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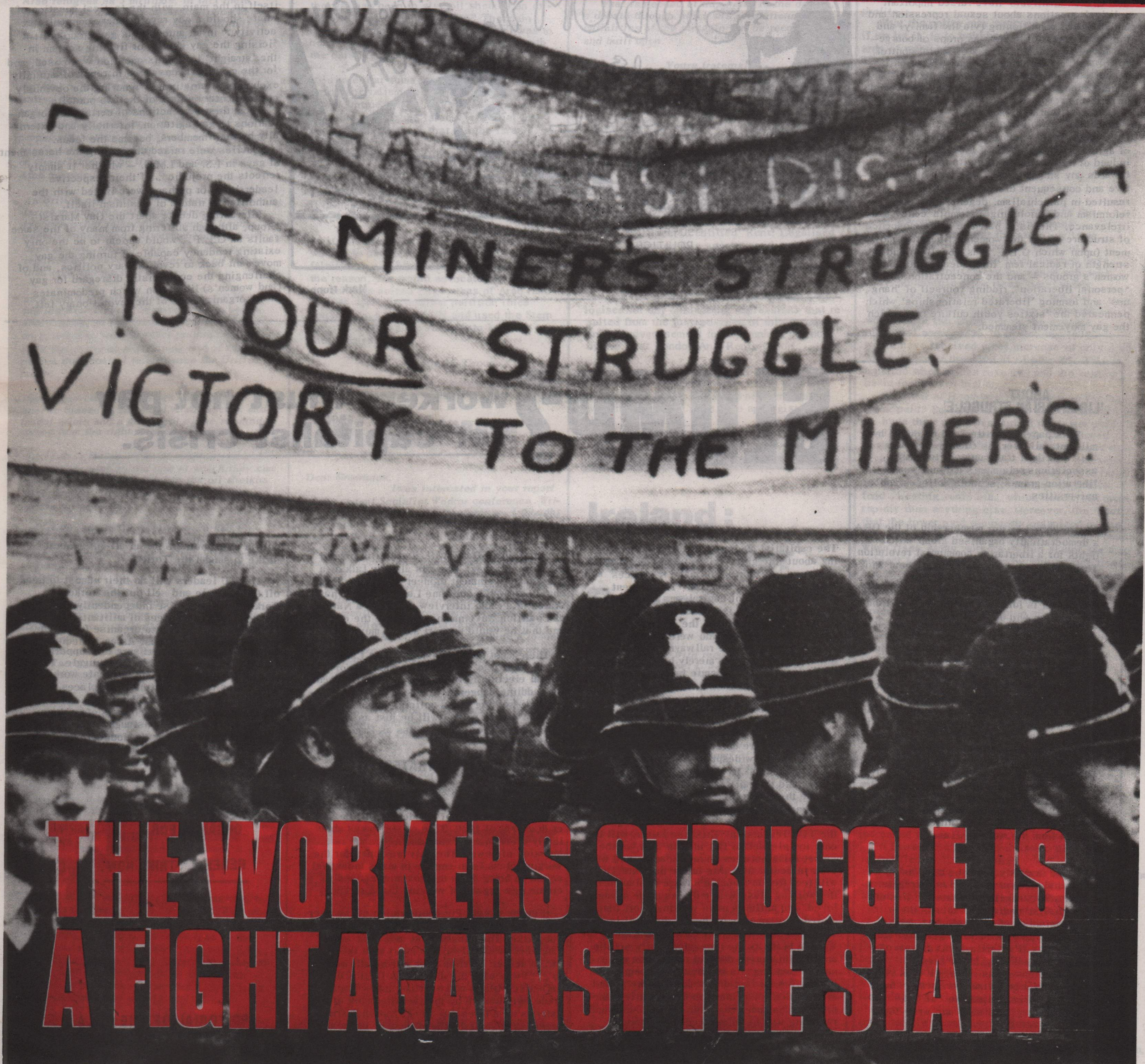
JANUARY 1974

5p

# libertarian struggle



FOR WORKERS POWER



paper of the Organisation of Revolutionary Anarchists



# GAY ROAD WHERE?

The past eighteen months has seen a collapse of whatever political credibility the Gay Liberation Front may ever have had. Despite the publication of some excellent pamphlets, and the formation of the Gay Marxist Group, the political practice of G.L.F. has remained on the reactive level of mobilising counter-demonstrations to those groups that have taken an avowedly anti-homosexual stance — like the Festival of Light and S.P.U.C..

Publications such as 'The Politics of Homosexuality', 'Faggots and the Revolution' and the 'G.L.F. Manifesto' have raised important political questions about sexual repression and authoritarian conditioning (via the family) and the development of sexism as props of bourgeois ideology and major forms of social control. All of which make clear that gay liberation is no mere 'liberal cause' which nice people should support — but a fight inextricably bound up with the revolutionary struggle.

The gay liberation movement — even within its nominally revolutionary expression, the Gay Liberation Front — has been incapable, however of agitating on the basis of these analyses, or indeed of nationally defining its orientation towards any single issue. This lack of perspective and consequent disunity of action has resulted in parochialism, degenerating into reformism and concluding in complacency and irrelevance. This is in part due to the absence of structure within the women's liberation movement (upon which G.L.F. was modelled) and the strength of radical feminist ideas within many women's groups — and the concentration on 'personal liberation', ridding yourself of 'hang ups' and forming 'liberated relationships' which permeated the 'sixties youth culture from which the gay movement stemmed.



Mark Hopper

The sterile role which many see as G.L.F.'s primary concern, i.e. politicising the gay ghetto, has also contributed to its present condition. Creating an understanding of gay oppression within the ghetto is a difficult tactic to defend. What use the new ideas coming from such an understanding may be to the new 'gay lib convert' is very hard to see since the only outlet that G.L.F. provides is to go out and win more adherents to lifestyle politics. Moreover, because the ideas lack any organized perspective, and exist outside any framework for action, the entrenched culture of the ghetto has tended to swamp G.L.F. and shift its orientation away from revolutionary struggle and towards notions of acceptance within this society, as well as similar abdications.

