

WORKERS' FIGHT

No 18

Nov 4 17

4p

NO FREEZE!

TURNING FRANTIC SUMMER-saults, like the proverbial cat on a hot tin roof, Edward Heath - Tory apostle of the free and uncontrolled market - has declared a statutory wage freeze for 3 months, with an option of extending it to 5.

He failed to get a voluntary Freeze at the now abandoned Downing Street talks because the Union leaders know very well they can't hold back the labour movement from pressing for higher wages in face of the zooming prices of food and basic goods.

The statutory freeze is a desperate effort to hold down wages. To the Industrial Relations Act and its sanctions is now added the prospect of unlimited fines for individuals and organisations who refuse to toe

the line, beginning with a £400 fine for a summary conviction, and beyond that unlimited fines and even prison.

It is a thinly disguised

attempt to pin down the working class as the cost of living rises, cutting savagely into the standard of living we have built up since the end of the war.

The "control" of prices and dividends is largely a sham, a conman's gambit. Freezing dividends is no more than putting money away in the bank for the shareholders, whose assets are proportionately increased.

Freezing wages is also putting money - extra money - in the bank: the same bank, that of the shareholders. The worker doesn't have a key to that bank. Wages lost like this are never recovered.

It is difficult if not impossible to control prices under a

market-dominated capitalist system. Heath isn't trying very hard. The wage freeze is total, automatic, and with no exceptions. But there are notable exceptions to the price freeze - basic foodstuffs, for example, not to mention "fair rents".

That alone makes the Tories' game as transparent as Salome's nightdress! And, despite the much publicised show of "Watch-dogs" checking prices, it is left to wholesalers and retailers

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IS IT PEACE IN VIETNAM?

THE VIETNAMESE PEOPLE HAS NOW WITHSTOOD THE FULL MILITARY PRESSURE OF THE MIGHTIEST CAPITALIST POWER IN THE WORLD FOR EIGHT LONG YEARS.

The American bosses have used their strength with genocidal frenzy throughout the years of their large scale involvement. Millions are in "refugee" camps, the dead, the maimed and the missing are uncouneted. Whole areas have been turned into ecological deserts to help the US bludgeon the people of this small underdeveloped country into submission.

Throughout 1972 the US Air

Force has saturated Vietnam with its bombs, attacking civilian targets quite indiscriminately and deliberately hitting at the dyke system on which the life of the North depends - as if their goal were literally, physically and completely to wipe the country off the very face of the earth.

VICTORY?

And now they talk of 'negot-

iating peace, and the 'experts' say there is going to be peace.

Have the Vietnamese won their war of national liberation, the greatest epic struggle for freedom in human history? Or have they been forced into a compromise which is less than the full victory to which they are entitled? Are the announced terms of agreement a "Victory for the Indochinese people" as one left paper incautiously headlined it, and should we really follow the Morning Star's advice and take up the cry -

"Force Nixon to sign"?

In fact the terms of the agreement so far known are virtually the same as the so-called 8-point "peace" (!) plan put out by war criminal Nixon last February, before the mining of Haiphong harbour and rejected then by the Vietnamese.

Since that time the incessant bombing and growing isolation has undermined the Vietnamese. It is well known that as both the Russians and the Chinese got more and more pally with Washington, both these powers (neither of which ever gave adequate military aid to the Vietnamese - the Chinese less than the Russians, even in the former's most "revolutionary period") have put heavy pressure on the Vietnamese to compromise.

They would happily see a new version of the 1954 Conference at Geneva which filched the fruits of the military victory over the French from the Vietnamese.

We do not question the right of the Vietnamese to make a compromise peace if they see no other option. But every socialist and militant must denounce the cynical scoundrels in Peking and Moscow who have betrayed the Vietnamese people.

Withdrawal of US troops is a victory for the Vietnamese. But they aren't going any further than Thailand; and the airplane carrying US Seventh Fleet hovers, and will continue to hover, around the coast. The US army is anyway now merely a mainly non combat rump. It's

see p.3, col.1



vietnam:

The war criminal and mass murderer Richard M. Nixon is sweeping to a big electoral victory and another four years as President of the USA. Here we reprint a statement of solidarity with the Vietnamese against US imperialism by one of the other candidates for the Presidency, Linda Jeness, nominee of the Socialist Workers Party. Jeness speaks for that part of America which will one day bury the politics, the ruling class and the imperialism that Richard Nixon represents - and erect a socialist America in their place.

Nixon's top aide Henry Kissinger says that "peace is at hand" in Vietnam. This is a lie.

The nine-point "settlement" that has reportedly been agreed to was wrung from the Vietnamese through the most extensive bombing campaign in history and through the threat of years more of the same terrible destruction.

imperialists only allow elections

against any threat.

The Union and Protestant Ascendancy were inseparable for 50 years - until the British government

Already the U.S. is rushing military equipment to the Thieu government, and Thieu is preparing to carry out a bloodbath of repression against "suspected communists" in Saigon-controlled

areas of South Vietnam. Under the proposed agreement, U.S. troops are to remain indefinitely in Thailand and in the seas off Vietnam, ready to intervene again if the U.S. warmakers think it necessary. This is no peace!

The nine points represent a formula for maintaining the capitalist system and a foothold for U.S. imperialism in Vietnam. And Washington is pressing for even more concessions. The agreement thus represents a setback to the decades-long struggle of the Viet-

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and social justice. the
This is true despite concessions made by the U.S. These are the promise to withdraw the remaining 30,000 U.S. troops within 60 days, to end U.S. bombing, and to recognize control by North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front troops in areas where they were stationed at the time of the cease-fire.

What is the Vietnam war all about? Contrary to the argument used by Nixon, and Johnson before him, the issue is not "Communist aggression." What is involved is a popular rebellion of the masses of Vietnamese peasants and workers for an end to exploitation and imperialist domination.

SAYS TROTSKYIST CANDIDATE

FOR U.S. PRESIDENCY

The Vietnamese are rebelling against a system that allows a few landlords and capitalists to own most of the land and wealth. The masses of peasants must hand over a large part of their crops to the landlords simply to be able to farm the land. Workers are paid miserably low wages, taxed heavily, and denied basic democratic rights. The hated Saigon regime represents the landowners, the capitalists, and the imperialist powers they depend on to protect them from their own people.

The proposed nine-point agreement does not resolve any of these fundamental problems in line with the needs and aspirations of the Vietnamese people.

The agreement provides for a

Continued p.3

All out for Anti Internment League march Nov. 12

ASSEMBLE SPEAKERS' CORNER HYDE PARK AT 2pm



THE PAY TALKS

Meeting of the knuckleduster and the Feather duster



the boot in" they "opened the door".

Make no mistake about it, the incomes policy was not a "government initiative", but a TUC initiative, and it came in its clearest form at the Brighton conference, where the General Council resolution opposed compulsory pay restraint but opened the door to an incomes policy which "is an integral part of an economic strategy which includes control of rents, profits, dividends, and prices and is designed to secure a redistribution of income and wealth". So rather than meeting the government head on over the Industrial Relations Act, the TUC leaders thought they could bargain it away, by offering to cooperate on incomes policy.

Not that this "redistribution of income and wealth" meant that the TUC was driving a hard bargain, either. In fact the dividend control they proposed would be a positive asset to the employing class — one which the American capitalists recently asked Nixon to preserve!

TORIES FOLLOW TUC

In any case the gesture at Brighton did not go unnoticed. On the following day the 'Times' said that:

"The government should not ignore the TUC's conference decision yesterday on pay restraint" — and neither did they. For both the Industrial Relations Act and Incomes Policy rest on the same foundation. They both rely on implementation by the Trade Union official leadership.

When the Tories brought in the Industrial Relations Act, they said it was intended to "change the structure of industrial relations and to "strengthen the trade unions". They meant by this that they were aiming to strengthen a particular type of "trade unionism" — the "trade unionism" of Frank Chapple and Lord Coaker.

wanted to strengthen the power of these right wing leaders so that they could act as better policemen against the self-reliance and fighting confidence of the rank and file. More important, they wanted to "change the structure of industrial relations" so that left wing union leaders such as Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon would also be pushed into stifling the militancy of their members in the same way as Chapple and Cooper.

But the Tories' plans went astray. Instead of strengthening the union bureaucracy they were faced with a massive upsurge of grass roots militancy which threatened to sweep right over the heads of the Feathers. But if it was the grass roots trade union movement which threw a spanner in the Tory works it is now the bureaucrats who are trying to patch up the damage. By presenting Incomes Policy as the Trade Union alternative to the Industrial Relations Act, the Union leaders have indeed given the Government an alternative, which is every bit as dangerous as the Industrial Relations Act.

Not that we should suppose that we will get the repeal of the Act as a reward from the Tories if we accept Incomes Policy. It is quite clear that the Tories have a good chance of getting union leaders to accept both Act and Incomes Policy — if not openly, then by virtue of their refusal to fight either.

COMPULSORY

In the same article quoted above, the 'Times' states "We adhere to the view we have taken over the past two years that a government decreed incomes policy is necessary; and we doubt now whether it can be postponed before this winter. But it does not at all follow from this that the Downing Street tripartite talks should be abandoned. Indeed they are an essential prelude to a compulsory policy."

initiated not by 10000 but by 700 engineering workers who on 16 October had voted to strike to further their claim for danger money for working in the polythene plant.

In other words, by accepting incomes policy as 'a good thing' for 'the nation', by negotiating with the government, the TUC has disarmed the working class in any fight against pay restraint whether it be compulsory or voluntary; whether it be TUC-sanctioned or not. The 'Times' goes on to say that "The success of the compulsory policy when it comes will depend above all on the political atmosphere at the time". And could the 'Times' or the government have hoped for a better 'political atmosphere' than the TUC bargaining with the government with the desirability of pay restraint taken as given.

The Industrial Relations Act and Incomes Policy both have the same aim — to increase profits at the expense of the working class, by stifling the militancy of the rank and file trade unionists. Both have the same agency — the trade union leaders — for holding down the rank and file. They differ only in form and their 'acceptability' to the TUC leadership. For militants and trade unionists the fight against both hangs on the same principle — absolute independence of the trade unions from the bosses' state.

The crunch on the issue of Incomes Policy is likely to come over one of the various major pay claims now pending: local government workers and hospital ancillary workers, miners, railwaymen. Now that the talks are "off" there will be no Downing Street diversion — everything will clearly depend on the militancy of the workers in struggle.

The Tories will act in accordance with the real intention of the policy — not to 'help the ICI bosses and good — the leahey are. is control (not and tenants must safeguarding the solidarity with these workers now. This solidarity must include financial aid from the leaders of the big unions to strikers, the aid that was lacking in the post office workers' strike.

