of the Royal Ulster Constabulary special force, better known as the riot squad.

Third from the right, in civilian clothes is Ronald Cook, a member of the B-specials.

One of the stated reasons for the introduction of the Public Order Amendment Bill, at present making its controversial way through parliament, is that the police need greater power to control counter-demonstrations.

by
EAMONN McCANN

ASSAULT

It is obvious from the photograph that at Burntollet the police were in close contact with a group of men whose clear and unmistakable intention it was to launch an assault on a peaceful march, and who had armed themselves for that purpose.

Under existing legislation the police in the photograph had authority to arrest at least the two persons on the left, seen carrying clubs.

Not only did they not do this, they have not, since January 4 charged any of the men shown, all of whom took - and were seen by the police to take - an active part in the ambush. The police did not lack the power to prevent the Burn-

tollet ambush, they lacked the will.

During the debate on the second reading of the Bill, Mr John Hume, MP, elicited from the Minister of Home Affairs the information that B-specials - even in plain clothes - will have power to intervene with all the authority of the state on occasions such as Burntollet. This power will be given to such as the aforementioned Ronald Cook.

Mr Cook works at the quarry owned by W. Leslie Ltd. about a mile from Burntollet Bridge. It was from this quarry that stones were carried in a lorry on the night of January 3 to be left in piles ready for the preliminary stoning of the marchers.

On Tuesday, March 18

Bowes Egan, PD candidate for Enniskillen, Eamonn Melaugh of the Housing Action Committee and I went into Leslie's Quarry in the course of an investigation into the background to the Burntollet affair (the results of the investigation will be published shortly in a book by Mr Egan).

We were assaulted by a group of men. Mr Cook ripped a roll of film from Mr Melaugh's camera.

POWERS

He then told us that 'we could kill you here and bury your bodies. No one will ever know.'

Before we left Cook said 'if there is any more talking or writing about that march we will kill you, and we mean that'.

It is to men like Mr Cook that wider powers are to be given. It is worth noting in passing that the allegedly liberal Home Affairs Minister,

Mr Porter, recently praised the B-specials fulsomely and said that the security of N. Ireland depended on them.

Yet, for all that, the basic objection to the Public Order Amendment Bill does not rest on its detailed provisions nor on the character and calibre of some of those who will interpret and implement it.

One of the central planks of the civil rights platform was opposition to the repressive legislation embodied in the Special Powers Act and the existing Public Order Act. The reaction of the O'Neill regime has been further to restrict the area of freedom allowed political and quasi-political movements.

'MODERATE'

The Bill, by appearing to curb 'both sides' was designed to create the impression that O'Neill, the moderate, stood between and above two contending groups of extremists.

He has been assisted in making this plausible by the recent spate of resignations from civil rights groups and by the smear campaign against 'extremists' carried out by Miss Betty Sinclair, Mr McAnenny and others.

O'Neill introduced this fake measure because he CANNOT solve the problems of N. Ireland.

The civil rights campaign focused around specific reformist demands such as 'One man, one vote' and 'Abolish the Special Powers Act'. But it was, at bottom, an elemental expression of discontent accruing from a society which could not provide decent housing for its people nor provide any solution to the unemployment problem.

CAUSE

Mr Robin Baillie, MP, gave the game away recently when he said that in N. Ireland the demands 'one family, one house' and 'one man, one job' were not reformist, but revolutionary.

Mr Baillie could be right. O'Neill could possibly concede universal franchise and end discrimination, and get away with it - although he is probably too effete and spineless to carry it through.

He cannot, however, end the underlying shortage of houses, because he cannot break the bankers' strangle-

hold on the local councils and the Housing Trust which is the root cause of our housing problem.

He cannot end unemployment because the lack of investment in N. Ireland in this period is linked to the general crisis in Britain which, as we have recently seen, is also having a cataclysmic effect on the 'republic' in the south.

To solve the problems of N. Ireland it is necessary to mount an assault on the whole Tory system, not just to demand a more 'liberal' regime. To do this in a non-sectarian way, to minimise the possibility of evoking a conditioned sectarian response from the Protestant working class, any such continued campaign would have to be seen clearly to be in the interests of all workers.

It is not enough merely to repeat over and over again,

'we are non-sectarian. We are fighting for social justice for Protestants as well as Catholics.'

