

WORKERS' FIGHT

No.15

Sept. 23 Oct 6

4p

ULSTER: Repression by Britain steps up

Indefinite internment — with trial, backed up by special courts



Big Brother - with a gun

and using a strengthened and reinforced Special Powers Act — that's the latest Whitelaw initiative to bring 'peace' to Ireland. The special courts will meet in secret to put the stamp of 'law' — which in Northern Ireland as in Britain the bosses make up when they need it — on detention of men against whom there is no evidence that a reasonable jury would convict on. Gerry Fitt, of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, has said that the move is aimed at get-

ting the SDLP to the conference on the future of Northern Ireland due to start on 25 September. The SDLP is boycotting the talks until internment is ended (though recently they met Heath for discussions) That explains the courts. But the strengthening of the already notorious Special Powers Act, which has been used for decades against the Catholics, suggests that there will be a general strengthening of repression in Northern Ireland. The revised Special Powers Act will allow prosecution for "furthering the aims" of an illegal

organisation. It could lead to prosecution of advocates of a United Ireland. It looks very much as if the British Government has decided that the war in Ireland has still a long and bitter way to go yet. This latest move to bolt down and tighten the screws of repression must be denounced and opposed in Britain just as internment has been.

INSIDE: Austen Morgan reports from Belfast; and P.D. on "The Politics of the Provos".



Villages: victims of Zionism

Israeli's raids on Lebanon and Syria, in which about 300 civilians were killed, were claimed to have been against "guerrilla" bases. In fact nearly all the chosen targets were ordinary Lebanese and Syrian villages. Even where Palestine refugee settlements were hit, all the evidence points to the fact that this is just what they are — and not "guerrilla bases" at all: certainly villages 100 and more miles from the Israeli border could pose no threat to Israel. The primary aim of the bombing was not military but political — to isolate the Palestinians from their popular support and make them unwelcome even in the Arab lands. And there is also a strong possibility that Israel is looking to southern Lebanon as the next target for its expansionist drives. Only in June of this year they were fabricating stories about a supposed Lebanese-Syrian 'invasion plot' as an excuse for deep raids into the fertile lands of Southern Lebanon.

TENANTS PREPARE TO SMASH RENTS ACT

When 3,000 people marched in Glasgow on 16th September in protest against the Government's Housing Finance Act, they showed the Tories something of what is going to hit them when they try to ram their so-called "Fair" Rents down our throats.

The demonstration, which was over half a mile long, had representatives of every part of the Labour movement as well as many factory committees.

At the same time 1000 people in

Manchester were marching. Here the demonstration was organised by the Trades Council and received the backing of many tenants associations, the AUEW District Committee, and many building workers.

In Oldham and Wigan, and in Kirkby, similar protests were held.

In Birmingham shop stewards representing over 12,000 Rover car workers have endorsed the Labour Group's opposition to the Act and sent representatives to a demon-

Continued p.2, col.1

MILITANTS MARCH AGAINST MONDAY CLUB

On Saturday 16th September militants from a number of revolutionary organisations marched from Charing Cross to Central Hall, Westminster, where the forces of Britain's growing fascism had gathered under the aegis of the right wing Tory Monday Club for a "Stop the Asians" rally.

After the short march on which the militants chanted 'Fascists out of Central Hall' and 'Defend the Asians, Defend the unions' a mass picket was mounted. The organisers then turned the mass picket into a mass open air rally — one easily outnumbering the racist rally inside the Methodist-owned hall.

Speaker after speaker stressed the need not only to combat racist ideas, but also to prepare physically to beat the fascists back down the sewers they haul their filthy ideas from.

For this not to be an adventure, though, speakers stressed, vigorous work in the organisations of the working class, in the factories and housing estates, would have to be done: the mass of workers had to be won to an understanding of the need to oppose racialism and a commitment to fight it — if necessary, physically.

That the march co-incided with tenants' demonstrations throughout the country was proof enough of the willingness of large sections of the working class to oppose attacks on them by the ruling class. Fascism has no aim but to turn the frustration and fury felt by workers over matters like housing into a reactionary blood-lust where it is the blacks, Asians and trade unionists who are first blamed and then beaten for the crimes of the bosses. In this situation fascism is triumphant.

On Saturday fascism was humiliated. The next time it rears its vile head it must be thrashed.

RENTS from p.1

ration (on 19th September).

Local newspapers report scores of other demonstrations in every part of the country. And in many cases it is the same story: the essential step has been taken on the road to victory — the tenants have organised themselves into associations willing not only to withhold the rent increases but willing physically to defend the tenants against eviction. In many places the strength of this organisation has been boosted enormously by the firm support of the workers in the factories.

The support of trade unionists for the smashing of the Housing Finance Act is clear by their support of the scores of demonstrations, but now it must be made practical by a firm commitment to strike in support of the tenants in the event of any eviction.

In most places the tenants associations with whatever factory help they can get, will be fighting without the support of the councillors they elected. Of course the tenants will support those few Labour councils that have decided not to implement the Act, but they have made it clear that they will not accept any shilly-shallying. Labour councils that have voted against implementation but intend to stand by while the government-appointed commissioner carries out their "duties" deserve no more respect than the open traitors.

The open traitors and self-appointed bailiffs of Tory Ratchmanism use all sorts of ridiculous excuses for swindling their constituents. One of the most common is that the rebate system (or means test in workers' language) will not be able to operate during a rent strike. This is an absurd argument. The Act will be defeated and its rebate system with it.

Not the rebate system is worth a light anyway: it's simply a way of holding down wages (seeing as it withdraws the "benefits" as the wage increases, so cancelling out the wage increase), whittling away opposition and putting some grotesque idea of "fairness" in the forefront of the Ministry's lying propaganda.

Neither have appeals for concessions to the Minister of the Environment, the despicable property shark Peter pick-your-pocket Walker, done any good. Offers to reduce the increase were only attempts by the frightened Tories to stall and try to deflect the militant struggle into safe letter-to-the-Ministry type of ineffective protest.

As proof of this just look at Tower Hamlets Council. After waiting for ages for a reply from the Ministry (which by delaying hoped to give no time for tenants to organise), they finally got a reduction. Now Tower Hamlets is not asking for 100p increase — only 95p!

The working class, having just caught its breath after the fantastic drubbing it gave the Tories when they jailed the dockers, stands at the threshold of yet another nationwide action.. This time there can be no stopping at concessions. The Industrial Relations Act has only been dented. The Tories' Act of Robbery must be smashed!

LOOK TO FUTURE FIGHT FOR IT NOW

FOR THOSE WHO LIVE IN COUNCIL houses a new phrase has come into the dictionary, "fair rents".

For the owner occupiers a new word has come into fashion, "gazumping". In both cases the new language-lesson has a simple meaning: higher costs, bigger profits to the rich.

IN THIS ARTICLE, ALBERT GREEN looks at not just this fight against the Housing Finance Act, but the fight that must be launched if we are to put a final end to this extortion practised by the propertied class, and proposes a wider set of objectives to be fought for.

"Fair rents" is the term the Labour Government thought up for what is in fact a commercial assessment of the value of your council house on the open market. This is denied. Even the class arrogant Tories will not admit that they judge the needs of the tenants by the standards of the financiers. But that is the truth. The standards of assessment: age of dwelling, its character, how near it is to amenities — are purely commercial considerations. But not only this side of the matter is subject to the whims of the financier. The whole matter of interest rates is in his hands.

rary, with the sale of council houses part of government policy even council estates will gradually find themselves back in the clutches of landlordism.

In other words council housing — and a dramatic expansion of it — is worth fighting for.

But from the very beginning council housing was financed largely out of borrowed money. This money came from the banks, the building societies and the money lender institutions. The same is true to-day to such an extent that about 80% of all rent paid goes in paying off interest charges alone on the money borrowed. In other words, you the tenant are subsidising the wealthy money-lender. This problem could be solved by nationalising the building societies and other money lending institutions. That is to say, housing could be seen as a social service supplied in the same way as other social services, financed from state funds on which there would be no interest.

But not even that would solve the problem, although it would cut some of the leeches out of the system. After all, even if that were done, the land would still be owned by the big landlords — the likes

So we would have to nationalise the land also. After all, there is nothing more typical of the absurdity of capitalism than the fact that someone has a "right" to gain money from selling land he does not even cultivate. How can you own land? No one makes it, the speculators do not even improve it. But still over £20.00 is paid by councils like the GLC for one council house.

The task of nationalisation of land is to free the use of land from the dictates of profiteering.

But even if we dumped these parasites off our backs there would still be that mixture of inefficiency graft and profit-piracy that typifies the building industry to get rid of.

BLOOD MONEY

In 1969 the building concerns most involved in house building made huge profits: Wimpey made £7,545,000, McAlpine £2,948,000; Costain £1,620,000; Laing £1,373,000. In these firms as in many smaller firms there are hundreds of accidents. 56% of construction industry deaths were directly due to criminal breaches of the Factory Acts and regulations by the employer. Over a third of all fatal industrial accidents occur in the building industry.

In other words, as well as squeezing the ordinary tenants of their last pennies, these profiteers are literally minting blood.

The present building workers' strike highlights the plight of the building worker, and only shows all the more why this industry must be nationalised and placed under workers' control.

But even this would not mean that we had cut the costs of housing down to a minimum. After all there are still contractors and such-like getting enormous rake-offs from building.

CORRUPTION

The Poulson case (see WF no. 11) revealed this for all to see. Together with the Sporre affair (in Wandsworth), this case lifted the lid slightly on the sordid world of council corruption. It is no accident that one of the most dramatic cases of corruption to be revealed of late is in the field of council housing. The whole housing business is rotten with villainy.

These two cases show that the roots of corruption reach from cabinet ministers and government officials down to the architects, businessmen and council officials.

This rabble has to go!

DEMAND

But for them to be thrown out and the same system of corruption to be operated by shysters who are different from them only in that they are harder to detect, is no point either.

What the Poulson case showed is not only that the land, the banks and building societies must be NATIONALISED, but that the whole thing must be taken out of the controlling hands of the money grubbers and their parliamentary front men and Whitehall wide-boys. It must be put into the hands of the working class to be run for their need by them.

This is why we must demand:
NOT A PENNY ON THE RENTS

TAKE THE LAND AND BUILDINGS OFF THE BIG PROPERTY OWNERS
TAKE THE MANSIONS OFF THE RICH
NO PENNY OF COMPENSATION TO THEM FOR THEIR LOSS

NATIONALISE THE BANKS, THE BUILDING SOCIETIES AND OTHER MONEY LENDING INSTITUTIONS

NATIONALISE THE BUILDING INDUSTRY. PLACE IT UNDER THE WORKERS' CONTROL
PAY NO COMPENSATION



Bolton tenants burn their rebate forms

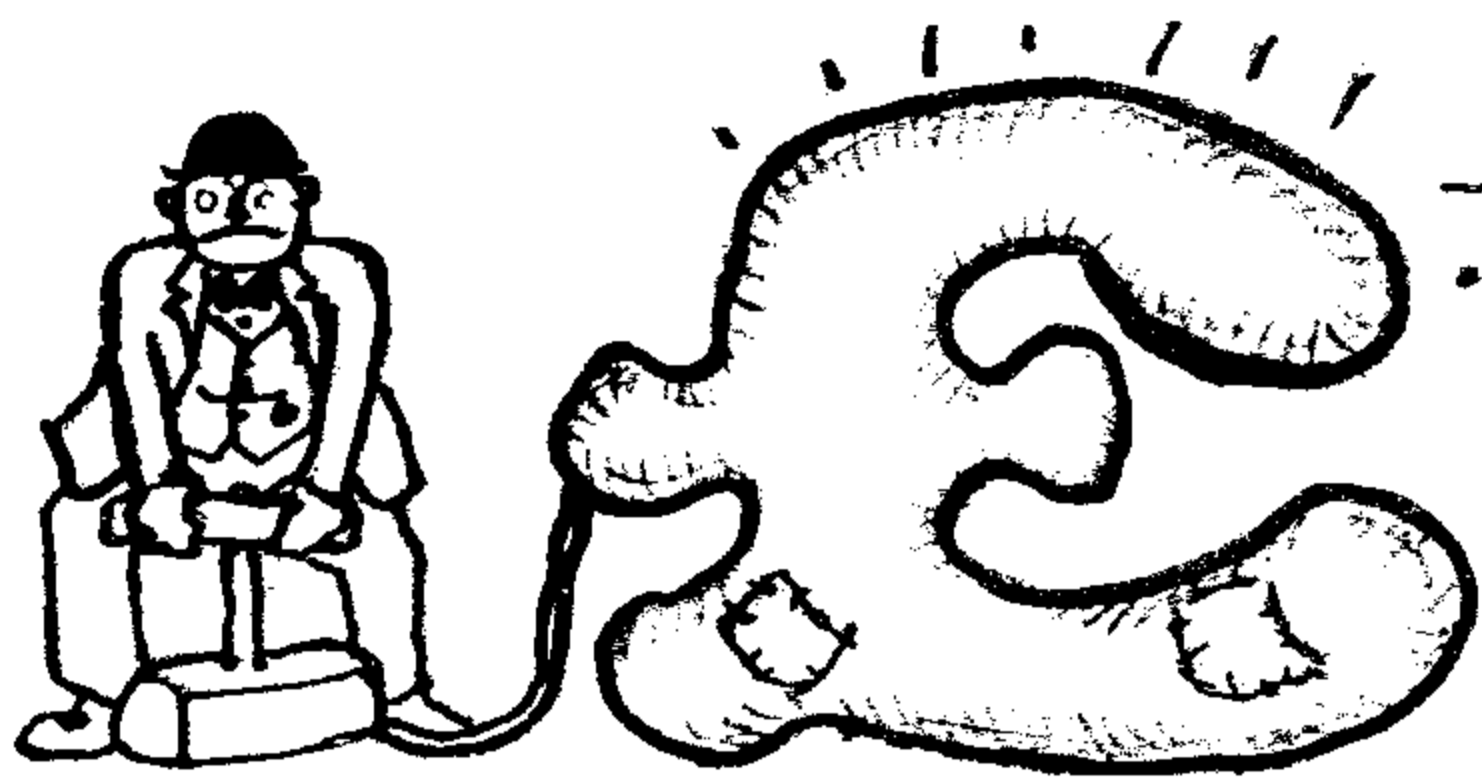
Everything that ought to be associated with council housing is going by the board. No longer is the social need of adequate housing for all at a cost that all can afford a guiding principle — council houses are now often far more expensive than private property. No longer is the battle against Ratchmannism and extortion being waged by expanding council housing, but on the cont-

of Clore, the Freshwater Company, the Queen and the Church of England.

