

THE WORKER



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THEY CAN'T FREEZE CLASS WAR !

AUEW DEFY BOSSES COURT

At the beginning of his premiership, Heath stated in the United Nations that the danger facing countries like Britain was not national wars but civil war. He is now anticipating that civil war with a cold war - trying to freeze workers in their tracks.

The 90 day freeze on pay, prices, rents and dividends is simply a wage freeze - and workers know it. If the Government really intended to put a comparable stop on prices, rents and dividends, it could have got a voluntary agreement with the TUC - not that workers would have paid any attention to that either!

Who's for it?

Naturally the CBI and the City have hailed the Freeze with relief. The capitalist money markets of the world have also marked their approval with an increase in the value of the pound.

Who say they're against it?

The TUC is only concerned with proving that they were not responsible for the breakdown of a 'voluntary' agreement which they had no right to be negotiating in the first place. The strongest words they have for the Government is that it 'has made an error of judgement.' It is not an error of judgement. It is the most vicious attack yet on the standard of living of the working class.

Wilson speaking for the Labour Party opposition is not against a wage freeze. The Labour Government imposed one itself in 1966. He merely wants more window dressing than Heath has provided - like the restoration of cheap school meals.

Even some union leaders have only argued against it on the grounds that it won't work, because at the end of the freeze there will be a whole spate of wage claims. But if workers wait three months, it will have worked.

And after the three months there will be an extension of another two months. And after that will come, once more, Heath's £2 plus limitation and a 'voluntary' freeze, presumably with the TUC's collaboration. Not only would workers have dropped far behind just when entry to the Common Market, council rent rises and higher prices generally will have kicked the cost of living sky high, but more important they would have lost the whole impetus of their present class militancy in a demoralising capitulation.

When the talking had to stop

The breakdown of the TUC-CBI-Government talks is no reflection on the enthusiasm of the three parties to arrive at an agreement.

The TUC leadership made every effort to reach a concord with the government; meetings went on for hours, into the small hours and adjourned on several occasions. The desire and willingness was there on the part of every member of the TUC panel. Nonetheless the talks had to come to an end. The working class was not to be fooled. They made their position clear well in advance.

The break up of the talks was a direct result of the opposition by the rank and file to these talks and any possible outcome. The very principle of the TUC having discussions with the government was rejected by all sections of the working class.



Who really is against it?

Only the workers - the people it's all about. Only those trade union leaders who prove their class credentials by going into battle with the workers and not running away from it. For workers nothing has changed. They will continue to take on the employers and the Government that backs them, whatever punitive measures are devised.

The very militancy and solidarity of the working class which has prompted Heath to push through Parliament his deep-freeze bill guarantee a hotting up of class conflict which will melt it away.

'Voluntary' or statutory it is just not on!

Reg Birch addresses the meeting

VIETNAM FRONT LINE REPORT

'A gentle people, with a tenderness that belied their tenacity in struggle'. This was how Reg Birch, chairman of the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) and just returned with a delegation of British Trade Unionists from North Vietnam, described the Vietnamese people to a packed Conway Hall on October 27th.

From the moment his Vietnam-bound plane was delayed in Nanning because of US air raids over the North it was forcibly brought home that this was a people under constant attack. There are at least 3 air raid warnings every day. And what atrocities they have had to endure! Once in Vietnam, Comrade Birch saw hospitals, schools, and housing quarters that had been bombed; he visited Nan Ding, a textile town that had been 70% flattened. At a press conference he saw victims of horrific injury and personal loss - orphans left with vast napalm burns. The US used anti-personnel bombs, looking like oranges, designed to unleash plastic shrapnel undetectable by X-ray.

Bombs only serve to fan the people's hatred

But had this hardship and suffering weakened their resolve to win? The answer from the Vietnamese was a resounding NO! The bombs only serve to fan the peoples' hatred. Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom. And calmly this graceful people went on to work the fields at night, to refill the craters at night. He saw an F111 shot down from the skies, and the orange balloon designed to carry the pilot out to sea was shot down too. The coast might be mined but the Vietnamese said 'We have our own ways' of sailing junks and barges around the edges of the mines.

Comrade Birch pointed out that the redemption of the honour of the British people over Vietnam had hitherto rested on those young people who had demonstrated in Grosvenor Square. The issue had never been seized by the Trade Union Movement. It was now late in the day. Through their military and political wisdom the Vietnamese were now poised to take Saigon, last bastion of reaction, from without and from within. Nixon is desperately trying to evade and sabotage the Vietnamese peace initiative.