The civil rights' demands should be linked to demands for a minimum wage, to a campaign against redundancies such as occurred at BOC recently and for work-sharing on full pay as an alternative to a campaign against rent rises such as those recently announced by Belfast Corporation.

It is clear that until we have built a viable movement based on such policies, measures like the Public Order Amendment Bill will be introduced by panicking Tory politicians and political policemen like Head Constable Patterson will go on condoning the criminal activities of people like Ronald Cook.

This article first appeared in Rampart, journal of the Londonderry Labour Party.



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SOCIALIST WORKER is the paper of International Socialism, a movement of revolutionary socialists who believe that the present form of society, with its blatant inequalities, its periodic crises, wars and racialist hysteria must be replaced by one based on a planned economy under full workers' control; those who produce the wealth should own and control the means of production. International Socialism is opposed to any incomes policy that seeks to restrict the wages of the workers in order to boost the profits of the employers. We unconditionally support all shop stewards and rank and file trade union members in their struggles for better wages and conditions and oppose all reactionary laws that threaten the liberties of the labour movement. We support all strikes in defence of workers' interests with the de-

WHERE WE STAND

mand of no victimisation of trade unionists. Redundancy should be opposed with the demand: five days work or five days pay. Shop stewards' organisations should strengthen and extend their in-

fluence by linking up on an industrial and ultimately a national basis. We are opposed to racial discrimination, a weapon used by the ruling class to divide the labour movement. Immigration control must be ended, ensuring the free movement of peoples regardless of race and colour. Black and white workers must unite and form their own defence organisations to fight fascism and racialism. The labour movement must demand the immediate recall of British troops from abroad as the first step towards ending colonial exploitation. The task of revolutionary socialists is to join workers in their struggles with socialist ideas that will link up the various sections of the labour movement and help create a force that will lead on to workers' power and international socialism.

Ford: a victory LETTERS

EVENTS MOVE QUICKLY. The recent victorious strike at the Ford plants has been followed by an even more victorious return to work.

Forcing its way up from the grass roots of the movement, the demand consistently urged by the shop stewards and conveners for no penalty clauses was presented by the official union leadership to Ford management on March 28.

This has produced the position that until the next National Joint Negotiating Committee meeting on April 19, no procedure agreement exists between the unions and the company, with the company hinting that no wage agreement exists either, and that a return to 1967 wage levels is possible.

The likelihood of this latter measure has to be weighed against its plausibility. The principled opposition to the penalty clauses continues to rise, with the vigour and untidiness of any other natural, but unexpected event.

An endless succession of agendas, tactics, intr'gues and agreements have been used by the company, government and union officials to neatly formalise the tumult on the shop floor.

One of these moves was the recognition that greater negotiating rights for works

committees were necessary. Having reached this point, the rank and file strength at these negotiations immediately blew a hole through the last of these agreements, on the point that they have maintained throughout - no penalty clauses.

The Ford workers, dedicated to the above principle, are certainly armed to deal with any threats to their wage packets. For a quarter of a century, Ford wages have drifted further and further from the rest of the industry.

There will not be a neat look to Ford labour relations until the two demands, parity and no penalty clauses are accepted by the company.- FORD WORKER, Dagenham.

Controls

I HAVE BEEN READING Where we Stand in your paper. As an English worker (union ASTMS) I am disappointed that you don't appear to have any concern for this island's future in advocating free movement of peoples regardless of background.

I am sure you cannot be serious. Even at this moment large inroads into our natural rural and farmland areas are

being made in our growing p certainly don't England saturate density housing the middle of a Park. Of course the to be controls entering this cou you can safegua ipated workers' doesn't seem pursuing it. - G. Coventry.

Rat race

IF THE PERSE by the Labour regarding expen then it is only ask why tax especially an not granted so that they output. As it is one family to benefit time. Concerning are never more can be competitive as other West Ham is extending. Any gain by these states made at the or all of the