SPECULATORS

If the land were still in their hands they could still hold us to ransom. They could charge even higher prices for land than they do now to rake in the money.

INFLATION: LIES BLAME WORKERS



IN THE 1950s AND 1960s THE main pre-occupations of the capitalists, their press and their politicians – Tory and Labour – were the balance of payments crises and inflation.

Strikes and wage increases were blamed for 'pricing British goods out of the world export markets. The fact that British wage increases and the number of days lost through strikes in this period were among the lowest of the advanced capitalist countries, were conveniently forgotten; working class militancy was evil and, of course, contrary to the "national interest".

The "battle against inflation" is today used as a new version of the "national interest" in ruling class propaganda: against this bosses and workers have, they say, a common interest, and should and can apparently have even a common policy to deal with it. Wage rises after all are worthless if their value is eaten away by spiralling prices – caused, so they claim, by rising wages.

The truth is that inflation takes place with or without wage increases. For example, the massive continued arms expenditure; the rise in import charges; the growth of mergers between big firms which puts millions of pounds into the pockets of shareholders without one extra item being produced, all contribute to increased prices – so long as the employing class tries to keep its "reasonable profit" levels.

Any foregoing of wage struggles in these circumstances would just mean a cut in the standard of living of workers. The greater the share of what is produced (by the workers of course) goes on profits, the less is paid in wages. And conversely the smaller wages are, the bigger are profits.

So all talk of "national interest" is a load of old rubbish. There is the interest of the employing class and their hangers on. And there is the interest of the working class. They are antagonistic interests.

DOG-EAT-DOG

Nevertheless, in the irrational dog-eat-dog world of international capitalist competition, the British employers have been losing out.

In the immediate post-war period the British share of the world export market was 30%. By 1950 it had declined to 25%. Since then there has been a continued relative decline. By 1966 the share had diminished to 13.4% and by early 1972 it has been estimated that it constituted only 10.5%.

This contrasts with a continuously rising share of the world market for West Germany, Japan and other European countries.

By the early 1960s the West German employers had overtaken the British. By early 1972 they held nearly twice the share of the export market. By the end of the 1960s the Japanese had already overtaken the British employers in this respect.

The cause is certainly not working class greed. West German wages are actually higher than British wages.. The fact is that investment has been lower in Britain (13 - 17% through the '50s and '60s as compared with nearer 30% in West Germany) and that British industry is therefore technologically backward.

It is probably true that if British workers took drastic wage cuts it would improve the competitive position of British employers. But what's the point? Economic slump and the

suffering it causes for the working class would at best come later. This is just what happened to the apparently invincibly prosperous USA in 1929.

The situation then would be of a working class beaten down by its concessions "to help the bosses" trying now to do what it should have been doing all along – not helping the bosses in their investment policy but fighting them right down the line.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Towards the end of the '60s the technology-led boom of the previous 20 odd years started to give way to stagnation in the advanced capitalist countries. Profits started to fall, production was cut back, unemployment mounted and contrary to previous developments, prices rose at a rate that was unprecedented.

The monopolies, in order to counteract falling profits and increased costs due to low utilisation

of machinery, just hiked up prices.

The big jump in the cost of living in 1970-71 preceded wage demands.

At the same time, in the last couple of years, we've seen attempts at holding down wages, cutting back hard-earned social benefits, introduction of incomes policies and other anti-worker legislation in most of the capitalist countries, not least of which are the Industrial Relations Act and the Housing Finance Act here in Britain.

Whether we like it or not, given the expected increase in the retail price index of 7-8% in 1972 and 9% in 1973 (and higher for the basic goods which workers buy) we have to redouble the struggle for improved wages and conditions.

Any talk of incomes policy, conciliation etc. (as the TUC has been doing) now, as ever, can only benefit the employers. If our wage increases bring forth further price inc-

reases from the employers to keep up their profits, we can't help that. Inflation is not the workers' creation nor the workers' problem to solve.

As long as capitalism exists we have to fight for as much of the wealth we produce as we can get. The only way to end inflation and all the other problems of capitalism is to build a movement which can abolish capitalism and replace it with a socialist society.

EARLY MORNING FILTH

In Droylsden, Manchester, Colin Jordan's fascist "British Movement" have been putting out their sick anti-Uganda Asians leaflets.

But the only time they dare spread their filth is in the early hours of the morning.

The leaflets claim to speak for "the British people". But the postman coming round to deliver the mail knew where the real interests of British working people lie. He promptly removed the leaflets from all the letterboxes.



While (left) French police have a joke with slave transport, the slaves (right) sit on the ground dejected.

FRENCH SLAVERY

Gradually the open secret of the scandalous conditions in which immigrant workers live in France is creeping out into the more public light of day. The impetus to a whole series of revelations that have hardly been mentioned in the British press was provided by an unusual load of "perishable goods".

On July 14th, – ironically the French holiday which commemorates the storming of the Bastille, the notorious prison – another prison was discovered.

On that day French traffic police were approached on a road near the Italian border by a lorry driver, Michel Piteau. He told them that his lorry had broken down and needed to be got on its way immediately because it contained "perishable

goods".

When the police got to the lorry, however, they were surprised to see that it was a Singer sewing machine lorry. Their surprise turned to shock when they discovered what the "perishable goods" were. They were 59 Malians, nearly dying of hunger and thirst.

These men had followed what seems to be a common "slave route" for Africans lured to Europe with false promises of jobs and accommodation.

Stories of how the Africans are smuggled into France vary (it is claimed that 75% arrive illegally) but what follows seems the pattern. They are recruited in the towns of the ex-French colonies like Mali, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Guinea and Camerouns. They are told that there are jobs waiting for them as well as a place to stay in France.

Some can scrape together the fare (usually hugely inflated) while others borrow it from the "agent" to be paid back out of wages. They are then shipped from North Africa to Sicily, to Rome and from Rome to France or directly to Marseilles.

The addresses for accommodation

turn out to be at best doss-houses owned by the "agent" or his syndicate. Many are immediately fixed up with work, which suggests a collusion between the smugglers (or slave traders as they must be called) and the employers. This is not limited to the tiny sweatshops but involves the big car firms too.

In these firms the Africans are used as a supply of cheap labour and considerable pressure is put on them by employers to force them to be strike-breakers. The biggest pressure is, of course, the enormous debts that the African has by then accumulated – possibly a part of his fare, the food for that long journey, the doss-house: all of course supplied at the price the "agent" dictates.

As a force that the racist employers of France wish to exploit doubly, as well as wish to pit against the French-born worker, the African has come to replace the Morrocans and Algerians in France. And like those workers they will surely turn the tables on their exploiters by being a fighting unit of the French working class.

LEWD LONGFORD AND THE PORN LAWS

LORD LONGFORD'S REPORT ON pornography, all 520 pages of it, is expected to be a best-seller. The first printing of 85,000 is to be followed by a planned second printing of 35,000.

This success, aided by the lurid design of the cover will at least help to line the pockets of Pornford and his team.

As the *Financial Times* noted soberly, the book gives 'no objective evidence' to support "the belief... that 'pornography' and 'obscenity' are in themselves harmful." People such as Malcolm Muggeridge, Cliff Richard, Jimmy Saville, Kingsley Amis are apparently exempt from such mundane requirements as objective evidence.

The report proposes harsher penalties against 'obscenity', defined as follows:

"An article or a performance of a play is obscene if its effect, taken as a whole, is to outrage contemporary standards of decency or humanity accepted by the public at large".

Anyone who considers that racialist slanders on Ugandan Asians, for example, are more truly obscene than the honest and open portrayal of sex, is differing from "standards accepted by the public at large" and has to knuckle under.

Some of us may well be genuinely disgusted by the crude commercial exploitation of sex seen, for example, in a lot of advertising. But this exploitation actually rests upon the hole-in-corner, secretive and guilt-ridden attitude pushed by Longford. There are and have been societies where sex is a more open matter and is not surrounded by the fear, shame and insecurity linked to it in present-day society. That fear, shame and insecurity, encouraged by Longford's attitude, helps to make people feel that their problems are due to their own individual inadequacy, and deter them from acting to change society.

When have laws against obscenity been used? Not against the dirty big business exploiters — but against radical publications like *Oz* and the *Little Red Schoolbook*, which attempt not to exploit but to explain openly and frankly.

The working class have nothing to gain from Longford's drive against 'obscenity'.



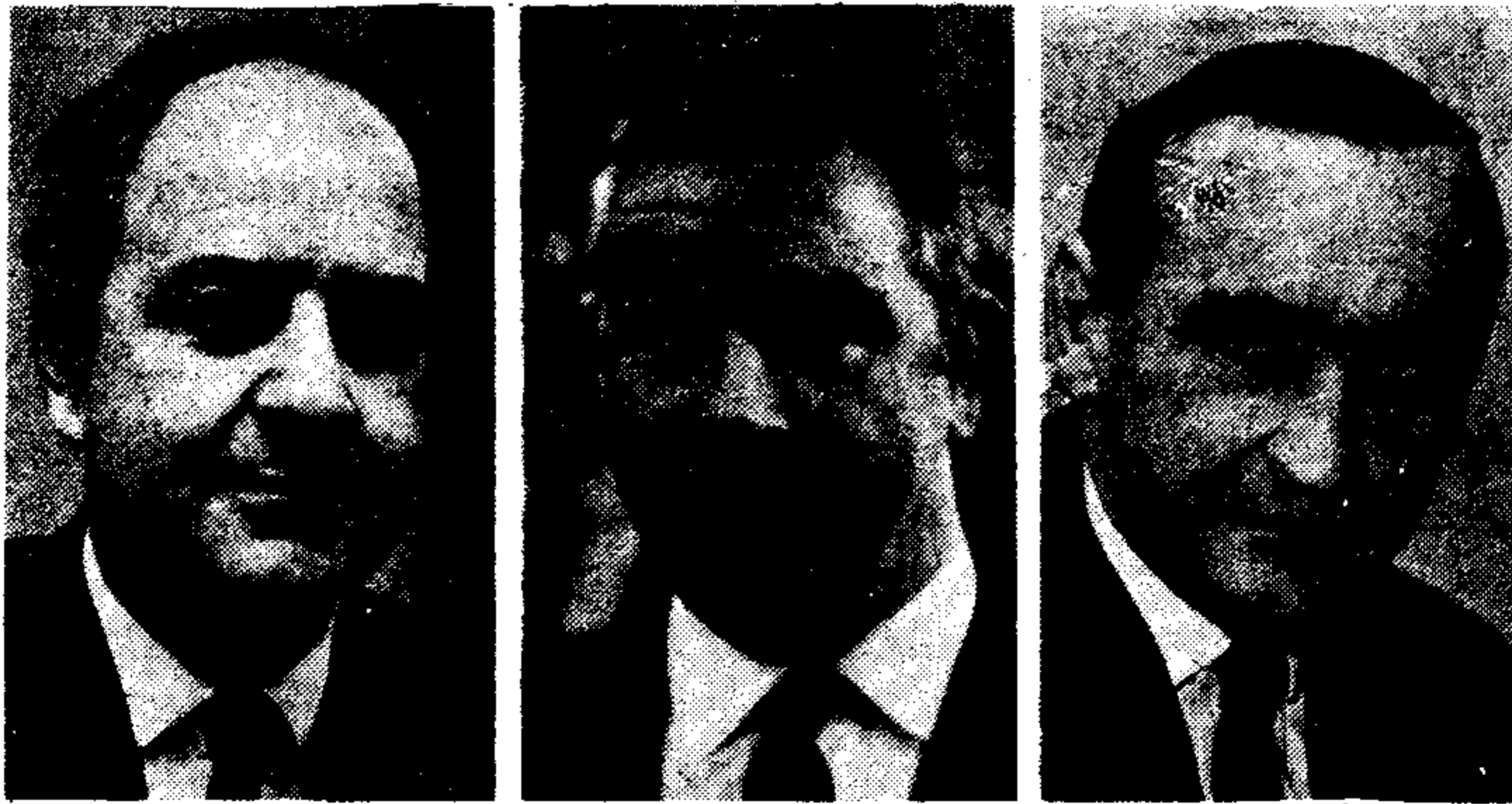
Lord Longface

Miners have just received a real slap in the face from their unions and the National Coal Board. The joint report submitted to the Government last week is all the more insulting when you think of the courage and the sacrifice of the miners' strike earlier this year.

At that time, the union leaders, sensing the overwhelming and totally united fighting spirit of the rank and file, were forced by this pressure to "ride out the strike", keeping any reputation they had as militants in the process.