## A RETURN TO POLITICS ?

Many involved with G.L.F. are aware of its failures and shortcomings but without any form of national co-ordination little can be done save on a local level. An attempt to revitalize the political elements within G.L.F. is the Gay Marxist Group which held its second national conference in November last year.

Discussion at this conference concerned itself, in the main, with the tactical question of where should a gay revolutionary concentrate activity — in an autonomous gay group politicising the gay ghetto, or fighting sexism in the 'straight' left. This question was posed, and for the most part, answered in terms of mutually exclusive alternatives — ignoring the obviously complementary nature of the two pursuits.

From this the reactions of certain left organizations to gay agitation, internally and externally by their members, became the focus.

Queries were raised concerning the harassment of gays in I.S. and I.M.G. — whether it simply reflects the prejudice of their respective leaderships, or perhaps were linked with the authoritarian nature of Leninism itself.

Interesting debate apart the Gay Marxist Group, although suffering from many of the same faults as G.L.F., would appear to be the only existing tendency capable of turning the gay movement back to revolutionary politics, and of challenging the economic disregard for gay (and women's) liberation which predominates in the organizations of the revolutionary left.

## ABOUT 'LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE'

This paper is written and produced by militants all over the country who are active in their trade unions, tenants' associations, claimants unions, women's liberation groups, schools, colleges and universities.

We are united by our membership of the O.R.A. a democratically organised group which fights for a libertarian communist revolution. This means a revolution brought about and firmly controlled by the working class. This is the only foundation for a society in which production is for need not profit, free from exploitation and oppression.

The only way working class power can express itself is through workers' councils in the factories and neighbourhood councils in the communities. Demands for improvement in workers' living standards — whether wages, better housing etc. are not purely economic demands. The working class must make each demand a move towards the control of production and the control of their own lives. Therefore every organization and struggle of the working class must be directly and democratically controlled by the workers involved. Consequently we oppose all groups and parties who take the initiative and control from the working class.

We intend that this paper be used as an agitational weapon in the class struggle. 'Libertarian Struggle' combats the lies of the capitalist media and exposes the authoritarianism of the stalinists and trotskyist organizations. We put forward revolutionary libertarian ideas, forms of struggle and politics. In the present period of intense class struggle it is vital that a strong libertarian movement is built within the working class. We call all militants to buy, and sell, and write for Libertarian Struggle.

The editorial group producing this paper wish to state that signed articles do not necessarily represent national O.R.A. policy.

workers' power — no substitute —

# SLUMP? Workers must not pay for capitalist crisis.

The capitalist media is full of scare-mongering about 'the grave crisis facing our nation'. Everyone is exhorted to 'make sacrifices' and show 'the spirit of Dunkirk'. The present crisis is a crisis of capitalism, and the strategy of the ruling class is to make the workers pay for the breakdown in the system. A while ago it was the Arabs who were blamed. Now it's the miners and the railwaymen. In fact, the energy crisis has merely hastened the recession which economic forecasts had stated would have happened in 1975 anyway.

## THE CAPITALIST SOLUTION

The ruling class hopes to save itself by inflicting a severe defeat on those workers in dispute and by widespread cuts in workers' living standards. By blaming everything on the miners and the railwaymen the Tories hope to isolate them from the rest of the Labour movement and thus make easier their defeat. At the same time they hope to get an agreement with the TUC leadership. This, the latter, will be only too pleased to fall in with this, as the secret talks between Jones, Scanlon and Whitelaw indicate. With this in the bag, the Tories will feel free to mount a savage onslaught on the working class with millions made unemployed, and millions more working short time, cowed into submission by the threat of layoffs. This will be followed by further attacks on the Welfare State as the recession really sets in and the financiers demand reductions in government spending. As international competition intensifies for fast diminishing markets, and all efforts are put into export industries, the price of consumer commodities will soar, and rationing will be introduced. Food ration cards have already been printed.

The Labour Party will also fall in behind the Tory strategy. There is already talk of a National Government to meet the crisis. Emmanuel Shinwell — one time Labour 'left' — has stated in a radio interview that only a National Coalition Government can 'save the country' and that he would support such a move.

There must be no illusions about Labour's will or ability to fight. Those who call for a general election to return a Labour government are peddling dangerous ideas. Capitalism demands that anti-working class policies be carried out, and Harold Wilson will be just as willing to betray the working class as Ramsay MacDonald was.

## THE WORKERS STRATEGY

If the ruling class succeeds in its offensive the working class movement will be set back years and the scale of the defeat will be greater than that of 1926. This crisis makes absolutely clear that the fundamental issue is the question of power. The only way open for the working class is to engage in mass industrial action to bring down the government, and to create new organs of working class power.

For the miners the continuation of the overtime ban is pointless. There must be an all-out strike. The miners must not fight alone. Engineers and railwaymen must also take strike action. Scanlon must not be allowed to get away with the disastrous tactics of selective strikes and overtime bans — tactics made more absurd by the fact that most of industry is on a three day week. National strike action is essential. There must be unity at all levels in the struggle. The strong sections

pull in other workers for an all-out general strike to smash the Tories.

The TU leaders will do their utmost to head off the struggle and sell out the workers. Workers must organise independently now. Local action committees of militants and socialists must be set up to organise for a general strike in their areas. As an immediate aim these committees must ensure the support of the mass of the workers in the struggle. The long term strategy must be to create workers committees to take control of all places of work and to establish local workers councils — democratically controlled organs of workers power — which lead the onslaught against the bourgeois state and lay the foundations for a libertarian communist society.

ORGANISE FOR A

GENERAL STRIKE NOW.

EDITORIAL OF THE O.R.A. DELEGATE CONFERENCE



# DEMOCRATISE THE RANK & FILE.

Once again, the twice-yearly meeting of the Rank and File National Committee is over and the IS leadership have won a marginal victory over the tendencies fighting for democracy in the NUT Rank and File Group.