But though it is late and we have not been active we must now become involved. We must launch a campaign as we did with 'Arms for Spain!' That the AUEW has voted £500 to aid the struggle of the Vietnamese is a first step. The branches of this Engineering Union, that led the action over Spain, will be circularised. The Vietnamese are poised to win. We have a right and an obligation to participate in that great gain.

The Executive Council of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers has taken a correct working class stand in its decision to ignore an order from the National Industrial Relations Court.

The order arises from an earlier act of 'contempt' when the Union refused to answer a charge that it had 'unreasonably and arbitrarily' refused James Goad admission to a Union branch meeting.

Goad worked during a strike and refused to comply with Union discipline that he give his earnings during the strike to charity. He lapsed from membership and then, instead of using the Union's appeals machinery, took the case before an industrial tribunal - though the personnel officer at CAV, Sudbury, where he works, warned him against this.

Sir John Donaldson, President of the Industrial Relations Court, has given a judgement in favour of Goad, and ordered a representative of the AUEW to appear before it on 8th November to explain why it had disobeyed the earlier order.

The decision of the Union to refuse to recognise the National Industrial Relations Court is the policy of the Union which the Executive Council will uphold. This Union opposes the Industrial Relations Act in its entirety and the legal machinery it has set up.

Any argument that the Union should have appeared before the Court because it had such a good case is like Heath's urging workers to 'give the Industrial Relations Act a trial and it can be amended in due course.'

The question here is a basic one. The Union and the Union alone decides who shall be a member or not.

The Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers has donated £500 to the Vietnamese people in their epic struggle to defeat U.S. Imperialism. On a decision of the Executive Council more than 3,000 AUEW branches have been circulated inviting further contributions for Vietnam.

No doubt other workers in Britain will want to show their solidarity with the fighting Vietnamese by contributing on behalf of the labour movement in this country. Their struggle is our struggle. Their enemies are our enemies.

By their magnificent liberation war the Vietnamese are on the point of driving the U.S. aggressors out, but after years of bombing and devastation they have a tremendous task of rehabilitation to make their country, in the words of their great leader, Ho Chi Minh, even more beautiful than before.



ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

CAV Fazakerley

The 1,200 workers sitting-in to fight the planned closure of the plant next April, stepped up the pressure on the management in the fourth week of the occupation. After Sir Kenneth Corley, Chairman of the Lucas group, had repeated that the factory must close, the CAV workers closed the factory gates to all transport thus threatening to bring the second plant on the site, Lucas Industrial Equipment, to a halt. All the advantages of having a 'flying picket' without having to move from their own front gate.

Buried alive

Fatal accidents in the construction industry rose in 1971, for the 3rd year running. 18.5 deaths per 100,000 workers 1970 to 19.2 per 100,000 in 1971. 'This means that work is being conducted on the wholly unacceptable basis that 15 men will meet their deaths by being buried alive in circumstances which should never occur' in the words of the Chief Inspector of Factories. He goes on to say 'Perhaps the greatest obstacle in the way of further improvement is the sheer indifference of some companies to the safety of their workers! We said - a long time ago - IT IS RIGHT TO STRIKE DOWN CAPITALISM. Here is added reason.

Ford

1,000 draughtsmen at Ford's research centre at Dunton, Basildon are refusing to co-operate with outside contract draughtsmen. This is because some drawing work for the body of a new model to be built in Britain and W. Germany has been placed with an American company. A Ford spokesman has denied that this represents a policy decision to concentrate Ford design work in the U.S. and claims it is only to deal with a peak workload. With nearly a million unemployed, the Ford draughtsmen think it would be better to hire more people in Britain to deal with any more problems of overwork.

Swan Hunter

3,800 boilermakers returned to work at the five Tyneside yards of the Swan Hunter group on October 30th. In a secret ballot they voted 1,337 to 803 to accept a new pay deal. The original demand was for a cost-of-living increase of £4.72, while the deal gives £4.50 over the next nine months, with £2.50 immediately. Lower paid workers will get 75p. increase in the basic rates, giving a £3.25 initial rise. Swan Hunter still has to deal with similar demands from 8,000 other workers.

Chrysler

While some people behave as if the plastic milk bottle was the greatest evil to hit Britain since the Black Death, workers have been fighting real pollution. All 1,500 production workers at Chrysler's truck plant at Dunstable walked out because a paint spray booth was a health hazard. The men were also demanding payment for lost time during an earlier stoppage over a broken ventilation fan. The men returned after Chrysler promised to spend £15,000 on improvements.