The new report hinges on an agreement by the miners' unions to discuss closures — even closures based on things other than exhaustion of coal seams. Among its demands the report asks for better redundancy payments to sugar this bitter pill. But the miners don't want redundancy payments. They don't want redundancy.

There is also in this report a firm commitment to further productivity-dealing. This is done in two ways. Firstly by agreeing to tie wage rises to the overall profitabil-



Ezra (NCB), Gormley (NUM), Boardman (Tory Government) united against the mineworker

MINING INDUSTRY:

REPORT MASKS PACT WITH TORIES

by JACK PRICE

tying wages to the workers' productivity.

This is not the same thing. If wages are tied to overall profitability then it means that even if records in productivity were to be set, wages would not necessarily go up. If the NCB through its sales operations (which they also intend to re-varp) or (more likely) the Govern-

ment by its fuel policies and investment policies reduces the overall profitability of the industry, there will be no rises at all.

Of course these 'leaders' will argue that the profitability will come from 'rationalising' factors other than labour. But in a labour-intensive industry like mining this is nonsense. The main point of the report for the pit-man is not the £200,000,000 'deficit' the report asks to be written off. It is how many of the 300,000 jobs the NCB and Union hope to write off in exchange.

In fact, it is the old, old story: the bosses' state still controls the nationalised industry, and the unions accommodate themselves to the "viability" of the industry, in this way tying the workers to the bosses state. Once again our 'leaders' teach us what they do not want us to know: that without a fight for workers' control in the mines, all the other struggles are sapped of their strength and the victories lose their bite. ● ●

POLICE PICK ON BLACKS

THE CONSTANT EXCUSE OF those who stand for keeping black immigrants out of Britain is that they have nothing against individual black people. The want black people living here to be treated equally — so they say — but "we haven't got room for more".

Treated Equally? The recently published Select Committee Report on RACE RELATIONS AND IMMIGRATION admits — in a muted and apologetic way — that the opposite is true.

The report says that it is "impossible to know to what extent — and there have been some cases — the police pick on black youths merely because they are black... there have been instances of policemen acting insensitively and officiously against immigrants."

WELCOME

The "no room for more" excuse may be sincere in some cases — though it certainly isn't when it comes from the Tories and the Nat-

ional Front. But even with good intentions, racialism against new immigrants is inevitably associated with racialism against those already here and black people who were born and brought up in Britain and who know no other home.

The assumption of the anti-immigration case is that black people are a bad thing, to be put up with rather than welcomed; that their presence here is a privilege or an optional extra; and that when there is shortage, black people should suffer first.

Against this, socialists must argue that the working class can only gain from welcoming black people into the labour movement without discrimination. We can only gain from black people fighting to liberate themselves from their oppressed position, and joining us in the struggle against the common enemy — the bosses, the profiteers, the landlords.

POLICE

The clearest example of the

"optional extra" attitude is police treatment of black people.

Try selling the "fair-minded British bobby" line to any young black person! The four case histories given in WORKERS FIGHT no.12 show a part of why black people call the police the "pigs". Black people are time after time beaten up by the police. — At the same time they see cases of white racist attacks on black people, like the fire-bomb attack on a party in London in January 1971 in which 30 people were injured, getting off scot free or with minor punishments.

This police attitude helps the racist splitting of the working class. During the "race riots" in part of Liverpool a few weeks ago, one white lad reported that he had been beaten up twice by policemen calling him a "nigger-lover" because he was fighting alongside black lads to defend his home against a gang of skinheads.

The fact that a large proportion of the black population of Britain — as well as a number of white people, of course — have seen through the conventional image of the police, has started to worry the police. And so we have the Select Committee report.

The Report does not, of course, advocate the organisation of black people to protect themselves against racist violence. It attempts to isolate the militants in the black community and boost the 'moderates' by proposing more coloured police officers, training in race relations for policemen, "independent appeal tribunals" (as independent as "independent arbitration" in industrial disputes?), and so on.

Socialists must continue to support black people when they take the necessary steps to defend themselves.

THE PARAS AND THE UDA

"The brutality of the Paras towards people, including women and children, has to be seen to be believed. These men are animals and should be taken off the streets of Ulster and sent to the jungle where they would be at home."

No, not the IRA talking. But the ultra right wing UDA which has in the past welcomed and gloated over the savage terror which the Paras, and the rest of the British Army, have inflicted on the Catholic areas of Northern Ireland.

But recently, when two Protestants were killed by the 1st Battalion of the Paras during a UDA mobilisation in the Shankill, the main Protestant working class area of the city, the close collaboration of the UDA and the British Army almost broke down.

Following the killings the UDA said - "Never has Ulster witnessed such licensed sadists and such blatant liars as the First Paras. These gun happy louts must be removed from the streets. ... We demand that the First Paras be searched and an inquiry into this most controversial regiment be started immediately."

The First Paras are of course notorious for the murder of the 13 unarmed 'gunmen' in Derry's Bloody Sunday. This elite British regiment has been repeatedly used in Republican areas to punish and instil fear into Catholic workers and their families. It is their claim that they have been responsible for the deaths of more Irishmen and women than any other army regiment while they themselves have suffered no casualties.

Catholic workers have known all this for some time. Now it appears that the Protestants are beginning to learn a simple lesson. The lesson is that while British Imperialism may appear to be all sweetness, charm and reasonableness in the person of Sheepfarmer Whitelaw and other Tory propagandists, it is at the same time employing the military capacity and repressive force of 21,000 British soldiers on the streets of Northern Ireland.

Further, that this force will be used against anyone, Catholic or Protestant, who attempts to oppose or obstruct the designs of the British ruling class in Northern Ireland.

"GOOD SUNDAY"

Sympathy for the Protestants has not been forthcoming from the Catholic population. They remember with bitter irony that John McKeague, a popular Shankill demagogue, referred to Bloody Sunday as "Good Sunday" on a television programme and that the 'work' of the Paras was praised by many Loyalist spokesmen.

But socialists and Republicans should take care when interpreting the meaning of such conflicts between the Army and Loyalists. In no sense can the UDA, the Loyalist Association of Workers (LAW) and Vanguard be seen as anti-imperialist forces when they come in conflict with an Imperialist army.

While the UDA condemned the Paras and called for their withdrawal they did not call for the withdrawal of the rest of the Army. In the same statement in fact the UDA called for restoration of cap-



U.D.A. on parade

The Protestants have always seen themselves as dominant in Northern Ireland society - it has been **their** country, and **their** state to do with as they wanted - or so they have thought. Imperialism has in the past been quite happy to foster this illusion. Little did the Orange state realise that its existence depended upon the economic, political and military backing of the British bourgeoisie. That most of the former Unionists still do not realise this is quite clear from the support that a 'UDI' and an "Independent Ulster" has received in recent years.

PROTESTANT WORKERS

Protestant workers have been stuck in this contradiction just as much as their Orange masters. They have always seen themselves as the loyal defenders of the status quo. In the past this has resulted in a payoff in the form of a house or job or at least first place in the queue, and a blind eye turned on the odd bit of Fenian-bashing.

Imperialism, in the face of total opposition and resistance from the Republican areas of the North, is gradually realising that the old status quo cannot be maintained. They are at present attempting to find and impose a new 'solution' - yet another era in Britain's domination of Ireland. They have decided, or rather have been taught the

lesson, that the sectarian Orange state no longer serves their interests best.

In this context clashes between the Protestants and Army are likely. The Army will from time to time attempt to teach the Protestants that it is **not** their state and their country to do as they wish. The Protestants will be rewarded if they are good boys, punished if they are bad.

SHOCK

It is as much the shock of this realisation as anything else which has upset the UDA, the Loyalists' military wing. This organisation, much given to marching up and down in front of TV cameras, has been responsible for sectarian killings and bombings in Catholic areas in recent months.

Several days before the Shankill killings a UDA commander who had treated a Paras' patrol to drinks in a UDA club was arrested later that night by the same patrol and detained for possessing a gun! He had reason for feeling 'victimised' because the army shows a great tolerance of armed UDA men.

The UDA is torn between conflicting loyalties, values and prejudices. They set themselves up as an auxiliary to the Army to "help out" suppressing Catholic areas when required. Now that the army has turned on them, they do not know which way to turn.



Dublin workers make clear their view of Heath and the Paras

ital punishment and an intensification of the military campaign against the "terrorists"

immensely complex and important case (on the subject of the dockers and the T&GWU fine)".

It seems that isn't all either. On that occasion the Lords broke their rule of each judge giving an individual judgment and hastily formed a solid front to get Heath off the hook and the Tories back on their original track of turning the unions' officialdom against the rank and file.

Thank you Justinian. Thanks for the memory.

TAKE A CHANCE

The "red Mole", fortnightly paper of the International Marxist Group, has made a sudden overhaul of its design and presentation. The aim no doubt is to take its message "to the masses" rather than simply speaking the "language of the left".

Consistent with this approach, the front page of its last issue carries an attack on racialism. For that they are

to be commended (after having ignored the question in their previous issue). But breaking away from their old bad habits is not easy: their article is the purest sectarianism - its title, "ASIANS: BIG CHANCE FOR LEFT". That is how they greet the wave of racialism and the biggest mobilisation of fascism for ages!

For devotees of this kind of thinking, however, we offer the following quiz: In the first section below are a number of catastrophes and misfortunes; in the second are a number of "big chances" Your job is to match them up. Complete answers should be sent to 182 Pentonville Road, N.1.

1. the ten plagues; the purge of the Bolshevik old guard by Stalin; the black death; Hitler comes to power; the fall of the Roman Empire; fascism victorious in Germany.
2. our turn next; big chance for budding historians of imperial history; big chance for critics of Thaelman; big chance for new leadership; big chance for young

doctors; big chance for rat-catchers.

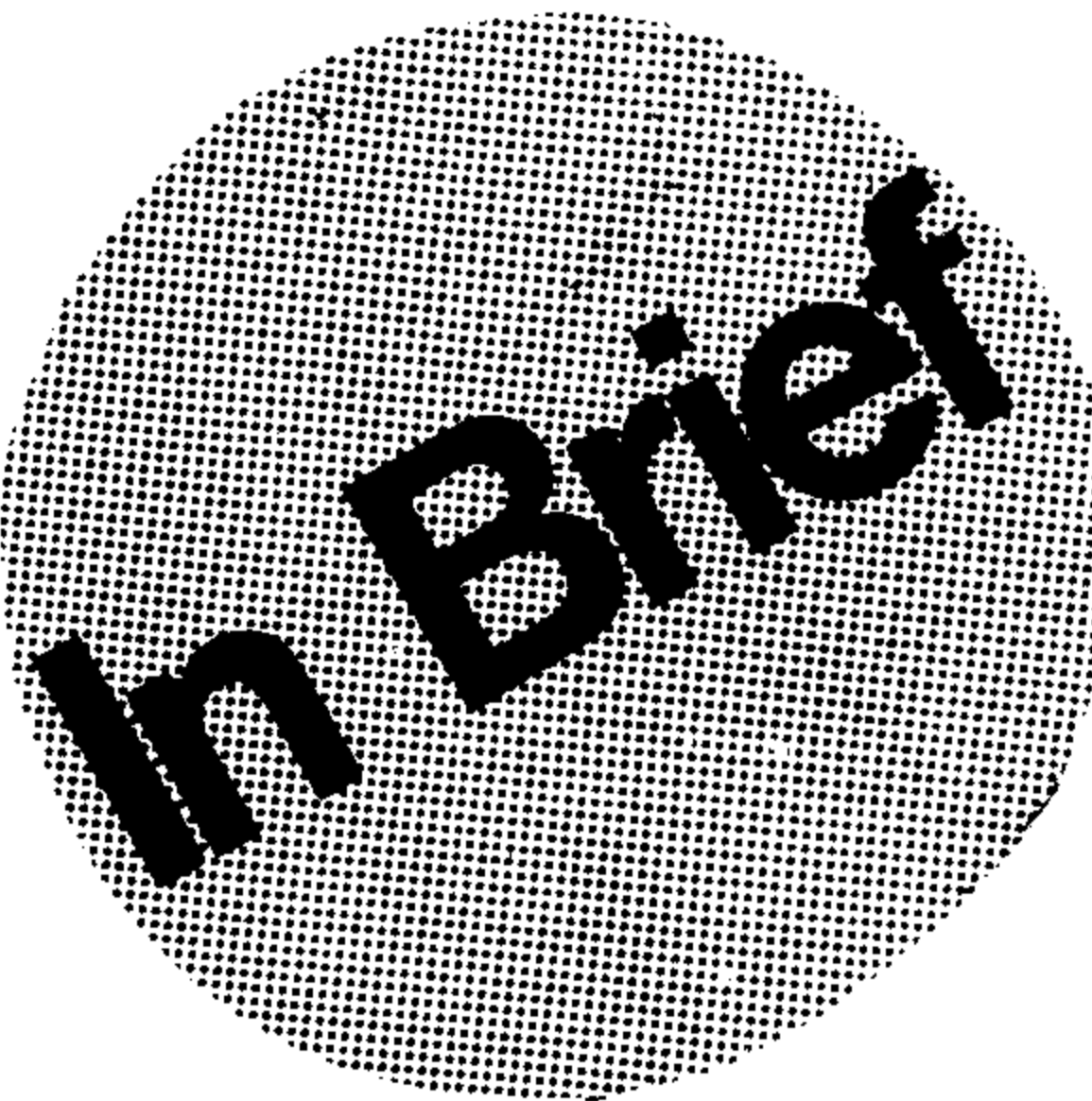
In case you're not sure how to play the game, we'll start you off with a real one (actually the slogan of the ultra-left German Communist Party at one time): "Hitler comes to power - our turn next."

