

THE WORKER



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WORKERS OF THE WORLD ON THE MARCH

MAY DAY EDITORIAL

THIS May Day finds the British working class in a state of higher political struggle than at any time in its history.

In every region, in all sections, the battle rages.

For over three years the "Worker" has faithfully depicted the twists and turns of this class conflict and has shown how it is organic to revolutionary development in Britain. At the same time we have shown that for this struggle to attain its natural goal—the destruction of capitalism and the victory of socialism—a further step must be taken. The true leaders of our class, the militants on shopfloor, in mine, dock, depot and site, must join in a single party with a single politics—Marxism-Leninism. The building of this party, the Communist Party of Britain Marxist-Leninist, began four years ago and its fruits are already to be seen in the rising political level throughout the land: the Class builds the Party and the Party advances the Class.

The tasks before us are daunting. There is no short cut to socialism. A hundred years of Social Democracy weigh heavy on the working class. We face the oldest and cleverest ruling class in the world—the British Bourgeoisie. On the other hand we have the wisdom that we the workers and our forefathers have gained in struggle. And we can take heart from the successes of our class brothers in other lands. In Europe heroic Albania shines like a beacon. In Asia there is the example of great China. Above all today the matchless warriors of Vietnam, after twenty years of protracted guerrilla warfare, are inflicting final defeat on the U.S. imperialist invader.

On this May Day, 1972, we British Communists re-dedicate ourselves to our revolutionary task.

THE SCENE IS GLORIOUS: THE WORLD OF WORKERS IS ON THE MARCH. ONWARD TO VICTORY!



PEOPLE'S OFFENSIVE IN VIETNAM

VIETNAMESE liberation forces have launched their most powerful attack since the 1968 Tet offensive. The troops of the Saigon puppet government fell back on all fronts, taking their American 'advisors' with them. They were taken completely by surprise by the massive co-ordinated attack on four major fronts.

The massive attack, using tanks and heavy artillery, by the liberation forces is an inevitable part of the strategy

of protracted war — as vital a part as is guerrilla action. The woodworm gnaw the door away — then the boot kicks it in.

In the north of S. Vietnam, the Liberation forces surrounded the cities of Dong Ha and Quang Tri, captured a whole string of fire-bases, shot down 45 aircraft in the first few days, killed or wounded 6,500 enemy troops, and captured or destroyed over 100 tanks and armoured cars. A marine brigade, three infantry regiments and two armoured columns were decimated. The bulk of the 56th regiment of the 3rd infantry division, including the commander and deputy commander, went over to the people's side.

Attack on Kontum

In the Central Highlands, attacks were launched in the Kontum, Dak To and Pleiku areas. Intensive guerrilla activity spread all over the Mekong delta.

To the north-west of Saigon, liberation forces captured the rubber plantation town of Loc Ninh and surrounded the provincial capital of An Loc. A relief column sent towards An Loc was

itself cut off, as liberation forces tightened their grip on Route 13, reaching to within 25 miles of Saigon. At Loc Ninh the Americans attempted to use an experimental 'knockout gas' to rescue 7 'advisors.' The plan was to immobilise the Americans and their captors before landing helicopters. But the plan and the gas backfired, proving again that technology is no substitute for men. The wind created by exploding shells blew the gas off the ground into the helicopters, putting the gunners out of action. The pilots then decided to concentrate on rescuing themselves and turned tail, only pausing to kick off wounded Saigon troops trying to escape.

Even massive U.S. bombing failed to patch up the crumbling puppet armies. Once again the White House dragged out the old lies about "North Vietnamese aggression." Once again they used this to justify air raids on N. Vietnamese cities. Once again the U.S. aircraft were blasted out of the sky.

Ironically, as news of the Vietnamese victories first came through, ex-president Lyndon Johnson had a heart attack. The 1968 Tet offensive showed that even half a million U.S. troops could not save American rule — could not even save the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. Johnson's policy had collapsed. So Nixon fell back on the Vietnam policy of the 'peace-loving' Kennedy. Running the war by remote control, 'Vietnamisation', 'Chang-

ing the colour of the corpses'. The hope was that the combination of Vietnamese puppet troops, U.S. bombs and U.S. money would work where U.S. troops, U.S. bombs and U.S. money had failed.

Mutinous troops

Not that Nixon had much choice. According to Col. Heintz in the U.S. Armed Forces Journal, "By every conceivable indicator, our Army that now remains in Vietnam is in a state approaching collapse, with individual units avoiding or having refused combat, murdering their officers, drug ridden, and dispirited where not near mutinous." At home, the cost of the war hit the already bilious U.S. economy right in the stomach. The almighty dollar now creeps around in fear of the yen. Unemployment marches hand in hand with inflation. Just as in Britain, also fighting an expensive, unpopular brutal colonial war, also doomed to ultimate failure.

