

THE WORKER

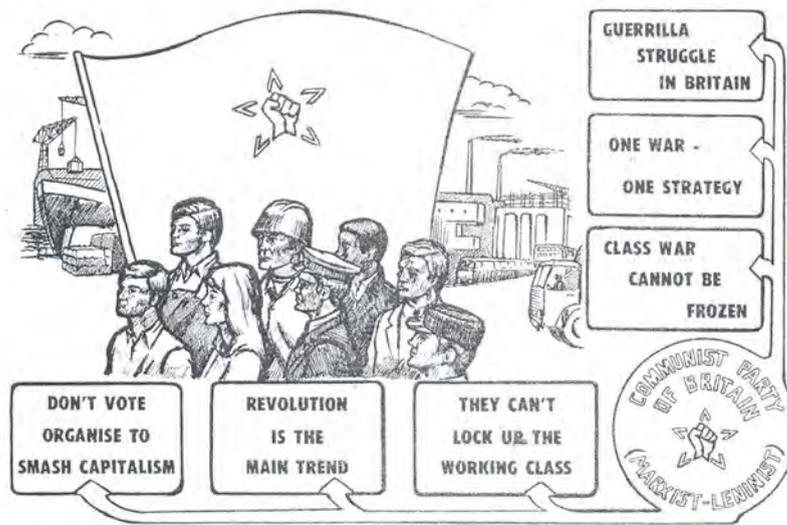


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No.10



May Day is International Workers' Day. In this issue we carry news from the many fronts of World Revolution. In Britain, thanks to the Working Class taking charge, for the first time we have a May Day work stoppage called for by the TUC. The political level is rising, in Britain and around the world.

C.P.B.M-L. 5 YEARS OLD

April has always been the month of rebirth, of life renewing itself after the dead time of winter. Our ancestors marked the Easter festival and May Day with celebration of the abundance and fertility of nature and man's power to endure.

Christianity borrowed Easter with its theme of death and rebirth. But Christianity is a passing phase and Easter will be celebrated long after that particular religious episode has been forgotten.

At Easter 1968 the British Working Class gave birth to its political party, the Communist Party of Britain Marxist Leninist. The date will go down in history as indicating a stage in the ideological development of a people.

This was a birth, because never before had there been a Party absolutely identified with the class interests of the Working Class.

It was also a rebirth, because the revolutionary character of the British Working Class has never been in doubt. The question was not whether but when.

April in Capitalism is a bitter season. 'the cruellest month' because it should be the kindest. Our winter of wage slavery has lasted very long. The modern wasteland created by Capitalism is not dependent on the seasons; April can wash away the detritus of winter but not the scars left by Capital. The blight lies heavy on us, morally and intellectually as well as materially. Waste of land. Waste of resources. Waste of intellect. 'They make a desert and they call it peace,' said the Roman.

In the last decade there has been a worldwide rebirth. The great fight of China and Albania against international revisionism, the victory for Marxism-Leninism in Vietnam, have started an ideological cleansing for workers throughout the world which is still going on.

We in Britain are a part of this process, as are the new Marxist-Leninist parties in many countries. The CPBML has grown very rapidly both in numbers and ideologically. In relation to the tasks which lie before us, however, it is both small and backward. Yet this Party is the most precious possession of the British Working Class for it embodies the class aspiration to end for all time the exploitation of man by man, to enter upon the new day of Socialism.

On this our Fifth Birthday, our fifth, May Day, we re-dedicate ourselves as fighters in the ranks of the world revolution as British Marxist-Leninists.

ENGINEERS STAND FIRM

The engineers continue with their resolute opposition to the Industrial Relations Act and all other attempts to hold down workers, and their wages. Their policy-making body, the National Committee, meeting at Torquay, reaffirmed their

total opposition to the Industrial Relations Act and of non-cooperation with all its aspects. It congratulates Executive Council on their courageous stand in giving effect to those policies by refusing to recognise the National Industrial Relations Act or to pay the fines imposed. Executive Council is instructed to continue with the policy of total non-cooperation until the Act is removed from the Statute Book and to raise the matter again with the T.U.C. with a view to all affiliated Unions adopting a similar stand and refusing to appear before, or be represented at, the N.I.R.C.