AJAX, THE CLEANSER

Lord Janner, a vice-president of AJEX, the Association of Jewish Ex-Servicemen (established by Jewish British Legion types who wanted to prove their loyalty to the Crown), spoke the other day of the demands that were arrived at "unanimously" at a rally in Trafalgar Square to protest against the Munich deaths.

Herr Janner explained them thus: "We want those who attack the ethical principles of our great ideologies to be exterminated once and for all because if they are not, then we shall be."

Good idea von Janner, but is it the final solution?



IN JUDICIOUS HASTE

The Financial Times legal reporter "Justinian" preserves the aura of a majestic and unhurried deliberation of the judiciary by reporting events over a month late.

The fact is that a month later the "news" can do no harm: in other words, "Now It Can Be Told". The complaint is not infrequently heard from even the most temperate and a-political lawyers that the House of Lords displayed an indecent haste in disposing of an

The deaths of 11 Israeli athletes, taken hostage in Munich by Arab guerrillas who demanded the release of 200 Palestinians held without charge or trial in Israel, was quickly followed by reprisal raids on refugee camps in Lebanon and Syria in which about 300 people, including many women and children, were killed. The outrage, indignation and inflated 'public' "disgust" over the dead 11 at Munich contrasted markedly with the "business as usual" acceptance and "understanding" expressed by the Press and capitalist politicians for the latest savage and indiscriminate slaughter of Arabs by the Israeli armed forces.

A spokesman for the US Government, which is doing its utmost to finish off the job of bombing Vietnam into one large mud-filled bomb crater filled with the napalm-charred bones of the Vietnamese people, stated of the death of eleven Israelis: "Munich was so horrible, so vicious, so brutal ... that we simply must not act here as if it did not exist."

This is just a sample of the kind of hypocrisy which has been flowing in generous portions throughout the well staged international propaganda exercise for Israel which swung hastily into action, as memorial services, orations and shots of weeping relatives have filled the news media around the world.

Yet in June, when 36 ordinary people were killed in Israeli air raids on a Lebanese town, the "incident" barely even got into print. Not a weeping relative did we see mourning the deaths, nor were we given personal biographies to counteract the anonymity of "36 dead".

And when in the days following Munich scores of children and babies, men and women, and old people - 300 in all - were coolly massacred, the press indulgently viewed it as an "understandable" reprisal.

In Israel people muttered that "Jewish life isn't cheap any more". To date the exchange rate has been roughly one to 30.

But for Israel the scores aren't even yet.

PROPAGANDA

The propaganda has endeavoured, as always, to present Israel as the threatened victim of senselessly hostile, bloodthirsty Arab hordes. Moreover, Israel is humane, civilised, resourceful - and European. Whereas in the Arab countries the guerrillas are seen as heroes, which must prove that they are all fanatics out to "drive the Israelis into the sea".

But atrocities in the Middle East have been, almost invariably, Israeli atrocities. And hundreds of thousands of Arabs have been the victims.

At its very foundation, in fact for decades before, Israel was moulded by the Zionist doctrine of a Jewish state. The fact that the "homeland" was in reality the home of other people deterred them little, and they set out to eradicate that reality with ruthless efficiency.

ZIONIST COLONS

The early Zionist settlers bought land from the Arab feudalists and drove off the peasants who lived on it. The Zionist colony grew by such methods, and by rigidly excluding Arabs, particularly Arab labour, from all its enterprises. Swelled by the influx of refugees in the 1930s, Zionism encroached steadily upon the right of the Arabs simply to live in Palestine. It allied with the British Army of occupation against the Arabs and vigorously opposed independence until there was, after the Second World War, a real prospect of total Zionist domination of Palestine.

In 1948 they turned out hundreds of thousands from their homes and lands, using terror and threats. They cleared out and took over 88 entirely Arab towns, 34 large Arab towns, and about a thousand

and entirely Arab villages.

After the war they continued to expropriate, on one pretext or another, many more properties, rich orchards, land tended for generations by the Palestinians.

The refugee camps swelled and festered.

In 1967 Israel had another offensive, informally annexing the Gaza strip, the west bank of the Jordan, the Golan heights of Southern Syria, and the Sinai peninsula. It became clear that Israeli expansionism was once again on the rampage. It expresses the Zionist credo which sees every Jew in the world as an automatic citizen, with the right to "return" - after a leave of 2000 years. But for those in the camps across the river there is to be no return.

RACIALISM

Since 1967 Israel has made clearer than ever her intentions of coldly pursuing a racist goal. The number of refugees was maximised by napalm raids on the big 1948-vintage camps in new areas being occupied, and despite much publicity about their return, only a very small trickle was allowed past a vast barrier of red tape.

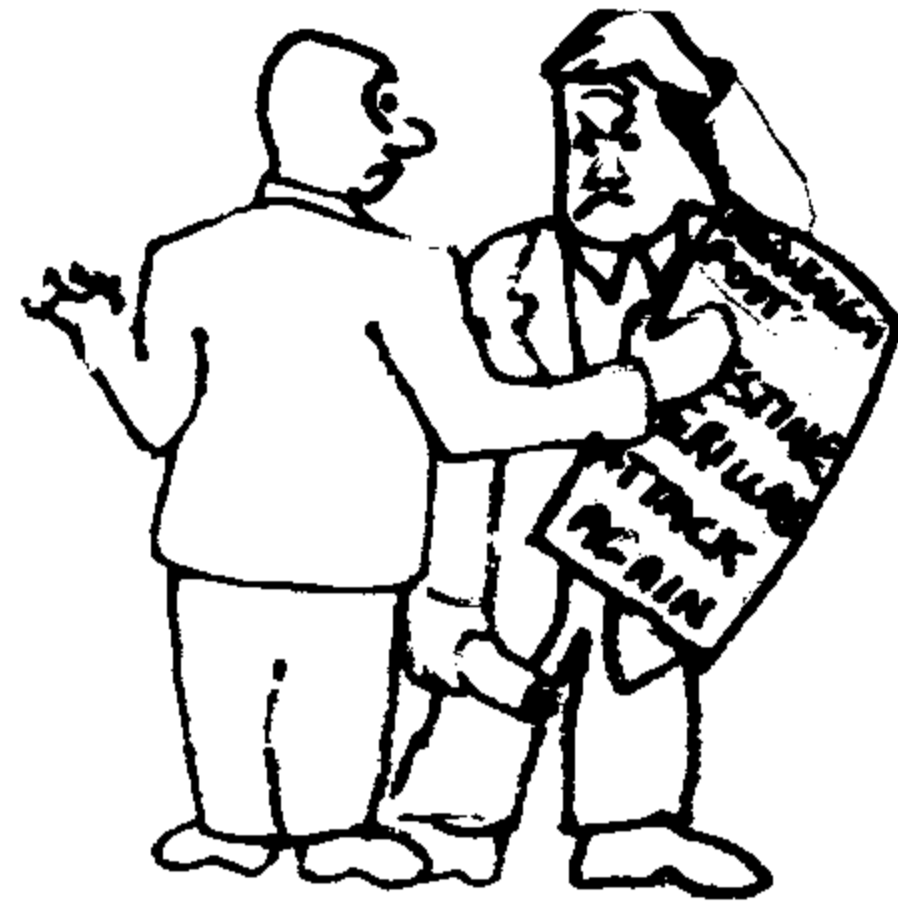
The population of the annexed areas have been cowed by vic-



Ghassan Khanafani - Palestine resistance leader blown up by a parcel sent through the post. It is generally presumed, even by pro-Israel publications in this country, that this was the work of Israeli agents.

ious methods of collective reprisals for any opposition and thousands of Arab militants imprisoned. 200 without trial. Meanwhile military style Jewish settlements have been established throughout the West Bank to ensure continuing Israeli possession. Jewish housing settlements have gone up around the once Arab Jerusalem. The Israeli army commandeered 2500 acres of agricultural land near Hebron for Jewish settlement "Between Hebron and Bethlehem is a block of three Israeli settlements. Down in the broader stretches of the Jordan valley the boys and girls of eight new Israeli settlements are starting their own agriculture on the fields that were formerly worked by Arabs. This was the region of Jordan's most luxuriant farms, but only a few Arab cultivators are allowed to work there now. On much of the land that the Israeli army holds, but is not using, orchards and market gardens have been allowed to wither away." (Economist, 18 April 1972).

A letter writer in the Guardian quoted facts to show what life is like for Arabs in the occupied territories: "In Gaza ... the military occupation imposed 3708 hours of curfew in 1970 alone. In July of last year 400 houses in the Jabaliya refugee camp were bulldozed and the inhabitants transported to El Arish in Northern Sinai. They may have been only



Palestinians? Who are they?

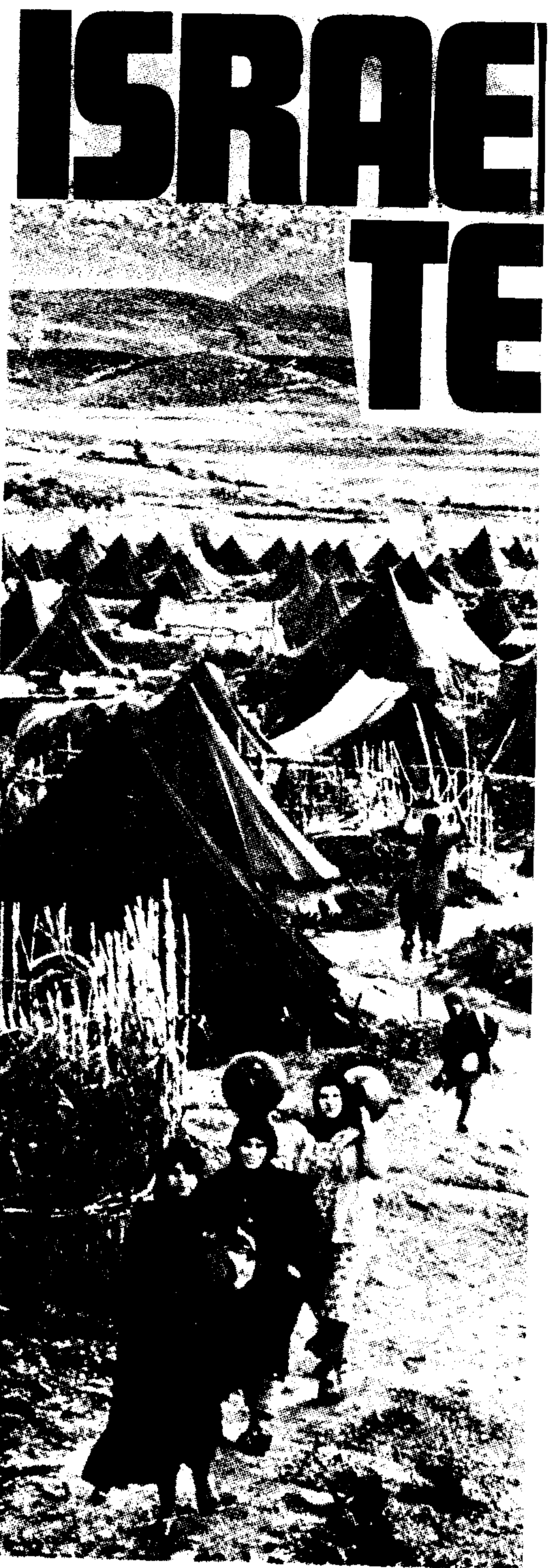
huts but they were the only homes they had known for 20 years."

OPEN DOORS

Above all, Israel continues its open doors policy toward Jews throughout the world. Russia's 3 million Jews are welcome, and Zionist organisations throughout the world have campaigned for them to be allowed to "return". They are needed, says Israel, to establish "the right population balance" - i.e. a guarantee of Jewish supremacy.

Skillfully amalgamating two distinct issues they exploit the widespread condemnation of anti-Jewish discrimination in Russia to slip in the idea that the Soviet Jews, like all the Jews in the world, have a "right" to go to Palestine ('Israel'). But the Zionists can only have a 'right' to Palestine at the expense of the Arabs driven away into desert camps. A scandal and a crime though the treatment of the Jewish citizens of the Soviet Union undoubtedly is it must be said that their treatment is a good deal better than that of the Arabs in Israel and the Israeli occupied territories.

By contrast with this international open doors policy, the people of two Arab villages who have been forced to be refugees within Israel since 1948 have recently been told that they can never have their land back. The villagers,



according to a New York Times report, because "The Government is worried that the return of the expelled Arabs to Berem and Ikrit - they would be the first displaced Arabs to be allowed to resettle - would set off a chain of thousands and thousands of demands from other Arabs who lost their villages in 1948. 'And not just villages' a ranking Israeli official said, "Think of such towns as Lydda, Ramle and Jaffa.' They are among the originally Arab towns that are now predominantly Jewish".

The official quoted here was at least more honest than Golda Meir, who said in 1969: "It was not as though there was a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist!"

In fact, all of Israel was "originally Arab" and is now "predominantly Jewish". And, war or no war, Israel is determined to keep things that way.