As reported in the July/August issue of Libertarian Struggle, the Executive Committee (EC) of Rank and File, a group within the National Union of Teachers, are prepared to go to quite extraordinary lengths of about face and bureaucratic manoeuvre in order to retain their control over the membership.

At the last National Committee in June, a constitution that had been in use for many years suddenly became 'draft' and was precipitately amended so as to cut membership control of the organisation down to a subordinate and trivial level. (National Committee is a delegate body set up to co-ordinate and initiate policy between the annual meetings of the sovereign National Conference.) Not content with this, IS members declared that National Conference was also to be delegated in future. A delegate conference is obviously necessary when a group grows large enough, and is also more democratic in that all sections of the membership are given an equal voice and not excluded by geographic or financial considerations. However, delegation goes hand-in-hand with a proportional representation system. Unless all opinions held by the membership are fairly represented, delegation merely becomes the steamrolling of any minority opinion by the majority.

One thing needs to be made clear to IS - until they trust the membership of the group, and while they continue to treat them as pliant fodder, the Rank and File Group will not grow and will not gain credibility with the overwhelming majority of union members who remain unimpressed by Rank and File posturing. In fact, membership has actually dropped in the London region despite a large groundswell of dissatisfaction and militancy over the part-time education issue. This is an indication of the sickness which the leadership refuse to recognise in their short sighted determination to keep hold of the reins.

In the recent 'Perspectives' document drawn up by the controlling Executive Committee for the membership, they actually state that 'at first, the role of the supporter (all Rank and File members are called 'supporters' so as not to antagonise the Executive Committee of the NUT into expelling the Rank and File Group for dual membership) was seen as being one of helping the paper financially plus, once a year, electing the EC and determining in broad outline the policy of R and F'. They state that this has now changed - which is not true - but for a group to actually see membership of a rank and file organisation in the above terms is very indicative of the low regard they have for members' involvement.

Another example of this disregard for the membership which occurred at the most recent National Committee meeting in December, was when a motion was passed instructing the EC to 'appoint a sub-committee of the EC to prepare a draft version of a new 'Teachers' Charter'.

Amendments suggesting the draft version be submitted to the next annual Conference for discussion and acceptance/rejection, or that a specially convened conference discuss it, were rejected and it was left open to debate just exactly what control the membership will have over the final version. No procedure was set up for the document to be circulated to groups - it is obviously going to be yet another document given to a docile membership prevented from having any say about its content. Just like the 'Aims and Principles' of R and F, just like the pamphlets 'Democracy in Schools' and 'Education for Society' (pushed out under the R and F tradename) - all presented as 'faits accomplis' to a membership not entrusted with any say in them.

As a final kick in the face to the idea of participation in the 'Teachers' Charter', a member present who asked to be on the sub-committee drawing up the draft 'Teachers' Charter', for which an open invitation had been issued at the National Committee ("If you want to be on the sub-committee, give your names to Jon Hooper at the end of this meeting"), was asked "What experience do you have? If you want to be on the sub-committee, you'll have to apply in writing to the NC and they'll consider it".

For a group supposedly concerned with democratising the NUT, there is very little democracy shown by the R and F leaders.

It is also indicative that at the National Committee meeting, the following motions were defeated:

"The NC rejects the attempt of the R and F NC to redefine the aims and principles of R and F as decided by groups nationally and published in R and F 21 without reference to the membership. As socialists, we recognise the legitimacy of debate within R and F and on subjects wider than education, NUT and trade union activity. In particular, we demand that democracy be seen to be done and that the conference on Ireland, as constitutionally called for, be held."

LOST: 29 to 39

This R and F NC calls for the reversal of the Bradford resolution calling for a delegate National Conference and calls upon the NC to submit the question to the next annual Conference.

This motion was amended to read:

This R and F NC recognises that as the National Conference is the supreme body of Rank and File and only the National Conference is competent to define itself as a delegate Conference, the NC thus notes that the next annual conference will not be a delegate conference and that the Bradford resolution will be discussed at that conference."

LOST: 31 to 48

"Voting for the election of delegates to National Conference will be conducted on a proportional basis by a system of transfer vote."

LOST:

"Voting for the election of members of the National Committee will be conducted on a proportional basis by a system of transfer vote."

LOST

Once again, all the motions dealing with the democratisation of Rank and File are defeated, though the size of the minority is a clear indication that there is a growing struggle to smash the IS-led bureaucracy. It is essential that rank and file groups are not viewed as "a cog which IS will turn" or "a united front of socialist teachers" but as the organs of workers' democracy in the trade union movement that will finally transform the labour movement as we know it today.

These syndicalist principles of workers' control and democracy must be fought for against all those who wish to abuse and use them for their own ends. It is the struggle for these principles that is now being fought in the NUT Rank and File Group.

Julie Sharpe

# ROBIN BLACKBURN: THREATENS COURT INJUNCTIONS

Robin Blackburn, leading militant of the International Marxist Group has recently threatened court injunctions against several bookshops in this country. Playing another role besides that of revolutionary, he represents the interests of the publishing house New Left Books. His behaviour brings into question his adherence to a number of principles which any revolutionary would deem a necessity.

On Monday 26th of November, Blackburn walked into 'Books' of Leeds and scrambled through the many shelves looking for a cheap paperback reprint of Althusser's 'Reading Capital'. Insulting various people who worked there, he shouted 'Found it!' when he eventually came across a copy. Compendium and Betterbooks, two London bookshops, had already been threatened with court injunctions by New Left Books (of which Blackburn is a

director). The injunctions were to prevent the sale of this cheap £1 paperback. N.L.B. publishes a hardback edition at £3.85.

Shouting 'Look - it's bookshops like you selling cheap left-wing books that makes our books so expensive. You are killing the demand for Marxist literature,' Blackburn left the shop. Besides Blackburn's confused logic in reasoning that cheap books kill demand, it is clear that he and the rest of the directors of N.L.B. are determined to keep the prices of revolutionary literature at inflated levels. When presented with this accusation Blackburn replied - 'We produce our books for academics. They can afford them.'