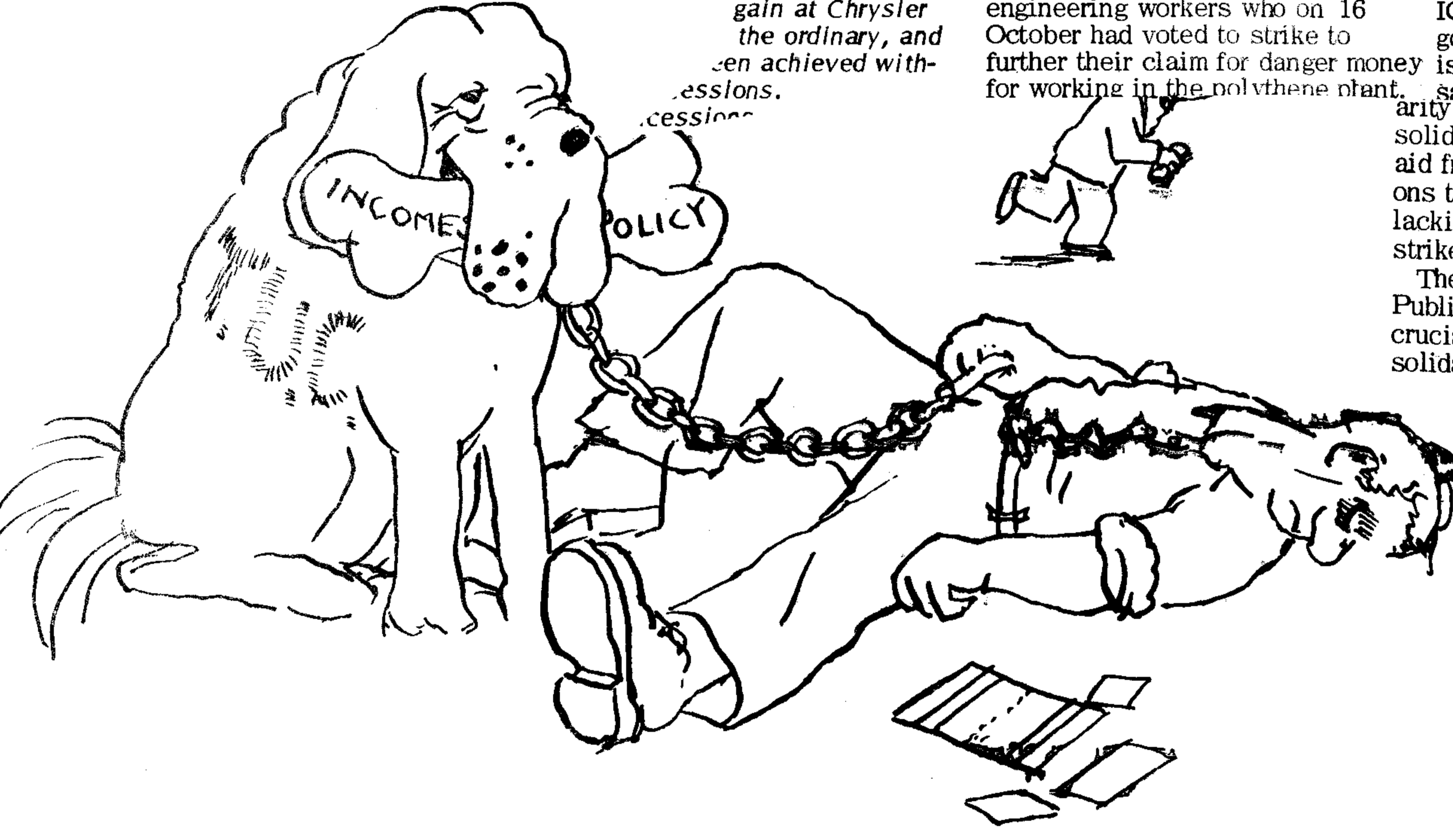
The demand for an Alliance of Public Sector Unions becomes crucial in view of this need for solidarity.

Finally, let us remember: the Industrial Relations Act is still on the books. To enforce Incomes Policy the government has to defeat any pay claims significantly bigger than £2. To defeat the claims they must defeat the workers. To do this they will use any weapon necessary. If they think they need the Industrial Relations Act, they will use it. The slogan of a General Strike — to get rid of the Industrial Relations Act, the Housing Finance Act, and any attempt at Incomes Policy — remains relevant

After the release of the five dockers, the Tory government stood discredited. It was discredited both in the eyes of the working class, which had dealt it a heavy defeat, and in the eyes of the ruling class, whose servant it is. All the boasts that were made about strong government and sorting out the unions now only served to embarrass — after suffering two major defeats, the Tories could not face another all-out confrontation with the working class.

But the difficulties of the employers' government should have been the trade union movement's opportunity. The chance was there to "put the boot in" — that is, to turn a severe battering into a rout. A rout which would put an end to legal chains on the unions; a rout which may have well brought down the government. What was required was for the TUC to rally the rank and file of the trade union movement with the aim of smashing the Industrial Relations Act; to reimpose a complete boycott of the bosses' industrial courts; to refuse to pay the fines levied on the Transport and General Workers' Union and to be prepared to respond to any threat from the courts with a General Strike. Nothing short of this type of all out confrontation with the state could have smashed the Act.

Any such generalised confrontation would have brought the working class onto the scene as an independent political force. Workers would have learned of their own strength — not just on the industrial field, but in the political sphere as well. But the short sharp taste of the power of the working class that had been demonstrated by the freeing of the five was quite enough for the 'generals' of the TUC. Instead of "putting



gain at Chrysler the ordinary, and men achieved with sessions.

from p. 1

VIETNAM

the US air power that really counts.

Thieu objects mainly to the North Vietnamese troops — 135,000 of them — remaining in the South under the agreement. In fact, the New York Times reports (November 1st) that the real reason the US has stalled on the signing of the agreement is to force the North Vietnamese to agree to withdraw the troops.

1 MILLION SOLDIERS

The Thieu regime has one million soldiers, as well as police. The Americans have spared no expense on that tremendous military bureaucratic machine (and the agreement allows them to replace its equipment) which controls 90% of the population of Vietnam.

Its power will be used mercilessly in the muffled struggle for control of the country which will certainly continue after a ceasefire. It will continue because the de facto state of dual power continues — in conditions which the agreement makes more favourable for the murderous regime of the landlords and the capitalists.

Elections in this situation cannot be democratic: they can only provide a mask for the military-police distatorship. According to Amnesty International Thieu has started to slaughter his political prisoners (of whom there are over 200,000). After a ceasefire the power of this regime to repress the workers and peasants, despite its lack of popular support, should not be underestimated.

In short, the unrestrained slaughter and terror, the use of Russian and Chinese pressure, and the threat of an ever greater volume of airborne savagery

FREEZE...

whether or not to raise prices. Only if the Government thinks it unjustified will it then order them not to...

The promised £10 for pensioners is a typically thick-skinned insult to the retired generation of workers who have spent a lifetime slaving for the bosses and now "live" (or so it is called) on a pittance whose buying power dwindles daily as prices rise astronomically.

BLACKMAIL

Clearly Heath is trying to blackmail the TUC into restarting the tripartite talks (TUC, CBI, Government) on voluntary restraint. But they should never have taken part in talks with the Tory pirates and the City spivs of the CBI in the first place.

Any worker who lets himself be conned or bullied by the Government or held back by the Union leaders is a sucker. Very few workers will allow themselves to be conned, though the

Union leaders will do their best to take advantage of the freeze to put their feet up.

The working class will not be intimidated by the new laws, any more than by the Industrial Relations Act. Heath is still choking from having that one rammed down his throat last July — which didn't remove it from the statute books as a weapon to be used against us now.

The fight against inflation is not a bond of common interest between workers and bosses, as the Government, CBI and TUC all say it is. It is a common problem — but the employers' and their government's solution for it is to make the workers pay for controlling it by keeping wages down. Talk of a common battle against inflation is one of their ways of persuading the working class to allow them to do so.

Our answer must be:

NO WAGE FREEZE — WE WON'T BE CONNED!

after Nixon's re-election, has allowed the US Government to force a retreat on the Vietnamese. We must recognise these facts, however unwelcome they may be. Otherwise we will wind up prattling pseudo-militant slogans demanding that Nixon "sign", as does the Morning Star which covers up for the Soviet bureaucracy.

We shouldn't want mass murderer Nixon to "sign" the compromise he has forced on the Vietnamese people. We must demand the immediate withdrawal of the US Army, Navy and Air force from Vietnam and from

the whole of Indochina. **UNCONDITIONALLY!**



LEICESTER RACISTS CHALLENGED

On Saturday October 21st, 3000 demonstrators marched in Leicester in support of the Ugandan Asians and against racialism and fascism.

The demonstration had been called by the Leicester Anti-Fascist Coordinating Committee and was supported by all the socialist political groups (apart from the Socialist Labour League). The reason for choosing Leicester was principally to oppose the racist, anti-Uganda Asians, policies of the right-wing Labour City Council and to combat the growing activity of fascist groups, especially the National Front.

Of course, demonstrations are not enough in themselves. The Leicester demonstration did show to the working class that a large number of socialists support an alternative to the racialism of the Labour council; it did stress the question of working class unity; it did show the immigrant workers of Leicester that they were not isolated and unsupported. But, in addition, the issue of the defence of the Uganda Asians must be carried by socialists into all sections of the working class, to win workers and workers' organisations to a position of solidarity of ALL workers, of whatever nationality or skin colour.

Furthermore, self-defence must be organised against the intimidation of black people by fascist thugs of the type recently seen in Rochdale. **NEAL SMITH**

LETTER

OWNER-OCCUPIERS

I disagree strongly with the article on owner occupiers in "Workers' Fight" no. 17. It was a load of rubbish. I know plenty of owner occupiers living on egg and chips, but the article made out that most owner-occupiers were living off the fat of the land. Most of them never own their homes anyway, they pay through their eyes and nose for them.

Fran Brodie, Manchester.

REPLY: The article showed that there is a discrimination in favour of owner-occupiers against tenants. There is, of course, far greater discrimination in favour of moneylenders and financiers against both tenants and ordinary owner-occupiers, but that wasn't what the article was about.

The basic effect of the discrimination in favour of owner-occupiers is to enable rich owner-occupiers to benefit at the expense of tenants. Poor owner-occupiers are not much affected by it (they don't pay much income tax anyway, so tax relief doesn't help a lot). As I pointed out in the article, "Some owner-occupiers are workers. But these aren't the people whom this regulation is chiefly meant to help". Discrimination in favour of the "haves" against the "have-nots" exists in housing as everywhere else in capitalist society. Some of the "haves" have very little, and gain very little. But the wealthy owner-occupiers do gain considerably at the expense of tenants.

Jack Price.

VIETNAM...

Continued from page 1

cease-fire—with no change in the capitalist political or economic system in Vietnam. The Saigon puppet regime—with or without Thieu—and its entire repressive apparatus will remain in power and will hold veto power in the three-part council established to organize "internationally supervised" elections.

The political future of Vietnam will supposedly be determined by these elections. But any elections organized under the capitalist-landlord government in Saigon and with the blessing of the U. S. imperialists can be assumed beforehand to be a fraud.

History shows that the imperialists only allow elections that are rigged for their own benefit. This happened in the June 1954 elections in the Republic under "interim" Toryism for troops occupying the country. Joaquin Balaguer, an Ireland Labour Party member, and Raphael Trujillo.

In Vietnam, on the other hand, the U. S. made sure that the elections set for 1956 by the 1954 Geneva Accords were never held. President Eisenhower later admitted that the U. S. feared the Viet Minh would win 80 percent of the votes.

Even if the proposed agreement leads to a coalition government in Saigon, it will still be a capitalist government. Despite the long years of struggle by the Vietnamese, and the hundreds of thousands of lives lost, the capitalist social system that goes against the needs and aspirations of the masses of Vietnamese still remains.

It can easily be understood how the Vietnamese may have been forced to accept the terms of the nine-point agreement even though they mean a setback for them. The Vietnamese have undergone the horrors of war for 30 years. In the seven years between 1965 and 1971 alone, the U. S. has battered Vietnam with explosives equal to 450 Hiroshima bombs. Since May the North Vietnamese faced U. S. attempts to cut off their supplies through a blockade.

It is not only Nixon who must be condemned, however, for forcing the Vietnamese to come to terms acceptable to Washington. On top of the exhaustion of years of war, the Vietnamese liberation fighters have faced isolation and betrayal by the bureaucratic regimes in Moscow and Peking.

While the Vietnamese have been making enormous sacri-

fices and providing an unparalleled example of heroic resistance to U. S. imperialism, Moscow and Peking have been entertaining Nixon and making deals with him to strangle the Vietnamese revolution.

They refused to provide the Vietnamese with the most modern fighter planes and anti-aircraft weapons needed for defense against U. S. bombing attacks.

While giving substantial aid, including fighter planes, to capitalist regimes like Egypt, they did not give the Vietnamese the type of modern weapons they needed.

The Moscow and Peking bureaucrats have joined the U. S. in pressuring the Vietnamese to stop fighting and to make unwarranted concessions. Rather than condemning Nixon for trying to dictate the future of Vietnam, they have uncritically supported the nine-point agreement and offered to help enforce the terms.