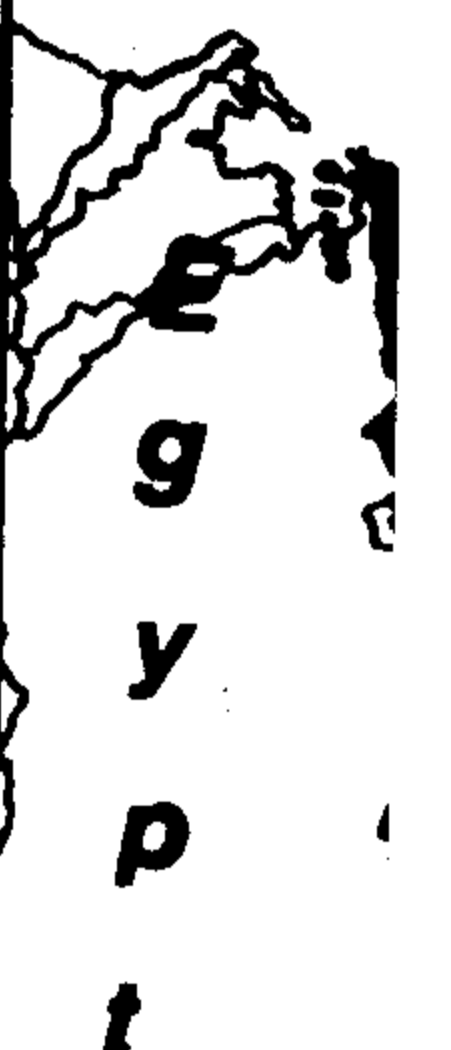
ARAB AND JEW

The Jews have been the victims of genocide. But never at the hands of the Arabs. Even up to 1967, for instance, Jewish communities lived at peace in many Arab countries including Egypt. The tolerant and equal treatment they had always received does much to bely the propaganda image of bloodthirsty Arabs, and contrasts sharply with the treatment of the Jews



by

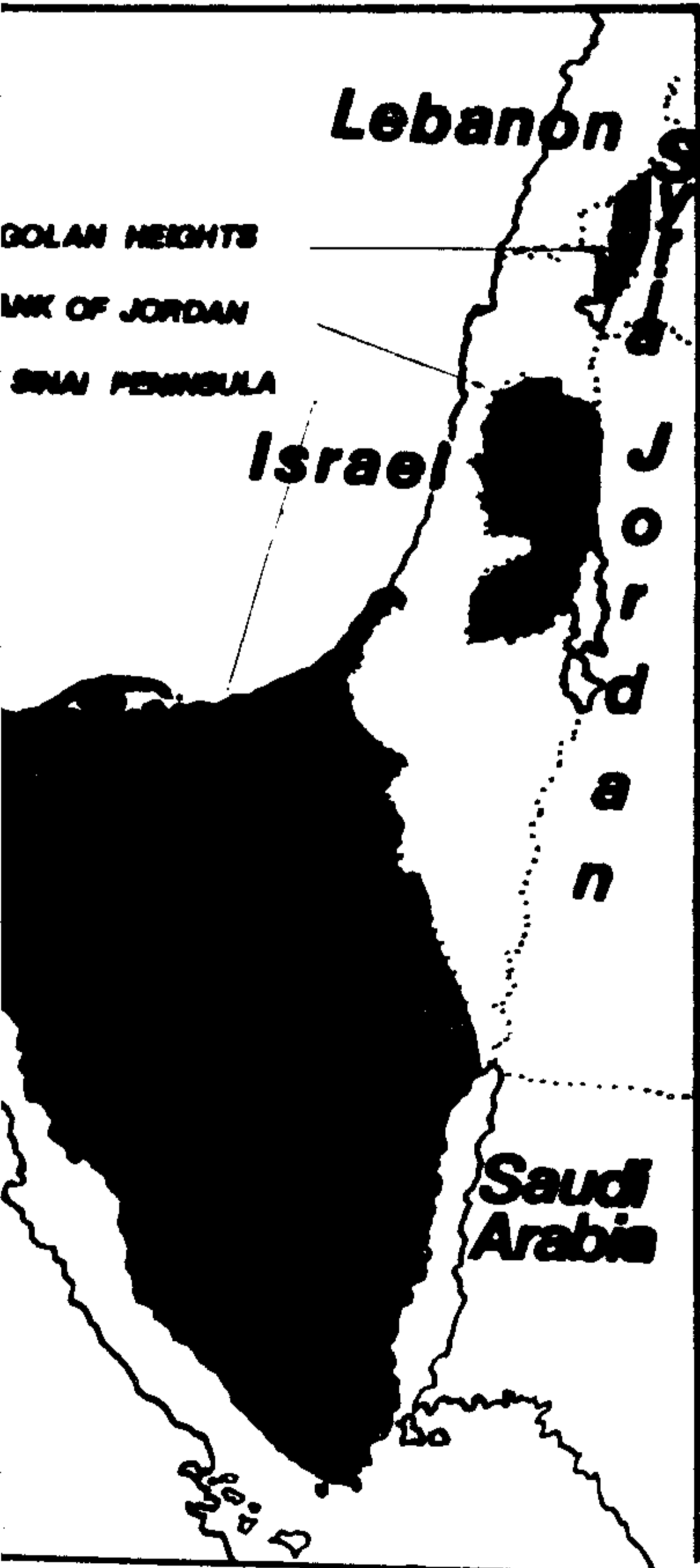
SYRIA
WEST
EGYPT



LAND THE RROR



Rachel Lever



down the centuries in "civilised" Europe.

Arab opposition to Israel is not racialist. It grew up in direct correspondence to the wounds inflicted on them by the Zionists, wounds which grew deeper and wider as Israel's power grew.

The Arab masses, kept in crippling poverty whilst 7 US oil companies piped out the resources and wealth of their countries, noted that Israel has been since its establishment backed to the hilt by US armour and finance.

But the main and continuing source of rage was the arrogant racialism of the religion-based Zionist state with its vast export-import business in human beings — Palestinians out, Jews of every nationality in.

PALESTINE MOVEMENT

It is this racialist basis of Israel which the Palestinian movement is against. The question of the return of the Palestinians is patently not a problem of shortage of space, when a like number from Russia or anywhere else are constantly urged to come and settle.

That is why the prime goal of the Palestinian movement has been a multi-racial, secular state, which will be the precondition for the reinstatement of their people. Most of them also believe that such a state can only be a force for progress in the Middle East if it takes

up the cause of the poverty-ridden 100 million people of the area against the imperialist exploiters.

But, though Israel claims to 'yearn for peace', such a solution to the real problem of two peoples both with a passionate attachment to the same land, are not considered. Israel's leaders would keep up a state of perpetual warfare if they had to, rather than make any concessions on the nature of their state. The only 'peace' which Israel wants is to be able to hold onto the status quo which it has so ruthlessly created, to go on building an exclusively Jewish state. To this end it has bent bent all its political, military and propaganda efforts.

Militarily, having dealt a crushing blow to the regular armies of the surrounding states in '67, Israel has concentrated on isolating the armed resistance fighters who had organised on a mass basis after '67 to attempt to win back their land.

This mass, armed grassroots activity, in which radical and Marxist sections were gaining increasing influence, posed a threat not only to Israel's hold on the new status quo, but also to the Arab governments themselves, particularly that of Jordan, whose reactionary Hashemite ruling clique had itself done a deal with the new Israeli state in 1948 to carve up what had once been Palestine.

In September 1970 Hussein sent his tanks and artillery into the refugee camps and the areas of Amman where vast Palestinian settlements supported the resistance fighters. In a few bloodfilled days over 10,000 were massacred. The fedayeen withdrew to strongholds in northern Jordan where they held out against Hussein's army for another year before being finally driven north into Syria and Lebanon.

But by now their forces were decimated, and though they retained mass support this became increasingly passive as the war weary refugees recoiled before the incessant attacks of Hussein and the bloody reprisal raids of the Israelis, pursuing their policy of a life for a tooth, a village for an eye.

Today the Fedayeen have little power left with which to fight for the restoration of their homeland. Despite Israeli propaganda justifying raids deep into Syria and Lebanon, both the Syrian and Lebanese armies have acted to put down Palestinian armed organisations, which have been forced to abandon many of their bases. Syria has never allowed the fedayeen to conduct operations against Israel.

Meanwhile Israel holds all the cards and is steadily digging in for an indefinite stay in the territories taken in June '67, while the Arab government manoeuvre and limber up for a permanent settlement to finally sell out the Palestinians.

DESPERATION

It is in a desperate last bid to avert this that some groups in the Palestine resistance have turned to terrorist tactics, the resort of the weak fighting overwhelming odds. Of course they would prefer to organise on a mass basis — but this has now been denied them. Of course they would rather fight it straight with the Israeli Army — but this also is not possible now. They are not fanatics, sadists or perverts — which is how the politicians who order napalm raids like to describe them. They do not kill out of malice. But they have watched as time and again non-combat-

ants among their countrymen were callously killed and maimed by the Israeli and Jordanian forces, and must wonder bitterly why only they are branded as murderers whilst their enemies' actions are 'acts of war'. They have seen their own leaders blown up by bombs sent through the post by presumed Israeli agents. And they must wonder why when they adopt such methods there is moral outrage throughout the world.

Nor do the homilies about 'harming their own cause' cut much ice. 'Good behaviour' in the years between 1948 and '67 got their people nowhere. The world was happy to forget about them and leave them to rot. The citizens of Baram and Ikrit won sympathy by their patient petitioning — but that's didn't get their villages back.

They know too that their 'image' in the world is affected far less by their actions than by the political bias of the image-makers. Israel can get away with perpetual murder and theft and still retain its good clean 'civilised' image. As one Lebanese put it, the Palestinians "can well do without a certificate of good behaviour from the international organisations and philanthropic societies. The Israelis have shown them only too well how to distrust such testimonials."

MUNICH

Thus it was that the athletes in Munich fell victim to their own Government's actions and policies. War brings its victims, including civilian victims. And the Israeli athletes did die in a war — albeit one which has been squeezed out beyond its natural boundaries because the Israelis and their collaborators in the Arab ruling class have virtually smashed the ability of the Palestine liberation movement to operate in the Middle East.

Because, even so, it is not possible for the Palestinian people to accept the situation, to settle in and learn to live with their lot, to raise future generations as refugees, because they have been deprived of everything and reduced from free farmers to destitute, stateless refugees — for these reasons they strike out desperately.

The moralisers who condone Israel have no right to condemn them. The root terrorism in the Middle East of that of Israel. It is the racialist, Zionist state of Israel and not the Arab guerrillas, which is the problem. Desperate, and brave, actions like Munich, generated by the outrage and the mass suffering of the Palestinian Arabs, will certainly continue until the problem of Zionism is settled.



The following article appeared in the September 4th issue of UNFREE CITIZEN, weekly paper of the Peoples Democracy group. It was signed by the Central Committee of P.D.

It is an attempt by revolutionary socialists operating in Northern Ireland to explain why they work with and support the Provisional Irish Republican Army and, simultaneously, what in their view is wrong with the politics and tactics of the Provos. We think they are right to support and defend in Northern Ireland, as we do in Britain, the armed militia of Northern Ireland's Catholics; and right also to state openly a revolutionary socialist criticism of the Provisional IRA. We find ourselves in unreserved agreement with them on both counts.

We reproduce the article for that reason, and also because we believe that the necessary socialist criticism of the IRA should come through the voice of Irish socialists, active in the struggle against British imperialism in Northern Ireland, and clearly not using the criticism as a cop-out from taking sides.

The Provisional I.R.A. have put up a remarkable fight against the British Army and their assorted hangers on in the UDR, RUC, UDA etcetera. They have inevitably made many mistakes and many — too many — innocent civilians have been killed or injured. While we regard attacks on economic targets as perfectly legitimate and highly effective, we believe that the Provos should stop immediately — bombing targets where civilians are likely to be hurt.

But the I.R.A. are not sectarian gangsters or callous murderers, whatever the prostitute press or prostituted politicians may say. They are brave guerilla fighters, fighting an anti-imperialist war and we intend to continue supporting and co-operating with them.

But support and co-operation does not mean slavish admiration. While the Provos' fighting ability is good their politics are lousy. Their blundering ineptitude when they talked to Whitelaw nearly wrecked the whole civil resistance struggle, and recently there have been disturbing examples of right wing attitudes among the Provo leadership.

By the beginning of July the Provos were under pressure. Lynch's opening of the Curragh and establishment of Special Courts had deprived them of their safe haven in the South and forced the leaders into the Bogside where they came face to face with the peace movement which was in full cry after the shooting of Ranger Best.

The Provo leaders seem to have been genuinely shocked by the strength of the peace movement — a result of their own failure to explain the reasons for fighting on after Direct Rule, combined with war weariness and revulsion at needless killings.

They replied with a showy gimmick designed to demonstrate their desire for peace and put the blame on Whitelaw for continuing the war. They offered to meet Whitelaw on a number of conditions — but the conditions did not include the prior release of internees. They expected Whitelaw to refuse.

The SDLP jumped at the chance. For months they had been trying to wriggle out of their commitment to

POLITICS OF THE PROVOS

as seen by P.D.

"No talks until the internees are released". If the Provos, representing the bulk of the internees, could talk before the men were released, then so could the SDLP. And they did.

Meanwhile the first phase of Whitelaw's strategy of stopping the Provos by winning over the anti-Unionist population had failed. So he decided to go further. Whitelaw is nothing if not a determined politician. He offered them a truce and negotiations. The internees might not all be released but the Provos would be recognised as a real political force. The SDLP carried the messages and the Provos listened to them. The SDLP for all their treachery and sell-outs suddenly became the allies of the Provos.

The truce began — much against the wishes of many volunteers — and ultimately the Provos met Whitelaw and experienced a brief moment of glory. But Whitelaw did not keep his word. He found excuses for delaying the release of the internees, he collaborated with the UDA. The truce collapsed.

Who gained? Whitelaw and the SDLP.

The SDLP gained because the solidarity of the Civil Resistance struggle had been broken. If you could talk once you could talk again — and the Provos could not condemn you too sharply.

And because, for a brief moment, they seemed to have the trust of the Provos, they had been given credibility again. Whitelaw gained because any gain for the SDLP is a gain for British Imperialism and because doubt and confusion had been spread in the anti-imperialist campaign.