A principle of revolutionary politics is begged by Blackburn's actions. Do you publish propaganda and agitation to provide a distribution for the widest possible audience, or do you publish for a market and 'academics'?

Are New Left Books doing their work for profit or are they working for revolutionary ends? From Blackburn's words and deeds it is clear that they are determined to prevent any cheap imports of their editions being sold, just so as they can be kept in business.

On enquiry, it was found that N.L.B. considered these principles of widespread agitation to be 'populist crap'. Libertarian Struggle was told by Fred Halliday, another 'militant' director of the company, that N.L.B. 'would not use court injunctions if we don't have to, but we're not afraid to use bourgeois law.' When asked the reasons for stopping the import of cheap editions of left-wing books, he stated that 'these cheap book importers are objectively agents of U.S. imperialism, undercutting the market.'

Bourgeois notions of markets and their maintenance are the basics of Blackburn's and Halliday's publishing practice. Blackburn's

dual role as publisher and I.M.G. 'militant' brings the pursuit of profit into conflict with revolutionary politics. The Gery Lawless affair (over his false claim that the I.R.A. was responsible for the London bombings) brought home to all sections of the revolutionary movement, including many I.M.G. members, the dishonest nature of the I.M.G. leadership as they tried to cover up Lawless' job in the Press Association - making money from a false scoop. Now we have Blackburn mixing business with politics and actively preventing the widespread distribution of revolutionary literature in order to protect prestige markets. The I.M.G. can hardly claim to be a credible organization while its leadership's other interests, hobbies and businesses are being constantly revealed.

Bob Campbell.

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## ORA

### groups & contact addresses

If you think that the direct control by working people over all aspects of their lives is worth fighting for..

If you think that what's needed now is independent rank and file organisation linking all aspects of working class struggle - in housing, schools, womens' rights, in work, and all others.

If you think that the independence of these organisations must be defended from takeover by the Labour traitors, union bureaucracies, and the 'NEW leaderships'

If you think that an organisation is needed which fights for revolutionary politics in everyday struggles but has no intention of seizing power for itself..

THEN, JOIN THE ORA!

#### LOCAL GROUPS.

Glasgow: Gordon Sykes, 32 Queen Elisabeth Square, Glasgow C3.

Hull: Marion McCartney, 13 Colman Street, Hull.

Lancaster: Joe Thornberry, 56 Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

York: Neil Hunt, 24 Moss Street, York.

Leeds: Trevor Bavage, Flat 3, 35 Richmond Road, Leeds 6.

Manchester: Les Smith, 277 Kingsway Park, Davyhulme, Urmston, Manchester.

North London: Doug Durrant, 68a Chingford Road, London E. 17.

There are also contacts in: Andover, Birmingham, Colchester, Dundee, Edinburgh, Harlech, Liverpool, West, East and South London, Newcastle, Norwich, Oxford, Poole, Reading and Swansea. If you want to be put in touch, write to Terry Green, at the York Group address.





# THE

The miners' struggle is developing towards the most decisive confrontation that the Tory government has had to face. As the miners' claim threatens to shatter Phase 3 and leave the government policy in ruins, we see vast preparation by the government to build a campaign against the miners.

The fight will be by far tougher than the 1971/72 strike. The Tories now consciously see that if the miners wreck Phase 3 the result will be an international distrust of the British economy, a run on the pound and a continuation of massive trade deficits.

## 'LAW AND ORDER'

The margin of confidence of the bourgeois investors and profiteers is at its thinnest in the present economic climate. If this government cannot hold the working class down on the wages front, the bourgeoisie will panic and a collapse of the stockmarket will follow. The ruling class will use the media to blame all on the working class and the Tories will hold a 'law and order' election on the basis of "who governs the economy."

The Phase 3 legislation is the stopline over which no mass body of workers will be allowed to cross. This is Heath's ruling. He has made it quite clear that those who wish to challenge Phase 3 challenge the "democratically elected representatives of the people; Her Majesty's Government." His economic policy hinges on Phase 3. The only bending of this policy that will be allowed, via negotiation, will be strictly within the 'anomalies' or 'special cases' categories that are allowed in the Pay Code.

## LESSON ON THE FIREMEN'S STRIKE

The Code can not only be bent; it can be broken. The firemen's strike and the subsequent wage settlement was labelled a 'special case' by the government and it was presented to the rest of the working class as such via the media. The firemen's rise broke the Phase 3 Pay Code not as a 'special case' but because the firemen took sufficient action that moved the government to pay them. Phase 3 was forgotten because a panic broke out among the bourgeoisie over the issue. As scabbing fire chiefs and army 'drafts' failed to cope with fire after fire, burnt-out warehouses and shops were presenting frenzied investors in insurance companies with the spectre of a flood of claims. The ruling class slander campaign, that the firemen's strike was causing people to die in fires, was dropped as soon as the flames licked up the bourgeoisies property. The demands of the firemen's claim were met, in spite of their treacherous union leadership, and Phase 3 had had a small hole punched in it. The government had been unprepared and the trade union movement watched the results. The firemen became a 'special case' and a battery of ruling class ideology was opened up on the trade union leaders at Downing Street, in order to convince them of this. It is this 'special case' ideology on which the government hinges all its plans to use the leadership of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and its allies at some future point of the struggle. How much of a 'special case' the miners are will be the point around which the NUM Executive hope

## THE N.U.M CLAIM

£35 minimum surface workers  
£40 minimum underground workers  
£45 minimum underground (higher grades)  
Plus an extra weeks holiday

## THE N.C.B OFFER

£27.50 minimum surface workers  
£30 minimum underground workers  
£32.50 minimum underground (higher grades)  
Plus an extra days holiday

# general strike

## Lessons from 1926 for 1974?

With talk of a general strike in the air, it is absolutely vital for socialists and militants to learn the lessons of the 1926 general strike. We must understand why the massive display of working class solidarity with the miners finally ended in a disastrous defeat for the working class movement and the eventual starving out of the miners who were forced to return to work on the employer's and government's terms - a reduction of wages and increase in hours.