In the chorus of applause for Nixon's nine-point settlement is my Democratic opponent George McGovern. This so-called peace candidate says only that he would reserve the right to "renegotiate" sections of the settlement if he is elected.

By applauding the nine-point terms for U. S. withdrawal, McGovern helps give legitimacy to U. S. aggression in Vietnam in the first place. He lends credence to Nixon's claim that the U. S. had to continue its bombing campaign until the Vietnamese accepted his terms for an "honorable settlement."

I say the United States has no right to negotiate anything whatsoever about the future of Vietnam! And I urge all anti-war Americans to speak out against any terms the U. S. tries to impose as a condition for its withdrawal.

At this time, however, no cease-fire agreement has been signed, and the bombing and shooting continues. Moreover, even under the proposed "settlement," the U. S. plans to maintain 39,000 troops in the Seventh Fleet surrounding Vietnam and another 45,000 troops in Thailand, ready to intervene militarily anywhere in Southeast Asia.

The demonstrations called for Nov. 18 by the National Peace Action Coalition will be important in opposing the U. S. government's policy of attempting to impose its will on Vietnam. The actions will demand: U. S. get out of all Southeast Asia immediately! No conditions!

in press... unwarranted concessions... for presur... uncritically... help enforce the terms.



Lessons from the Past for Builders' Charter

by
Len Glover

With the sell-out of the builders' strike still fresh in the minds of militants, it is worthwhile to look back; not only at the lessons of the strike but also at the lessons of history.

The fighting history of the working class is dotted with accounts of rank and file movements very similar to the Charter, the building workers' rank and file movement.

The Charter started in Liverpool and London back in 1969. Since those early days it has grown into a very strong and well organised body. The Charter was solely responsible for the left swing of the builders' Trade Union.

The strikers were defeated by Union officialdom, always looking for a chance to settle quickly and get back to a quiet life, and the tactic of individual settlements, by which workers who settled on a particular site returned to work, thus splitting and weakening the strike.

'Ginger Group'

But probably the greatest single factor was that at the crucial stage, when the sell-out came, there was no unified alternative leadership to show the way for the rank and file.

That was the role that Building Workers Charter **should** have taken. It did not, and a great deal of responsibility for the failure of the strike to win as much as it could have must rest with the Charter.

The Charter was initially conceived as a 'ginger group', to pressure the Union officialdom to the left, to force Smith to hold out against any derisory settlements. The Charter succeeded in this right up to the sell-out.

Pressure tactics can force bureaucratic leaderships to the left. But there is always a lag between the rank and file militancy which is the source of the pressure and the response of the top leaders. And the lag becomes greatest — and most critical — when the rank & file moves forward most rapidly.

Demoralisation

Then the leaders stall, sell out, and dissipate the militancy gained, then reasserts its power on the basis of the demoralisation caused by its treachery.

The only way this can be fought is by an alternative leadership stepping forward. But the Communist Party leaders of the Charter continued to confine themselves to pushing the Trade Union top leaders to the left.

"It is clear from experience that many militants still believe that we can force the leaders to head a real fight. In actual practice mass pressure forces the leaders to manoeuvre and to head strikes in order to retain negotiating authority and to betray the strike."



SELL-OUT? It's a case for the BRISTOL FLYING PICKET



Where does this quotation come from? Not from the lips of a disgraced building worker, but from the 'Communist Review'. It was written in 1933 after the defeat and subsequent demise of another rank and file organisation, the Minority Movement.

The Minority Movement was probably the most important, certainly the largest rank and file movement in British working class history. (For a detailed history of the Minority Movement, see 'Workers Fight' no 11).

Revolutionary

Very briefly, it was formed by Communist Party militants after a series of initiatives by the Red International of Labour Unions.

Over a period of years they forged a rank and file movement embracing many sections of industry. By March 1926, 957,000 workers were gathered under the banner of the Minority Movement.

The politics and tactics of the Minority Movement were based on the need for an alternative leadership to the Trade Union bureaucracy, and on the need for a revolutionary outlook — the Movement was **not** conceived as a ginger group and it did not function as one.

Leadership

Before the General Strike in 1926, there was, however, a shift in the policy of the Minority Movement, following an overall change in Communist Party policy as directed by Moscow. In those days all the Communist Parties followed the Moscow line, far more so than today.

The Minority Movement changed its tactics and its politics, from revolutionary politics to a reliance on 'progressive' forces (i.e. the Trade Union bureaucrats). The working class, in an absolutely critical period, was deprived of a revolutionary leadership. The only leadership it was left with was the bureaucrats; and any industrial militant knows what follows from that — sell out and defeat! The failure of the Minority Movement in 1926 was one of the reasons for the defeat of the General Strike and the acute demoralisation which followed right into the thirties.

So, where are the parallels

between the Minority Movement and the Charter

— both rank and file movements, one multi-industry, the other being confined to one industry.

— both involved in a period of critical and intense struggle.

— both posed themselves as 'ginger groups', pushing Trade Union bureaucrats to the left (the Minority Movement by changing to the wrong line, the Charter by not seeing the need to change its line).

— both movements were unable to prevent sell-outs.

'Progressive'

It can be seen from this that there is much to be learnt from the past. The Charter **must** reorganise along the lines of posing itself as an alternative leadership to

Smith or suffer the same fate as the Minority Movement. As an immediate rallying cry the Charter could mobilise its members round the need to kick out Smith and the rest of the scabs and traitors who purport to lead the building workers.

In this way the Charter could motivate vast numbers of men who are too demoralised to act on anything else. From this a whole new alternative leadership could spring. Unfortunately the Communist Party leaders of Charter do not see things this way. It appears that some of them want to get a place in the armchairs and plush offices of Smith and Co.

The Charter plans to hold an extraordinary National Conference soon. This meeting may hold the key to future Charter policies — militants will watch with interest.

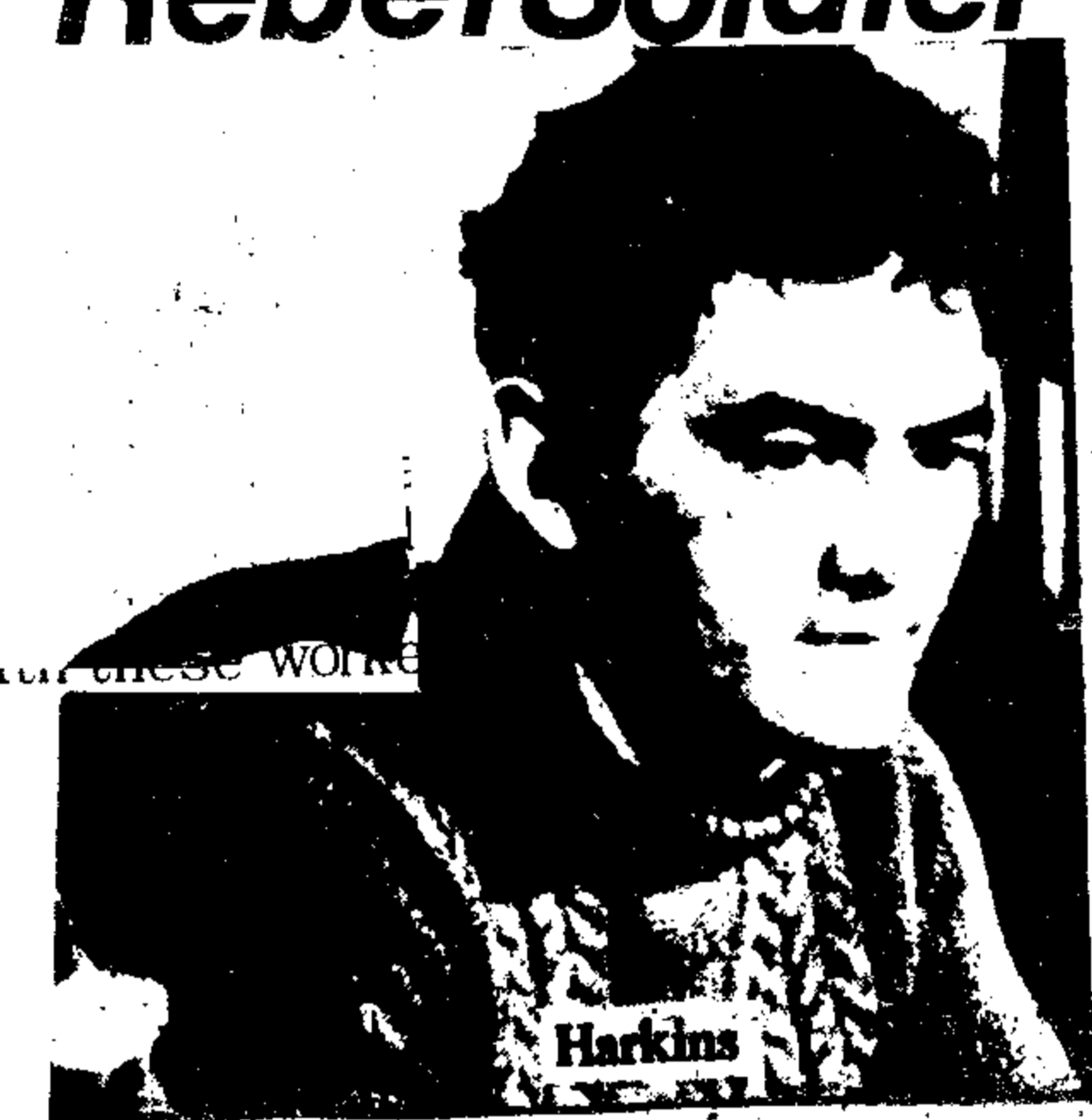
Savage Sentence for Rebel Soldier

Like many other soldiers at present serving in Ireland, Michael Harkins joined the British Army because of unemployment. He did so against the advice of his mother, to whom he was always very close. He never settled down to Army life and became increasingly disgusted at the role the British Army plays in the Six Counties. Bloody Sunday was the last straw for him and his friend Colin Demet, and they turned themselves and their weapons over to the Irish Republican Army. When his mother fell ill some weeks later Michael returned to Liverpool to see her. He was picked up, sent to rejoin his regiment in Belfast, and transferred with them to Germany where he received a sentence of **five years**.

His mother ... is frantic with worry that she may not see her son again before she dies....