In Saigon as in Belfast the propaganda machine chums on. Trying to beautify unmitigated disaster into some semblance of a victory. Nobody has yet dragged out the old LBJ faithful about "light at the end of the tunnel." But the light is there all right. Not the clear light of victory for the U.S. and their handful of corrupt puppets. But the on-rushing headlamp of the approaching express train.

(See also Page 4)

NORTHWEST ENGINEERS OCCUPY FACTORIES

"OUR fight's really started now and it's up to us to carry it through to the end. We have the control and we must be firm on the stand we've taken, all of us, not just the stewards but every worker involved. We've taken the step and we can and will win, let me tell you that."

This was the comment of a Manchester engineering worker, one of the 200,000 workers in the Greater Manchester and North-West area who are involved in an overtime and piece-work ban in support of their present claim. Over 500 factories in the area are affected and already workers have occupied 24 of these after threats of suspension by the management.

The engineers' action comes after a decision by shop-stewards in Manchester on March 13 to bring in the ban from March 27 in support of their claim. The thousand workers at the James Mills Steelworks, Bredbury, Stockport gave a lead to other workers in the area with their occupation of the factory on March 15. Since this, many other occupations have been initiated by workers in the area all after threats of suspension by the employers.

Following the example of the workers at Bredbury, the men at Davies and Metcalf Ltd, also in Stockport, occupied their factory on March 21. Talking about this Eric Woolridge who is a shop steward at the factory told our Worker correspondent:

"It really doesn't matter if the stoppage is a national or local one but at least in the present situation the men are directly in control. When it comes down to it, it's the shopfloor

that really matters — we're the troops in every battle that's fought."

Now the local engineering association is attempting to show a united stand, but is being eaten away by contradictions within itself which workers are and will use to their own advantage. Already nine separate settlements have been made in the area, all conceding the workers' demands, while the employers' association has already expelled one company from its ranks for making a settlement.

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FIGHT WHERE YOU ARE

ENGINEERING and manufacturing are the dominant sectors of any country's economy. The correct guerrilla tactics adopted by the AUEW setting the pace for some four million engineers, will have a vital effect on the struggles of the whole British working class.

End of the Agreement

When the procedure agreement between the Confederation of Engineering Unions and the Engineering Employers Federation came to an end, in spite of interminable discussions nothing could be agreed to take its place. The whole thing broke down and that was the best thing that could have happened. To have given too much importance to those discussions would be as if our Vietnamese comrades were to forget the war while sitting in endless conferences in Paris.

What we have now is organised anarchy. We organised it. We can live with it and fight in it—better than before. The employer can no longer say "you must not stop work. You have not gone through the procedure"—not that workers ever took notice of such things anyway. Now workers no longer chafed under Union strictures imposed by the agreement.

And The Federation?

When the Federation made its ludicrous offer of £1.50 to the thirteen point claim, the Union walked out on them. That was the end of attempts to reach a national settlement and, effectively, the end of the Employers Federation. What the Executive of the Union was saying to the members, endorsed by the National Committee, was this: "You are free to fight where you are, in the factories, on all or any part of the claim, depending on local conditions and your own preparedness to struggle. Furthermore, if the employer tries to take action against you, lock you out etc., you are guaranteed our support—even strike pay—though we'll never buy our way out of capitalism. Go and make it where you work, at the point of production. Select your arena and fight as you will."

This was not, as some have claimed, an abrogation of leadership but putting leadership back where it belongs on the factory floor. It was never leaders who got anything for workers anyway but workers themselves by their own level of struggle.

A New Workers' Offensive

What this amounts to is guerrilla struggle in the protracted war the workers are waging against their class enemy. Each factory is a base and the workers there a guerrilla band to probe the weaknesses of the employers, to decide what issues they are prepared to fight hardest for, when to attack, when to break off and continue the struggle by other means, how to keep their forces intact and their morale high.

In these developments our party, the CPB(M-L), has played its full part and made its contribution by deriving from the experience of the working class in constant struggle the principles of this kind of warfare.

In the battle that has now begun there are many dangers. There are those who pretend to be with the workers who do not like this kind of fighting where it is no longer possible to make militant noises while avoiding the risk of getting bloodied up. They would like to cause just enough disturbance to make the employers send up a smoke signal and ask the Union leaders back to accept another half crown as the price of industrial peace.

Our task is to stop that. Our job is to make sure that there is protracted war, that we will not assault frontally at this stage of the battle, that we will split the employers and use their own trick of divide and rule.