Why were our brothers and sisters defeated in 1926? What was the balance of class forces? What were the ideologies of the combatants? Why did the rank and file allow themselves to be sold out? Most importantly, what must we do to avoid repeating the same mistakes?

When socialists raise the question of class consciousness, they are usually referring to the class consciousness of the working class. What many socialists forget is the class solidarity and militancy of the bourgeoisie. In the period of social, political and economic crisis which followed the first World War and culminated in the 1926 general strike, the British ruling class defended its interests in a militant, circumspect and ruthless fashion.

Unlike the reformist leaders of the TUC, the bourgeoisie and its direct political representatives the Conservative Party knew exactly what the struggle was about - a decisive confrontation between capital and labour in conditions of capitalist crisis. Baldwin mobilized the forces of the state, the bourgeoisie and petit bourgeoisie to combat the inevitable proletarian challenge. He even backed down on 'Red Friday' because as he later explained 'we were not ready'. The Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies was established - its aim was to organise those citizens who would be prepared to volunteer to maintain supplies and services in the event of a general strike' i.e. to scab and smash the strike. More direct tactics were also used. Twelve leading Communists were arrested in the autumn to get troublesome elements out of the way for a few weeks.

By the spring of 1926 the bourgeoisie was in a position of such strength that it felt it could defeat the working class and paralyse

the trade union movement for years. Once the strike started, the full resources of the capitalist state (operating under the legal cover of the Emergency Powers Act) were used to win the propaganda war and smash the strike. The Tories set up the 'British Gazette' while the police and armed forces were used to move supplies and increasingly to defeat the strikers by the use of violence. At Liverpool, two battleships, three destroyers and a troopship were stationed in the Mersey for the duration of the strike while baton charges on crowds was a common sight. Armed troops escorted by armoured cars broke through the mass picket at the London Docks.

So much for the reformist illusion that the state is neutral and somehow above society.

But what about the leaders of the working class movement, the trade union leaders - surely they too were mobilising their supporters for the inevitable confrontation? The truth of the matter is that they did nothing. Up until the last moment they were attempting to come to some sort of compromise with the Tory Government. Once the strike started, their major aim was to limit, inhibit and de-escalate the struggle. They were absolutely terrified of the militancy of rank and file trade unionists. Thomas, the General Council's General Secretary, gave the game away when he later commented 'What I dreaded about this strike more than anything else was this, if by any chance it should have got out of the hands of those who would be able to exercise some control.'

The TUC continually stressed that the confrontation was economic and not political, thus ignoring the fact that a general strike is implicitly revolutionary - a general strike poses the whole question of power. Their ignominious capitulation to the government, leaving the miners to fight alone, and Thomas's declaration 'I have never disguised that, in a challenge to the constitution, God help us unless the government won't are fitting epithets to the spineless treachery of these class collaborators.

However, despite the fact that the Communist Party analysed the disaster in terms of 'a failure of leadership', a certain amount of blame for the defeat must lie with the politics of those socialist militants organised in the CP and the Minority Movement. J. Murphy, the leading theoretician in the shop stewards movement,

made the point in his influential pamphlet 'The Workshop Committee' that it is mistaken - if understandable - to accuse trade union leaders of treachery. The real point was that they occupied a different social position, and that the new social position meant that their interests were ultimately different from those of the rank and file members.

Nevertheless, militants never really learnt the lesson that the trade union leadership is a bureaucratic caste which vacillates between the bourgeois state and the working class. Their direct social interests necessitate their taking an antagonistic position towards the workers' revolution. After all, hadn't they shown their mettle in 1919 when the response to Lloyd George's question 'are you ready to take over?' was abject defeatism.

From that moment on said Robert Smillie, the miners' leader, 'we were beaten and we knew we were.'

This fatal relationship with, and dependence on, the General Council meant that revolutionaries could not take full advantage of the situation, they were unable to argue for the institutional and organisational forms of working class power which could have challenged the bourgeois state. The CP's most militant demand was 'All power to the General Council' and this at a time when a situation of near dual power existed in the North East, when various Councils of Action were forming defence groups to protect pickets from police attacks, and when various workers were beginning to take offensive action e.g. mass picketing and the derailling of a scab train at Cramlington.

In the present situation there is an inherent tendency towards a general strike. Militants must not repeat the mistakes of those in 1926. Any organisation for a general strike must be developed independently of the trade union bureaucracy. We must recognise that these class collaborators cannot be trusted. In the event of a general strike, militants and socialists must be active in forming broadly based Councils of Action and develop these into our own organisations of working class power. Only then can we win a general strike.

Elizabeth Black



# MINERS CLAIM

to negotiate.

## ROLE OF THE NUM EXECUTIVE

On the 26th of November, the campaign of the National Coal Board (NCB) started. Every national newspaper carried large advertisements purchased by the NCB outlining their pay offer. The NUM replied on the 30th of November with a campaign as widespread as the NCB's. It was this advert that revealed the true attitude of the NUM Executive. The NUM advert stated that they were trying to stop men leaving the pits at the rate of 600 a week and their case ended with the plea "Our claim is not based on greed. It is not an attempt to run the country or kick out the government. We are just recognising the facts of life."

The NUM Executive is not willing to take on the government. It will try and present the miners as a 'special case' and hold back the call for strike action as long as possible, and continue with the overtime ban. The moderates in the NUM Executive are led by Gormley, and they have to face the 'left' on the Executive which holds the overwhelming majority. These 'lefts' outspokenly represented by Lawrence Daly are watching the government to see if they are weakening. The threats from Heath and his preparations for a strike and his ability, at this stage, to whip up a slander campaign against the miners, are the barometer by which the oscillating Executive will judge the time to take strike action. As Heath is firm, the Executive will move to compromise. But there is another force which the NUM will have to respect, and that is the NUM membership which grows stronger each day in its determination to win the whole claim. They will force the NUM Executive to act. More and more of the NUM membership reject the apoliticism of the Executive's desire to settle via the 'special case.' With the 3-day week imposed by 'the energy crisis' and the massive cut-back in electricity supply, Heath will use this to whip up a campaign against the miners. The Executive will try not to move to a strike ballot when they next meet in mid-January. The membership must push their Executive to action, for it is clear they cannot win their claim without smashing Phase 3 or without bringing down the government, and that can only be done by strike action.