That doubt and confusion was rapidly exploited after Bloody Friday to prepare the way for Operation Motorman.

After two Peoples Democracy demonstrations at the Curragh concentration camp the Provos themselves — whose men were inside — got around to holding one during the shortlived truce. At the start there was a scuffle when the stewards tried to force members of the P.D. out of the march but more important was the scene at the camp. A massive force of Guards and troops in British Army riot gear kept the marchers from the camp. Rioting quickly broke out and Sinn Fein stewards attacked the rioters while the platform party condemned and disowned the rioters.

Later, in a press statement, Sinn Fein (Kevin Street - Provisional) blamed the rioting on P.D. We are glad to say that our members were rioting — but so were a great many Provos. The Sinn Fein leadership's anxiety to avoid a clash with the Southern state was nauseating.

Around the same time Republican News, the Belfast Sinn Fein paper, carried a hysterical McCarthyite attack on Communism and Marxism, tarted up with a lot of pseudo-religious cant. It tried

the usual "red agents under the beds" scare and quite dishonestly equated Marxism with modern day Russian-style communism. It was a foul slander on Karl Marx, a great humanitarian and revolutionary who today would be fighting for the overthrow of the bureaucratic dictatorships in Russia and Eastern Europe, and who was one of the strongest supporters of the Irish people's fight for freedom.

The article seemed to be a disguised attack on left wing tendencies in the Provos' own ranks.

There is a pattern behind these events. We have long argued that



Demonstrations as Republicans and P.D. demonstrate at Curragh Jial Camp

the Provos are an uneasy alliance of Left and Right held together only by the solidarity of their military campaign. The volunteers are mostly working class and revolutionaries in the political as well as the military sense. But in the South particularly there are elements in the Provos who are little better than militant Fianna Fail supporters. And there are businessmen and petty capitalists who support them like Bill Fuller, American owner of the Old Shieling Hotel in Dublin and Teac Furbo Hotel in Galway, and some members of Taca, the Fianna Fail businessmen's club.

These political sharks are taking out a sort of insurance policy in case the Provos might win and their support is strictly on condition that the war stays in the North and their businesses are not disrupted or blown up. Equally the Fianna Fail government seem to have agreed to turn a blind eye to the Provos' activities provided they left the South alone. Only Lynch in the long run does what his masters in London tell him and so the clamp down on the Provos came regardless.

But the leadership of the Provos seems to be in the hands of the right wing elements in the alliance and they have rigidly confined the struggle to the north, going to extraordinary lengths to avoid clashes with the Southern state and establishment.

Similarly in the North the leadership, although committed to a United Ireland and realising that

only violence will make the British impose it on the Unionists, show no real desire to destroy the existing political system — only to find a place in it.

They did not see the necessity to destroy the SDLP and to build up a completely different and revolutionary political structure through the Resistance Councils. Instead they opted for the professional politicians' game of negotiations and tricks.

At the same time they launched a vicious attack on Marxism, designed to discredit the study and discussion of revolutionary political theory which alone could teach the volunteers how to really overthrow the system.

We believe that the only Republic worth fighting for is a socialist republic and that it must be fought for in the South at the same time as in the North. If the struggle is confined to the North then, even if it succeeds, the gangster politicians of the Free State will take over. They may find a few seats for retired gunmen on their benches but they and their capitalist masters will stay in control.

Moreover there is no chance of

winning over any section of the Northern Protestants unless they see some struggle going on in the South. We also believe like Che Guevara that a guerrilla war cannot succeed unless it identifies completely with the working class and gains their full hearted support. And that can only be done by a movement which constantly explains to the people the reasons for its every action and strives constantly to better the conditions of the people even during the struggle.

We know that the majority of the Provo volunteers are out for a socialist republic. We know that there was and is deep resentment and indignation over the flirtation with the SDLP and the talks with Whitelaw. We know that most Provos are more than anxious to start the struggle in the South and were glad to see that the hysterical anti-Marxism of the Republican News was ably answered by a number of volunteers.

We believe that the war against imperialism must go on. We will go on supporting the I.R.A. in that war but we will also go on criticising them constructively until left wing policies come to the fore and the war is fought on a clear socialist basis. In the meantime we will continue to build up the P.D. as a revolutionary socialist party to the stage when we can establish an Irish Citizens Army to join in the military as well as the political struggle.

WHO NEEDS ANOTHER ROAD TO REFORMISM?

As the Tory offensive against the whole labour movement intensifies and increases in its savagery, so ever increasing numbers of workers become disenchanted with the bosses' system — capitalism.

The Labour Party, in the eyes of many socialists, holds no solutions whatsoever. It is increasingly seen in its true and ugly light, as just another administrator of capitalism. Perhaps a little more subtle and sometimes not so harsh, but, nevertheless, basically the same. They realise that a Labour government in power, at this stage, would be forced to bring in more or less the same anti-working class measures as the hated Tories.

For the current crisis of British capitalism is deep. In face of this fact, the Tories Heath and Wilsons alike — must obey the command of their masters, the industrialists and financiers.

They must snatch back the gains made by the labour movement, during the post-war boom period.

But the present generation of the labour movement, weaned in the boom period, fights back ferociously and defends itself magnificently. In these struggles the class moves forward politically.

An increasing number of workers see their industrial battles not just as economic, but in the perspective of ousting the ruling class parasites completely.

The most revolutionary elements within the working class are looking for an alternative to capitalism. It is, quite often, to the Communist Party that they turn.

No surprise. The Communist Party is the largest group on the left, well established, with considerable industrial strength.

And yet the CP holds no solution for the working class. Their "British Road to Socialism" is nothing but an unrealistic dream

ALLIANCE

According to the CP, the British Road to Socialism runs as follows:

1) As a climax of mass struggle a parliamentary majority, based on anti-monopoly alliance, can and must be achieved. This majority will then legislate to destroy capitalism and build a Socialist state.

2) The core of the anti-monopoly alliance will be made up of a united working class and an amalgamation of the CP, the trade unions, and the Co-operative Societies.

3) The indispensable basis for success in establishing the anti-monopoly alliance is Labour-Communist unity, with the left having won leadership and a majority in the Labour Party.

The anti-monopoly alliance will be created, and fight, on the basis of a programme of democratic planning, economic expansion, increased public ownership, and the defence and extension of democracy.

5) The programme of the anti-monopoly alliance will not be socialist. It will make inroads, however, into the power of the monopolies, and so pave the way and

show the logic for a transition to Socialism.

Throughout, this programme is riddled with misconceptions and ambiguities.

First let us examine the nature of this anti-monopoly alliance. The keystone of this theory of a popular alliance against monopolies is that all, who are not monopolists, that is the vast majority of the population, stand to gain at their downfall. Therefore it is in their own interests to "unite and fight". But is it? At present many, although not being monopolists, stand to gain by the continuing existence of the big monopolies.

For example, small business. (At the 20th Congress of the CP, small capitalists were included in a list of candidates for the anti-monopoly alliance). In many cases their profitable existence depends on a relationship with the larger firms. Similarly sections of the professionally employed such as accountants and lawyers have their interests directly linked to the existing system. After all it is not the working class who pay them huge fees to fight court cases and fiddle tax.

Another misconception in this 'popular alliance' is — that the working class will wish to ally themselves with the little capitalists. Surely it is not in the economic and social interests of the working class that small shopkeepers should not be eliminated by supermarkets, or that smaller and less efficient capitalists should survive.

Such an alliance, if it existed, would lead in one of two possible directions.

REACTION

The alliance could fragment. The conflict of interests would, if this alliance were to achieve a parliamentary majority, immediately result in disintegration with many social groupings struggling for the spoils. The opportunity would be seized upon and the door would be open wide for successful reactionary counter-attack. The effect of this on the labour movement would be shattering. After having struggled for such a time they find that it has been in vain. The Labour movement will have been set back decades.

OR — the alliance could hold for a while and some sops might be thrown to the workers if the workers' leaders could hold them in check. This would only be possible if the alliance was cemented through the leadership of middle-class politicians, with the working class heavily subordinated.

That is what happened in France in the Popular Front of the '30s — and what will happen again if today's projected Popular Front becomes the government. The workers were misled and betrayed. Nor did the monopolies suffer. There is a chain binding the middle-class politicians to the big monopolies. The Labour and CP leaders in such an alliance

Chris Corcoran

looks at the C.P.'s programme

would bind themselves and the workers to these politicians.

The monopolists could not actually be challenged without breaking with the capitalist forces in the alliance.

And that is the key: who leads any alliance? Led by the working class many petty bourgeois can be roused to fight the monopolists — but on a programme of socialism, not of a utopian and idiotic "programme" of restoring the capitalism of a century ago, and on an active programme of struggle, not of parliamentary horsetrading.

A further 'theory' on which the anti-monopoly alliance is based is that since monopolies are attacking democracy (bourgeois democracy) 'the defence and extension' of bourgeois democracy will be an issue around which non-monopoly groups can rally.

The point is that monopoly capitalism is not attacking democracy, because it long ago rendered it irrelevant. Parliamentary democracy has been reduced to an empty sham, where very little of real consequence is decided (the chairmen of the 400 leading monopolies have a very great deal more power than the elected 'representatives of the people').

Why should the monopolists attack the empty, but to them quite useful, form of democracy — i.e. parliament — when it serves them quite well. Parliament acts as a mantle of democratic legitimacy in which to clothe bourgeois rule. The ballot box gives them prior warning of social discontent, and then if necessary there can be a speedy change in parliamentary personnel. Monopoly capitalism is therefore concerned with strengthening the sham bourgeois "democracy" and the many conceptions which support its rule. It is most often to 'democracy' and "the rule of law" that they appeal against the direct action now increasingly taken by workers, which begins to counterpose working class democracy to the ruling class charade.

The biggest ideological block which has maintained the rule of capitalism is the belief that political activity is confined to parliament. The Communist Party also, with their conception of parliament as 'the supreme organ of representative power' capitulate completely to this bourgeois ideology.

It is the job of communists to explain to workers how much of a con bourgeois democracy is and to fight for a conception of working class democracy based on the direct power of councils of workers.

Parliament is only one part of the capitalist state. A very useful arm of the state indeed, but only so long as the democratic mantle is able to hide the bare reality underneath. As soon as the working class attempt to seize power through parliament then the other tentacles of the state are brought into play. The courts, the army and

the police will move swiftly to prevent the downfall of the ruling class they protect.

Unless communists understand this and prepare for it in advance the working class will certainly be defeated.

The Communist Party states that an indispensable factor in establishing the anti-monopoly alliance is Communist-Labour Unity with the Left having won leadership and a majority in the Labour Party. The Communist Party's usual reason given for the inability of the left to win leadership in the Labour Party is that right wing ideas are spread because of the domination of right wing leaders. According to the Communist Party the left is gaining strength, but a look at the last reactionary Labour government shows this to be factually incorrect. And the ideas of the resurrected 'left' of these days are the same ideas as those of the Wilsonites out of office — before '64.

The main flaw of this Labour-Communist alliance, however, is the way in which the organisations of the Labour Party, Communist Party, Trade unions, Co-operatives, are seen to represent the united labour movement. Rather than mass struggle creating the united labour movement — the united labour movement substitutes at the top for mass struggles of the working class.

The main theoretical errors which constitute the reasoning behind the 'British Road to Socialism' can be itemised as the broad popular anti-monopoly alliance; the parliamentary transition to socialism and the reliance on Labour-Communist unity.

In short this is a programme for non-action.

Opposed to this 'road to nowhere' a revolutionary programme must be set out and fought for at all times.

The crux of this revolutionary programme lies in the belief that the main task is to break completely the hold of bourgeois democratic ideas on the working class.

This task can only be achieved by a revolutionary party which has a correct grasp of the nature of the capitalist state and sees clearly that parliament is just one arm of this same state — a party which intervenes in an ultimately is able to lead the struggles of the working class, linking the lessons of the struggle with an overall conception of the need to smash capitalism and build socialism.

As to joining forces with petit bourgeois elements, this can only be realised by the working class taking the leading role. Then, if the petit-bourgeois elements see their interests linked more with the working class than the ruling class, they will join force against the oppressors — not in an anti-monopoly alliance, but for workers' power and socialism.

Published by Workers Fight at
98 Gifford St London N 1
Printed by voluntary labour



WHERE WE STAND

workers' fight

□ CAPITALISM is inseparable from the exploitation by the bourgeoisie of the working class 'at home' and (since 'advanced' capitalism became imperialist) of the workers and peasants in the colonies and neo-colonies abroad.

It is a vicious system geared to buttressing the strong against the weak, to serving the handful of capitalists against the millions of workers, and to keeping many millions in poverty so that a few may prosper. Capitalism exalts property and degrades life. It is at the root of the racialism which poisons and divides worker against worker. It is a system of massive waste and social disorganisation, at the same time as it forces the working class to fight every inch of the way to better or even maintain its wages and conditions.

Having once been progressive, in that it at least developed, in the only way then possible, the productive resources of mankind, it is now a totally reactionary force in history. Its expansion after World War 2 gave it merely the appearance of health: in reality the boom was like the flush on a sick man's face. And already economic expansion has given way to creeping stagnation.

□ TODAY the ruling class can keep their system going only at the cost of large scale unemployment and attempts to cut the living standards of workers in the 'rich' parts of the world, of massive starvation and bloodshed in the 'poor' two thirds of the world, and of the ever-present threat of the destruction of humanity through nuclear war.

□ THE ONLY WAY OUT is for the working class to take power and to bring the resources of the modern economy under a rational working class plan, in place of the present unplanned and blind private-profit system. Having overthrown capitalism and established social ownership of the means of production, the working class will build towards a truly communist society, in which at last the principle will be "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs."