Police on building site

Hull police have a new role - as the bosses' 'peace keepers' on the shop floor itself. On October 30th a TGWU official walked on to a Quibell's building site, and asked to contact one of his members. The foreman refused and called the police to throw him off the site. Local employers have obviously noted the enthusiasm of Hull police involved in the vicious attack on Southorpe dockers in August. The next step, presumably, will be to have the police permanently on call to sort out any building worker who makes a nuisance of himself.

hospital workers picket

Pickets were outside London hospitals on Friday October 7th - during the Health Service ancillary workers' one day token strike in support of a claim for a wage increase of £8 per week. Up until now workers in the Health Service have had low Union membership and low rates of pay. The claim for £8 comes from the N.H.S. Unions' shop stewards and rank and file members who have realised that their Union 'leaders' claim for £4 is insufficient to even bring them up to their living standards of two years ago. The Health workers have learned the lesson that struggle doesn't mean sitting back while someone else does the negotiating - with action, not words. If the Government doesn't meet the Health Workers demands the 'negotiations' will be resumed - with guerrilla tactics.

Support for the industrial action has come from another section of future Health Workers - the medical students. At Kings College Hospital Medical School a motion was passed by the students which supported the £8 claim and one day token strike and pledged that the medical students would do nothing to lessen the effectiveness of the industrial action.

Fry + Cadbury-Schepes

Fry's new agreements within the Cadbury-Schepes group are being negotiated. Whereas workers at Cadbury's and Schepes asked for and got a £4 rise payable immed-

ately, workers at Fry's Keynham were offered only £3.70 pence now and the remainder in January '73 plus an increase on the women's 'incentive rates' in September '73 to bring them up to the men's incentive rates. The workers rejected this and came out on unofficial strike on Tuesday October 24, for an across the board increase offer on the minimum rate for all workers now. They went back on Monday October 30th for further talks with the management.

The management's latest derisory offer of an extra 20 pence now and still only £3 total in January '73 was unanimously rejected on Nov. 2nd. Workers feelings are solid on this and unless their demands are met they will all come out on official strike on Tuesday 7th Nov. If this happens the other workers will also come out, paralyzing the factory.

L Gardner + Sons

In this factory making diesel engines at Eccles, near Manchester, 68 engineers in the machine shop had been on strike for five weeks in support of a dismissed shop steward. Then the management, which had laid off 1,300 other workers because of the machine shop strike, claimed that for the sake of the laid off workers it would have supervisors take over the work of the machine shop. In protest at this, the other engineers in the factory voted to join the strike.

Stop press :steward reinstated

Rolls-Royce staff continue pay strike despite freeze

ONE BIG CONSTRUCTION SITE



(Written by a young worker who spent his holiday in the People's Republic of Albania)

To know about a socialist country from books and pictures is one thing, but actually to see socialism first hand is quite another experience. Especially when that country, twenty-eight years ago, was the most backward in Europe, ruined economically by the war and retarded by age-old religious and superstitious beliefs.

Today however, this tiny country, The People's Republic of Albania, is forging ahead in the construction of socialism and rapidly raising the welfare of its people.

The tone of the country is set when you reach the border, having left Yugoslavia; the cultivated trees, the flower beds, and the new customs house being built. For it is the amount of building being done that strikes the visitor most. Factories, irrigation, canals, houses, railways and, something most important for the future of Albanian industry, a huge metallurgical works. These are some of the projects well under way. In 1969 the volume of construction work had increased seventy-nine times over that of 1938.

Agriculture is making speedy progress also, with many new crops being cultivated. Even in the rugged mountains, areas are being cleared and olive and fruit trees planted. A most impressive sight is the formerly barren hillsides now terraced and ready for planting.

But to admire only the economic and technological progress is to see only half of the Albanian picture. With a socialist base, they have created a platform from which it is possible to fight against many of the ills that beset capitalist society, such as pollution, delinquency, alcohol and drug addiction, and crime. (Many crimes, from petty theft to murder, are virtually unknown.)

Albania is above all a healthy country, a country of the future, and most important of all a country for the workers. There are no wealthy businessmen living in big villas, rich property speculators or corrupt bureaucrats tying the system up in knots with red tape. With a Marxist - Leninist party as its vanguard, the working class is taking the lead and forging for itself a new type of society.