## GORMLEY SPEAKS

"National 'interest' means a lot to miners"

"As a moderate it means there comes a time when I must say to the militants: enough is enough let us negotiate"

December 13th 1973

When the miners' strike occurs, we will see a collision with the government that will make the Saltley Coke Works demonstration (in 1971/72, a large police contingent was smashed by massed pickets and so the plant

was closed to scab lorries) a regular occurrence outside every power station in the country.

## STATE VIOLENCE

As the government loses its ideological slander campaign it will increasingly turn to use force and violence to break the strike. Anti-picket squads of police are being specially trained for this role. The miners' strike will bring about direct confrontation between the rest of the working class and the state.

## SOLIDARITY

In this atmosphere, anti government feeling will run high and it will be then that the possibility of an alliance with the engineers and the railwaymen can be made. It will be the miners' struggle and support for it that will force Scanlon (AUEW) and d Buckton (ASLEF) to fight with the miners. The pressure from their membership to do so will be tremendous. The recall of the TUC General Council in this period for the calling of a General Strike against a government using police and army violence against the miners is a demand that must be prepared for now. Militants in all industries must discuss these possibilities and prepare for them. In this intensification of the class struggle, the TUC leadership, every union bureaucrat, every 'left' leader, and every Labour politician will act against the miners and those in solidarity with them. Their long-standing treacherous role will be emphatically revealed.

## WORKERS' COUNCILS

At some stage in the fight against the government, it will be absolutely necessary to break from the traditional institutions of the labour movement. Workers who are fighting with the miners must form Action Councils, made up of delegates from trade union branches and strike committees, separate from the TUC. The struggle cannot be won without the formation of independent workers' councils.

Now is the time to smash the Labour bureaucracy. It can only be done if every militant uses the coming lessons to show clearly to all workers the role of their leaders who have held their trust for too long.

BOB CAMPBELL.

## Interest

Since nationalisation, the N.C.B. has paid out over £600 million in interest charges. It has released capital into private hands for investment in the profitable "growth" sections of the economy. Last year alone, it paid out £33½ million in interest.

# The grants campaign left turn

The Left made substantial gains at the recent NUS conference at Margate, particularly over the crucial grants' action campaign. Conference, in supporting the IS dominated 'Left Alternative's' call for a national rent strike and the censure of the executive for its mishandling of the campaign, pledged itself to more militant tactics this term.

Nevertheless, this is no guarantee that militant action will actually occur. The internal split within the executive is there for all to see. The two IS members of the executive face a 'Broad Left' coalition of four CP members and their five allies, while the remainder of the executive usually follow Randall and have no consistent position. Randall himself veers with the dominant wind. Much to the CP's disgust he voted for the 'Left Alternative' resolution on a national rent strike. We should not be misled into thinking that this indicates a conversion to militant politics as far as Randall is concerned. He wants to be re-elected at the next conference, and is desperately looking around for a new basis of support. At the moment the tide is running in the Left's favour: he could just as easily turn to the Right.

It is equally important to ensure the participation of the weakly organised sections in the technical colleges and colleges of further education. We must stress the importance of building local grants action committees with representatives from different colleges in an area which can really help with the problems of those students in these weak sectors in terms of finances, facilities, etc. It must be made clear that there will be no backdown on any of the demands of the campaign. Right wingers within the student movement will attempt to defuse the campaign by putting forward the suggestion that university students should forego grants increases in order that the weaker sections - those on discretionary awards, unsupported mothers, etc. - can get more. This is a standard right wing ploy designed to split those in dispute, and must be firmly resisted.

To assume, however, that the adoption of militant tactics and the establishment of rank and file control of the campaign will lead to victory is simply naive or mistaken. Militancy, alone, is not enough. The campaign must be given political direction. It must be placed in the context of Phase 3 and links must be for-



PRESTON GRANTS DEMONSTRATION, NOVEMBER

The executive is so split that even if it wanted to mobilise real support for the demands of the campaign (which is doubtful for the majority of the members of the executive) it is unlikely to be in a position to do so. Militants will have to use the weight of the conference mandate to organise for direct action in the colleges this term - including rent strikes and occupations.