Their actions against the Act have already frightened employers and government away from using it. But the battle does not end there. The resolution continues

In furtherance of these aims, Executive Council is instructed to initiate mass action on as wide a front as possible, including mass meetings throughout the country to generate support, to mobilise through the T.U.C. the whole Trade Union Movement in concerted acts of defiance, and to support by all means, including industrial action and financial help, any Union or trade unionists penalised under the Act.

Finally we pledge ourselves to defend the policy of this Union and its Rules against any attempts to destroy them and call on the members to maintain the democracy of our Union in face of the dictates of the Industrial Relations Act

Cutting through the social-democratic rubbish about all troubles being due to the 'wicked Tory Government', the resolution on the wage freeze says that

This National Committee is totally opposed to the Tory Government's attempt, or any other Government's attempt, to freeze wages. It rejects Phase 7 of the Government's policy on Prices and Incomes on the basis that it is direct interference with the principles of free collective bargaining and that its main aim is to control wages rather than prices, thereby seriously reducing the living standards of our members.

A clear warning is given to any who seek to negotiate away the rights of the working class and its standard of living:

Accordingly, in instructing the Executive Council to reject this unjust law, we further instruct them to press the T.U.C. not to participate in any discussions with the Government on any form of wage freeze and to declare that we will not be bound by any decisions arising from talks between the T.U.C., the C.B.I. and the Government which would place restrictions, voluntary or imposed, upon the free collective bargaining of wages and conditions.

Once again the engineers are proving to be a rock on which government policy and class collaboration are foundering.

Celebrate May Day Conway Hall 7-30pm

RED-LION SQUARE,
HOLBORN,
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Rebuilding Cambodia despite bombs

As the liberation forces of Cambodia sweep the country with victory after victory, capturing the coastal city of Kep, the people in the liberated areas are building the countryside, restoring and developing agriculture everywhere.

As a result of the exorbitant taxes and numerous levies by the US puppet regime large tracts of farmland were laid waste and seafood production fell off. On top of all this the people are brutally suppressed.

In the liberated areas, the National United Front has distributed the land to the peasants. It also helps them to set up labour exchange teams, mutual aid groups and supply and marketing cooperatives and to surmount difficulties arising from lack of seeds, buffaloes and farm tools. A campaign for higher yield of rice has been launched. Cadres at all levels and front-line combatants make use of the intervals between fighting to go among the masses and join them in reclaiming wasteland, building dykes and dams and digging canals and ditches. The liberated zones have become self-sufficient in grain supply and sometimes have a surplus. Traditional fish products have been restored and developed.

In the past, in the mountainous areas of Cambodia there were acute shortages of salt, cloth and other daily necessities. Prices were vastly inflated. Many people suffered from dropsy as they could not afford to buy salt. Many had no clothes to wear. After the establishment of the people's regime, supply and marketing cooperatives have been organised in the villages. Now, despite enemy raids and bombing, people in the mountainous areas can buy salt, cloth, medicine and farm tools in local cooperatives.

The concern for the masses shown by the people's regime has immensely stimulated the enthusiasm of the people to increase production and support the struggle against US aggression.

Soviet imperialism or Albanian internationalism

Speaking at Vlorë, the hero city, on the occasion of the 28th anniversary of the liberation of Albania, Enver Hoxha, First Secretary of the Party of Labour of Albania, recalled an incident during the visit to Vlorë in 1959 of the arch revisionist Khrushchev.

Looking over the magnificent bay of Vlorë Khrushchev expressed his wonder at the sight. His collaborator, Marshal Malinovsky, said to him: "From the bay of Vlorë we have the entire Mediterranean in the palm of our hand."

"They had only the wind in the palm of their hand," Enver Hoxha pointed out, "because our Party and Government destroyed their plans. Vlorë will never be in the hands of foreigners."

And in Butrint in the southern part of Albania, Malinovsky told



Enver Hoxha is greeted by a group of Albanian children and workers

Khrushchev: "This is a beautiful lake. If the sea-coast is pierced through nearby, a magnificent submarine base could be built and then Greece, too, would be ours."

But Enver Hoxha remembered a dark night in Tirana during the occupation of Albania when together with Vasil Shanto they pasted up posters "Down with Italian fascism! Long live the

fraternal Greek people fighting for freedom..." "No," he said, "our Party and Government would never allow evil to come from the country of olives to the fraternal Greek people!"