□ The working class has created political parties for this purpose — LABOUR PARTIES, COMMUNIST PARTIES, SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTIES. — But in country after country these parties have joined capitalist governments and managed capitalism. They have betrayed the socialist aspirations of their working class supporters, tied the labour movement to the bosses' state, interest and ideology, and destroyed the political independence of the working class.

□ The task is therefore to build a socialist party which will stand firmly for the interests of the working class. WORKERS' FRONT is a group of revolutionary socialists, aiming to build that party: a party which is democratically controlled by an active working class membership, which preserves its political independence and fights the ideological domination of the ruling class.

□ The basis of our activity is the scientific theory of MARXISM, the only theory which gives a clear understanding of present day society and of the necessity of revolutionary change.

□ Although they cannot organise the struggle for workers' power, the TRADE UNIONS are indispensable for the defence of workers' interests. We fight for the independence of the unions from all state control, and within the unions for militant policies and for democracy. We see the trade union bureaucracy as a distinct stratum which acts as a broker between workers and bosses. Its life and work-situation is quite different from that of the working class. Lacking a direct, necessary allegiance to working class interests, or any fundamental historical interests of its own, its general tendency is to work with the bosses and their state against the working class.

Only a mass national rank and file movement, linking up the different industries and guided by the ideas of revolutionary Marxism can, in this period, turn the trade unions into reliable instruments of working class interests, independent of the bosses' state.

□ We fight against the INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ACT, against any incomes policy under capitalism, and against any legal restrictions on trade unionism.

□ We fight against UNEMPLOYMENT; for a national minimum wage; for work or full pay; against productivity bargaining.

□ We fight to extend the power of workers to control the details of their own lives in industry here and now. We stand for the fight for WORKERS' CONTROL with the understanding that it can be made a serious reality only in a workers' state. We are against any workers' 'participation' in managing their own exploitation under capitalism.

□ We believe that the "PARLIAMENTARY ROAD TO SOCIALISM" is a crippling illusion. The capitalist class will not leave the stage peacefully; no ruling class ever has. Socialism can be built only by smashing the capitalist state machine (army, police, civil service) which is the ultimate defence of the bosses' power in society, and replacing it with a state based on democratic Workers' Councils.

□ The LABOUR PARTY is a capitalist party in its ideas, its policies, and in its record in government. At the same time, the bedrock organisations of the working class, the trade unions, support and finance the Labour Party. There is an open valve connection between the Labour Party and the unions, allowing the possibility of large-scale active working class participation in the party.

We relate to the Labour Party, therefore, not by simply denouncing it, but by attempting to advance the working class towards outgrowing and breaking through the stage in its own development — ideological, political, and organisational — represented by Labourism.

□ We fight for full and equal rights for WOMEN, for female emancipation from the male domination which has co-existed throughout history with class society and which has its roots in such society. We fight, in particular, for the emancipation of women of our own class, suffering a double and triple exploitation, who have been most accurately described as the "slaves of the slaves."

□ We fight against RACIALISM and against immigration controls. We fight for the integration of immigrant workers into the labour movement and for a united fight against capitalism, whilst supporting the right of black minorities in Britain to form defence leagues or independent political organisations.

□ We give unconditional support to the struggles of oppressed peoples everywhere fighting against IMPERIALISM, and to their organisations leading the fight.

□ British workers have — fundamentally — more in common with every single worker throughout the globe, irrespective of race, religion, nationality or colour, than with the whole of the British ruling class. We see the fight for socialism as a world wide struggle, necessitating the creation of a world revolutionary party. We give critical support to the FOURTH INTERNATIONAL.

□ We stand for a political revolution of the working class against the bureaucracies of THE U.S.S.R. and the other countries called 'communist', which we consider to be degenerated and deformed workers' states. The social regime of the different Bureaucracies has nothing in common with socialism, let alone with real communism. At the same time we defend the nationalised economy in these countries against capitalism and imperialism, unconditionally: that is, irrespective of the selfish, usually anti-working class and anti-revolutionary policies of the ruling bureaucrats, and against those policies.

□ There are OTHER POLITICAL GROUPS (including the official British section of the Fourth International) which have generally similar aims, but methods differing from ours, or differing conceptions about what needs to be done here and now. We consider all these groups to be seriously — sometimes grossly — inadequate in theory and practice. We favour unity in action with these groups where possible, and a serious dialogue about our differences.

A BOOK YOU SHOULD READ

...SO DIES THE NAVY MAN

THE RAILWAY NAVVIES by Terry Coleman

Published by Pelican Books, 40p.

Reviewed by Roy Ratcliffe

If you've ever wondered how the word 'navvy' came to be in the English language, or how the term 'living over the brush' came into use, you are due to find out if you read this interesting account of a little known section of the British working class.

If as a child you have felt the excitement of the railway, if you've wondered at the marvel of steam locomotives when you were train spotting, as they rushed toward you from some unknown town or city, only to hurtle with a shrill scream into the pitch black depths of some murky tunnel, then this is a book you should read.

'The Railway Navvies' by Terry Coleman traces the story of how the railway system was built in England. It gives a sympathetic close-up of the men who tore at the earth with picks and shovels to build the railways.

It will be refreshing to workers brought up on a diet of 'inventors' who are supposed to have 'built' the railway system. The Stephensons, Huskissons, Brunels, are all given the glory and the credit for giving the world this modern transport system.

In fact, as is often the case under the capitalist system, the men who make the profits get the credit and the workers who do the work are left nameless and faceless. This book does something to redress the balance. Names like 'Trump', 'Reeky Hoke' and 'Jethro Bird' appear as real characters and liven up the pages. While such men died on wet and windy moors others were reaping rich profits and holding banquets in warm

houses and mansions.

The book shows the hypocrisy of the upper classes in the 1800s who used the working masses as fodder for working in filthy industrial conditions, who made enormous profits from exploiting them, and who at the same time bemoaned the 'lawlessness' of the navvies.

The 'navvy' after receiving his month's pay, would clear off on a 'randy' and would drink, fight and frighten the so-called 'gentle folk' to death.

The railway navvy led a savage, brutalised life often working for twelve hour stretches with little food and would stagger off the job to collapse in some tin shanty. When not working and waging war on the elements, the Navvies would wage war upon the rest of society or amongst themselves.

At times this book is moving, as in the chapter on the Woodhead tunnel, at other times it is extremely amusing, but at all times it is intensely interesting. The railway navvy himself is best summed up by a navvy poet in a few lines from a poem featured in the book:

I do not care for the ladies grand who
are of high degree,
A winsome wench and willing she is just
the one for me.
Drink and love are classed as sins, as
as mortal sins by some,
I'll drink and drink where're I can, the
drouth is sure to come;
And I will love till lusty life runs out its
mortal span,
Safe in a ditch with his heels cocked up,
so dies the navy man.

REVIEW OF THE LEFT PRESS

The last two issues of the Red Mole, fortnightly journal of the International Marxist Group, have carried front page articles on the Uganda Asians. For the funnier side of the Mole coverage, see our In Brief (Take a chance). There is also a serious side to it: the preposterous headline (Asians: Big chance for the Left) only reflects the tremendous confusion in the IMG's thinking on racialism.

First a summary, then comment:

Issue No.50 (4.9.72) carried an unsigned editorial under the above headline. A sub-head ran *Best thing for Years*. The picture painted was as follows: the press is whipping up anti-Asian hysteria but the Labour leaders duck the issues, thus laying the basis for a racist response from sections of the working class. The traditions of the British working class are inadequate to deal with the problem: "No attempt to offer a solution to the working class can be made except on the basis of a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism." "The only way to approach the problem is to tackle it head on." Racists talk of strains on the social services: "We are not going to argue that there is not a problem with the social services or with the employment situation. It may

very well be true that a council house for an Asian is one less for somebody already here." But a house for a building worker is one less for a docker. "The problem is a problem of capitalism". "It is an answer to this problem which it is a burning necessity for the working class to provide in all its struggles. On this issue it is less easy to dodge these fundamentals than on any other." There fore the furore is the best thing for years: "It is one of the main ways at this point of educating large numbers of workers in the need for a political response to the capitalist offensive and to point up the message that muscle is not enough." "The working class is still buoyant and self confident enough to face up to the racist question". The left must "strike" "while the iron is hot". The Monday Club demonstration on September 16th "can provide a focus for a reply which can begin to raise the right questions."

Issue No.51 (18.9.72) is less euphoric and there is a marked lessening of the previous mood of 'Bliss in this dawn to be moles with "clear" ideas to present'. It has now given way to a dawning realisation of the situation: the Fascists are organising on a bigger scale than since the 1930s. The unions haven't counter-attacked. Many militants have tended to "ignore" the question and concentrate on fighting the Industrial Relations Act. But the defence of the Asians is part of the same fight: there is a danger of working class division. The ruling class will also benefit from the mobilised support of the petty bourgeois, thus laying the basis for a much stronger attack on the working class. "To deny that there is a

reports.....reports.....report

BOLTON

Recently in Bolton a crowd of over 300 people listened intently to speakers bitterly opposing the Tory Government's "Fair Rents Act". The public meeting was the culmination of a march and demonstration by Council House tenants against Government legislation to double Council House rents.

Speaker Eileen Duffield of Brightmet no. 2 Tenants Association (who had organised the demonstration) told of the tenants' determination to oppose the Act, and of the cowardly way some of the Bolton Labour Councillors had behaved in voting for implementation of the Tory Act and others who abstained, or failed to turn up at the Special Council Meeting.

She spoke of action planned in case of threatened evictions: "Let them try to evict any of our members for not paying the increase and we'll have a crowd around that door as big as this one to stop them", she said, indicating the people around her.

Stress was laid on the fact that tenants in Bolton were not on their own but part of a countrywide campaign to oppose the Act. Special stickers were distributed for sticking in front windows of Council Houses with the words: "I'm not paying the increase". (picture p. 2)

Here is a list of the Labour Councillors who betrayed the workers who elected them by voting with the Tories:

Alderman Lowe
John Walker (Brightmet)
Norman Morlidgo (Halliwell)
Tom Conner (West)
Alderman B. Glynn.

Here is a list of the Labour Councillors who assisted the Tories by abstaining in the crucial vote.

Mrs Hamer (Halliwell)
Bob Howarth (West - ex-MP and ex-Communist Party member)
Mrs Mitchell (West)
Mrs Haggarty (Derby)
Alderman Brigg
Alderman Lucas.

The tenants and workers of Bolton would do well to remember their names.
STEPHEN BOYD

GLASGOW

Glasgow Corporation, one of the most important authorities in the country, decided on 14 September not to implement the Act, despite 13 Labour renegades voting with the Tories for implementation.

The Corporation meeting was lobbied by the Trades Council, the city Labour party, and Govan Tenants' Action Committee.

MANCHESTER

ONE OF MANCHESTER'S SMALLER TENANTS groups, the Droylesden Tenants Association, recently saw the Labour Council they'd put into office agree to implement the Tory Housing Finance Act.

Tenants representatives in the public gallery were repeatedly told to "shut up" while their councillors agreed to hand tenants' hard earned cash over to the Tory landlords.

One or two Council members showed some real concern and understanding about what this Act will mean to working people.

Councillor Ridley called for no implementation. Unfair Rents must be knocked on the head NOW. "The people started their fight months ago when they trusted a Labour majority - let's uphold our responsibility."

However, the worthy gentlemen on the Council seemed most concerned to remain within "the law of the land", to comply with the Act so that the beneficial (beneficial?!) means tested rebate schemes could be operated, and to crawl to the Tory housing minister begging for a dispensation allowing an increase of "only" 65p - at first.

But why should tenants pay rents dictated by a bosses' government at all? There was no recognition on the council of the fact that to implement the Act is to lay the tenants open to crippling attacks on their living standards for years to come. It did not occur to these Labour aristocrats that there is strength to fight anti-working class legislation from among the tenants themselves and in the

TENANTS GET READY for D-DAY

THE HOUSING FINANCE BILL PROMISES NEVER WILL SO MANY (TENANTS) PAY SO MUCH (RENT) TO SO FEW (LANDLORDS) WITHDRAW THIS BILL!



Trade Union movement. There was much muttering about fighting through the ballot box, but the real point was made by one of the tenants -

"If you stand with us, we'll stand with you - you should know that"

He was ordered to be quiet. When the vote was passed, tenants walked out shouting their determination not to pay. The battle is now in their hands, and Droylesden tenants, like many others around the country, plan to raise broader support for their association, and stage a rent strike.

The idea has been suggested that tenants should go along to local factories to see the shop stewards and ask them for their support in the event of evictions, that they come out of their factor-

ies and help to stop any being carried out. Tenants are also putting pressure on their labour councillors who supported them in the vote, to state that they will not be a party to any evictions.