In Sheffield and Manchester there was an attempt to do the opposite of guerrilla war by putting in a single claim irrespective of the state of various factories and the level of struggle in them. It was an attempt to substitute the region for the nation and go back to the old form of letting the generals on both sides decide the matter without the troops having a say.

But the occupations and sit-ins in the Manchester area are a run away thing now. The workers are engaged in making their own fight in their own place of work and have broken out of any attempt to regiment them in such a way that the employers could regroup and knock them off. Already there have been some 70 odd settlements of employers buying out of the struggle and conceding more than any national settlement could have won—not because of the "leadership" in that area but because of the level of struggle at the point of production.

The forms of struggle adopted by engineers in the region are spreading elsewhere. In Wolverhampton there are major battles and real struggle is always highly contagious.

Fast Enough?

If engineering workers seem a bit slow off the mark in this guerrilla offensive, it is because they think things through for themselves. The working class is not a light switch to be turned on or off by any would-be leaders. When Union leaders said "go back to work" they often did not do so. Now that they are told "Fight it out where you are" they hesitate. They are not puppets. Nor are they gladiators putting on a show for anyone else's benefit and waiting for someone else's thumbs up or thumbs down on their struggle.

The influence of social democracy and revisionism has always been for living with capitalism, not destroying it. Workers are still learning that the simplest thing is to have done with it. No one sets out to resolve a question till he has to. The working class is at a higher level of political struggle than ever before and it is the job of Marxist-Leninists to make sure that they are in front, not at the back.

Some people, usually those who are not working and are not in unions, talk about the weaknesses of economic struggle. These are only "bread and butter" issues they say. The slogan for the October Revolution was "Bread, peace and land". It is an act of treason against the working class to describe their travails as only "economic".



Workers in China run their own factories and are involved in every stage of production from planning to final output. There is no unemployment in industry nor on the land. Indeed there is a labour shortage since no other limit is put on the production of goods for the use of the people.

STATE TRIES TO RAILROAD WORKERS

THE Government and their Industrial Relations Court have decided that it is illegal for the railwaymen to work to rule. Not only is this a gross insult to anyone intelligent, it also shows the vicious repression that British capitalism is resorting to. The Government as political representatives of the ruling class have launched an attack not only on the railwaymen but on the entire working class.

To try to enforce laws that can make illegal even to refuse to work overtime shows that the employing class intend that workers should have no more rights than a medieval serf. In its decay capitalism tries more and more to solve its insoluble problems by means of direct repression and state control.

The Government has taken a clear political decision to try and break the organised strength of the working class, for the

£4 million at stake in the rail dispute is for them mere peanuts in overall economic terms. They are trying to transform, by legal threats and blackmail, the trade unions from being the organs of mass struggle of our class into mere appendages of the capitalist state, as was Dr. Ley's Labour Front in Nazi Germany.

But the British trade unions were born in illegal struggle. Such actions by the state can only result in the growth of political understanding in our class. The employing class and its political and legal backs are merely hammering the nails in their own coffins.

Even as the rail unions executives were coming to their decision to accept the courts ruling a clear class line was

beginning to emerge from the railworkers, as one NUR branch secretary put it—"We fought the Nazi Government in the

last war and we'll fight this one as well.

The virtual shutdown of the Southern Region on Monday 24th April, showed the strength the railmen have - if they are prepared to use it. The railmen now face difficult tactical decisions, for it is clear that the working class is now fighting under new conditions, and obviously this requires a development of tactics. But foremost in the railmen's mind, as they face this situation, should be the fact that the members are the unions and not just the executives and that the strength of the unions derives from the actions of the members not the words of the executives.

This is precisely what the Liverpool dockers are demonstrating in continuing to black container lorries whatever pressures are brought on the union leadership to make them call it off.

It is also said that in this new offensive based on shop floor leadership the weak sections will go to the wall. But if we base our struggle on the weakest we will never advance. Their lot depends on the strong, not the other way around. By acts of solidarity with the strong who are in struggle the weak will gain the strength to fight themselves.

On With Protracted War

Fines, injunctions and cooling-off periods imposed on workers by the capitalist government on behalf of the employing class it serves will not keep workers down. (And those who mindlessly shout Tory out, Labour in! should remember that cooling-off periods like so much else the Tories are imposing were a Labour invention.) The right kind of offensive against the Industrial Relations Act is to fight it where you are, where you work—in exactly the same way as you fight the employer who has to rely on the Act because of his weakness against you.

We workers have set ourselves a new law. We are against the violence of capitalism.

THE working class is in a state of great struggle. It is in a state of outlawry. It is the duty of the party of the working class, the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist), to use and be involved in all forms of struggle, working in the unions and engaging in industrial action with all workers. There is the need for a long period of education for us all, Party and working class as a whole, gathering strength preparing for the final overthrow of capitalism.



ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

1971 had 13½ million days of strikes—the highest since 1926. But in just the first two months of 1972 there were 12 million days of strikes. Most of this upsurge was of course due to the miners' strike.

Cowley

Four sit-ins and a strike in one week! This was the British Leyland Maxi and Marina body plant at Cowley, Oxford. Rejecting an offer of an increase from £42 to £44.20 for day-shift workers, which had already been accepted by the assembly plant across the road, the 2,000 workers have been going slow and operating an overtime ban. On Monday 10 April the management threatened to suspend the men for "crippling disruption". So the day shift followed their mass meeting by a sit-in. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday—same thing. On the Friday they simply went on strike.

C.A. Parsons

Another punch-up between C.A. Parsons and its technicians. The company has plans to close its drawing office at Epsom, Kent, making 60 redundant. The Technical and Supervisory section of the AUEW is already involved in a dispute with Parsons over 950 threatened redundancies in the N. East and over the closed shop principle, which Parsons is referring to the National Industrial Relations Court (Instant Injunctions Ltd). The technicians are imposing sanctions including an overtime ban and a boycott of non-union technical staff. 100 were 'sacked' for this on April 18, another 300 on the 19. But the workers refused to leave.

Smiths

70 toolroom workers at Smith's factory in Cricklewood have been on strike for over a month as part of the engineers' campaign. They have rejected two offers, both falling short of the £8 demand.

Financial support has been promised by other workers in the district—but the best form of solidarity is to take action where you are. At the same time, Smiths Industries has threatened 300 redundancies in the next year at its Witney car heater factory. Last autumn there were 400 redundancies announced there.

But this and the 21% settlement have not put an end to the miners' struggle.

Already the Kent area of the N.U.M. has called for £7 increases in the present minimum rates of £23 for surface workers and £25 for underground, and for the power loading minimum of £34.50 to be raised to £40 a week.

Electricians

Site electricians are breaking through the straightjacket of their Joint Industry Board. In the N.E., on the Aican smelter site, Bailey's paid electricians an extra 15 pence an hour, following a strike. The employers, with their backs to the wall, have been forced to concede an escape clause—the Special Sites Agreement. So now the stronger sites can win more money. This brings up the level of the whole and signals the beginning of the end for the J.I.B.

But the wounded beast still has poisonous teeth. Another battle to go above J.I.B. rates has been the marathon struggle at the Inland Revenue Office computer site at Bootle. There McAlpin have been forced to pay building workers £48.35 for 44 hours. But James Scott & Co. only pays electricians £27.78 for 44½ hours. The electricians on the I.R.O. site kicked off the struggle for rates above J.I.B. with the demand of a 40-hour week at £1 an hour back in February 1971. After 25 weeks they returned for talks. 7 weeks later they were sacked. Reinstated, they were on strike again in October.

As a result, the I.R.O. site chairman and spokesman J. Byrne was the first to be victimised under the J.I.B. 'legally binding' Rule 21. He has had all J.I.B. benefits suspended for 6 months after he returns to work. But the struggle still goes on at Bootle. There will be a demonstration there on June 9. And at a recent conference of site representatives in Liverpool the decision to use industrial action at the strongest sites was taken. Taking the fight back where it belongs—the only place victories can be won. Not the negotiation rooms, but the sites.

OUTLAWS OR SLAVES

FROM THE WORKERS TO THE WORKERS

In the last few weeks we have seen a Lord Chief Justice huddled off to Northern Ireland to do a white-wash job on the blood-stained British occupation forces, a sitting of the House of Commons at which Tory and Labour MPs fell all over themselves "legalising" all the illegal acts which that occupation army had been carrying out against the Irish people and now an Industrial Relations Court obediently handing down decision after decision against workers at the behest of a capitalist Government and the employers whose interests it serves.

Once it required a bit of Marxist subtlety to expose the class nature of the state and the fact that the laws of the land operated in favour of

property against the working people. Today there can hardly be a worker in the country, certainly not a miner, engineer or railman, who can have any illusions about the "impartiality" of arbitration tribunals or any other agencies of the capitalist state. Bourgeois "democracy" has always been democracy for the bourgeoisie. Its character as also a dictatorship over the working class has now become glaringly obvious.

Once working class militancy and the reaction to it makes it impossible to present the state and the judiciary as standing above the class struggle, it becomes necessary to deny class struggle itself.

This is where the corporate state comes in. The corporate state is

based on the false assumption that there are no fundamental class distinctions and the whole people, whether they own factories or only work in them, have the same interests. That is why the anti-working class acts of the Government are being presented as "safeguarding the interests of the people against irresponsible trade union leaders" and "protecting the community from blackmail by militant sections of the labour movement".