Palestine - Imperialism and terrorism

The flagrant invasion of Lebanon by several companies of Israeli commandos resulted in the deaths of 3 Palestinian leaders, 15 others, and several buildings destroyed by bombs. A woman was mowed down by bullets as she opened the door of her flat. The Israelis were attempting to exterminate the Palestinian resistance but will pay dearly for their atrocities.

When the attacks were finally beaten off, 7,000 Lebanese and Palestinian students took to the streets and shouted "Down with imperialism". They had good

cause to. It is the United States which supplies Israel with an uninterrupted flow of money and weapons. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union provides the manpower, especially military specialists, with its emigrants to Israel. Imperialism, using its protege Zionism, masterminded the coup. Terrorism is a manner of fighting belonging to imperialism. Only it has millions of dollars at its disposal, the backing of helicopters and gun boats, and a complete disregard for human life.

No such weapon is available

to the Palestinians. Their strength lies in the masses of people who live in refugee camps, who have seen their land seized, their houses demolished, and have been subjected to repeated persecution by the Zionists. It

was from these masses that were born the guerrillas and in quick retaliation for the latest barbarity they launched several attacks on the aggressor troops in the Golan heights and elsewhere.



Cambodian Liberation Fighters with guns captured from the enemy

CHINA Malthus or Marx?

At the 29th session of the United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East held in Tokyo, the Chinese deputy representative, *Chen Yun*, attacked reactionary views on the population question and explained China's own views.

"We hold that all things in the world, people are the most precious. People are the decisive factor in the social productive forces." People as producers can produce more than they consume as consumers, and the obstacles blocking the development of the social productive forces can be swept aside.

It is erroneous to say the

poverty and backwardness of the developing countries stem mainly from over-population and that a population policy is of fundamental significance in solving their problems. We hold that the fundamental reason for poverty and backwardness lies in the policies of aggression, plunder and war pushed by imperialism and colonialism and in particular by the superpowers, the USA and the USSR, which seriously destroy the developing countries' productive forces.

Over the past 24 years China's population grew from 500 million to over 700 million but during the same period grain production more than doubled, from 110 million tons to 240 million tons; cloth and other light industrial products increased by even greater proportions and bigger increases even than these have been registered in heavy industrial products. There are food, clothing and work in plenty for all.

"Planned population increase is China's established policy, not because 'over-population' exists in China; but because social production is carried out in a planned way and this requires that the population increase is planned too. It is also necessary to have a planned population increase to promote the thorough emancipation of women, to educate and bring up the younger generation well and to improve the people's health generally."

"China's work on birth control is carried out on a voluntary basis of the masses with state guidance. The state provides contraceptives free of charge and related medical services. In densely populated areas with high birth rates late marriage and birth control are advocated. In national minority areas and other sparsely populated areas measures are adopted to help increase the population."

Ch'i Lung added: "We hold that the drawing up of a population policy is the internal affair of the various countries so we cannot seek to enforce a uniform population policy."

REVOLUTION SURGES FORWARD

In the last analysis, it is a question of whether or not to accept the universal truth of Marxism-Leninism, whether or not to recognise the universal significance of the goal of the October Revolution, whether or not to accept the fact that the people still living under the imperialist and capitalist system, who comprise two-thirds of the world's population, need to make revolution, and whether or not to accept the fact that the people already on the socialist road, who comprise one-third of the world's population, need to carry their revolution forward to the end.

(A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement, Central Committee of the C.P. of China, 1963)

Neither the repression and oppression of the capitalist system nor all the distortions and duplicity of the revisionists and false socialists can stem the tide of revolution. In all five continents the working class and its allies are up in arms against their class enemies and guerrilla struggle rages in country after country. The epic victory of the people of Indonesia against the mightiest power in the world has been of the utmost value to all of us whether engaged in strikes on the factory floor or taking up arms against occupying powers. In particular we are encouraged by the growth of the world communist movement against the treachery and betrayal by the rulers of the Soviet Union.