Indies: 100 years



British troops on Anguilla: replacing one set of gangsters with another

pirates, profits and blood

by PAUL FOOT

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ingly upon beet, and as prices have fallen, so the planters have clung even more tenaciously to their privileges.
The full force of their venom was turned on the rising trade unions and their leaders. They forced the British Governors to pass laws dividing the constituencies into seats which they could rig, and, when the rigging failed, passed a 'law' banning trade union leaders from sitting in the island parliaments.
The law was championed by Moody Stuart, managing director of the Antigua Syndicate Estates, which owned most of the island, and who at the same time was a leading member of both Legislative and Executive Councils.
Trade union leaders were bullied, threatened, even murdered. But nothing could stop the unions, and, gradually they formed themselves into political parties.
Manley in Jamaica, Adams in Barbados, Bird in Antigua, Bradshaw in St.Kitts, Joshua in St.Vincent, Gary in Grenada - all these men who later became prime ministers started as union leaders in the fight against the planters.
This is the background to the situation in Anguilla. For 120 years Anguilla has been ruled as part of a federation - first of the Leeward Islands and then of St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla.
Nowhere in the West Indies were the planters more resistant to change than in St. Kitts. Consequently perhaps, nowhere were the sugar workers more courageous in their support for their trade union and labour leaders.
It was the planters who first sowed the seeds of hatred and jealousy between one island and the other



BRADSHAW
Insisted on federal structure

dividing themselves into small island castes, angry and suspicious at any sign of co-operation with anyone else. The hatred between the planters on St.Kitts for their brothers and cousins in Nevis was outstanding.
The leader of the St.Kitts Sugar Workers' Union, Robert Bradshaw, became prime minister of St.Kitts in 1966, winning all seven of the seats in the island.
The planters, who had tolerated him under British rule, decided to fight him when Britain pulled out. To procure a base, they financed and organised an 'independence movement' in Anguilla, and organised a military coup in St.Kitts on June 10, 1967.
The British government was perplexed. What to do next? As always, they got their answer from America.
The policy of the Central Intelligence Agency is not, as sometimes imagined, to support arch reactionaries in every cause. It is concerned primarily to ensure a 'peaceful environment' for profit-making.
For the CIA, better a helpless majority government than a racist and reactionary minority one.
The CIA gave their orders - smash the Anguillan

the Sugar Workers' union in the late 1940s, Bradshaw quickly discovered that in his isolated island there was little room even for ordinary trade union reforms. He passed a Minimum Wage Act and an Industrial Injuries Act but in terms of any real encroachment on the plantocracy or the new, 'dynamic' tourist-orientated upper class, he made no gains.
He could rely upon almost endless electoral support - but the enthusiasm of that support could only be maintained as long as the planters continued playing cops and robbers from Anguilla.
Despite heavy subsidies from the St.Kitts government (amounting to twice the island's revenue) in 1966, the self-styled Anguillan leaders declared UDI in May 1967.
Bradshaw insisted on some form of federal structure and a series of conferences were held, mainly in Barbados. As the conferences continued it became clear that the men in charge in Anguilla did not want to agree to anything.
They wanted an island without government or elections or taxes, a gambler's and hotelier's paradise. They wanted another Nassau (Sir Stafford Sands, former Prime Minister of the Bahamas was paid several million dollars in 'consultancy fees' by Meyer Lansky of the Florida Mafia).
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'revolt'. Take sides with Bradshaw against the planters. Seek to settle a dangerously explosive situation with gunboats and diplomats.
But the Anguilla operation was ham-fisted. And in spite of appeals by the Antiguan Labour prime minister, Bird, to 'keep calm', 8000 Antiguanians marched through the streets to protest at the interference of British troops.
RECIPE
The arrival of British troops in Anguilla replaced one set of gangsters with another. Anguillan nationalism is an abstraction, invented by New York and Florida businessmen, but equally the 'peaceful environment' sought by the intervention of the British troops, is a recipe for another 100 years of exploitation.
The demand for the removal of British troops must be unequivocal and unconditional - not because 'Anguilla wants independence' as sugar-owning Tory MPs would have it, but in the hope that the West Indian working people - one of the most potentially revolutionary forces in the third world - will themselves shake off the shackles of plantocracies and CIA-inspired 'peaceful environments' and run all their islands in their own interests.