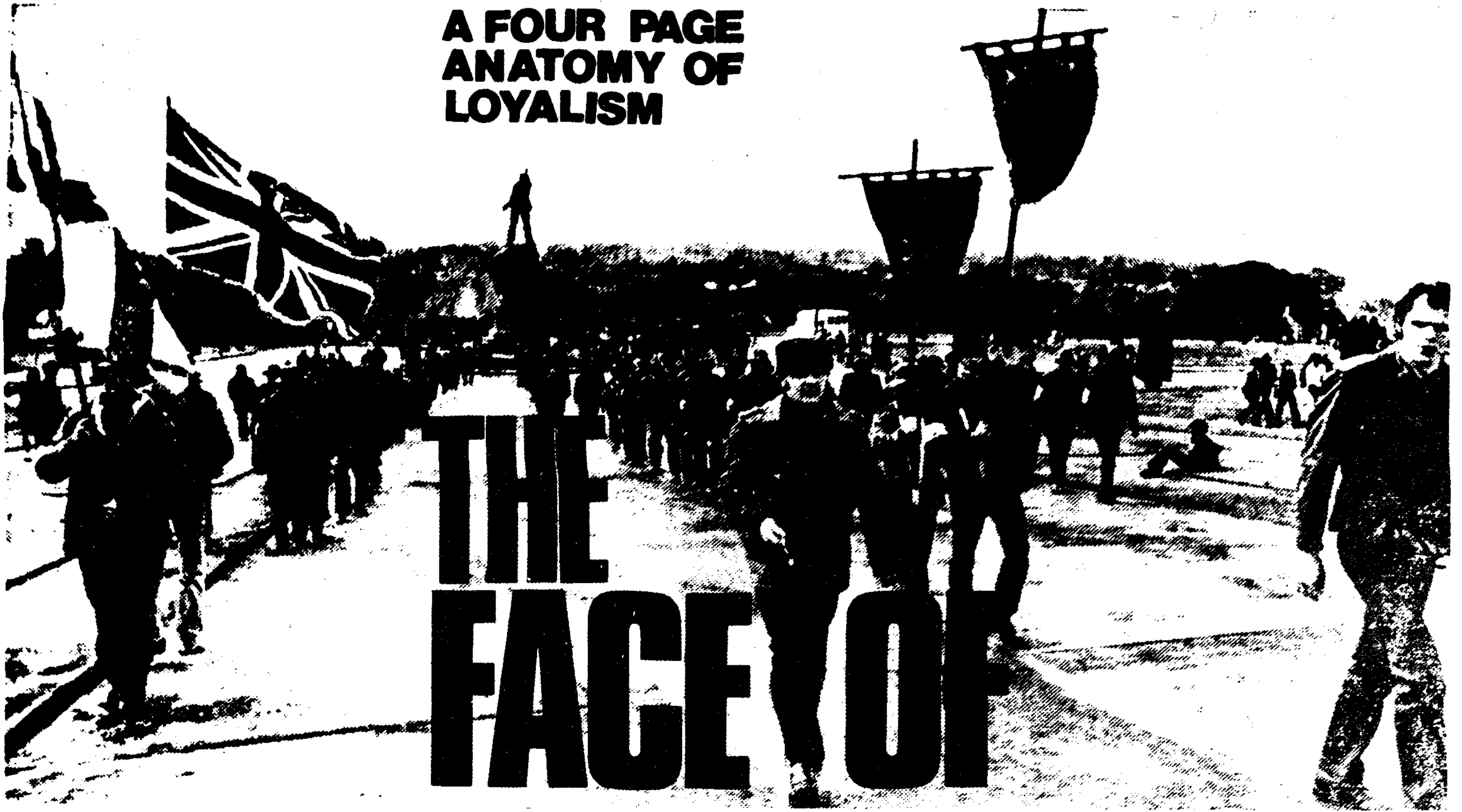
According to the best available advice the fastest way to find out Michael's whereabouts is through one H. Wilson, the MP for that constituency. Mrs Harkins has recently written to him appealing for help.....

A couple of days ago, Michael's mother, Mrs Anne Harkins, received a visit from a Special Branch man who told her that she would hear of Michael's whereabouts



"but it would be some time before she heard". Presumably this is the reaction to the letter which was sent to Harold Wilson. We repeat, it is about six months since Michael was arrested. Mrs Harkins cannot be expected to wait another six. Exactly what is going on that they will not tell Mrs Harkins of Michael's whereabouts? There is something very peculiar going on and we demand to know what it is. (Reprinted from the Oct 24 Issue of *Rosc Catha*, published by *Clann na hEireann* (the political organisation representing the Official Republican Movement in England, Scotland, and Wales)).

A FOUR PAGE ANATOMY OF LOYALISM



THE FACE OF ORANGEISM

There are two main distinct components or trends within Unionist Loyalist politics — trends which have, since 1968, resulted in the breakup of the Orange monolith. They are: 1) maintenance of the Union with Britain and 2) maintenance of the Protestant Ascendancy at home.

It was the first, the Union, that the Orange capitalists and their Tory allies fought for 50 years ago. Initially Northern Unionism did not welcome Stormont, which the 1920 Government of Ireland Act granted them. They would have been content to be ruled by Westminster.

The second aspect, the Protestant Ascendancy in its Northern Ireland form, was a direct consequence of the setting up of the northern, Orange state.

The Unionist majority is in fact an artificial one, deliberately created to make a feasible state — one which consistently ignored the wishes of the nationalist minority within its boundary, and of course also of the vast majority of the Irish people.

Northern politics, because of this, did not develop in a normal bourgeois fashion. No Social Democratic movement was ever able to seriously contest Orange Toryism for the allegiance of the working class. The pathetic Northern Ireland Labour Party has played a marginal role in Northern politics despite its favouring union with Britain.

The scapegoat for all social problems was the "terrorists within our midst" (William Craig's favourite expression) — the Catholic minority. The loyalty of Protestant workers to the status quo was rewarded through the Orange Order, by far the most important institution in Northern Ireland society. An alliance of all Protestant classes, under strict landowner/capitalist domination, was maintained through priority being given to Loyalist workers in the house, job and queue — which have always been much longer in Northern Ireland than in the rest of the "U.K."

Economic and political peace resulted from this policy. The skills the Tories have developed in the management of the British working class were never needed in Northern Ireland. The odd bit of

sectarian rabble rousing was sufficient to break up any possible working class movement.

The Unionist Party, through discrimination, gerrymandering, sectarianism, the Special Powers Act and the Loyalist militia (the B Specials) was able to maintain the state against any threat.

The Union and Protestant Ascendancy were inseparable for 50 years — until the British government began pressurising the Unionists to curb the rampant discrimination against Catholics. Now Direct Rule, removing the power and patronage of the Unionist Party, has separated them entirely in the minds of many. The result has been chaos amongst 'Loyalist' politicians and talk of a unilateral 'Declaration of Independence'.

The Civil Rights movement, which started in 1968, partly in response to the liberal mouthings of O'Neill, the Unionist Prime Minister who raised the hopes of the Catholic minority without fulfilling them, began the process which has thus led to the disintegration of the Orange monolith. And this disintegration is also the precondition for any political progress in Ireland and an absolute necessity if Irish socialists are ever to have any chance of winning Protestant workers away from the Orange bosses and to the side of the socialist and anti-imperialist movement.

Direct rule in Northern Ireland has already shattered the unity of Northern Ireland 'Unionism'. The Unionist Party was very different from its British Tory sister party. Although like the Tory Party it served the bosses, it was also the party of the mass of the Protestant workers in Northern Ireland. From landed aristocrats to underpaid 'unskilled' Protestant workers, reactionary class unity was the norm in the Orange statelet.

Now that unity, and the organisation which expressed and fostered it, is shattered beyond repair. AUSTEN MORGAN describes the Protestant political factions and military organisations that have emerged as a result of the disintegration of Ulster Unionism.

PAISLEY



The first major assault on the Unionist Party came from Ian Paisley — a religious bigot, a figure who might have stepped straight out of the early 19th century. Paisley reacted violently to the overtures of Captain O'Neill to the leaders of the Catholic minority and the Southern government. This he saw as a betrayal of traditional Unionism. Christian ecumenism was as much a threat as Republicanism, as the Ballymoney bible-thumper saw it.

Paisley was able to mobilise the most backward and bigoted Unionist supporters on the streets, and he and his followers became the major opponents of the Civil Rights movement.

Wherever there was a Civil Rights demonstration the Paisley-

ites with their Union Jacks and Lambeg drums could be found "harrying and harrasing" the 'rebels'. Paisley on the streets set the pace for the right wing of the Unionist Party. As he continued to demand "no surrender", the Unionist party, at all levels up to the cabinet, followed him in order to maintain popular support.

Since his election to Westminster two years close to the corridors of power in London have mellowed the Reverend Doctor. It has also, however, taught him something about middle class politics.

Paisley, along with Enoch Powell, is now peddling "total integration with the United Kingdom" around the Loyalist grassroots. Through his friends on the right wing in the Tory Party, he reckons he is more in tune with political reality.

Of Craig and his "Independent British Ulster" he has said "The voice of Mr. Craig and the advice of Mr. Craig are the voice and advice of folly. Anarchy cannot be answered by more anarchy. Lawlessness cannot be answered by more lawlessness."

Paisley, by strutting about on the Shankill and outdoing Craig in waging verbal war on the "terrorists", is attempting to recapture the Loyalist following he has lost.

Despite his "integration" ideas, Paisley is still the most popular Protestant politician, and has ►►

hopes that, along with his party the "Democratic Unionists" (DUP), he will be pushed with the aid of the Tories onto the centre of the political stage as the Saviour of Ulster.

THE UNIONIST RUMP



The rump of the Unionist Party today under Faulkner is a poor reflection of its former self. Faulkner will go down in the history books as the last Prime Minister of the Six County state, who was driven out by the Civil Resistance movement in Republican areas and given the final shove by his fellow Tories in London.

The importance of the Unionist Party was that it could keep worker and employer, oppressed and oppressor, within its ranks under the dominance of the latter. Now the Protestant workers are being led down several fruitless paths away from the Unionist Party, leaving various petty bourgeois and middle class elements still in the party.

Some of the clever rats, such as Bob Cooper, Phelim O'Neill, Dick Ferguson and Anne Dickson, deserted the Unionists early on and founded the Alliance Party. They represent that strain in the Northern ruling class which is more in tune with the contemporary needs of British imperialism. They would accept a united Ireland tomorrow if they could be elected on that basis.

Other rats have been more cautious. Simpson, Bradford & McIvor have vacillated, holding onto the Unionist Party in the hope that it could restore itself to its former glory — and them to power. Now with Craig in the ascendancy, they are searching around for a regrouping of "moderates" within northern politics.

The Unionist rump is attempting to hold onto both strands of Unionism, the union with Britain and the Protestant Ascendancy, or as much of it as they can squeeze out of the Tories. Its sheer inability to turn itself into an Alliance Party type grouping shows it is a declining political force. What is left of it will have to throw its lot in with Alliance or with Craig and Vanguard.

Neither course holds out much hope for those still left in the party.

CRAIG AND VANGUARD

William Craig, a former RAF bomber crewman and small town lawyer, rose rapidly to prominence after his election as Unionist MP for Larne (a sacred place in Unionist folklore) in 1960. From Chief Whip he became Minister of Home Affairs, then Minister of Development (!) and back to Home Affairs, where Craig took the action that sounded the death knell of Ulster Unionism. On

October 5th 1968 he banned a small Civil Rights march due to take place in Derry, a predominantly Catholic town, on the grounds that it would offend the Loyalist minority in the city.

The march took place and the RUC, under Craig's control, viciously beat the marchers into the ground.

Pressure from the Wilson government had forced O'Neill on the road to reform. But while O'Neill might get away with pretending to be a liberal, Craig never could. This meant that Craig — who wanted to treat the Civil Rights movement in the traditional manner — label it an IRA plot and then throw the Special Powers Act, B Specials and the RUC at it — was soon sacrificed to O'Neill's 'liberal' image.

While Paisley did his bit on the streets, Craig started on the rounds of the Unionist Associations letting the grass roots hear what they wanted to hear.

Craig led the opposition within the party to both O'Neill and Chichester-Clark, articulating the gut reaction of traditional unionism. But when he stood against Faulkner for the Premiership he received only four votes.

While still a member of the party, he was unable to oust the leadership which responded reluctantly to the dictates of the British government. Then earlier this year, Craig made his bid for power when he founded Vanguard.

Vanguard was to be, not a new party, but a pressure group within the Unionist party. It soon eclipsed the remains presided over by Faulkner.

Vanguard was launched to a fanfare of militaristic trappings, with motorcycle escorts for the 'Leader' and inspections of troops at the rallies. Craig began to threaten civil war and incite violence against the Catholics.

On 19th March he told the assembled faithful, "We have an organisation that covers every part of this land. It must be used to identify the real enemy and build up dossiers. . . One day it may be our job, if the politicians fail, to liquidate the enemy. . ."

The "Independent British (!) Ulster" which Craig advocates is a call for the restoration of the Protestant Ascendancy at the expense of the Union. Little does he realise that the former was only possible because of the latter. Craig in his call for 'Protestant Sinn Feinism' (as Paisley calls it)

will obviously receive the support of those who have most to lose — the Protestant workers — now that the Tory government is carefully moving against the Protestant Ascendancy in an attempt to reform Northern Ireland society.

But their problem is that a 'UDI' Ulster would slump economically and Protestant living standards would plummet — even though keeping always one notch ahead of the Catholic workers.

Along with these there is also a fairly sizable lumpen element in the Vanguard movement.

But like orthodox Unionism, Vanguard is still under careful middle class leadership, even if as yet money has not been forthcoming to it from big industrialists, who for the moment are backing the Tory Government.