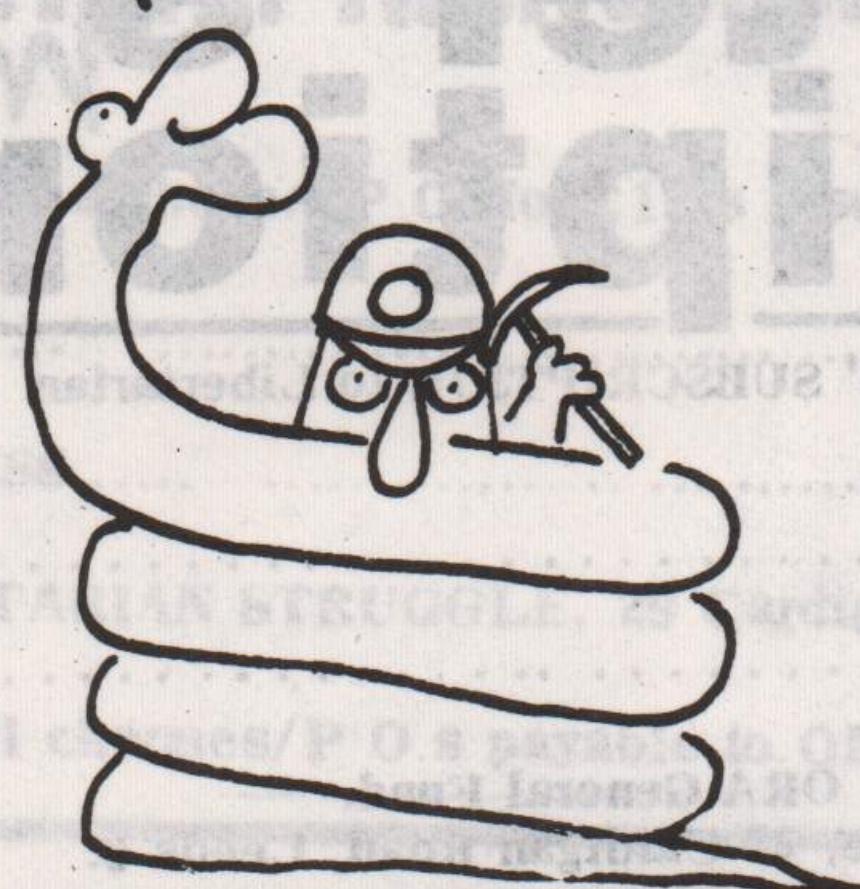
We have to realise, too, that the key to any sort of meaningful campaign lies in the active participation of the mass rank and file of the student body. It is necessary to take control of the struggle from the student union bureaucracies and place it in the hands of rank and file grants action committees, directly answerable to the mass of the students.

ged between the students' struggle and the workers' struggle against the Tories' pay laws. The 'student-worker solidarity' platitudes must be turned into a fighting reality by giving financial and physical aid to those workers fighting the government. Anti-Phase 3 fighting funds must be established at all colleges, students must help strengthen picket lines, colleges occupied to provide accommodation for flying pickets. Students cannot win their demands by pleading as 'a special case' and by confining agitation to a 'fair grants now' campaign. Only when the Tories are brought down through mass direct action by workers can any real advances be made, and in this students have an important role to play.

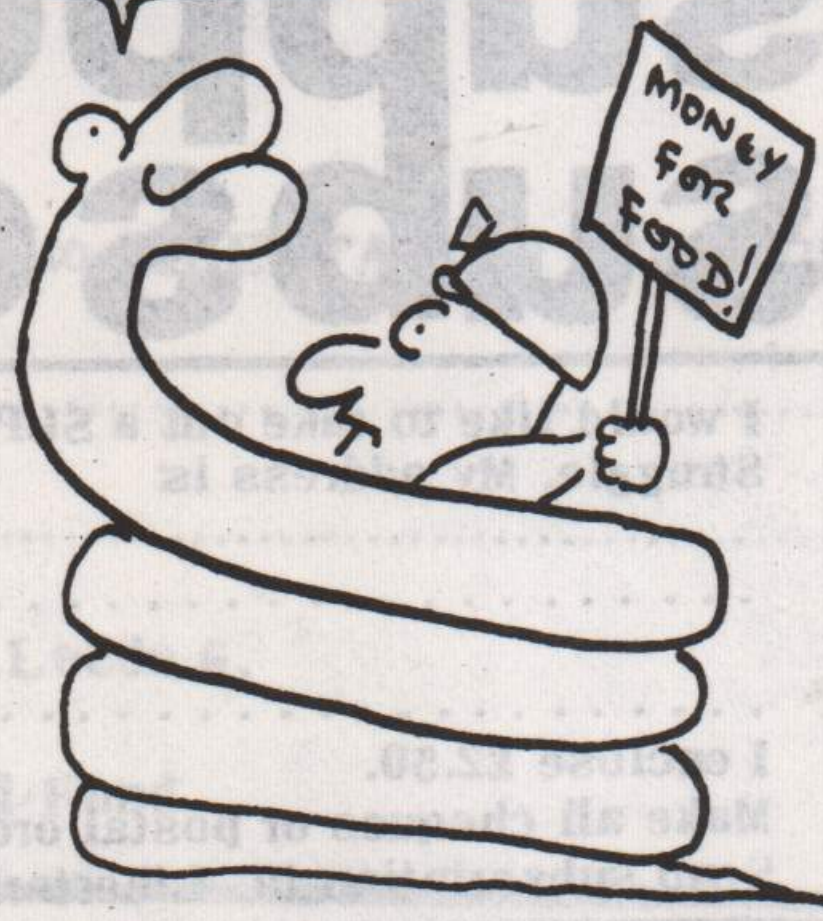
Peter James

Snake

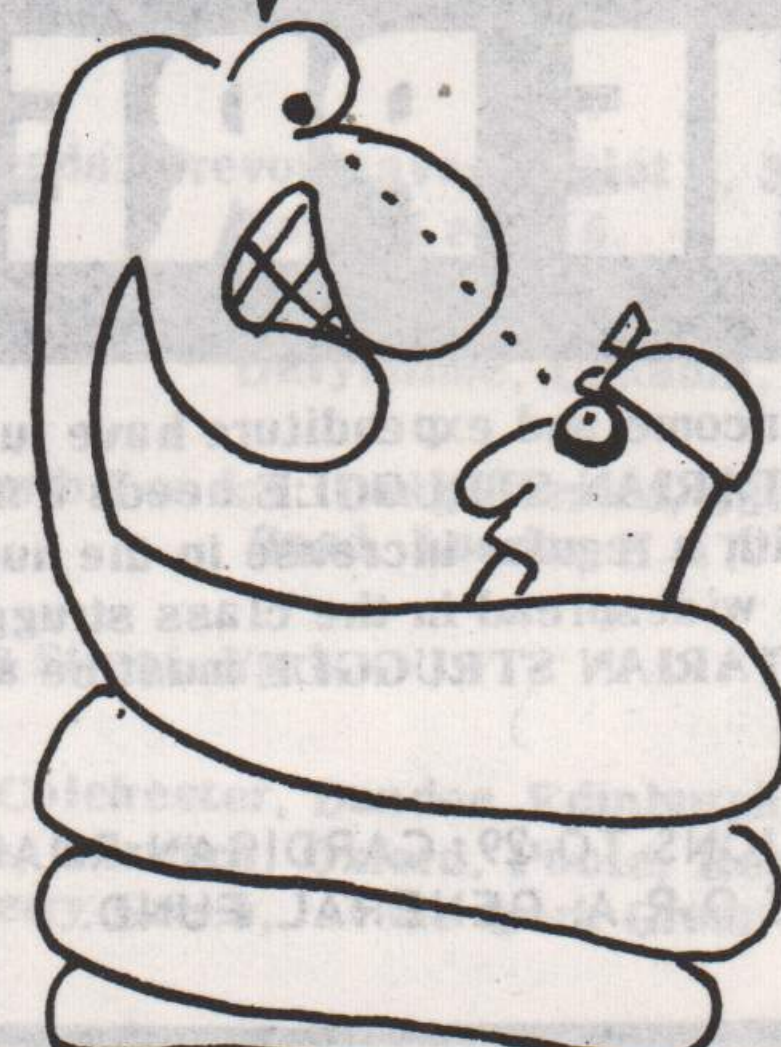
FOR REASONS BEYOND MY CONTROL AND ABOUT WHICH I PROPOSE TO DO... ER... NOTHING, THE PRICE OF FOOD HAS SHOT SKY HIGH!