But the establishment of the corporate state depends on smashing or transforming the trade unions as working class organisations. The Nazi Party in Germany was only a gang of street thugs till the industrial barons of the Ruhr began pouring money into the Party coffers in exchange

for a promise to break the power of the trade unions.

In "law-abiding Britain" as it is hopefully called, the Industrial Relations Court has been enlisted to do here what Nazi thugs did in Germany.

The dictatorship of the bourgeoisie exists as long as the capitalist system remains unsmashed. The corporate state can only come into full being with the acquiescence of at least a large section of the working class.

Let it be clearly realised on this May Day, 1972, that given only the alternatives between crawling on their bellies in obedience to capitalist laws and becoming outlaws in pursuit of their legitimate class aims there is no doubt that the workers of Britain will choose.

AS a regular feature of our paper we print interviews with workers involved in class struggle, so that we may learn from each other's experiences in different sectors of what is all the same fight. These articles are reports from the front in the guerrilla war the working class wages daily with the employing class and the capitalist government which serves its interests.

An interview with Alec Reese, Works Convenor at the occupied James Mills Steelworks, Bredbury, Stockport and Chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee.

Q. What were the events leading up to the occupation of the factory?

A. Originally our action in support of the claim was due to begin on Monday, March 27. This date had been fixed by a meeting of engineering shop stewards from the North-west in Manchester on March 13 and this decision was put to the shopfloor here the following night. The men decided not to wait until then and a resolution was carried that our action begin from the following day, 15th March. This decision was reported to the management on March 15 who subsequently threatened to suspend any man complying with this decision. On hearing this the shopfloor unanimously voted to implement the resolution and by noon the whole factory was suspended pending dismissal. By 4 p.m. production was suspended and it was decided to occupy the factory. A notice was subsequently sent to all the employees informing them that they had been laid off. This notice was dated 20th March but postmarked March 17.

Q. Why do you consider that the occupation of the factory was the best thing to do in these circumstances?

A. First and foremost: we are in a factory and can see what the management are doing. If we occupy they can't do a thing, we're there to see to that. But if we're outside in the picket line we don't know what's going on. They could bring in lorries at night and suddenly get products out with a police escort.

Q. What have been the employers' tactics against the men?

A. Nothing. They haven't done anything because they can't. The employers have kept the rolling mill open but we are asking the lorry drivers to support us. One driver phoned up his boss and told him about the occupation and our request for support and the boss told him that there were many people looking for a job like his and that he could easily do without him. My answer to his boss was that there are many transport companies to choose from and if he's sacked then we'll make sure your contract is withdrawn. It's as simple as that. We have complete control of the factory and all that goes in and out of it.

Q. Have the employers made any new offer since the occupation began?

A. No, they're sitting back at present. Our particular boss is a hard-liner. He's not going to give in without a fight.

Q. When would you stop the occupation?

A. When the employers have given a firm realistic offer on our claim. The shop stewards are always available.

Q. What sort of support have you received from other workers in the area?

A. We have had lots of support and other workers have taken over too. The finest support has come from Metcalf's and Mirlees, where the workers have occupied both companies factories in the area. Other firms are already on day work - the important thing is that we're not going it alone.

Q. How is the occupation being run?

A. The whole factory has been split into nine shifts. This means that the men come in only once every three days, one day in and two days at home. During the day there are 100 at a time in the factory. Two stewards are in charge of each shift and the men report on and off to them. Gangs of workers have been organised to deal with things like sanitary arrangements and keeping areas clean while others pass the time talking, and playing cards.

Q. What is the morale of the workers like in the factory?

A. Let me tell you one thing. Mr. Morton, the president of the local employers association, is quoted as saying that he is sure the vast majority of workers are reluctant martyrs, most of them just wanting to get back to work. This is the biggest load of rubbish he's ever said. Of course we want to work but we are not going to work for peanuts anymore. We are prepared to stick this out to the bitter end. You know that we've been refused dough. A test case about this is coming up soon though. I myself got 80p from the Social Security last week. Others got 70 and 75 pence. I've never seen the morale so high here. The feeling of the lads is we either win or lose and we're going to stick it out to the end. The dispute's official now also. We have the unity of the shop stewards from the two unions at the factory over this and this is something we've never had before.

Q. What is your attitude to the Industrial Relations Act?

A. We don't recognise it, we don't respect it. We don't want to know about it and we'll do anything to bring it down.

NO GO FOR 'OMO'

DOES 'OMO' sound like a brand of soap-powder to you? Actually it's a brilliant new idea adopted by the Tyneside Passenger Transport Executive: One Man Bus Operation. In the past the T.P.T.E. had a policy of high fares and low wages which angered passengers and busmen alike, and led to a two-week strike.