Craig likes to invoke the days of 1912, while at the same time appealing to "democracy". But the Loyalist "majority" he continually refers to was only the creation of the Boundary Commission of 1925 which drew a gerrymandering border across Ireland.

The 1912 Unionists made no pretence to being a majority — their main argument was on the rights of a minority to veto the wishes of the Home Rule majority of Ireland. The Solomn League and Covenant signed by 471,000 Loyalists in 1912 made quite clear that they had no notions of "democracy": "Being convinced in our conscience that Home Rule would be disastrous to the material well being of Ulster. . . (we will use) all means which may be found necessary to defeat the present conspiracy to set up a Home Rule Parliament in Ireland."

Today as in 1912 the Unionists are a minority in Ireland. Now, as then, they still seek to frustrate the wishes of the majority for a united and independent Ireland.

L.A.W.

Loyalist Association of Workers

L.A.W. is an association of Loyalist trade unionists angry and frustrated at what they consider to be the 'sell-out' policies of the official trade union movement. (It wants Stormont restored.)

L.A.W. is led by Billy Hull, a shop steward in the Belfast shipyard and a former member of the N.I. Labour Party. What Hull lacks in political intelligence he makes up for in political ambition; and the

rest of L.A.W.'s leadership is made up of would be Loyalist politicians vying with Hull for a place at the top alongside Craig.

Hull has not so much organised L.A.W. as put himself at the head of a more or less spontaneous movement. For years Protestant workers in certain key industries in Belfast would sally forth to put down any trouble coming from the Republican areas. They could always be relied upon to go back to work after they had done the employers' dirty work.

Hull has no interest in leading his followers in struggle against their employers over issues such as pay and conditions. Such actions would alienate him from other Loyalist leaders such as Craig who would accuse him of letting down the Loyalist side.

L.A.W.'s greatest event was the two day Loyalist General Strike which Vanguard called on the introduction of Direct Rule last March. Since then Hull has not been able to pull off anything so spectacular.

The day after the Paras murdered two innocent people in the Shankill Hull called out the North's power workers in protest against the Regiment, which was also guarding the power stations. (Though during the power workers' work to rule the Loyalist power workers refused to take part.) Whitelaw held firm and would not concede to L.A.W.'s demand for the Paras' withdrawal from the power stations.

Hull gradually backed down and the men went back to work after four days without having gained anything.

Craig has threatened that the province's industry will be brought to a standstill if the British government does not give the Loyalists back **their** Stormont, though L.A.W. has not made these threats.

The Protestant workers have no history of sustained opposition to their bosses. They have won the little they have by complying with rather than opposing their masters. If Craig were to call such a strike, the employers would probably have no real difficulty in persuading substantial numbers of workers to return.

L.A.W. is plagued not only with personal rivalry and disputes — it is also politically confused and unstable. At one time its organisers intended forming their own political party; then they wanted Craig and Paisley to unite with Faulkner; next we heard, they were solidly behind Craig.

The politician they most respect





was a former member of the British army in Cyprus. This was two years before Civil Rights, and four years before the present IRA offensive.

Recently a sergeant in the UVF, Sinclair Johnston, was killed in Larne in a gun battle with the British army. 3,000 men in paramilitary uniform, many of them wearing UVF badges, marched behind the coffin. The funeral was allowed to proceed and the army did not intervene. The UVF has also organised two jail breaks from Crumlin Road in recent weeks.

Many unexplained murders and several bombings have been attributed to the UVF. Along with the British Army's SAS (undercover arm), the UVF has been waging a "counter-terrorist" campaign against the IRA and the entire minority population. One of their more heinous tactics has been the planting of car bombs outside crowded Catholic pubs without giving any warning.

Despite the fact that the UVF has been in existence for several years and has engaged in "subversive" activities both north and south of the border, the British army has made no attempt to move against them. Faulkner claimed that internment was introduced to remove all subversives from circulation. Yet out of over 1,000 men interned, not one was a suspected member of the UVF.

Present British government policy is still directed against the Republican population in the north. There has been no consistent attempt to move against the Loyalists. On the contrary, the Tories have been encouraging the Loyalists in their war against the IRA.

Professor K. Lindsay, in a Vanguard publication "Dominion of Ulster" admitted that the British army had trained the UDA.

While the Loyalist population may not be as organised and as strong as it appears at first sight, it should not by any means be written off. The policies of Imperialism and the legacy of Britain's domination of Ireland have left the anti-Imperialist and socialist movement with the problem of the Orange monster still yet to be solved. ■

is Enoch Powell. Hull at one time talked about taking a delegation to see racist Powell to ask for his advice.

Nor is there anything particularly surprising in Loyalist workers asking advice from Powell, the arch enemy of the British working class. Powell's views on issues other than Ireland are well known to the members of L.A.W. Their respect for Powell indicates the totally reactionary nature of their entire outlook on politics and society in general.

A realisation by the Orange workers of the treachery of the British government, which has cynically used them for its own purposes in the past, and an insight into the bankruptcy of Orangeism, is a precondition for winning them to a socialist perspective. They have yet to realise that their future destiny lies with their fellow Irish Catholic workers and not with the Craigs, Faulkners and Paisleys of this world.

Only when they ditch their Orange masters will they be able then to engage in struggle against their oppressors in the fight for a workers' republic in Ireland.

U.D.A.

Ulster Defence Association

The UDA began in Armagh in 1970 when a group of former B Specials formed themselves into a vigilante organisation. The present organis-

Faulkner with Unionist Party colleagues

Craig with Powell at Vanguard rally

Passers by frisked by UDA men in Sandy Row

Billy Hull carries the Union Jack; at right, Pastor Jack Glass, leader of the Reformation Movement of Scotland

ation really emerged in its present form under Vanguard tutorage. The lines of men that Craig inspected at Vanguard rallies were then organised by Vanguard General Secretary, Louis Gardner (a member of the ultra right Monday Club from London) into the organisation we now know as the UDA.

Vanguard likes to look upon the UDA as their military wing — the 'leader's' bully boys who owe unswerving allegiance to Craig. The UDA's commanders, Anderson and Herron, have their own ideas, and it is they, not Craig, who control the men in paramilitary uniforms and dark glasses.

The Chairman of the UDA is known to regard Paisley as the best politician the Loyalists ever had — yet Paisley has strongly condemned the whole UDI concept which is the main plank in the United Loyalist Front platform of which the UDA is a constituent organisation. Of Whitelaw, he has said — "I don't agree with the policy he's trying to put across but as a man he's sincere in what he's trying to do."

Yet, at the same time, Anderson has a political ideology which contains elements of what some attempt to argue is an embryonic class consciousness. "I feel" he once said, "that people are beginning to catch on about the Unionist government. The ordinary man is starting to think for himself about fifty years of misrule."

This group consciousness bears no relation to a socialist working class consciousness. The ordinary Loyalists are talking of being betrayed, not because they realise Unionism is a dead end for them, but because recent Unionist governments have not repressed the Catholics to the extent that Loyalist workers have demanded.

The confused nature of their ideology fortunately leads to political confusion making the Loyalist population a much weaker force politically than it might well be. The UDA also is opposed to mass Loyalist industrial action as a political weapon. Their main weapon is bluff — combined with threats and sporadic acts of violence against the minority population.

UVF

Ulster Volunteer Force

Though the UDA may not have history on their side, they should not be underestimated in the immediate future. They are armed. Army searches have uncovered weapons and explosives in Protestant areas. Belfast's engineering factories have become part time munitions factories, as in 1913.

The UDA is close to and probably has a common membership with the UVF (Ulster Volunteer Force) an illegal Protestant terrorist organisation modelled on the Ulster Volunteers of 1913.

The UVF first hit the headlines in 1966 when Gusty Spence and others were convicted of the murder of two Catholic harmen. Spence



A MARCHING PAST

BEGINNINGS OF THE ORANGE ORDER

IN 1792 SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE raised in Ulster to help the French Revolution to fight off invasion by the forces of the European counter-revolution, and in November the Belfast Volunteers welcomed the deposition of King Louis XVI and the establishment of a Republic.

In December of the same year delegates from the Catholic Convention, which had met in Dublin to demand a share in the government of the country, passed through Belfast on their way to present a petition to the King, and the good Protestant burghers came out to line the streets and wish them success.

By 1796 the United Irishmen, the Irish Jacobins, had a military organisation operating in Ulster with especially strong representation in Antrim and Down, where "thousands of peasants were already armed with the muskets that had belonged to the Volunteers or with the pikes that were being steadily turned out of scores of smithies throughout the countryside" (C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland*).

Even more interesting are the cultural tastes of the Belfast radical movement described by the same writer: "The Belfast radicals drew much of their inspiration from the French Revolution, but they had a quite un-revolutionary sense of tradition: they were interested in Irish antiquities and folklore, and they were prominent among the supporters of a society established to 'revive and perpetuate the ancient music and poetry of Ireland'. The idea of an 'Irish nation', indifferent to religious rivalries, rooted in history, but enlightened by the Revolution, takes its rise in the Belfast of the late eighteenth century."

How was it then that Republicanism was erased among the Belfast Protestants?

Part of the answer lies in the rise of the Orange Order, which began life in 1795 as an Armagh peasant movement.

GRATTAN

Despite the moderate degree of prosperity brought by the establishment of "Grattan's Parliament" in 1782 and the passing of Foster's Corn Law, conditions in the rural areas remained bleak for the poor. Rents rose and so did the population. Rural terrorism (against the landlords) appeared in Munster around the mid 1780s. In the north there was also unrest.

But in areas of mixed Protestant-Catholic population, such as Armagh, conflict flared up between the two sections of the peasantry.

Protestant tenants, claiming they were being outbid for holdings by their Catholic neighbours who were ready to pay a higher rent, formed themselves into an armed secret society called the "Peep o'day Boys", whose aim was to raid Catholic homes and drive the inhabitants out of the neighbourhood.

The Catholics retaliated by setting up their own society known as the "Defenders". Out of an encounter between these two factions known as "The Battle of the

Diamond", there arose an "Orange Society" of Protestant peasants, dedicated to the maintenance of the Protestant Ascendancy.

The Order was of use to the authorities in the suppression of the 1798 Rising, and some Orange bands were armed by the ruling class. Clearly the Irish landlords were not unaware of the potentialities of this new movement.

There was some consternation in the Orange lodges over the passing of the Act of Union in 1801 because it was feared that the British government would grant full civil rights to Catholics as Pitt had proposed, and that it would not help northern commerce.

But with another Tory administration in power after 1815 the danger appeared to have passed, although Howard Senior reports that "The plebeian lodges in Ulster continued forming Black lodges or inner circles in defiance of grand lodge policy." (*Orangeism in Britain and Ireland, 1795-1836*). This would appear to be connected with continued sectarian strife in areas such as Armagh.

O'CONNELL

Despite this, however, the movement went into decline. O'Connell's campaign for "Catholic Emancipation" revived it, but the Irish authorities responsible to Lord Liverpool banned the movement in 1825 (apparently as a sop to O'Connell) and although it surfaced again in 1828 it was unable to prevent the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Act in 1829.

Naturally enough the Orange Order supported the Tories in the struggle against the 1832 Reform Bill, and likewise Peel's 1834 minority government. It then got itself involved in a conspiracy to cut Queen Victoria out of succession to the throne and replace her with the Duke of Cumberland, but this attempted coup fizzled out and in 1836 the movement was banned and stayed that way until 1846.

The Order only began to make headway again in the late 1860s in response to the growth of Fenianism. Disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869 was felt, of course, as a grievance, and so was discontinuance of the royal bounty payment granted by King Billy to Presbyterian ministers.

However, it was the issue of Home Rule and the rise of Parnell which contributed most dramatically to the political power which the Order now enjoys in the Six Counties. To understand how Home Rule transformed things we must go back a bit and look at the development of capitalism in Ulster.

Capitalism in the North did not become fully developed until after 1850, but was already making progress before that date. The linen industry became concentrated in the North East by the middle of the century as a result of the introduction of machine spinning around Belfast. Cotton declined, but ironworking survived in Belfast while decaying elsewhere, and in Derry shirt manufacture began around 1830, pioneered by master linen weaver William Scott.