ALBANIA'S NATIONAL DAY Meeting Friday NOV 24

7.30 p.m. Central College Theatre, 16, Gordon St., W.C.1. (off Euston Square)

fight for recognition

Management are trying in vain to crush a strike of 329 workers at Robinson-Willey Ltd, Mill Lane Liverpool. The strike, over Trade Union recognition started on Wednesday, 25th October when 3 stewards were sacked within 24hr of organising the men. Of course there was a "good reason" for the sackings. One steward was accused of bad timekeeping, another of bad workmanship, and the third of insubordination - in view of this last pathetic excuse for sacking, you would think that one of our glorious ex-colonels is in charge.

Many times in the past Robinson-Willey have sacked stewards for attempting to recruit men into a union, and they got away with it. This time they are fighting organised workers not just the union officials. Whereas 170 walked out initially now the other 150 workers have joined them, and since signed up with the T.&G.W.U.

The men had a meeting with their local official who recommended a compromise i.e. that they accept the management offer to put the case in the hands of independent arbitrators. The lads soon told him who was in command and sent their official packing. They followed this up with a picket of Transport House (T&G Headquarters in Liverpool) as well as their picket of the firm. Successful picketing is costing the company an estimated £14,000 a day.

To quote one of the stewards: "They thought they could nip it in the bud again, but this time they were too late".

Wherever the organised working class is in struggle our capitalist class will always be too late. The bosses rule is only as strong as we allow it to be, and the workers of Robinson-Willey have decided that "their" union will have "their" stewards, not management puppets.

THE TOYMAKERS SLAVES

While boys and girls go out to play the Meccano workers slave away.

At Meccano's Binns Road factory in Liverpool, fifty men from the 'die-cast' department walked out unofficially on October 31st, demanding a reduction from a 54 hour week to a 51 hour week. Why should any worker have to strike for this?

12 hour shifts - no tea breaks

In Meccano conditions are so bad that 51 hours is a big step forward. Normally these men work 12 hour shifts with a 45 minute lunch break and no tea breaks. (Tea breaks were sold by their union for more holiday at Christmas.) Negotiations have been in progress since last May. Meanwhile take home pay is typically about £28 - hardly a decent wage for 40 hours, let alone 54! All this cash for the privilege of working with no showers available, no protective clothing (save boots), no compensation unless damaged physically and no ventilation despite the high temperatures of working with molten metal - conditions which wouldn't satisfy the Factory Act of the late 19th century. Moreover, the workers reckon that the noise is way over the allowed limit because so many machines are crammed into a small area.

women's fight essential

The men are hoping for support from the 900 women in the same union - General Municipal and Workers Union, who comprise the majority of the labour force, and work under similar prison conditions, in soul destroying jobs, for low wages. A typical 'Dinky' wage is £12.80 (fixed by wage councils) and is supplemented by a mixture of piece work and fixed bonus rates, according to the job, making an average take home pay of £14. At present the women are fighting against 'lay-offs', having learnt their lesson from the last power strike, when they were laid off without pay.

This struggle by the 'die-cast' workers is vital as failure would allow management to tighten its grip on its female slaves. Success will accelerate the women's fight for civilised pay and conditions.

Last year (December) Meccano was taken over by Airfix to form Meccano (1971) Ltd. Up to this time Meccano was the only profitable part of the Lines group which went bankrupt. During that year, Meccano workers went on strike for a 'bob' an hour extra but accepted a 'tanner' to 'see the firm through', and were later thanked for this loyalty. Recently the firm boasted of their expected £4,000,000 profits by the end of next year. Since the time of the take over, directors' pay has gone up by £2,000, but the Airfix average wage has fallen from £1,200 to £850! This is a typical example of how the bosses will plead bankruptcy and squeeze a worker dry, while simultaneously they link arms and share the spoils. Simultaneously we see clamp downs on workers in the form of the Industrial Relations Act, proposed anti-picket legislation and the prospect of a wage freeze. So called 'democracy' is making it more and more difficult for a worker to defend himself, and, at the same time, is attempting to take more and more from him.

PROFITS PRICES & WAGES

Prices

The paper monopolists have just announced steep increases of from £7 to £11.75 per ton to take effect from January next. No sign of any influence by the CBI here. This is the biggest price increase in this monopoly controlled product since 1967 when the £ was devalued. The British end of the cartel gives the reason for the increase as the floating £ and the increase in cost of raw materials. So much for the argument that wages and the greedy workers cause all the prices to go up.

and profits.

Crisis or not, the profits of companies big and small recognise no arguments for restraint. New records are being set up day by day. Recent examples to name but a few - Hepworth the tailors, £3,109,526 compared with £2,522,795 for last year. Westward Television is paying a dividend of 27½% on 15 months, more than double that for the previous year. Glaxo made £26.9 million last year, an increase of 13% over the previous year.