GREETINGS FROM US and FRENCH SOCIALISTS

Fraternal greetings were brought to the Easter conference of the International Socialists by the Independent Socialist Clubs of America and Lutte Ouvriere (Workers' Fight) of France.
THE INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST CLUBS of America take great pleasure in greeting the Easter conference of the International Socialists and expressing our hopes for a successful meeting. The growth of our British comrades has been an inspiration to us.
Here in the heartland of world imperialism, the growing repression and polarisation has led many in the anti-war, student and black liberation movements to look for more fundamental solutions and to orient towards revolutionary socialism.
The ISCA has played an important role in this development and has grown as a result. The pressures of the war economy and of the world capitalist crisis have led to an increasing turmoil and militancy within the American working class.
ISCA has accelerated its efforts to sink deeper roots in the working class and to so generalise the struggle in the wake of black upsurges as to lead in the direction of workers' unity. The red hunt of the 1950s so devastated the movement that it effectively destroyed the continuity of socialist culture. This poses to us the task of reconstructing and developing anew a vital revolutionary theory to give direction to the militancy generated by the 1960s.
But despite the repression, the movement for revolutionary socialism is growing. At the ISCA national convention in June we shall transform our present federation into a truly national organisation. - IAN MCMAHAN, International Secretary, ISCA.
I AM VERY GLAD to bring the French Trotskyist comrades of LO's greetings to your conference. The situation is much more favourable at present for French revolutionaries than it is for British comrades. Since May 1968 no week has passed without several strikes.
The reasons might be various, wages, hours of work, discipline and so on, but as a whole these strikes show that the working class is still ready to fight.
In the last 10 months all revolutionary groups have grown considerably and spread, in spite of their illegality. Tens of thousands of revolutionary workers have been waiting for these groups to give them a goal in their struggles, but the groups are unable to answer them.
It might be possible today, against the Communist Party and the ruling class to make a united movement where all the groups would be represented as a tendency and would have the right to develop their own political views.
It may seem curious, but most of the revolutionary groups don't even worry about such a perspective. In fact each group is quite convinced it is the only actual 'vanguard' and dreams of getting all the others into its own organisation. For our own part we will go on trying to achieve some unity among revolutionaries. With that purpose in mind we organised in January a public meeting with comrades of Rouge. 4500 people were present. In April we have another meeting with the same comrades on the referendum and unity of revolutionaries. - LUTTE OUVRIERE spokesman.

ous return to work...

ion in the last analysis which contains the potential for military conflict.
If such an extreme position is to be avoided it can only be done by rationalising and blunting that very competitiveness which allegedly is crucial to Britain's survival.
Thus our 'export drive' is fundamentally ambiguous and even more so when it is realised that, as the workers graft away to make more profit, a large part of such profit is itself exported as 'investment' or frittered away

in the casinos of Monte Carlo or keeping other sections of the business community in flash hotels in the Bahamas and Cote d'Azur.
There are now reckoned to be close on 600,000 Britishers living abroad on profit derived from this country.
Where the Labour government itself is concerned it surely must know by now that in a society of gross inequality the sort of full blooded response they seek from the workers cannot be given.

After being elected in October 1964, if they had positively pursued a policy of internal redistribution of wealth they could now with some justification make demands on the workers. But as matters stand there is nothing doing.
Indeed the point has been reached where the majority of the working-class electorate have become disillusioned with Labour, in the process inadvertently preparing the ground for a most right wing Tory victory. -PAT O'DONOVAN, London N1.

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the marxist journal that provides a political backdrop for readers of Socialist Worker

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Name

Address



MINERS AND COAL BOSSES IN BATTLE OVER RENTS

John Charlton

DONCASTER:- Yorkshire miners are preparing for a bitter struggle against the National Coal Board's plan to increase their rents by as much as £1 10s a week.

The Coal Industry Housing Association which runs NCB housing, asked the Yorkshire Rents Committee, drawn from 'a panel of experts with professional connections in the estate and property business' (the chairman earns £18 a day), to reassess miners' rents on an economic basis, bringing them into line with local authority rents.

This comparison is totally false. CIHA commitments on houses built 16 to 40 years ago bear no relation to those of a local authority trying to build new houses with an 8½ per cent interest rate.

And local authorities have much greater responsibility than the NCB for maintenance and other amenities.

ENRAGED

Following the bosses' time honoured principle of divide and rule, assessment forms, printed aptly on thin lavatory paper, have been arriving through the letter boxes on the coalfield over a three month period.

Next door neighbours have received their forms at quite different times and some enraged miners have thought the man next door had escaped the increase.

The forms call for landlord and tenant jointly to indicate their agreement of the new 'fair' rent, which can be anything up to 31s 6d a week.

Many tenants believe that against a background of sharply rising prices in the shops, wage freeze and Alf Robens' pay increase of £15,000 a year, the only 'fair' rent that they could agree to would be one considerably less than they are paying at present. They are understandably angry at the judgment of the 'panel of experts'.