Most important of all the Belfast harbour authorities straightened out the river Lagan, deepening the channel and enhancing the town's commerce. In 1853 shipbuilding was started on the Queen's Island.

As a result of all this enterprise Belfast and its environs grew rapidly in population: from 18,000 in 1791 to 37,000 in 1821 to 75,000 in 1841. Newtonards and Bangor also grew rapidly. According to the economic historian L.M. Cullen, "All three, with their spinning mills and their urban cotton weavers, were the first industrial towns in Ireland. Belfast in 1838 already had 50 of the 150 steam engines in Ireland."



This industrial growth was matched by a liberal tendency in politics, represented for example by the newspaper "The Northern Whig", which supported parliamentary reform and repeal of the Corn Laws, and opposed the rack-renting landlords. The paper also supported the campaign for Catholic Emancipation, but vigorously opposed O'Connell when he went on to demand the repeal of the Act of Union.

It is not hard to see why: Ulster manufactures were aimed at the British Empire market rather than the Irish home market, and by the 1840s were becoming established. Also the land question was still far from being settled, and there were dangers in that quarter against which Union was a form of insurance.

As time went on, supporters of the British Liberal Party began to win seats in Ulster — four in 1868 and nine in 1874.

Unfortunately the Catholic middle classes and masses, whose economic interests were somewhat different, inevitably chose to butt in at this point. "Green" capitalism, less securely established, required protective duties against competing British goods, which would hardly help Belfast. As Erich

Strauss has pointed out, "Its (Belfast's) credit was governed by the City of London, its raw materials came from the same sources and its output was sold in the same markets as that of other British manufacturing centres."

Something had to be done to stop Parnell, who after the 1875 election was in a position to make or unmake governments on the question of Home Rule. Lord Randolph Churchill, whose party had come out against Home Rule, hit on the answer — "the Orange card".

There ensued the collapse of Ulster Liberalism and the formation of a solid Unionist front which lasted up to 1914 and beyond.

Alas and alack! This did not

Carson, Unionist leader, in 1912

Orange Lodge members escort Lord Randolph Churchill through Belfast in 1886



stop the unruly "Taigs" from getting out of hand yet again and forcing a somewhat weakened British Empire to consider granting Ireland her independence.

But something was salvaged from the wreck: a six-county statelet in which Unionists outnumbered nationalists by a ratio of 6 to 4. However, it was necessary to deny the minority a number of accepted democratic rights in order to maintain the British connection, which two fifths of the population find unpalatable.

This being so, then it followed that the Unionist masses had to be controlled too, to make sure there were no "rotten Prods", opponents of "Ulster" who do not come from a Catholic background.

The Orange Order is an effective means of doing this, and with the massive patronage of 'its own' 6-county statelet at its disposal, it functioned as an employment agency, social welfare agency and club, in addition to its more obvious role.

The Order has room for all classes and at the time of writing appears to be flourishing, even while Unionism, its long-time political expression, is in disarray.

CHRIS GREY

REVIEW OF THE LEFT PRESS

KRONSTADT

THE RED MOLE ON "TROTSKY, WARTS AND ALL"

The current RED MOLE carries an attractive four-page pull-out made up of photographs of Leon Trotsky, reproduced from the recent book; TROTSKY: A DOCUMENTARY by Francis Wyndham and David King. There is a short review of the book, mainly devoted to belabouring the unstable 'trendy revolutionaries' of "five years ago".

The review also says, in a tone of great reasonableness (and, presumably, to show that its author is a free spirit with a fine iconoclastic turn of mind regarding the person of Leon Trotsky): "In these pages, Trotsky lives, warts and all - Kronstadt gets its mention."

As if every anarchist, social democrat and centrist didn't "mention" Kronstadt. As if every faint-hearted on his way out of revolutionary politics doesn't "mention" Kronstadt. As if every enemy of Trotskyism (except the Stalinists, for their own good reason!) doesn't "mention" and indeed harp on and on about Kronstadt - where, it is said, the first great betrayal of the Russian Revolution occurred when in March 1921 the Bolsheviks suppressed the mutiny of the naval base at Kronstadt.

As if there is not a whole 'culture' - ranging from explicitly political writings through the execrable 'novel' of a dozen years ago, "The Great Prince Died", up to the current Joseph Losey film "The Assassination of Trotsky" - which insistently "mention" Kronstadt!

All of them, in their different ways, falsify the record and slander the Bolshevik revolutionaries who suppressed the Kronstadt mutiny. Most even falsify Trotsky's thinking and pronouncements on the Kronstadt affair, as well as ascribing to Trotsky a lurid personal role in the repression which, in fact, he never played, bearing only a political responsibility for it.

Kronstadt, therefore, has had more than its fair share of "mentions", all by people and tendencies who do not, in the final analysis, stand for the right of the Russian revolution to defend itself then. They can therefore criticise the Bolsheviks and wash their hands of the Kronstadt affair from a safe distance.

What is at issue today is the attitude of Trotskyists to the history of our own tendency and loyalty to our own comrades, now dead, in the face of these slanderous attacks.

CIVIL WAR

Let us look at what happened in March 1921.

The Civil War in Russia came to an uneasy (and most people thought temporary) end early in 1921. The country had been ravaged by civil war and by the invasion forces of 14 countries for three long years; and those three years followed on the destruction of World War I which had driven the Russian masses to revolt in the first place.

Industry had been decimated, and by 1921 was almost exclusively geared to meeting the needs of the army. The working class itself had been vastly changed.

The militants, the working class fighters who had made the revolution, had been drawn into the work of constructing the proletarian state and the Red Army created for its defence. Newer, rawer elements had been drawn into the factories as the active (though depleted by the industrial decline) proletariat.

Relations between the working class and the peasantry had also changed.

The key to the success of the revolution had been the fact that the workers had won the political leadership of the peasants in an alliance against the

landlords and capitalists. Throughout the Civil War the peasants supported the defence of the revolution against the Whites and the interventionists, because it was in their perceived interest to prevent a capitalist and landlord counter revolution.

But as this period, known as "War Communism", wore on, their support became reluctant and full of strains. It was during this period that the Bolsheviks had had to resort to direct appropriation to ensure food supplies to the towns, against a background of the virtual breakdown of reciprocal economic relations between town (normally supplying manufactured goods) and country.

The peasants had approved the Bolshevik-led revolution which chased away the landlords. They were now increasingly bitter at the grain expropriations and at those who organised them. They muttered against the expropriating "Communists" who seemed to have "replaced" the liberating "Bolsheviks".

The end of the Civil War removed the last restraint which had induced the peasants' reluctant tolerance of the grain levy, and relations became extremely tense and threatening. In the cities, meanwhile, the working class was famished and restless amidst the ruins of the economy. A strike wave swept Petrograd in February of 1921.

The revolutionary uprising in Europe had subsided and the defeat of the March 1921 communist uprising in Germany left Russia isolated, without immediate hope of rescue by the European revolution. The Revolution was in an impasse.

KRONSTADT GARRISON

The Kronstadt mutiny grew out of this situation. Kronstadt, island base of the Baltic fleet, commanded the approach to Petrograd (now Leningrad). In 1917 the garrison had been one of the leading centres of the October revolution, providing shock troops for the assault on reaction. In the course of the Civil War successive layers of revolutionary workers had been creamed off for deployment to the most important crisis points of the military struggle and to provide the hard cadre force for new regiments.

By 1921 those in the Kronstadt garrison, though naturally they basked in the unearned glory still accruing to the name of Kronstadt, were not the revolutionary vanguard of 1917. They were fundamentally reservists, for whom no other use had been found. Trotsky described them as "demoralised elements" who led a somewhat parasitic existence engaging in all sorts of trafficking in goods and better off than the average worker in starving Petrograd.

All the social tensions described above were reflected within Kronstadt, where all social layers were represented - the mixed feelings of the peasantry, the distaste for the revolution of the city petit bourgeoisie, and the pressures on the working class.

"FREE" SOVIETS

The garrison drew up and put forward demands on the government which, in sum and in that situation, were regarded by the Bolsheviks as demands for preferential treatment. In addition they reflected the grievances of the peasants and demanded "free" soviets - which the remnants of the bourgeois and the petit bourgeois parties immediately translated (correctly, in the logic of the situation) into a demand for "Soviets without Communists".

(There is some dispute as to whether the Kronstadters actually raised this slogan, and this is much used by anarchists and buffoons like IS's Peter

Sedgwick to distract attention from the fundamental question - the right of the revolution to defend itself.)

Lacing their demands with anarchist phrases and aspirations they entered a struggle with the Bolshevik government. Trotsky, analysing the social stratifications of Kronstadt (in "Hue and Cry

essence a mortal danger to the dictatorship of the proletariat. Simply because it had been guilty of a political error, should the proletarian revolution really have committed suicide to punish itself?" (Hue & Cry over Kronstadt).

Below: Lenin, Trotsky with revolutionary workers . . .



over Kronstadt" 1938), concluded: "Many of the Kronstadt 'anarchists' represented the city petit bourgeoisie and stood on a lower revolutionary level than the SRs (the peasant party). ... Unless we are to deceive ourselves with the pretentious slogans, false labels etc. we shall see that the Kronstadt uprising was nothing but an armed reaction of the petit bourgeoisie against the hardships of the socialist revolution and the severity of the proletarian dictatorship."

When the mutineers seized the fortress and the guns they faced the Bolshevik government with the choice of either letting the centralised workers' state break up, or of using force to defend the workers' state. The Bolsheviks decided first to negotiate, then to put an ultimatum to Kronstadt, and finally to attack and recapture it. They believed that if they waited until the ice thawed Kronstadt would be accessible only to the ships of the interventionist powers, whose active warfare against the workers' state had so recently ceased.

The Bolshevik forces finally attacked and recaptured the fortress after a bloody battle. And no doubt the political police of the revolution, the Cheka, afterwards dealt very severely with the mutineers.

UNNECESSARY

The Bolsheviks looked on Kronstadt as a tragic and an unnecessary conflict. Trotsky later expressed the opinion that if the New Economic Policy (the restoration of a controlled internal market as a means out of the economic impasse) had been introduced a year earlier - he himself had advocated a variant of it - Kronstadt could have been avoided. "In 1921 Lenin more than once openly acknowledged that the party's obstinate defence of military communism had become a great mistake. But does this change matters? Whatever the immediate or remote causes of the Kronstadt rebellion, it was in its very

That is the basic question: did the revolution have the right to defend itself - even against the blind action of those who may not have been its conscious enemies? Yes or no.

Whatever the intentions of the Kronstadt garrison, what their armed revolt against the Soviet government meant was the first stage in the break up of the workers' state, which the imperialist powers, and the more conscious internal enemies of the revolution, would have been quick to exploit. "The insurgents did not have a conscious program and they could not have had one because of the very nature of the petit bourgeoisie. They themselves did not clearly understand that what their fathers and brothers needed first of all was free trade. They were discontented and confused but they saw no way out. The more conscious, i.e. the rightist, elements, acting behind the scenes, wanted the restoration of the bourgeois regime. But they did not say so out loud. The "left" wing wanted the liquidation of discipline, "free Soviets", and better rations. . . .

... the dilettante critics try (17 years later) to suggest that everything would have ended in general satisfaction if only the revolution had left the insurgent sailors alone. Unfortunately, the world counter-revolution would in no case have left them alone.

The logic of the struggle would have given predominance in the fortress to the extremists, that is, to the most counter-revolutionary elements. The need for supplies would have made the fortress directly dependent upon the foreign bourgeoisie and their agents, the White emigres. All the necessary preparations toward this end were already being made. Under similar circumstances only people like the Spanish anarchists or P.O.U.M.ists would have waited passively, hoping for a happy outcome. The Bolsheviks, fortunately, belonged to a different school. They considered it their duty to exting-

▶ ▶ CONT. PAGE 11 ▶ ▶



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' FIGHT** 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.