Whatever effect is claimed for wage increases they don't seem to have had any effect on profitability. When they talk about restraint they mean us not them.

.....and wages.

It is claimed by the exponents of wage restraint that wages over the years have not only gone ahead of the cost of living index but have exceeded it. Quite apart from the deceptive character of the index the real position is quite the reverse, and explains why people know they are worse off whereas the statisticians assure them they must be better off. The truth is of course that the workers do not actually get the wages increases attributed to them. Here is how it works, for a worker with a wife and two children. If his wages have gone from £20 to £30 a week over a period that looks like an increase of 50%. In fact though he has only received £2.27p. The remaining £7.93 has gone in increased tax, rates, rent, national insurance contributions and loss of means tested social security benefits. Such a worker is effectively therefore taxed at the rate of 79.3% as against 75% for a man with an income of £20,000 a year.

Workers are entitled to enquire how the hell money they haven't had has caused the cost of living to go up!

GEC WEMBLEY

The four factories at GEC are still holding out against their respective managements, (i.e. Arnold Weinstock Empire satellites).

Watsons have offered £3.20 for men and £2.80 for women. This offer was rejected on the basis that equality of pay for women was of paramount importance. A convenor said, 'We want any offer to be across the board.'

At Witton James Radio Appliances there are still no developments to report.

British Domestic Appliances met unions on November 1st and offered £2.80 (mainly for unskilled workers). This figure would bring supervisory staff only up to £27 a week, a deri-

sory offer! All this after three months of withdrawal of labour by 400 workers.

These workers have only been organised for nine months and they have been three months in struggle. As one of the convenors said, 'That is not bad at all!'

StopPress : BDA & Watsons

return, accepting £3.40 for

skilled men, £3.10 for women .

Witton James still out

Editorial

In every struggle in which workers are involved, against employers on the factory floor or against the capitalist government, they will always be presented by would-be 'leaders' with two equally false alternatives.

Ultra-leftists, like the various brands of Trotskyists, will want to up the stakes to some ridiculous demand. If workers are striking for £4, they will arbitrarily insist on making it £15. If workers occupy their place of work to prevent its closure, they will absurdly argue for establishing 'workers' control' and running it as a 'red' factory in a capitalist system. If workers decide to fight the Industrial Relations Act or the Rent Act where they work, the ultra-leftists will call for a general strike instead.

Rightists, like the social democrats, will want to end any and every struggle as quickly as possible in some form of capitulation. As a slight variation, opportunists, like the Revisionist Party of Great Britain, will talk the language of ultra-leftism while sneakily carrying out a line of abject surrender - as the revisionist leaders did at UCS.

Guerrilla Struggle The Only Answer

Guerrilla struggle steers clear of both horns of this dilemma. Waging it successfully depends on knowing your own strength and the strength of your enemy - so that you can bring the greatest force to bear where the opposing force is weakest. It depends on knowing when to attack and on what issues and when to pull back to keep your forces in good heart and ready to carry on the fight tomorrow. It depends on avoiding a refusal to fight at all and also a long-drawn-out static battle in which your forces waste away through attrition.

Workers out of their own experience of class conflict know how to fight a guerrilla struggle. The engineers and the building workers have proved it, developing new weapons like tactical occupations and flying pickets in the process.

Guerrilla Struggle and Protracted War

Guerrilla struggle wins battles but it cannot win a war. Winning the class war demands the strategy of revolution. Only revolution can give the working class ultimate victory. Unless the strategy is right, the tactics will not be right. With a revolutionary strategy, guerrilla tactics not only win immediate battles but also build the revolutionary movement for the final overthrow of the class enemy. An occupation is not a revolution, it is the training ground for revolutionaries.

Ultra-leftists try to lead workers into the trap of acting as though the revolution had already happened. Rightists and opportunists tell workers they do not need a revolution because they can live with the capitalist system. Both come to the same thing. Both are anti-revolutionary and therefore anti-working class. Only a revolutionary Party can be the vanguard of the revolutionary working class.

In many past issues of THE WORKER the issue of guerrilla struggle and protracted war has been dealt with. A CPB(ML) pamphlet on the theory and practice of guerrilla struggle and protracted war is to be published.

Solve inflation — the way the Chinese did

Anyone who thinks that the cavorting of the 'TUC-CBI-Government' gentlemen will produce any answer to the problem of rising prices other than to hold down workers' wages and to attack our living standards needs his head examining! The working class must look elsewhere for real answers.