Communist parties, directed by Marxism-Leninism, have been growing over the last few years, and the collaboration of revisionism with capitalism, most nakedly seen inside the Soviet Union, has been attacked and local revisionist parties either cast aside or fought. In Europe, fraternal parties in France, Italy, Belgium, Holland, Spain and West Germany have been reinforced by new Marxist-Leninist parties in Sweden and Norway. Organisations in Greece and Portugal, while not yet parties, have been fighting hard and workers' and students' struggles against fascism in both countries have risen to a new level.

Throughout the world revolution has been advancing either through new Marxist-Leninist Parties or older parties, renewed and strengthened by fighting revisionism and other anti-revolutionary ideas in their ranks. It would be impossible to catalogue all the heroic deeds being done by comrades in five continents. Throughout Southeast Asia Communist Parties are leading guerrilla struggles against reactionary governments and their imperialist backers. In Malaya, the Philippines, Burma and Indonesia despite setbacks there has been a new advance and many victories gained in the last two or three years. In Thailand the Thai Peoples Armed Forces have scored great successes in February and March in downing helicopters supplied by the USA to the semi-feudal Thai government.

In South Asia two newly formed parties — the CPI(M-L) in India and the EPCP(M-L) in East Pakistan, the so-called "Bangladesh", are chalking up successes against great odds. Guerrilla squads in both countries have been successful against the military and para-military forces of the reactionary Indian government and its military backer the Soviet Union.

In West Asia the Iraqi Communist Party (Central Command) is fighting valiantly against the fascist regime and its Soviet imperialist backers. In Turkey, while the Marxist-Leninist party has not yet been formed, their Marxist-Leninist organisation is in the forefront of the struggles against the fascist Turkish government.

The working class struggle and its ally, the national liberation movements from Ireland to Cambodia, from Brazil to Southern Africa have never been stronger. There is scarcely a part of the globe not affected by the desire for freedom from the enslavement of capitalism. From Durban in South Africa and Grenada in the Caribbean to Tokyo and Melbourne, as in every major industrial centre in Europe and the Americas, the battle of the two classes rages. It is for the revolutionary parties to harness this militancy and heroism to the universal truth of the October Revolution which produced the first workers' state in the world to destroy capitalism.

Hospital workers

a correct retreat

With a final flurry of strikes around the country the hospital workers ceased their gallant struggle and accepted the Government's latest offer. On top of the £1 plus 4 per cent increase on basic rates, their struggle has forced the Government to concede a further 80p a week for women, and a potential boost to bonus payments. The material gains have been slight but gigantic is the leap forward in organisation and consciousness. The NHS will never be the same again. Neither the Government nor the workers will forget this fight.

The hospital workers have withdrawn, faces to the enemy, and the Government has won at best a pyrrhic victory. The workers have shown that they are not ancillary at all, we have learnt of the Government's complete disregard for health and of their willingness to make patients of those to whom they pay starvation wages. Heath might well say, 'If we have another such victory, we are undone'.

The heads of the workers are unbowed, an exhilarating start since this was their first time in

real class battle. The battle was bound to be vicious, for their original demand meant outright rejection of the Government's Act.

Though they conducted their struggle well the odds were impossible and tactical retreat was forced upon them. Though they found allies among the nurses and doctors the working class at large paid mere lip service to their struggle. Practically no material support was forthcoming from other trade unionists and the effect of such neutrality is to condone starvation wages and destruction of the very health service for which they themselves have struggled.

However, in many cases there was local support. To take the Fulford Hospital in York as an example, T & GWU drivers refused to cross picket lines and there was no shortage of picket volunteers.

The lesson for the hospital workers is that they were not ruthless enough. They face a callous employer and only a ruthlessness today will tomorrow benefit the patient.

ON THE INDUSTRIAL FRONT

Harland and Wolff

While some try to demoralise the working class by crediting Heath with 'victory' in enforcing the wage freeze (few even bother to pretend that a price 'freeze' exists), the class struggle goes on. Heath has no more chance of stopping it than King Canute had of stopping the tides by royal decree. Wearing their lawmaking hat, the employers say 'Thou shalt not get more than £1 plus 4 per cent' but in their capacity as individual employers, faced with production bottlenecks, a shortage of key labour, or the need to persuade the workers not to hit them with action, the employers scurry round trying to find loopholes in their own law. Even when the government is the employer as with British Road Services or the Gas Corporation. And every action against the freeze, so long as it is tactically well thought-out, piles on the pressure, brings forward the day when the wage freeze will be as ridiculous as is the price 'freeze'.