REFUSE

Since rents are docked from wages at the pit head - which is another issue worth fighting - a total rent strike is not practical. But refusal to sign the forms means that the increase cannot be levied until after a public enquiry - and forms are being collected by tenant activists.

Plans are under way to make the enquiry genuinely public, with tenants attending in force.

Despite the value of insisting upon legal rights to the bitter end, there is an increasing awareness that the only really effective weapon is a strike at the pits, a policy that can only be won and sustained through open discussion at mass meetings of tenants and miners.

The miners have been kicked around and blackmailed long enough as their differences have been exploited by the NCB brass hats. The rents question is an issue that unites the whole coalfield. Determination can bring victory.

ITALIAN SHOOTINGS

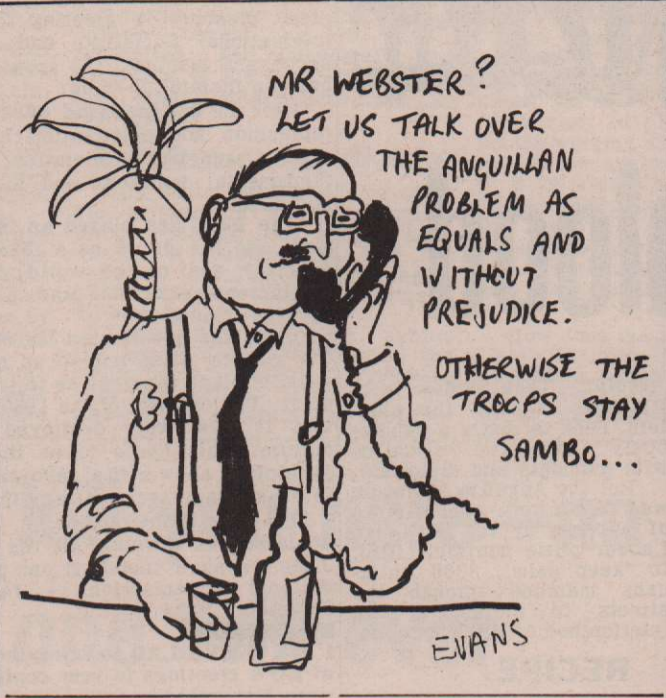
from page one

thought suitable by the leaders of unions such as the General Confederation of Labour (CGIL), which is dominated by the Communist Party.

In Milan, Rome and Florence, protest rallies developed into more street fighting. In Bologna, the Communist mayor pleaded with demonstrators to go home when they sat down on the railway line.

Clearly, the Communist Party and the union leadership wish to keep the anger of Italian workers and students within the limits they set, such as the campaign for legislation to disarm the police.

The role of the Communist Party is similar to that



MR WEBSTER?
LET US TALK OVER
THE ANQUILLAN
PROBLEM AS
EQUALS AND
WITHOUT
PREJUDICE.
OTHERWISE THE
TROOPS STAY
SAMBO...

Support grows for anti-racist mobilisation

SW Reporter

COUNTRYWIDE SUPPORT is expected for the Wolverhampton demonstration against racialism on Sunday, April 27.

Called a 'black and white unity mobilisation', the march and rally is being organised by the Socialist Unity Movement, a committee representing local socialist and immigrant organisations.

A leaflet produced by SUM outlines the reasons for the demonstration in the heart of Enoch Powell's constituency: 'Over the last year the "paper tiger" Enoch Powell has made Wolverhampton the focus of attention on the issue of racialism. He has done more as an individual than any other to whip up racist sentiments among working-class people in order to divide them and weaken them.'

SYSTEM

The leaflet stresses that SUM's target is neither Powell nor any other individual spokesmen of the capitalist system.

'We have to convince white, brown and black workers that they can only resist the present attacks on their rights, their living standards, their security and their persons by uniting as a strong force with the aim of destroying the present system and building socialism.'

The mobilisation is being organised under clear class lines and will be a significant demonstration of the growing unity of black and white workers against the racists in both political parties and the bands of nazis who are flourishing as a result of

played by its French counterpart last summer - except that the Italian party probably enjoys even less control over militant workers and has its sights more firmly set on parliamentary power.

Disarming the police would not solve Italy's problems. High unemployment and wide-spread redundancies (like those the Battipaglia workers were protesting against) are made worse by weak government which has lost the respect of sections of the ruling class.