Solidarity for Fine Tubes

"Our dispute has been going on for two years and four months" Hermann Welch, chairman of the Fine Tubes strike committee, told nearly 400 delegates to a conference in Birmingham on October 28. The conference, organised by the strike committee to arrange really effective blacking of Fine Tubes products, was attended by trade unionists representing over 30 unions and all parts of Britain.

Speakers at the conference included Ernie Roberts, assistant general secretary of the AUEW, who attacked his union's decision to cut off strike pay to its members at Fine Tubes after 52 weeks (due to a technicality in the rule book), and Eddie MacGarry, chairman of the British Leyland Motor Corporation shop stewards combine. Bill Anton, AUEW convenor at Hawker Siddeley, Stockport, demanded factory occupations in support of Fine Tubes.

Delegates from the Chrysler Stoke plant in Coventry committed themselves to a campaign of selective blacking of J. Sankey (who are using Fine Tubes products). Rolls Royce workers at Anstey are already blacking all work from the company's Derby works, which is also scabbing. A less optimistic report was given by a steward from Low Moor Steels in Bradford. Until a picket brought support from workers at the plant two months ago, this firm was one of Fine Tubes' main suppliers. But, although the AUEW is continuing the black, BISAKTA and Metal Dressers' Union members at the plant have been forced, by their full time officials, to withdraw their support.

The conference then passed the following resolution unanimously:

We, rank and file trade unionists attending the Fine Tubes Conference, commit ourselves to implement and extend the blacking of all firms concerned with Fine Tubes Ltd, and to raise the question of general and financial support on all the trade union bodies to which we belong.

We call on the Executives of all Unions, in particular those of the T&GWU and AUEW, to ensure that their officers and members effectively implement the blacking in deed as well as in word. We also call on them to approach the TUC to ensure that Fine Tubes and all companies dealing with them be declared black.

We commit ourselves to take this resolution back to our respective trade union organisations and pledge our full and continued support until the strike is won.

TRADE UNIONISM

The Fine Tubes workers are not just fighting for their own jobs, they are fighting for the very existence of effective trade unionism in the south west.

For the last three years the bosses have been waging a consistent campaign to break the

strength of the trade unions in this traditionally poorly organised and low paid area. After 22 weeks they were given a bloody nose at Centrax in Newton Abbot; at Ottermill Switchgear they succeeded. The major battle now is Fine Tubes.

All workers should:

* Black all firms dealing with Fine Tubes

* Raise whatever contributions they can and send them to Fine Tubes Strike committee c/o 65 Bretonside, Exeter Street, Plymouth. Telephone 65459.

BLACKING LIST

This supersedes all previous lists — 28.10.72. The following firms are dealing with Fine Tubes and declared BLACK. If these firms forward official confirmation in writing to the Fine Tubes Strike committee that they have ceased all dealings with Fine Tubes Ltd, then — and only then — will their names be removed from the blacking list.

Fine Tubes Group — Pacific Tube Co, Los Angeles, California, USA; Fine Tubes Ltd, Estover, Plymouth; Tube Sales Ltd, Holland; Tube Sales Ltd, Southampton (has a depot on Southampton docks); Superior Tube Ltd, Norristown, Pennsylvania, USA.

Fine Tubes vehicles are — Ford artic D800, reg. DDH 699H, artic reg. NJY 117J, oil tanker reg. WHO 396G, Ford transit reg. JCO 788F. Also used: two artics, reg. LJY 488H and MJY 450J belonging to Mr J Miners, Hillside, Bickington.

Transport firms who have crossed the picket line — Shepherds Transport, Bristol; Falklands Transport, Sheffield; Cyprian Fox, Newport, Monmouth.

Raw materials suppliers — Henry Wiggings, Hereford; Sandvic UK Ltd, Halesowen Birmingham; Babcock and Wilcox, Renfrewshire; Firth Vickers, Sheffield.

Firms dealing direct with Fine Tubes — Rolls Royce, Derby; Rapp Metals, Ltd, London; Smiths Industries, London; Chappans Ledbury, Hereford; Allied Industrial Services; Pump Maintenance (all groups); R G Brown Ltd, Birmingham; Mullards, Blackburn (all groups); Parker Pen, Newhaven; Woodbury Chilcott, Bristol; Walsall Conduits (all groups); Preci-Spark, Syston, Leicestershire; J Sankey Ltd, Bilston, nr Birmingham (part of GKN group); British Syphon Company, Eastbourne; SNECMA, Route Nationale 7, 91 Corbeil, Evry, Paris; Stotsebury Tubes and Fittings, Bristol and Derby; P.M. Steels Ltd and Aluminium Supply Company, P.B.A. House, Allum Way, Totteridge, London.

Further information may be obtained from the Strike Committee.

L. C. D. S. U. — DISSOLUTION A MISTAKE

On Sunday 28 October the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Student Unions, a grouping uniting students in a principled resistance to the Government's and College Administrations' attacks on student unions, held a national conference.

Workers' Fight supported this conference. The issue of the political independence of student unions is likely to be at the centre of important struggles in the near future, and the Liaison Committee has shown by the 25% vote that its candidates gained in the elections at NUS Easter conference that it has the possibility of being a real force in the students unions.

The conference was weakened by the International Socialists withdrawing from the Liaison Committee a few weeks previously,

and in consequence was largely dominated by the International Marxist Group.

The earlier sessions were largely devoted to extolling the correctness, the necessity, the successes of the LCDSU, but in the last session the IMG proposed, successfully, that, in an effort to regain unity, the LC as such should be dissolved and a new open conference held.

A Workers' Fight speaker opposed this dissolution on the grounds that messing around with names and titles does not help in shifting IS from their sectarian course.

Nevertheless we of course support the new conference decided on. The conference, also, on Workers' Fight initiative, decided on a campaign of solidarity with students in struggle at Stirling university.

THE LEFT and THE CRISIS

a WORKERS' FIGHT pamphlet

The Left and the Crisis is an examination and critique of the political line of a number of prominent Left groups during the week last July when 5 dockers were jailed by the Industrial Relations Court. The pamphlet is available from 98 Gifford Street, N.1, price 5p plus 3p for postage.

Dundee — 25,000 Against Rent Act

THE OVERALL TENDENCY of the tenants movement over the last fortnight appears to have been a levelling off. The movement has been weakened by the capitulation of Walsall council, who have given in to the Government's threats, and finally decided to implement the Act. The main rent strikes, however, remain solid.

The centre of the struggle may be moving to Scotland. On 30 October 25,000 workers, tenants and housewives joined in action against the Act — a one-hour stoppage of work, public meetings, and demonstrations.

from p.9 KRONSTADT

ush the fire as soon as it started, thereby reducing to a minimum the number of victims." (Trotsky, op. cit.)

TROTSKY'S ROLE

Then there is the question of the personal role of Trotsky. In much of the literature of the Kronstadt myth-makers (Trotsky called them "the Kronstaders without a fortress") Trotsky figures as "the butcher of Kronstadt". Losey's film mangles a quotation from him so as to make him appear uncertain and full of doubt as to whether the suppression and loss of life could be justified.

"The Great Prince Died" depicts him as suffering a terrible and incapacitating guilt over his part in the suppression of Kronstadt.

The facts? He played no direct part at all! He was involved only as a member of the government. In that capacity he favoured an attack on Kronstadt — and he ever afterwards took full political responsibility for the act.

Kronstadt was in fact far from being an early revolt against the totalitarian might of an incipient stalinist state, as the anarchists would have it, some early Hungary where workers with petrol bombs faced the tanks of the bureaucracy.

Not only was the historical and revolutionary right entirely with the Bolsheviks. So was most of the heroism. This was no bureaucratic military machine being used against ill-prepared insurgents. The attackers against Kronstadt had to fight a very heavily armed fortress, moving in the open across the ice, protected only by white camouflage sheeting, under the rifle and cannon fire of the mutineers. Kronstadt was taken by Red Army military cadets and 300 of the delegates to the 10th Bolshevik Party congress, then in session.

Speaking to the Congress of the Young Communist International later the same year, Trotsky described it: "The storming of Kronstadt was indeed symbolic. Kronstadt ... was about to pass into the hands of French and British imperialism. Two or three days more and the Baltic Sea would have been ice-free and the warships of the foreign imperialists could have entered the ports of Kronstadt and Petrograd. Had we then been compelled to surrender Petrograd, it would have opened the road to Moscow, for there are virtually no defensive points between Petrograd and Moscow. Such was the situation. To whom did we turn? Kronstadt is surrounded by sea on all sides, and the sea was blanketed with ice and snow. Nakedly exposed, one had to move over ice and snow against the fortress amply equipped with artillery and machine guns. . . . they marched in the open and without any cover against the artillery and machine guns of Kronstadt. And, as before, beyond Petrograd, so now on the Baltic ice, there were many corpses to be seen of young Russian peasants and workers. They fought for the revolution. . . ."

Indeed they did. Anyone passing

Dundee council is implementing and rent increases are due during November. Already many tenants are resolved not to pay the increases.

Meanwhile the Tory Secretary for Scotland has ordered public inquiries into the actions of Glasgow, Kirkcaldy, Lanark, and Falkirk — four major local authorities which are not implementing.

The traditionally low council rents in Scotland mean that Tory-style 'fair rents' would lead to massive increases, even bigger than in England and Wales.

himself off as favouring defence of the revolution and simultaneously disapproving of the Bolshevik action over Kronstadt (Trotsky's "wart") has therefore some explaining to do. Did Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks of 1921 represent a self-interested and oppressive social force in relation to Kronstadt? Or, on the contrary, were they the vanguard, the leaders, the organisers and defenders of the workers' revolution?

Did the stalinist bureaucracy later have to smash, pulverise and physically annihilate the party which carried through the suppression of Kronstadt before the political counter-revolution was triumphant in Russia? Or was "the seed" of Stalinism already present, as the anarchists say, at Kronstadt?

The answers are **incontestable**: the Bolsheviks had no interests other than the defence of the revolution. Stalinism ultimately arose as a negation and finally as a destruction of the Bolshevik party as it was in 1921.

Did the Bolsheviks perhaps make a mistake over Kronstadt? It is for the critics to explain what else, in the circumstances, they could and should have done.



Should they, as they did, have fought for control against chaos and counter-revolution, while at the same time taking steps to ease the situation — or should they have waited passively, just giving up?

The Bolsheviks were made of better, if indeed sterner, material than that. And this makes it difficult to explain and defend their action to people for whom "the revolution" is conceived as all sweetness and light, and not as the savage and bloody class struggle (sometimes with the lines blurred) that it was in fact.

We are astonished — truly! — to find the Red Mole, "organ of the British Section of the Fourth International", babbling like some anarchist publication. Especially so because, to our knowledge, this does not represent the political position of the IMG — unless there has been some new internal convulsion we haven't heard about yet!

TROTSKY AND HO

Only a while ago the IMG went into public mourning and uttered uncritical public eulogies on the death of Ho Chi Minh — a fighter against imperialism, but a man who, as a stalinist bureau

REPORTS

Manchester

On 29 October members of the Rents Action Group attended a Trades Council meeting and pressed a resolution for a token strike now against the Rents Act and a pledge of industrial action if eviction is threatened. The chairman, Communist Party member Frances Dean, ruled the resolution out of order, so the proceedings were confined to a speech by Labour MP Frank Allaun.

By and by, he said, there will be an election, and tenants can vote Labour; by and by, perhaps, Labour will repeal the Rents Act; some time, perhaps (but not too hastily!) they will nationalise building land. In the meantime? — don't look to Frank Allaun for any help!

Tenants, however, will continue to press their resolution on the Trades Council. The Rents Action Group also decided to send a delegate to a Direct Works stewards' council. And Droylsden tenants association is holding a public meeting to be addressed by speakers from the Transport and General Workers Union (docks) and the National Union of Public Employees (hospitals). A Greater Manchester conference on the Rents Act is to be held on 26 November, and trade unionists are being pressed to attend.

Tenants are also considering taking action against the Manchester Evening News coverage of the rents struggle, which has been scanty and distorted.