Chinese workers and peasants knew too well the fight against rising prices and a falling standard of living. Between 1937 and 1949 prices rose an incredible 8,500,000 million times! The mass of the population suffered untold hardship, many peasants barely surviving on a grim diet of vegetables and chaff. However since 1949 the situation could not have been more different. Prices have not risen, indeed many prices

have fallen appreciably - for example the price of medicines has fallen to 20% of its 1950 level. Production of grain has more than doubled, whilst the quality of life has steadily risen with supplies of meat, eggs, fish, poultry and fruit available to all.

In China prices are stable, the value of the currency appreciates and increased production is reflected in the rise of workers' real wages.

In Britain the opposite is only too apparent. Beef prices place it beyond most families while many more items become 'luxuries' e.g. butter, cheese, bus rides. In every capitalist country in the world there is inflation. It is as endemic to the capitalist system as unemployment, pollution and crimi-

nal waste. EEC Finance Ministers have just met to agree on measures to fight inflation in all the Common Market countries.

China has succeeded in curing all these because her people have thrown off the shackles of capitalism and fought for the victory of socialism. Only socialism, which sweeps away that class which lives by the exploitation of workers, will create a society whose economy is planned for the needs of the people.

Here is China's answer to rising prices. No money cures - they won't work - they're not meant to! The only 'medicine' that will cure is the fight to destroy capitalism and build socialism.

OCCUPATION AT BASINGSTOKE

On October 27th a mass meeting of workers at British Leyland's Thornycroft transmission plant at Basingstoke voted 400 to 200 to end their 11 week occupation of the plant. British Leyland has doubled its original offer of £100 as a lump sum to get production restarted and has guaranteed orders to safeguard employment for three years after the sale to the American Eaton Corporation is completed. The workers sitting in had originally wanted to save all of the 1,000 jobs at the plant. But can the jobs be defended of those who are not prepared to sit in, to risk losing redundancy money? Workers cannot sit back and expect someone else to save their jobs for them. Only by being prepared to fight to keep your job do you stand a fighting chance of keeping it.

On Wednesday 25th October, there was a meeting at Warwick University at which three members of the Joint Occupation Committee of Thornycroft, Basingstoke, Hants., gave an account of the events leading up to the 11 week occupation of the factory.

Two of the members spoke about their campaign to unionise the office-staff, and their support of equal pay for women. There was enthusiastic praise for all the women workers who were fighting side by side with the men, manning the canteens, Telex and telephones (until the wires were cut by the GPO!), and volunteering as pickets. One speaker expressed the wish that more women would stand for Trade Union posts.

The speakers spoke of their determination to fight to the end against a closure of the factory, and of solidarity between workers at the various different plants. The talk ended with a speaker emphasising the links between students and industrial workers, mentioning the fight for student autonomy and saying that these struggles were on different fronts but that they were against the same enemy.

IRELAND GREEN PAPER FOR A NOT SO GREEN PEOPLE

In the foreword to his Green Paper on Northern Ireland, Whitelaw says, 'The British Government have a clear objective in Northern Ireland. It is to deliver its people from the violence and fear in which they live today and to set them free to realise their great potential to the full.'

This statement is blatantly false. The British Government is directly responsible for the violence in Northern Ireland.

Despite the steady stream of distortions, half-truths and downright lies belched forth by the British Army Press Office and reproduced loyally by the capitalist press, this role is clear as day. It is the role of an imperialist and an aggressor. As such the British Government is the creator of violence and fear amongst the people, it is the greatest and most immediate barrier to their realising their potential in full.

Since 1969 the strength of the army in Northern Ireland has increased seven-fold from 3,000 to 21,000 men. (The army's own figures.) The Special Air Service employs a large body of undercover agents for their special task of spying and assassination, and in addition there is a further intelligence network code-named the M.R.F. comprising up to 500 men. The people of Northern Ireland have been subjected to unprecedented terror by these so called 'peacekeepers'.

There has been an unprecedented upsurge in the development and use of Electronic equipment and 'anti-insurgency' weaponry. Some of this equipment, like the Tobias device (which is manufactured under licence by Marconi-Elliott Avionic Electronics Ltd.) was used in other British wars, for example against guerrillas in Borneo seven years ago. Much is being used by the Americans in Vietnam today.