While the Communist Party works for its parliamentary solution, the workers as well as the students seem to have another answer: to take their politics out into the streets, no matter what brutality awaits them there.

Labour's anti-working-class policies.

Socialist Worker urges its readers to give their full support to the demonstration, which starts at 2 pm at the Penn Road junction, south of Wolverhampton Town Centre.

Some IS branches are organising coaches. For details contact your local branch secretary or the organiser of the mobilisation at 545 Wolverhampton Road, Willenhall, Staffs.

MAY DAY from page one

This can only come from the rank and file - significantly the original calls for May Day action came from the grass roots.

There is a further fundamental defect in the trade union leaders' (and the left MPs) opposition to Wilson, Jenkins and Castle. They still look to the existing political institutions for salvation, to parliament and the Labour Party.

The present crisis for the Labour movement shows the barrenness of this approach, pursued by them since 1964 and before. The necessity for an alternative revolutionary political organisation is clear but equally clearly it does not exist as yet.

In the long-term we must aim in this direction. In the meantime it is vital that unconditional support is given to every strike, every working-class action against the attacks of the employers and the Labour government.

CHAINS

Together they are forging chains of steel to bind the working class. Only on the basis of the mass activity of the working class can these be broken.

May Day is an absolutely clear-cut political opposition to the capitalist policies of the Labour government. It will be the most important manifestation of class politics since 1926.

There may not be a mammoth general strike, but its significance must not be underestimated. From these beginnings a mighty movement is being reborn.

It will eventually destroy the capitalist system and introduce production for need, not for profit, workers' power in place of strife.

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Tory smear on immigrant children

SW Reporter

THE TORY-CONTROLLED Haringey Council in North London have been shaken by widespread opposition to their plans to disrupt the local comprehensive schools by reintroducing a form of selection and by 'dispersing' coloured children throughout the borough.

Teachers, parents, immigrant associations and political groups have met to plan action to fight the council's scheme.

The campaign was strengthened on Monday by the publication of a 'secret' report drawn up for the council's education committee. It urged a policy of dispersal on the grounds that it was 'well-known' that West Indians have a lower IQ (intelligence rating) than white people.

'Race bias'

The Tottenham and Haringey branches of the International Socialists issued a press statement that said the secret report had brought into the open the clear racial bias on which the scheme is based.

The statement added: 'It is quite monstrous that responsible councillors should perpetuate myths reminiscent of Nazi Germany that negroes have lower IQs than white people and that large groups of West Indian children will lower the academic standards of schools.'

Evidence showed that conditions under which children live and learn are responsible for their academic abilities, not race or nationality, the statement went on.

Mobilise

'In other words, bad housing and slum schools are detrimental to the education of all working-class children, black and white. What is needed are better schools and housing, not a racist scheme of dispersal.'

The IS branches said they intend to mobilise opposition to the council's racist proposals and have invited support from other local groups, particularly immigrant bodies.

CHALLINOR'S CHOICE

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS, a debate has smouldered on about the prospects of Labour winning the next general election. Those who have thought this a possibility have argued that, in the immediate pre-election period, Wilson would reflate the economy, an air of affluence would be created - and Labour would be able to float back to power on it.

I have never subscribed to this theory. The sickness of British capitalism makes it unlikely, in my opinion, that economic recovery could be sustained for sufficiently long to have an impact on the electorate's attitudes. Moreover, the frail state of the economy makes it accident-prone, easily knocked off course, and therefore delicate campaign calculations can easily go awry.

Another factor is the demoralisation of Labour's rank and file. Most constituency party meetings resemble the geriatric ward at Ely Hospital. Although CLPs are certainly less crowded than Ely, attendance at them involves a similar experience. It seems highly unlikely that Transport House will be able to repair the ravages that the last five years have done to the organisation. The leaders' only hope of arousing enthusiasm in the ranks would be to devise a scheme that provided free burials for old party stalwarts.

If anything, Labour's position is worse financially than organisationally. Have you ever stopped to think what is the most unpopular thing you can ever do? The answer is to ask people to subscribe to Labour Party funds.

Yet this has got to be done - and done successfully - if there is to be the least prospect of winning at the hustings.

As party treasurer, Jim Callaghan must have had intimate, first-hand experience of attempting to get trade unionists, whose wage increases have been blocked under the incomes policy, to contribute to Labour coffers. The hopelessness of his task may well have been partly responsible for his vacillations over Barbara Castle's anti-working class legislation.