Then came new wonder 'OMO'. The T.P.T.E. gave a £5 per week rise to the drivers and threw in a productivity deal, and with staff shortages in the area there seemed no threat of unemployment.

But the words on the packet were never matched by the contents. One Man Buses are nerve-racking not only for the harried drivers but also for the passengers who have to wait longer and travel like sardines. The introduction of 'OMO' has also resulted in much less casual labour being taken on - once a traditional way of relieving the swollen Newcastle

dole queues. More seriously 'OMO' has started a spate of sackings of conductors for the most trivial reasons: - no collar and tie is a severe offence; so too are 'shorts' over 50p - the 'checkies' are having a field day! Thus unemployment has increased even without redundancies whilst inflation has seen the bonuses evaporate.

On the eve of mass conversion to 'OMO' what is being done? Organised opposition amongst the busmen has not been strong, and victimization by management has weakened the will of those who originally opposed. Militants are confident that solid support can be gathered, but it must be gathered quickly. Individuals cannot struggle alone; action must be taken by the mass of the Union. T.P.T.E. have shown their interest in higher profits - the busmen will show their interest in a living wage and a secure job.

NORTHWEST ENGINEERS

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The employers have made it clear through the association that they intend to break the workers' action but the workers can see their bosses' confusion and contradictions with each other. It is up to them to make the very best of this as they surely will.

One of the many engineering workers involved in this struggle told us: "These occupations aren't just something on their own, separate from other matters. We should see them as a part of the fight, our fight to get rid of this rotten system once and for all. The occupation is one of the tactics we can use, like the boss uses his own tactics against us. It's a war we're fighting against the leeches on our backs - the bosses - and it will be a long one. We must see our struggles as part of this fight to get them off for good."

No to Peanuts

At the G.K.N. Factory in Bredbury, Stockport, the feeling is one of great militancy, one worker said that they would either win or be out in the dole queues. They said that the firm will not close down the

factory because it is much too profitable and half a million pounds worth of equipment has just been installed. As for the press they always took the side of the bosses as did the Labour Party.

One worker said the Labour Party was a fraud and he said that nobody voted in the elections from this factory. They were quick to point out that workers of many different races were united together in the struggle - West Indians, Pakistanis, Poles, etc.

The employers made an offer of £1.50p. raised to £1.75p, but it was still totally unacceptable. Most of the men have take-home pay of about £19-£23. The security guard there works seven days a week with £20 take home pay - £5 on rent, leaving £15 for wife and children. The men are not going to work for peanuts anymore. At the moment they are trying to organise entertainment for the workers sitting in.

Worse than 30s

At Mirlees Blackstone Ltd., about 2 thousand workers are involved with the dispute.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MAY 5th, FRIDAY. MEETING ON IRELAND, 7.30 p.m. at Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5.

MAY 6th, SATURDAY. JUMBLE SALE, SOUTH LONDON BRANCH, 2 p.m. at Old Peoples Hall, London Road, Mitcham.

MAY 12th, FRIDAY. MEETING ON ALBANIA, a delegate to the May Day Celebrations in Tirana reports on his visit, 7.30 p.m. at Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5.

MAY 19th, FRIDAY. MEETING ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT, 7.30 p.m. at Bellman Bookshop 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5.

MAY 26th, FRIDAY. Film - to be announced, 7.30 p.m. at Bellman Bookshop, 155 Fortess Road, N.W.5.

PALESTINE WEEK

SUNDAY, MAY 14th. Demonstration to Israeli and Jordanian embassies (Assemble Speakers Corner 2.30 p.m.)

MONDAY, MAY 15th. Palestine Day Public Meeting, 7.30 p.m. at Central London Poly. New Cavendish Street, W.C.1.

TUESDAY, MAY 16th. Films on Palestine and Dnofar, 7.30 p.m. at Collegiate Theatre, University College, Gordon Street, W.C.1.

TUESDAY MAY 16th & WEDNESDAY, MAY 17th photo Exhibition in Collegiate Theatre Foyer Tuesday, 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Wednesday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.



WHERE IT ALL STARTED Workers of the G.K.N. Steel Factory, J. Mills Ltd., at Bredbury, who started the occupations in the Manchester area.

The sit-in has been organised on the basis of 24 hour shifts - this saves the workers the cost of bus fares and petrol. Each shift has 200 workers coming in, and domestic shifts to organise things like sanitary arrangements and to keep the factory in good order. After 3 weeks the men are still 100% behind their claim, the turnout for each shift being virtually 100%. The morale is 'very very good', entertainments being cards, darts, t.v. etc.