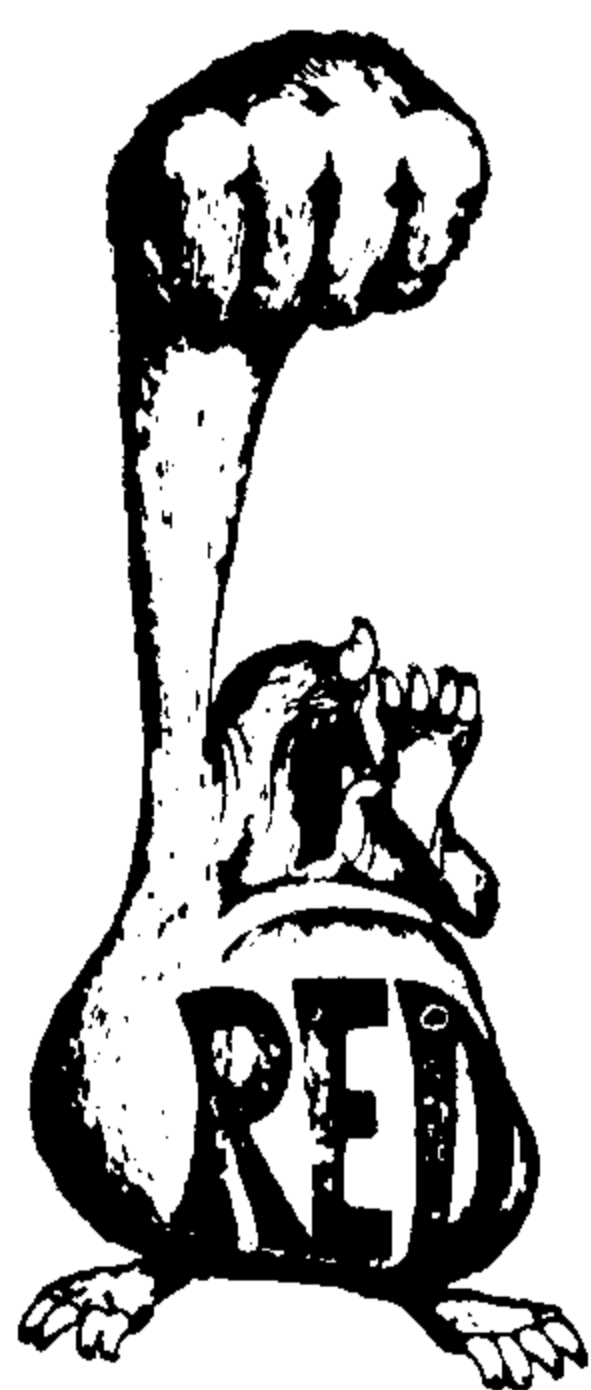
Naomi Wimborne

COVENTRY

At Samuel Vale House flats in the centre of Coventry, the scheduled increase is £1.08. But the tenants' association has decided to refuse to pay the increase. The result of a ballot among the tenants was that 93% refused to pay the increases.

This decision should act as a catalyst, to prompt other Coventry tenants' associations into action.

A similar decision has been taken with the formation of a tenants association on Grove Farm Estate, Nuneaton, about 8 miles from Coventry.



RED MOLE ON RACIALISM

class in Britain which would hinder it in the fight for the very material gains which are one of the main driving forces in the opposition to the Asians.

It is the job of revolutionaries to explain that any counting of costs within a static framework is unreal. Better social conditions have been and are obtained. They can be forced from the capitalist class by struggle. Racial divisions are likely to render the working class incapable of defending what it already has, let alone bettering it.

The 'Keep the Asians Out' "solution" to housing and jobs is a non-solution even on the assumptions of those who push it (those who want social improvement and aren't racist nuts). Given the widespread mood of hostility to the immigrants it is necessary to take up racism and the question of the Asians on this level.

If, like the Red Mole, you admit a conflict of interests that exists only from a short-sighted and static perspective ("we shall not say...") and pose your own fundamental solution, then you leave those who do not accept the socialist answer with the policy of 'Asians Out' as the immediate solution. And many who would

accept the idea of Socialism in general, but don't know how, here and now, it answers their problems, will be left with them. If there is no practical solution short of socialism - then the overwhelming majority, including militants accustomed to limited, localised sectional struggles where even national industrial unity is not always in existence - will say 'Asians Out'.

Racism must be attacked in the world of here and now, from the point of view of its effects on working class self-defence. At the same time it must be linked with the struggle for socialism through transitional demands. By linking housing and job shortages with demands (for example) for public works, revolutionaries can offer a path of struggle for an on-going alternative to the blind alley of racism, offer an antidote and point the figure at the government for the enlightenment of those for whom the socialist final solution is vague, abstract, and even if desirable not obviously relevant to the immediate practical struggle.

It is the curious achievement of the I.M.G. to have gone backwards almost to the S.P.G.B. point in its retreat from the 'traditional Trotskyism' and the Marxism of the Third International. For the Third International, socialism was no longer a great solution in the distant sunset while there were no real answers here and now except completely reformist ones. The division between maximalism and minimalism was overcome by posing transitional demands which related to the consciousness and the felt needs of the workers and focused on the real problems of capitalism, educating the working class in action.

The I.M.G. poses the question in the old maximalist fashion. It makes no link between the ultimate solution and the here and now; there is no indication of how one gets from where we are to socialism. (Except that "it will be through the entire work of socialists to organise the anti-capitalist fight that the poison of racism will be neutralised")

There is only the cry: Capitalism is the problem; socialism is the answer.

Because the fight against racism in no. 50 is not, as it can and must be, conceived of as being presented to the class as in its own direct material interests, not linked to the development of the labour movement as it is, there is nothing left but preaching socialism and sometimes moralising of a very 'advanced' sort.

But sections of the class had clearer ideas about the practical dangers of racism, and by issue no. 51, the action of building workers against National Front demonstrations had alerted the Red Mole sufficiently to note it as 'significant'. The builders knew from their multi-racial strikes what a deadly weapon racism could be against their immediate interests.

The gleeful "Best thing for years" approach arises from the rationalism inescapable in the maximalist, propagandist conception which dominates Red Mole. The furore is seen as a way of raising the issue clearly, gluing the eyes of the 'pupils' to the I.M.G. blackboard, to learn about capitalism. But in the real world attention is focused by the issue not on the real cause, but, by definition, on a scapegoat. The world is not quite an exact replica of a classroom.

problem will get us nowhere. There is a problem of unemployment and housing. But any solution must start from its real roots: the whole way in which capitalist society is organised." The Monday Club demonstration must be a focal point for a counter attack.

The combination of aloofness and divorcement from the working class is truly astonishing.

Red Mole should "say" that a house for an Asian will not mean one less for a British worker. Because it is not necessarily true that it will. It is crass idiocy for any worker to seek to better his housing or job conditions by excluding or attacking 'aliens' or black workers.

Even 50,000 extra workers' houses achieved at the cost of racism would create conditions within the working

BUILDERS: THE STRIKE ENDS

THE LATEST OFFER OF THE building employers provoked an immediate reaction of widespread rejection.

Chester building workers, when finally voting to return to work on the 19th., passed a resolution of no confidence in the National Executive of UCATT. That indicates what has in fact been the general mood

ANGRY STANTON LOBBY THREATENS B.S.C. HQ

On Tuesday 12th September workers from all departments of the iron works at Stanton and Staveley in Derbyshire (which the British Steel Corporation, doing the Government's bidding, has scheduled for closure) came to London to the BSC headquarters and demanded to see Lord Melchett.

Melchett, after keeping the men waiting for a while, sent a message to say that he could not see them as he was "busy".

Finally, came an announcement that some deputies were "willing" to meet a delegation of the men. This announcement came just in time: the Stanton men didn't fancy taking a trip to London for nothing and so they had given the BSC a time limit - at the end of which they would block traffic around the building and occupy its telephone switchboard room.

Sure enough, with one minute to the end of their time the men had set, a delegation led by Bro. Moon was allowed in.

Their principle demand on this lobby was that an inquiry should be held into the difficulties that will be caused by any further redundancies in the area. It was hoped that such an inquiry would come out against government policy to close the works.

But, despite plans to shift work to the Workington area, the men were at pains to emphasise "Our fight is not with Workington."

When the delegation left their interview, though, there were no smiling faces to be seen. What had been gained? "Bugger all" said one of the men's delegates. "They didn't want to know".

At present the workers of Stanton are living on a knife-edge. The deadline by which they were to know their fate (September 14th) has passed, with the only news being that the closure is being "held in abeyance."

of building workers as they were, area by area, herded back to work by the union officialdom.

The builders' claim was for £30 for 35 hours. The offer included no concession on hours - simply an agreement to "jointly review" the question. The basic rate for craftsmen is to go up to £26, labourers to £22.20. In June 1973 the basic rates are to rise to craftsmen £27 (plus £2.60 guaranteed bonus) and labourers £23 (plus £2.20 guaranteed bonus). Then in June 1974 a final rise to craftsmen £29 (plus £3 guaranteed bonus) and labourers £24.60 (plus £2.60 guaranteed bonus).

One of the first areas to vote to continue the strike after the offer was Stoke on Trent - traditionally a reservoir of busloads of scabs for militant Merseyside. This illustrates the tremendous mobilisation that this 13-week strike has produced,

with its militant tactics of flying pickets and picketing of building suppliers.

In view of this, the final sell-out settlement was particularly disappointing.

True, the wage concessions smash the Tories' attempts to keep increases down once again. But on the question of hours, crucial in the fight against unemployment, nothing was won. And only partial and, quite likely, temporary inroads have been made on the no-union, no-cards, no-questions-asked 'lump' system.

The right wing top union leaders showed that their main wish was to get back to a quiet life hand-in-hand with the employers as soon as they possible could.

But what about the left wing? What about the Builders' Charter movement, one of the main forces in initiating the claim and the

strike movement?

There was no concerted campaign by the Charter movement to continue the strike. The Morning Star, paper of the Communist Party, which has the leading influence in the Charter movement, simply reported decisions to strike or to go back, in a non-committal manner.

Evidently the Charter didn't see it as 'realistic' to take any bold stand. And it's true that no one could guarantee them a success in a campaign to continue the strike for the full claim. But the possibility of success cannot be doubted in view of events - with places like Merseyside, Manchester, Birmingham, Stoke etc, initially refusing to go back.

Clearly the Communist Party, which saw a determined fight on hours as 'unrealistic', will never, despite its formal intentions, see the question of the overthrow of capitalism as other than unrealistic.

But the militancy and the awareness generated in the strike has not been lost. Revolutionary socialists will continue to fight inside the Charter, and in UCATT, for a programme of the full wages and hours demand, the end of the Lump and the nationalisation of the building industry under workers' control.

BOLTON: UNANIMOUS AGAINST THE SELL-OUT

Bolton and District building workers reaffirmed their determination to fight for the full claim to the end at an emergency meeting called on Friday night 15th September. Over 200 rank and file builders voted unanimously to continue the strike despite Smith, Jones & Co.s' sell-out settlement.

A resolution from the floor, that "All workers involved in construction shall be urged, by every power that building workers possess, to withdraw their labour", was passed unanimously.

At an earlier meeting of the North West District at Wigan on September 8th the rank and file had already made its voice heard. It had then been decided that company settlements were acceptable on one condition, that being that there should be no return to work in these cases until the full national claim had been met by all building employers.

The final return to work, decided on Thursday 21st, was not a result of rank and file militancy having run down, but the product of a deliberate effort by UCATT.

MACHINE TOOL WORKER

2p. from 17, Wlnfred Avenue, Earlsden, Coventry.



THE HOOK rank and file dockers' paper available from:

H. Youd Editor, 26, Langton Street, Salford 6.

MERSEY: DEFIANT RETURN

A Merseyside builders' meeting on 19th September decided to stay out. The meeting started with a march of about 2,000 builders through Liverpool, chanting '£30' and 'Smith out'.

They joined at least another 8,000 from the Merseyside area at the Pierhead.

The first speaker, Bill Jones (chairman of the Strike Action Committee, local building workers' Charter leader and Communist Party member) spoke for about 20 minutes. His main effort was to demoralise the men. There was heckling and roars of anger when he finally worked his way round to the Committee's recommendation to return to work.

One man near the front shouted "You're doing their job for them" - the bosses' job, that is.

It should perhaps be said that Jones was visibly embarrassed by what he 'had' to do.

The first part of his speech was devoted to telling us how many other people had gone back; but to shouts of 'what about Birmingham' he admitted they were still out.

The 2nd speaker, Bill Clayton (a UCATT official) had to wait for a couple of minutes while the chants of 'OFF' died away. He started by saying that when the workers went back the officials would demand £30 for the Merseyside area. He ignored shouts of 'what about the hours' and "how are you going to

get it". The rest of his speech consisted of insults of the 'when you've calmed down' variety and idiotic remarks about keeping the greatest unity (in defeat?).

After the meeting he told a group of workers that 6 major employers in Liverpool had already agreed to give £30. But to a demand of what about the rest of the country - do we leave them in the cold? - he replied "that's not my responsibility."

The resolution of the Strike Action Committee to return to work was put, and about 6 or 7 hands went up. The vote against was virtually unanimous.

A speaker said "Although you've abused the speakers, the strike Committee accepts your decisions. ... the meeting's closed - you can go home now."

After a lot of shouts of 'what about the next meeting?', and when it was obvious that no one was moving, the strike committee agreed to a meeting on the following Thursday - admittance on union card only. Finally, after a lot of shouts of 'what about the non union men?' (many of whom have been on strike) the meeting broke up.

N.B. When the workers met again on Thursday the officials' campaign of demoralisation had taken its toll and they decided to return to work.

Paul Barker

read

REAL STEEL NEWS

available from:

48 Kensington Road Middlesbrough

ORDER NOW!
8 page TENANTS' SPECIAL
4p from W.F.

subscribe!

Please send WORKERS' FIGHT for 6 months / 12 months

I enclose 75p. / £1.50

NAME

Address

Send to: Business manager, 98 Gifford Street, London N.1

Glasgow Property Owners' and Factors' Association said "The administration have denied private landlords anything like an adequate rent to carry out even the most essential of repairs and have condemned the city to one type of housing for letting - corporation housing.

"The slums of today will be nothing compared with the slums in the corporation housing areas of tomorrow."

And it was not damp running down the walls but tears of sympathy of the tenants in the Gorbals slums for the poor landlords.....