Rubery Owen

The motor industry was hit by a strike of 2,300 of the 3,000 workers at Rubery Owen factories in Staffordshire, supplying wheels, chassis, axles and other components. The workers are demanding a £4.26 a week increase across the board, and an extra £1 for pieceworkers pending further negotiations on piecework. The management proposed a system that would have greatly reduced the importance of piecework and, learning from government propaganda they said they were going to 'improve the position of the lower-

paid'. The main victim of this 'redistribution' would naturally not be the millionaire who owns Rubery Owen but the majority of the workers at his factories, who stood to lose up to £13 a week. Some of the minority of dayworkers fell for the divide and rule tactic, but the pieceworkers were still able to stop production and to cut off supplies to British-Leyland, Chrysler and Massey-Ferguson.

Ford

Ford workers continued their guerrilla actions against the company and its Phase II offer. With the cost to Ford mounting every day, the management would dearly love to play the 'secret ballot' card again. But with the offer having been firmly rejected it will not be as easy now as in 1971. But Ford is not opposed to big increases to some of its 'employees'. One such person got a 27 per cent increase last year. Mind you, his name happened to be Henry Ford III. And despite the wage freeze in the US he got (nobody could say 'learned') \$874,567, (£364,236) last year compared to \$689,000 the year before. The money consisted of a 'salary' of \$264,567 and a 'bonus' of \$610,000. The President of Ford, Mr. Lido A. Iacocca only got a paltry \$861,290. So who are the greedy, overpaid Ford workers? The press keeps telling us about?

Vauxhall

Negotiators for 27,000 Vauxhall workers rejected the company's Phase II offer of £2.40 and demanded increases between £7 and £10.

2,300 boilermakers at Harland and Wolff's Belfast shipyard banned overtime for nine weeks, costing the company some £2 million. The men want an £8 increase to give parity with the £38-£39 paid on Clydeside. The company has offered increases within the Phase II limits but the men are claiming increased bonuses to match increased production (up by between 30 and 50 per cent last year). The company replied to the boilermakers' action by issuing dismissal notices to 800 and threatening to close down the entire yard, throwing a total of 10,000 onto the streets of Belfast. The management are old hands at this game. Last July these tactics produced a government handout of £50 million, which was ten times the value of all the shares at the time. Since the government only holds 48.6 per cent of the Harland & Wolff shares, this represented a pretty massive gift to the other shareholders. So the British taxpayer obligingly poured money into the pockets of people like Aristotle Onassis, who owns 14 per cent of the shares. And so generous is Onassis, that he recently offered the workers £20,000 in return for greater co-operation with the management. If you're a worker they pass laws to try and stop you getting any more money. If you're a millionaire they give you lorry loads of the stuff.

Engineers defy Phase 2

The policy-making national committee of the engineering section of the AUEW rejected the wage freeze and any TUC-CBI-Government agreement restricting wage claims - voluntary or not. The union's total opposition to the Industrial Relations Act remains unchanged. On wages a new claim, to replace the current agreement which expires in August, calls for a national minimum of £36 (a £10 increase) for a 35 hour week and pro rata increases for other grades. For 100,000 workers in the electricity supply industry, the demand is for increases of up to £12.25, giving a basic rate of £40.

Deaf children

Amongst a battery of attacks launched on our education system recently, one of the cruellest cuts is the Government's decision to withdraw the special allowance for teachers of the deaf.

There has always been severe shortage of such teachers, and this has become more acute in recent years. The withdrawal of the special allowance is hardly likely to encourage teachers to spend an extra year at college to get the training necessary for this exacting job! This means yet more difficulties for working class families with deaf children.

At present the law provides for deaf children to start at a deaf-unit, or school for the deaf, from the age of 2; plus regular home visits by a teacher from the time deafness is suspected.

But the shortage of teachers is so severe that many boroughs have no partially-hearing units or schools for the deaf: Why? because they see no point in building them if they're unable to obtain staff!

Some areas have no teacher and parents have to visit centres like Manchester University, or the Nuffield Centre, London, to obtain advice on how to teach their children themselves.

Deaf children rarely start school at 2. They are more often put into a normal nursery some time after the age of 3. At 5, many partially-hearing children proceed to normal schools where they have great difficulty in coping - or they are sent away to boarding school.