So far the employers have not made any new offers, but refuse to heat the factory even though there are some workers not involved with the dispute coming in for

work. The Lawrence Scott Electro-motors factory has been occupied by 520 men. One said "We're worse off now than we were in the 1930's. The young people want to wake up and start fighting or this country is going to be hell to live in, in 20 years time.

So far the men have rejected two offers. One was £2 a week increase for skilled workers down to £1.50p for women and unskilled labour, the other for a £2 increase straight across the board plus 1 day extra holiday a year (paid). "After this we're going to stick out for the original claim (£4 a week increase plus 35 hour week) or nothing."



ON THE SOUTH VIETNAM BATTLEFRONT

Pham Cao Thuong (left), 23, 7th company deputy-commander of the Liberation Army in Northern Quang Tri (South Vietnam). Under his command his unit fought for 24 days and nights running, on a hill in the Highway 9 area, contributing to wiping out 2,300 enemy troops, shooting down three planes, setting ablaze 10 tanks and armoured cars, and 5 militancy vehicles. His unit was recently honoured "Hero Unit of the South Vietnam P.L.A.F."

TENANTS LAY SEIGE

"I don't think they'll forget that for a while," said one tenant as 1500 people from Worsley in Lancs lifted their 3-hour seige of Worsley town hall. Despite torrential rain the tenants had surrounded the building to let councillors know precisely how they felt about rent increases due under the Housing Finance Bill.

Missiles, backed up by loud jeering had greeted the appearance of the council chairman at an upstairs window. But even the hastily summoned posse of police failed to prevent tenants from effectively blocking all exits from the hall. Thus coun-

CORRECTION
SEVERAL editions of "The British Working Class and Its Party" have been produced since it was adopted by the Second Congress of the C.P.B.M.L. In one edition the word "not" was left out of the following sentence in the section headed Trade Unions and Class Struggle: "of course the Trade Unions will not destroy capitalism." We apologise for the omission, which contradicts the line of the document, and request readers to correct their copies.

DEATH OF AN ARMY

AMERICA is fighting a "secret war" in Laos. But it's no secret that it's losing. The U.S. has been practically unable to scrape up a proper puppet army from the Lao people. (Unless you count an army of corrupt generals squabbling over U.S. bribes in the safety of their villas) So since 1961 dollars have been poured into the pockets of French-trained General Vang Pao to buy a "secret army" of Meo tribesmen.

The cost has been heavy. But heaviest for the Meo people. Their economy has been destroyed. It is said that Meo children believe that rice comes from the sky "because that's the only way they've ever received it." Nearly all the conscripts are children nowadays. When asked what had happened to the adult Meo recruits the general said "They're all dead."

In 1961 the army numbered approximately 15,000 regulars. Now it is down to 3,000. The gap has been filled by importing 8,000 Thai mercenaries from the military government in Thailand, although this has its own problems, with the guerrilla struggle in Thailand spreading to 38 provinces and wiping out over 1,700 troops. The quality of these "fighters for the Free World" can be judged from an American official's admission that "Most of the Thais don't even

know what country they're in." These troops too have been unable to stop the Pathet Lao advances.

Since the "dry season" attacks began in November, the Lao people have smashed 34 enemy battalions, including 13 Thai battalions. In all over 9,000 enemy troops, including about 2,800 Thai mercenaries have been killed, wounded or captured. The advance from the Plain of Jars has now cut vital Route 13 linking the administrative capital, Vientiane to the royal capital, Luang Prabang. Although U.S. bombing has now made Laos the most heavily bombed country in the history of war, this has not saved the puppets or stopped the clamour for more bombing. As one of Vang Pao's majors said "Our backs are on the wall. This is our last stand. We must have B-52 support or we cannot last." But no amount of bombing can stop a people determined to win their freedom.

Meanwhile, to the south in Cambodia, the second anniversary of the U.S. inspired coup was marked by an attack by liberation forces on the northwestern areas of the capital Phnom Penh. The radio station was put out of action and once again the airfield was devastated. Puppet president Lon Nol admitted the popular support for the guerrillas by blaming the attack on "subversive elements" within the capital.

Direct rule-naked oppression

IN August 1969 troops were sent to Northern Ireland by a Labour Government. Some people in Britain calling themselves 'socialists' welcomed this development. They believed the British Army would protect the Irish people against attacks from the Stormont regime, its discrimination in jobs and housing, its police brutality.

We in the Communist Party of Britain (Marxist-Leninist) saw the situation for what it was. Stormont was Westminster's foreman, obeying master's orders. That being so, troops were being sent in to prop up, not weaken, the crumbling Unionist edifice. In August 1969 we said: 'We condemn the despatch of the British troops to Ulster by the Westminster Government. It is an act designed to save a puppet government no longer able to govern'.