And the Black Propaganda Department churns out more and more lies to camouflage this role of British Imperialism. Recent spectacular 'successes' have included stories, printed in the British Press and completely false, of 'IRA gunmen, raping young girls at gunpoint'. Women have been forced by threats to bring tea to soldiers so that this may be reported to the British people. Young boys are paid to play football with British soldiers so that this may be photographed and used as 'proof' that the army is popular with the people.

The purpose of all this is clear. British Imperialism wants to strike terror into the population so that it can impose the settlement it wants. For the same reasons it must keep the rest of the world ignorant of what it is doing. Whitelaw talks and tries to set himself up as being impartial and above the fray. This is a monstrous insult to the intelligence and feelings of the Irish people and of workers everywhere. It is as ridiculous as the same capitalist government trying to set itself up as impartial and above society with regard to class struggle in this country. It is as ridiculous as if the Americans pretended to be impartial in Vietnam.

It is the resistance of the Irish people, this just struggle against aggression that Whitelaw means when he talks about delivering the people from violence. This violence can only end with the destruction of imperialism. And destroyed it will be. The Vietnamese people have defeated the greatest imperialist power the world has ever seen. The Irish people, learning from their struggle, are assured of victory.

The James Connolly Song Book

The James Connolly Song Book includes 'The Internationale' and the 'Red Flag'

18p. per copy post paid

from the
Cork Workers Club,
9 St. Nicholas Church Place,
Cove Street, Cork, Ireland.

TEACHERS IN THE FIRING LINE

Teachers in schools and colleges are entering their annual salary negotiations with the government. A lot of discussion has gone on, as always, on the form of the claim, a percentage, a flat rate, grading, etc. As every teacher knows, it is not the presentation of the claim that wins the day, it is the teachers' preparedness to fight for it. With both the N. U. T. and the A. T. T. I. rejecting the government ceiling on wages, it is up to us in our schools and colleges to formulate our tactics for the coming battles.

Hundreds of London teachers in schools and colleges, both union and non-union, militant and moderate, have united solidly under the NUT's initiative, signing letters of protest drawn up by the Union, and attending a protest meeting. The cause: the Government's blocking of an increase in the London allowance. An increase was agreed to in principle in May, to be settled by November 1st. The management panel had promised to make an offer at the meeting of the Burnham Committee on October 20th. The Union claim is for £300.

This blocking is obviously an example of the treatment they are planning for us in the future. Even the facade of negotiations

on the Burnham Committee is removed.

But the Government has a problem. London teachers are angry, and they know from bitter experience that their only guard against such shabby treatment is a solid offensive.

teachers and ireland

At its meeting in October, the Bristol N. U. T. Committee passed the following resolution: 'demanding that the Government withdraws British troops from three Belfast schools which they continue to occupy and two other schools which are partially occupied.'

PRINT WORKERS' PAY STRIKE

A strike by clerical staff at the Press Association news agency has just ended under the combined pressure of the agency's general manager and the officials of the men's union, NATSOPA.

A recent agreement signed by the Union and the Newspaper Proprietors Association for a 16% wage increase over two years, instead of the usual one year, includes a clause ruling out 'house' agreements negotiated with particular employers

on behalf of the rank and file members of the Union by fathers of chapels. This is felt by workers to represent an erosion of their basic democratic rights.

This was not the issue of the clerical workers strike but

created the climate in which the strike took place.

The strike of 250 clerical staff was in pursuance of such a 'House' agreement and followed on an unacceptable offer by the news agency which is part of the British Press Association of 1.50 a week in answer to a 2.50 claim. The father of the chapel involved, John Lawrence, who will be remembered as one of the leaders of the St. Pancras rent strike some years ago, was

dismissed for being in breach of contract. The secretary of Natsopt's London joint branches, instructed print workers not to support the strike which he said had brought about a 'chaotic and anarchistic situation'.

On The Buses; Hull

On 20th October Hull bus maintenance men decided to strike unanimously for a basic wage of £28 for craftsmen, and £25 for labourers, do away with their bonus scheme and demand a living wage without strings. Their strike has brought Hull buses to a standstill.

The men used to pride themselves on their history of cooperation with the employer (they last struck in 1926). But like a large part of the working class they have at last realised that class compromise, bonus schemes, and masses of overtime are no substitute for struggle.

The employers initially took the stand that there could be no question of an offer. The men's strike soon put paid to that one by forcing a £2 interim increase and the promise of 'meaningful negotiations'. In fact, on returning to work the busmen got nothing but abuse. Sir Leo Schultz, the Corporation henchman, had the bloody-mindedness to accuse the men of 'dishonesty' while himself breaking the promise of talks, in the hope of delaying a settlement until after the Chequers meeting.

renewed strike

The bus craftsmen and labourers gave a lead to all workers in Hull by refusing to take any notice of the TUC's class collaboration. Confident now of their strength, they realised that by renewal of strike action they would win. If they maintain their unity and determination there can be no doubt as to the outcome of the present strike.