Fran Brodie.

Clay Cross

The Labour council has firmly committed itself to refusing to implement the increases demanded by the Housing Finance Act. There is massive support for the council in their stand. Even if a Housing Commissioner is brought in by the Government, many tenants have declared that they will refuse to pay the increase. The Council itself has put out leaflets urging tenants to refuse extra payments.

The one weakness is that there is no tenants association in which tenants can organise themselves for the necessary rent strike action. Although some councillors are in favour of an association, prominent local left-wing Labour Party figures such as MP Denis Skinner oppose the independent organisation of tenants.

Hilary Cave

crat, was also responsible for the assassination of many Trotskyists in the 1940s: a totally reactionary, indefensible and counter-revolutionary deed, and a blow against the Vietnamese revolution.

Now, while favouring (as does Workers' Fight) the defence of the Russian revolution — even today despite its monstrous degeneration — they join in defaming Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks. These people — the most revolutionary, the most honest, the most incorruptible party in the whole of human history — were those who actually discharged the responsibility of making and defending the Russian Revolution, with the ruthlessness which the circumstances made unavoidable.

To the IMG, Ho's counter-revolutionary action in the 1940s left no stain on his memory. But Trotsky's share of responsibility for working class action in defence of the Russian Revolution — this is, it seems, a "wart", still visible 50 years later!

the
rents
battle...

Nottingham

Out of 48,000 council tenants in Nottingham, about 2,000 are refusing to pay the 94p increase. The Nottingham Federation, in stating that it will leave it up to individual tenants if they want to refuse to pay, has taken a very weak line, and consequently the 2,000 are widely spread and ill-organised.

Long Eaton Urban District Council is still holding out for a 40p increase rather than 96p. They are at the moment sending deputations to Peter Walker, who so far has ruled against them. Without much doubt they will end up the same way as Lambeth council, who also tried to wriggle through the Act instead of standing up and fighting. (see report, WF 17) — they will end up in line with the Tories.

Ivan Wells.

Stoke

The official figure for non-payment of the increase in Stoke is 6%. However, about 2,000 people have not paid in Newcastle, nearby, which is about 40% of tenants. The Newcastle area is solidly organised with a tenants association, whereas organisation in Stoke is very patchy.

Pat Longman

Bolton

On 31 October the Bolton Tenants Federation held a meeting to rally trade union support for the tenants' struggle.

Invitations were sent out to 15 union district secretaries, but as usual they failed to carry out their responsibilities towards their members and the working class as a whole. They did not provide a single delegate for the meeting. A WORKERS FIGHT speaker proposed a campaign of factory gate meetings to take the issue to the rank and file of the labour movement. Rank and file trade unionists and students told the meeting that they would fight for support for the tenants within their trade union branches and students unions.

The council hoped to avoid tenants' militancy by getting a reduction of the increase now to 70p approved by the Government. But tenants who have come to understand how money-lenders and financiers and building industry profiteers make millions out of council housing are now totally opposed to any increase in rent.

Despite the fact that there is a big 'red scare', mainly against WORKERS FIGHT, in the tenants movement, tenants are still standing firm behind their committees. Tenants committee members from Bolton will be attending the Greater Manchester conference on 26 November.

Howard Sweeney.

U.K. PIRELLI SUPPORT FOR ITALIAN SIT-IN

ON OCTOBER 27 SHOP STEWARDS representing 14 Dunlop Pirelli plants in the UK sent a telegram of support to workers at Pirelli's Bicocca plant, Milan, Italy, who were holding a sit-in to protest against sackings. This follows the solidarity day strike of June 19 last involving Dunlop-Pirelli workers in Italy and the UK. Pirelli workers in Milan have been reduced from 18 000 in 1969 to 10 000 now. Recently 870 more workers were laid off indefinitely and 1 900 placed on short time (a 32 hour week) at the Bicocca plant. The sit-in at Bicocca against these moves was joined by 8 other rubber plants in Milan.

Basically Dunlop-Pirelli is suffering from intensified competition on the world market, and trying to make the workers pay the cost.

Fiat has transferred its custom from Pirelli to Michelin, since Fiat and Michelin now both own Citroen jointly. And radial tyres, being more efficient than old-style tyres, lead to reduced demand.

The three major US tyre firms have entered Europe in two or more countries. Dunlop-Pirelli and Michelin are based in each of the major European countries. Meanwhile the smaller tyre firms are feeling the pinch. Michelin has already grabbed 25% shares in Kleber (France), and a small share in Semperit (Austria). They have been holding talks with these companies for closer collaboration and want Continental (West Germany) involved.

The only way to prevent more sackings in the tyre industry, as in any other, is by international solidarity action. The workers of Akzo (see report, WF 17) and of Dunlop-Pirelli have shown the way.

Contd. from p 11

LONDON

The strongest area seems to be Greenwich, where tenants held a mass meeting on 23 October and many are not paying the increase.

But in Lewisham, the tenants' movement is still moving at half-pace. Time after time the Communist Party leadership of the Joint Action Committee protest that "the tenants aren't ready for action yet" — but the tenants will never be 'ready' unless the J.A.C. gives a more vigorous lead. The "not ready" protest is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Tenants at the Flower House estate have resolved to withhold rent increases until a backlog of 700 repairs is completed — but the fact that these tenants still tolerate a pro-implementation Labour councillor as their Association chairman does not help to raise hopes about the prospect of action against the Rent Act on that estate.

Sam Kelly.

Coventry

The Council claim that only a couple of hundred tenants are on rent strike. The Tenants Federation says that the true figure is much greater, and are going ahead with plans to expand into really massive action next April. New Tenants Associations are being set up and old but dormant Associations reactivated.

Dave Spencer.

London's hospital workers say NO to just £4

by Mark Palmer
Secretary of L.A.S.H.

In our meeting on Sunday 29th October, the London Alliance of Stewards for Health workers were all agreed that our first piece of action in support of the £8 claim for ancillary staff was a considerable success.

Three 'LASH' member branches held stoppages: at Queen Mary's hospital Roehampton 300 members came out, and a number of non members joined them; at Westminster 200 took action, and at Kings College Hospital 700 members and a number of 'nons' came out.

At Queen Mary's, the Administration was told that if the strike was 'scabbed' enough to lessen its effect in any way, it would be prolonged beyond the planned 24 hours

"STAFF STATUS" SNAG IN CHRYSLER DEAL

Last week, after threatening strike action, tool room workers at Chrysler Coventry (Stoke and Ryton) plants voted overwhelmingly for an agreement which gave them £2,500 a year and "staff status".

But the agreement is nowhere near as good as it appears at first sight. What it does do, though, is it manages to continue the divide and rule policy that obtained while the Coventry Tool Room agreement was in force, and still scrap that agreement at the same time.

The old CTR agreement, because it gave the tool room workers an automatic rise to keep ahead of pieceworkers, tended to create a conservative, snobbish section of workers. The new agreement manages to pander to those characteristics and at the same time to entrench them.

But it has been shown recently that the Tool room workers could gain wage increases without such preferential treatment if they only fought hard. After all, the militant factories have gone ahead — for example Triumph Motor Cycles, Meriden, on £52 per week, Jaguar Daimler on £48 per week. In other words, the wage gain at Chrysler is nothing out of the ordinary, and it could have been achieved without any concessions.

The concessions are in fact an important part of the deal. They include greater labour 'mobility' to "ease demarcation problems" and, at the Ryton plant, "to carry out work while the production lines are moving provided it is safe and practicable to do so". The worst thing about these give-aways is that what they are giving away is the workers' right to veto increased mobility and unsafe work. That is what workers should be fighting for — against management's 'right' to determine mobility and safety standards.

Of course workers shouldn't turn their noses up at some "staff benefits", but they ought to see them less as privileges and more as the right of every worker. Giving some of the workers the privilege is not a step along the road to all getting it as a right — it is part of the employers' plan to weaken the men drive in a wedge between the AUEW and the T & GWU and thus block a further united advance by all the car workers.

— until it was deemed to have had an effect.

This resulted in heads of department instructing their staff not to come in, and a total stoppage of ALL ancillary staff in the whole hospital with the exception of two 'essential workers' (all essential services being maintained throughout our strikes).

Kings College had similar success, while Westminster bore the brunt of the newspaper attacks with gory pictures of Mrs. Reg Maudling cooking patients' breakfasts and the darling boys of Westminster Public School messing around with wheelchairs.

In the future we will warn the administration that having worked flat out to see that essential services were covered, if they attempt this sort of propaganda exercise again our essential service workers will also be withdrawn, and all other co-operation will cease.

The demonstration outside Alexander Fleming house, where the two sides of the Whitley Council met momentarily, was a great showing for the Westminster branch, who danced and sang, while the police guard urged LASH officers to "get the speeches over with" as the wind and rain were getting too much for them.

Five members of the Alliance gained admission and lobbied the staff side first. Our Trade Union leaders told us, straight faced, that the fact that £8 was the minimum necessary to bring ancillary

staff up to a decent living wage without endless overtime was not sufficient justification to increase the claim at that stage.

They were not bothered that £4 would not bring ancillary staff up to the TUC's recommended national minimum wage, and thought they'd be lucky if they actually came out with £4.

Seeing our 'national representatives' so reluctant to actually represent our members' wishes, and so submissive to the Tory Government's judgment of what we are worth, has hardened London health workers in their determination to fight and fight hard, at rank and file level, for what is rightfully ours.

At Sunday's meeting we planned our contact campaign, in which members of the Alliance are going into hospitals where we have no members, to draw them into the struggle.

On Sunday November 12th an open conference is being held to discuss the pay claim, to which all health workers in London are invited. The aim of the conference will be to encourage support for the aims of the Alliance, and to urge all health workers to join us in immediate action to support the pay claim.

We have made a good start in London, and with our sisters and brothers throughout the country we will keep the pot boiling where the health service is concerned, for a long time to come.

ICI WILTON: interim gain on danger money

Ten thousand workers attended an ICI mass meeting on Redcar racecourse on 24 October. Two hours before the meeting ICI Wilton management announced an interim concession, no doubt wrung from them by the strike call made to the 10 000 on the previous day by the shop stewards.

That is the simple story of solidarity! For the strike action was initiated not by 10 000 but by 700 engineering workers who on 16 October had voted to strike to further their claim for danger money for working in the polythene plant.

Until the Wilton Staff Agreement came into force last year the engineering workers were receiving £1.50 danger money, which had been negotiated after four men were killed in an explosion in the polythene works in 1969.

Obviously ICI would not admit the plant was dangerous, so they called the £1.50 "care and attention money". Of course if you don't use care and attention you can be blown to hell, but that's not dangerous, hell is apparently better than working under Wilton Staff Agreement conditions at ICI.

Almost all the products of the Wilton plant involve serious hazards to health over and above those usual in industry (oil, petrol, ethylene, polythene, caustic soda, acids, titanium, chlorine, and terylene).

Danger money is little compensation, though certainly all ICI workers should be demanding higher wages. The dangerous conditions raise the question of

workers' control. ICI workers should demand the right to modify or refuse to operate processes they know are unsafe. That is not to say they should take responsibility for the safety of the works — that rests firmly with the bosses of ICI who planned the works in the first place. But as long as the ICI workers are forced to work in a death trap to get a living — until workers have kicked out the ICI bosses and other profiteers for good — the least they can demand is control (not 'consultation') in safeguarding their health and their lives.

Tony Duffy.

GEC:

sackings at Rugby

OVER ONE THOUSAND WORKERS are to be sacked at GEC Rugby — by far the biggest employer in the town. This will occur when the Controls Components Division of the Industrial Components Division of GEC Elliott Automation moves to GEC Kidsgrove (where there are also redundancies — and workers have been promised that there are jobs at Rugby.)

So far the unions at GEC Rugby are blacking work to be sent to Kidsgrove. But clearly much more is needed if these jobs are to be saved. The local combine committee, including the Coventry area, must be mobilised to stop all sackings.

D.S.

Published by Workers' Fight,
98 Gifford Street, London N.1.
Printed by voluntary labour.