Heath and Wilson have now come to the conclusion that the puppet government has no more life left in it. Therefore direct rule has been imposed, putting straight into the hands of British ministers command over Special Powers, shoot to kill, and internment. With direct rule, the chicken of fascism has come home to roost. Yet our so-called 'socialists' are making the same mistakes all over again. They argue that Westminster rule will be more 'just', more 'impartial'. What they mean is they hope direct rule will 'calm the situation', and so destroy the Irish people's struggle for total liberation of their country.

Such mistakes stem from illusions about the British State, which exists to protect and defend British capitalism and its interests abroad, and

shield it from attacks by the working classes of all countries that it exploits. Westminster rule can't give the Irish people 'civil rights' because, as workers in this country are discovering the only rights they have are those they have won through struggle. Pte Derry was fought for, not given away. When Whitlaw promotes his message of peace, he is counselling workers in Ireland to lay down their arms and face bareheaded the assaults of Army guns and tanks, till Northern Ireland is cleaned up again for British capitalist enterprises.

Direct rule means the British now have no need to go through any legal process, however corrupt. With Westminster in direct control of 'law and order', people in struggle, like Joseph McCann, Staff Officer of the IRA Officials, Belfast, can be gunned down, walking unarmed in the street. The people of the Falls Road soon showed what they thought of this new 'peace policy'. On Sunday 16 April, the day after McCann's murder, they attacked the Army of occupation, killing three soldiers. Shoot to kill works both ways. The Irish people refuse to give up the fight, whatever left opportunists may tell them.

Our demand in the CPB(M-L) remains what it has always been—complete withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland, so that the Irish people can start running their own affairs, after 800 years of imperialist oppression by Britain.

IRELAND UPON THE DISSECTING TABLE CONNOLLY ON ULSTER AND PARTITION
Send 25c to the CORK WORKERS CLUB
9, St. Nicholas Church Place, Cork.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF JAMES CONNOLLY

THE C.P.B.M.L. on the anniversary of the death, the murder, of James Connolly, that great Irish soldier, socialist and leader, pay tribute to all those sons and daughters of Ireland, both dead and alive, who have fought and continue to fight for the political and economic freedom of Ireland, for an Irish Socialist Republic.

In paying tribute we put on record the words from the Manifesto of Connolly's own party, the Irish Socialist Republican Party, for here in lies the reasons for the 1916 Rebellion and the subsequent murder of James Connolly by the bullets of British imperialism:

"The struggle for Irish freedom has two aspects — it is national and it is social. Its national ideal can never be realised until Ireland stands forth before the world a nation free and independent. It is social and economic, because no matter what the form of government may be, as long as one class own as private property the land and instruments of labour from which all mankind derive their substance, that class will always have power to plunder the remainder of their fellow-creatures".

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INDIAN REVOLUTION SURGES AHEAD

ON the occasion of the third anniversary of the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist) on April 22, 1969 CPBML sends its warmest revolutionary greetings under the leadership of Comrade Chau Mazumdar the Party has led the revolution despite tremendous hardship and fascist terror unleashed by the Indian government and all kinds of disruptive moves by the enemies of communism.

Peoples Liberation Army

Although the press and other media keep quiet about what goes on inside India there has been no let up in the revolutionary tide since 'Naxalbari'. The formation of the IPLA on December 1, 1970 following on a

great victory at Magurjan, also in North Bengal, has meant a tremendous advance for the revolution. Throughout West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and the Punjab, revolutionary peasant committees have been formed with their own militia, own hospitals, schools and even post-offices. Land has been distributed and the formation of a red base area is that much closer.

Workers' Struggle

The Indian revolution is to be waged by the working class in the lead and the peasantry as its main ally. Already life-and-death struggles have been taking place in key industrial areas as for example the main munitions plant outside Calcutta and in Durgapur,

the key steel centre of West Bengal.

Fascist Repression

While the Indian Government churns out its nauseating propaganda about safeguarding democracy in someone else's country — East Pakistan — inside its own domain it exercises naked terror. Every repressive law used by the British has been brought back and under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act, persons are detained and kept in prison without trial for 3, 7 or 10 years. The very possession of Party literature means possible imprisonment.

As the facade of parliamentary democracy wears thin orders have been given to the police, paramilitary and armed forces to shoot on sight anyone suspected of being a

"Naxalite." Thousands of villagers and workers and their families have been killed, their homes burnt and their women raped. Communist detainees and prisoners have been beaten to death and tortured by methods ranging from medieval to the modern American techniques being used in Vietnam. Right now two Communist leaders, heroes of the struggle in Sriakulam, South India, await death by hanging — Comrades Nagabhushan Patnaik and Appala Surya.

Revolution Marches On

But the movement does not falter. Where one peasant falls in struggle more come forward to take his place. They are marching on...