Deafness is a handicap which makes normal spontaneous learning of speech impossible. Such children need intensive training by specialist teachers from the moment their handicap is diagnosed. That is, if they are to have any hope of understanding written or spoken language. Yet successive governments have denied these children such vital aid.

Even restoring the special allowance would not now disguise this callous treatment. No amount of wailing and wringing of hands in anguish can disguise the old capitalist maxim 'Profits before People'!

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LOCAL BOOKSHOPS

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Main Trend Books, Workers' Bookshop,
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Liverpool 3. Bristol. Open Weekdays 12 - 6pm
Open Weekdays 12 - 6pm. Open Mon. Wed. Fri. & Sat. 9 - 6pm.
& Sat. 9.30 - 6pm. & Sat. 2 - 6pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Fri. May 4th 7.30pm Red Detachment of Women - Chinese film
Bellman Bookshop, 155, Fortress Road, NW5
Fri. May 11th 7.30pm Public Meeting - Proletarian Internationalism
Bellman Bookshop, 155, Fortress Road, NW5
Fri. May 18th 7.30pm Vietnam - Anniversary of Ho Chi Minh's Birth
Bellman Bookshop, 155, Fortress Road, NW5
Fri. May 25th 7.30pm Public Meeting - Albania (meeting place to be decided)
Fri. June 8th 7.30pm Public Meeting - Marxist Philosophy
Bellman Bookshop, 155, Fortress Road, NW5

Low poll in GLC elections

In spite of special efforts by all parties in the recent GLC election to turn out the vote, the poll at an average of 36.5% per seat showed the same tendency toward abstention which has marked elections generally.

Abstention on a mass scale was particularly evident in the most solidly working class areas. The turn out in Hackney North and Stoke Newington was only 18.5% and right through Bethnal Green, Dagenham, Hackney Central, Shoreditch, Newham, Peckham, Stepney and Poplar the total vote remained in the low twenties.

Our Party slogan - "Don't vote. Organise to Smash Capitalism!" - is more and more in tune with the thinking and feeling of the working class, especially its most advanced and militant sections.

This is beginning to worry The Times. In an editorial on April 14th it points out that low polls are "not merely a feature of local elections. The turn out in national elections has been

steadily falling and can be expected to fall still further at the next general election."

The Times calls this "a withdrawal of interest in politics, both local and national, which must be regarded as a protest against the politicians." We say it represents a heightening of political consciousness on the part of workers who are fighting their political battles where their real strength and interest lie, at their place of work, and are boycotting the phoney electoral charade.

The Times states anxiously that in the prevailing "apaty" any party "which aroused the real enthusiasm of the electorate could transform the political situation." How true! And it won't be a capitalist party like the others, trying to turn out the vote in sham elections. It will be, indeed, it is already becoming, the workers' own party, the CPB(M-L), working out with its working class brothers the tactics of real political struggle in the industrial arena of class conflict.

A law unto themselves

Ignominious failure against the dockers and the engineers. Government rejection of its use against striking train drivers, gasmen or hospital workers. What future is there for the Industrial Relations Act? 'Improvement' is the answer coming from some trade unionists, employers, and the government. To our mind the only possible 'improvement' would be a quiet burial, preferably with a stake through its heart.

But the 'improvers' have other ideas. They want the Secretary of State for Employment to have the power to decide who can go to the court, for example. So 'officious meddlers' as Judge Donaldson is now forced to describe Messrs. Goad and Langston would be squeezed out. But to accept this means also accepting that some people do have a right to put trade unionists in the dock. TUC-CBI-Government consultation would doubtless indicate to the Minister which trade unionists were considered to be isolated, in a weak enough position to be subjected to the full rigours of the law. And so we advance to the corporate state in which unions and employers

join together with the government to enforce the law - against the workers. And what a triumph for social-democracy it would be to have the anachronistic figure of the Tipstaff replaced by a TUC-CBI-Government commission to take people off to Pentonville Prison.