IT IS NOT MERELY Jesus Christ who was resurrected. Many old comrades are now coming back from the dead. For years they had ceased to exist - been 'unpersons' - who, because of alleged deviations, could never be mentioned by a communist historian in any history he wrote.

But times are a-changing. It is good to see James Klugmann, in his history of the Communist Party of Great Britain, acknowledging that in 1921 'John MacLean and Harry McShane were leading the unemployed into action.' Likewise he mentions that I.P. Hughes was appointed CP Merseyside District organiser in December 1922, the fourth full-time organiser the party had.

Today, of course, Harry McShane is still active. His Glasgow Marxist-Humanist group recently published a pamphlet on Czechoslovakia, in which it attributes the crisis to Russia's imperialist policy. Similarly, I.P. Hughes is still active. A member of Merseyside IS, he is very valuable because of his vast fund of experience.

Just good friends

IN HIS PLAY Man and Superman, Bernard Shaw has a scene in which a millionaire called Tanner is held up on a remote mountain path by an armed bandit. The thief introduces himself: 'I am a robber. I live by robbing the rich.' Tanner replies: 'I am a capitalist. I live by robbing the poor.' The two men shake hands affectionately.

Elsewhere Bernard Shaw elaborates on the kinship of capitalism and crime: 'The thief who is in prison is not necessarily more dishonest than his fellows at large, but only one who, through ignorance or stupidity, steals in a way that is not customary. He prompts a loaf from the baker's counter and is promptly snatched into jail. Another man snatches bread from the tables of hundreds of widows and orphans and simple credulous souls who do not know the ways of company promoters; and, as likely as not, he is run into parliament.'

For simple souls, it's extremely difficult to tell the difference between the capitalist and the criminal. The Gramplan Chemicals Company, for example, wants £22m of public money for its refinery; the mail train robbers only wanted £2m of public money.

RAY CHALLINOR

'Late and you're sacked' plan leads to strike

SW Reporter

LINWOOD:- 2000 AEF members at Rootes Scottish car plant stopped work last Thursday in protest at the sacking of a man for lateness.

The firm recently turned another screw in the productivity package the unions accepted last year, by giving every worker an individual copy of their 'Absence and Lateness Procedure'.

An 'offence' is committed by the worker, they say, if at any time he is more than one hour late for work or misses one half shift (four hours) without prior permission.

GAP

He is also guilty if he is more than two minutes late on more than three occasions in any one month. After three 'offences' the worker is 'liable to dismissal' if there is less than a three month gap between each 'offence'.

One man has been found guilty for absenting himself while his father was dying. The man who was sacked lived more than 15 miles from the factory and was put on the three-shift system, forcing him to arrive at work at 6.30 am every third week.

There is virtually no available transport across Glasgow to make this possible, and the AEF asked for his transfer to permanent day or night-shift in another part of the plant, or for the firm to make transport available. Rootes refused and sacked the man.

The token strike has been followed by renewed negotiations, but unless the man is reinstated the AEF stewards are likely to call for further action. Support from AEF members has been nearly 100 per cent, but the second largest union at

Rootes, the Vehicle Builders have been dragging their feet.

They have no members in the Press Shop where the three-shift system is worked and shortsightedly are saying they will fight the new procedure only when it affects them. This is like asking for a job against polio after you've caught the disease.

Stewards and workers of all unions at Rootes should join together in the Joint Shop Stewards Committee and in shop floor meetings to demand the reinstatement of the sacked man and the withdrawal of the company's new procedure which puts machines before men, profit before people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

LENIN'S State and Revolution reviewed on page 2 can be ordered from IS Book Service, 90 Mountview Road, London N4.

A BREAKDOWN of the White Paper in Place of Strife, issued by the North West Shop Stewards' Action Committee. Available from P. Dunn, 193 Rowan Drive, Westvale, Kirkby, Lancs. 10d inc post.

MIDDLE EAST: all those interested in forming a Palestine Solidarity Campaign meet at 24

Carlisle Mansions, Carlisle Place, SW1, April 27, 7 pm.

MAY DAY: Liverpool demonstration leaves Islington Square at 10.30 am.

CIVIL RIGHTS conference, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, Sat April 19, 1 - 5 pm. Mtg to form a People's Democracy in London and to plan action in solidarity with the Civil Rights Campaign in Ireland. Phone Bryan McCabe 01-456 6381 for details.