Hull Corporation maintains that it cannot afford to meet the men's demands. We give just one example to disprove this. The conversion to one man operated buses cost the Corporation £600, and produced for them a gross annual saving of £300,000. It also resulted in 200 conductors losing their jobs.

COD WAR OR CLASS WAR

The blocking of Icelandic cargoes by East Coast Ports is a mistake. The ruling class have sacrificed the interests of fishermen by agreeing to the Common Market policy of plunder. British Shipowners are sending men out in boats renowned for their lack of safety gear, to fish in Northern waters in the most destructive manner, scooping up small fry and spoiling spawning grounds. No wonder the Icelanders want to keep them out!

No British fisherman in distress has ever been blacked by the Icelanders - our interests are the same - long term development of fishing resources.

Black the boss - not other fishermen!



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- Friday, November, 17th - Public Meeting "Ireland Today" 7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortress Road, N.E.W. (Near Tuftnell Park Tube Station)
- Sunday, November 19th - Film Show "Salt of the Earth", organised by Liverpool Branch, 7.30 p.m. at the Mitre, Dale Street, Liverpool.
- Friday, November 24th - Albania's National Day, Public Meeting. Film plus speaker recently returned from Youth Conference in Albania, 7.30 p.m. Central Collegiate Theatre, 15 Gordon St., W.C.1 (off Euston Square)
- Friday, December 1st - Public Meeting "Civil Liberties" 7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop
- Friday, December 8th - Film Show 7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop
- Friday, December 15th - Public Meeting "The Role of Social Democracy" 7.30 p.m. Bellman Bookshop

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WHOSE VIOLENCE ?

Another opening of Parliament has come and gone, with less ceremony and without the usual fanfare of trumpets greeting the Queen's speech. Not that there was much to trumpet about in what was said.

And what was that? For the benefit of our readers we quote: "My government will most vigorously pursue policies for the prevention of crime and the treatment of offenders. They are especially concerned at the conti-

nued growth in manifestations of violence".

Well, so are we. Extremely concerned. Concerned about the violence of a million unemployed, the violence of redundancies, the violence of workers being killed on unsafe building sites and in mines, the violence of old age pensioners freezing in their homes during the winter, violence against the homeless, and the violence of the colonial war in Ireland.

queens speech

We the working class say No! to "further reforms in the law and improvements in the administration of justice", for this is capitalism with its back against the wall, not being able to rule in the old way. We are for law and order. But for the law and order of a workers' state.

To achieve this we must counter ruling class violence with revolutionary violence. The working class, with its own party, the Marxist-Leninist party, can sweep capitalism into the incinerator where it belongs.

students rent strike

At the beginning of this term a general meeting of Bristol University students voted in favour of a rent strike against excessive Hall Fees. A committee was elected from the meeting to run the campaign. This follows last year's relatively successful campaign against the government's Student Union proposals, where for the first time a rank and file committee lead the struggle.

Indeed the fight against the government's proposals was a landmark in the student movement as a whole. Past struggle on 'bread and butter' issues, long denigrated as 'non-political', but in reality the only issues on which that struggle can genuinely be based, had been sporadic and isolated. The issue of government control of student unions gave rise to action by students on a scale never seen before, culminating in a one-day national strike on December 8th.

Although the fight for autonomy is in abeyance at the moment, the experience of last year has left its mark. Students have learnt that collective action is the only effective weapon they have. They are still learning how best to use that weapon.

About 300 Hall students have withheld their fees at Bristol, but it is realised that this tactic is not enough on its own and that mass support must be built amongst the students not actually on rent strike. To do this is to ensure both that this campaign will be successful and that in the long run the strength of the student unions will be built for their continuing fight against capitalism.

BUILDING FOR CIVIL WAR

A recent meeting of the Institution of Civil Engineers was told that it should have in mind the security aspect in the construction of public buildings and utilities so that "when such an installation is being designed, consideration should be given to the worldwide growth of violence and its possible eventual arrival in Britain on a large scale". For protection of installations and property it was suggested at the meeting that it should be ensured that buildings, as far as possible, were bomb-proof; that doors were made of steel, that there were few ground-level windows, that equipment should be easily repairable, and that there were adequate fencing and lighting.