Of course the fundamentalists of the right are wailing about the threat to the sacred 'impartiality' of British justice - the loss of the right for anybody (especially if he has a private income) to sue anybody else about anything. But the law has never been impartial, above the class struggle. When necessary, the most unlikely looking rabbits, such as the Official Solicitor, have been pulled out of the legal hat. The existing Industrial Relations Act declared the 'opinion' of a Minister about what the railwaymen thought a more important legal fact than what the railwaymen were actually doing - and that cloud-cookoo land has not been entered since. And anybody with faith in the impartiality of the judges must explain why the most delicate political fingering is always done by Royal Commissions headed by - a Judge!

Guerrilla struggle and the working class

Extracts from a forthcoming CPB(M-L) pamphlet....

The first crucial problem of the revolution and of all class struggles is to correctly and fully assert the leading role of the working class. Because of its economic, political, and historical position, the working class has become the representative of the progress of human society in our epoch, the only class capable of elevating the toiling people to mastery of their destiny.

Guerrilla struggle is 'irregular warfare'.

It is necessary therefore to understand fully the application of 'guerrilla war' tactics to civil strife; civil political action. It is a daily tool but is also political and will develop as changing contradictions force direct political struggle on the working class.

One should not hold the oversimplified view that economic slogans are reformist while only political ones are revolutionary. There may be political slogans

with a reformist character and economic ones carrying a revolutionary content.

Act now

Guerrilla action is an essential to the winning of a struggle, to prevent demoralisation and setback and is, in effect, the only course, the only strategy open to us. There is no other way at this time because of all the forces arraigned against us. It becomes imperative to grasp this now and

Protracted struggle

State measures used by the employing class, the Industrial Relations Act, Control of Inflation Act, the various Phases 1, 2, 3, the resurrection of Pay & Prices Boards, the introduction of direct firing of workers pursuing wage demands; all of which are a direct legacy from the Labour Government; now adopted by the Tory Government; show that the struggle is to be long, protracted, guerrilla. 'In Place of Strife', the 'Sixty Day Pay Pause', the proposed firing of workers who sought to set aside the Prices & Incomes Policy in regard to wage claims and earlier, the Prices & Incomes Policy itself, allegedly to beat inflation, were all creations of the Labour Government. Labour politicians, 'leaders' and generals of the TUC, formerly almost a man supporters of earlier Labour Party legislation, neither have the sincerity nor the capacity to meet this assault on the working class. Indeed, they are reduced to a strategy now, among other things, of calling for a General Strike which, it is wishfully hoped will compel a Government to retreat or better still, cause the defeat and collapse of the present government, leading to a General Election; which would only replace one Capitalist Government by another Capitalist Government.

Everyone should realise we are in for a long, bitter and intensive struggle to achieve victory; first in the immediate problems but how much more in the real struggle, the revolutionary struggle for the seizure of power, the overthrow of the class enemy, the Capitalist class, replacing it by the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

Marxist-Leninist leadership

This will not happen without the leadership of the Marxist-Leninist Party.

It does not mean, however, that if we assist in the present struggle, we shall be 'adopted' by the working class, that they will come to 'love' us and when they advance to revolutionary action, remember our role and call on us to lead them. We, the Marxist-Leninists are not the intellectual mentors of the working class. Our knowledge is derived in part from them; we are part of them as they of us.

Only in action at the place of work are leaders created. Therefore, we the Marxist-Leninists, must seek to lead at our place of work, but not in arrogance those who fight, those who lead; for we are not exclusive, on the contrary we must assist those who lead to become Marxists and recruits to our Party. It is self evident that there are no other leaders; nor can guerrilla struggle advance and extend without those leaders. From guerrilla struggle to protracted struggle, from protracted struggle to guerrilla war, from guerrilla war to Peoples' War, armed struggle.

If today the armistice....

In 1871 Joseph Arch, the Warwickshire farm labourer, wrote of a meeting he held with his fellow workers: "I told them that if they did form a union they would have to fight hard for it and suffer a great deal, both they and their families; they said the labourers were prepared both to fight and suffer. So I stood on my pig stool and spoke out straight and strong for union."

More than one hundred years earlier in 1756, one of the first notable union-organised strikes took place: that of the woollen weavers. Prohibited from forming a combination in the trade by Act of Parliament in 1726, the men were left with no legal remedy when the Justices refused to fix a rate of wages. They revolted, struck work and drove the journeymen who continued working from their looms. The strike led to serious riots and the masters eventually gave way.

These two incidents, so disparate in time and place, nevertheless aptly illustrate the spirit which forged the trade union movement, embracing so many sections of the wage earning masses. A movement born of the working people, and shaped and led by them in every decisive phase of its development, always depending ultimately on the courage of the rank and file. When Marx therefore wrote of the "unavoidable guerrilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital," he was acknowledging the nature of the struggle in Britain and the characteristics of innumerable battles such as these.

250 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Thus to look at the history of the labour movement in May 1973 is to recognise a 250 year old movement, stretching back beyond the factory system to the trade clubs and societies of the artisans and craftsmen. It is also to recognise the characteristics of British capitalism: its unbroken continuity of development, and the extremely long period over which this has occurred. Industry appeared locally, manufacture and trade being unhampered by internal customs restrictions and relics of feudalism still apparent on the Continent. Mills and factories grew up independently and in competition, and industrial productive units were predominantly of small and medium size, there being no concentrated large-scale application of capital, as in later developing countries.

The British proletariat thus came into existence in a piecemeal fashion. Its experiences were initially local and tied to the particular conditions of work. It was, therefore, stratified by the numerous trades and industries, and by craft, mill, domestic and agricultural work. As late as 1858 only half of all workers in wool worked in factories, the remainder being piece-working domestic weavers.

Combination, of necessity, occurred at the point of production to seek protection against the attacks of capital, spreading from the skilled handicraftsmen to the industrial workers. It was based on local and sectional interests precisely because the motivation for union came from the workers themselves, and was rooted in their daily experiences and practice. This struggle has been the mass base of the labour movement; the grass roots, continually fought for, maintained and returned to when false trails and easy ways out have proved illusory.

A NEW EPOCH

It was the year 1848 which marked the beginning of a new epoch for this movement. It was notable for three events; the publication of the Communist Manifesto; the final defeat of Chartism; and the first steps taken to form the Amalgamated Society of Engineers - the true father of modern trade unionism.

The new theory of scientific socialism was based above all on the development of British capitalism and the practice of the working class; but it was precisely because of this that it was unable to shape the course of earlier events and prevent the

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bitterness of defeat and disillusionment with Chartism and the Utopian socialism of Owen. With the retreat to limited economic action following this disillusionment, new foundations were laid to transform sporadic battles into permanent organised actions that could consolidate achievements, bring sustained pressure to bear, and prepare future engagements. It was the A. S. E. which showed the way.

However, the employers had not changed. Their one motive, as always, was to destroy trade unionism, for its very existence is intolerable to them. In consequence, the great lock-out of 1862 was an open attempt to crush the new union. After 4 months the workers were defeated and forced to sign the "Document". On previous occasions such defeats invariably brought the break-up of the men's organisation. But this new union was different. Its organisation remained intact and the struggle in the workshops went on. The foundations remained true.

GUERRILLA STRUGGLE AND A NEW STRATEGY

The negative aspect of the new unionism was the abdication of the political independence of the proletariat to Liberalism, and later to Social Democracy. Thus the development of the working class as an independent class with its own distinct revolutionary aims has had to proceed in the face of state repression and ideological subservience to capitalism. But class antagonisms have constantly forced their way through, and compelled the proletariat to advance.

There can be no escape from class struggle, the force of circumstances compel us to wage it. The very existence of these "unavoidable guerrilla fights" represents a recognition of the irreconcilability between labour and capital, and to wage these battles is a demonstration of an independence of behaviour in direct contradiction to bourgeois hegemony. The existence of this free area of activity has always been subject to "encirclement and suppression campaigns" and now, more than ever, this is of primary political importance for our class.

It was 1968, therefore, which marked a qualitative change in this struggle, with the birth of the CPBML. For the first time the guerrilla struggle in Britain has been raised to the level of a strategy. In the period of that strategic defensive all the economic battles must strengthen the class. Let us understand that every agreement is but an armistice, and tomorrow is the war. In this manner will the whole class tomorrow is the war. In this manner will the whole class recognise and understand, the logical conclusion of our 250 year old heritage; to establish a society of workers where that spirit of the agricultural labourers, the weavers and the engineers will flourish tenfold.

Tomorrow is the war



'Bloody Sunday'
November 1887,
workers and
police clash
in St. Martin's Lane