DUE TO A SMALL GROUP OF POLITICALLY MOTIVATED SNAKES... ER... SHEIKS THE PRICE OF OIL HAS SHOT UP TOO, SO EVERYTHING WILL COST MORE, CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT.



AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT



KICK THE SHIT OUT OF THAT SNAKE



# IRELAND THE FORGOTTEN REVOLUTION

*Editorial note: The following article is written by a member of the Official Republican Movement. It does not reflect ORA policy. However, we welcome such contributions and hope that readers will reply to the points raised.*

Those actively engaged in the Irish struggle feel a deep sense of isolation. TV pictures from England show demonstrations in support of the revolution in Chile, Vietnam, Palestine and so on, but rarely do people in Belfast or Derry see mass support for their struggle in the streets of British cities. Much of this is, of course, due to the highly effective censorship and blatant distortion of Irish news in British papers and to the historical disinterest of British people in the Irish question.

Still the most common comment is 'Bring out our troops and let them get on with it' It is not as simple as that and even the most crass analysis will point to the reasons why. It is because Ireland is economically valuable and because a defeat for British imperialism in Ireland could have grave consequences for the balance of society in this country. On all this the British 'left' is in agreement, but little has been or is being done to lend support to those in the front line in Ireland or to bring home the truth of the situation to the British people.

A starting point with most people, including those who like to see themselves as a part of that nebulously defined 'British left' is to force people into asking themselves why the Irish situation is so violent and bloody. By violence what is meant is the whole range of violence, not simply those events associated in most minds with the Provos. What caused ordinary and unorganised working people to take to the streets in 1968, 1969 and so on? What caused these people to put their homes, families and lives at stake in hand-to-hand conflict with armed police, B-men, and later the British Army itself? What fundamental sickness in Irish society is there that prompts a generation of men and women to organise and die in the ranks of one of Western Europe's most efficient urban guerrilla organisations, the Provos? Contrast such commitment and revolutionary dedication with the apathy of a British general election, where a 75% poll is a high one, a poll which neither injures nor harms any of the participants. There is no risk in going out to vote. Contrast the Irish involvement with the limp excuses for non-attendance one has heard so often on the 'left' or in trade union circles. When this point is won home, when the Irish people's efforts on behalf of all workers crushed by the British imperialist machine is acknowledged, then progress can be made to lending unconditional support to those elements of the struggle genuinely furthering revolution and comradesly criticism made of those elements holding back success.

Without entering the full emotion of this debate, let certain commonly held illusions about both groups be knocked down. Firstly, the IMG theory that the Provos are in the vanguard of the armed struggle against British imperialism. It is without doubt that the Provos have, through their campaign, done much to rock the very foundations of British capitalism and their suc-

cesses (not least, spectacular ones like Four Square, Seamus Twomey, and so on) have a great impact on all those in opposition to capitalist soc ties. On the other hand many, many people in Ireland have through the continuing and often pointless campaign been divorced from the struggle, become war weary and reluctant to engage the British at any level. Popular sympathy abounds, but genuine popular support is lacking. The second illusion is that the Stickies are filling in the political gaps and creating a genuine revolutionary party. To a great extent, they are achieving the socialisation of their members and are even forging links, however tenuous, with the Protestant side. They are also remembering that the Irish struggle is a 32 county issue and that success will not come merely when British troops are withdrawn and the border abolished, but only when the workers and small farmers effectively control the total Irish economy along socialist lines. To this extent, almost alone, Official Sinn Fein bore the anti-EEC campaign in Ireland. On the debit side, however, is confused leadership, a slowness to react to events and denial of armed struggle, fatal in terms of the support of Northern Republicans. Again, though they have had the courage to abandon 'traditional' Republican values and attempt to forge new policies to forward a revolutionary programme. British groups should order An Poblacht and the United Irishman and analyse the Provo and Sticky policies.

## THE STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN

So far, all Irish support groups in Britain have failed to survive changes in the situation, being split by the falling-away of the Civil Rights type of supporter and then being prey to the internecine disputes of IS, IMG et al, none of whom have shown any real grasp of events in Ireland anyway. A mass movement must be built, if necessary on issues that the British can identify with, such as a 'Withdraw the Troops' campaign. The trade union and labour movement must be encouraged to understand and debate Ireland. Republican speakers must be invited to meetings and discussion forums held. A new organisation, the Trade Union Committee in Support of Workers in Ireland, is attempting to do many of these things, but is seriously handicapped by lack of funds and contacts. What is really needed, if even this type of group is to succeed, is a new attitude on behalf of the British 'left'. Ireland is on the doorstep - it is always the struggle that should have priority after your own.

## REPRESSION OF IRISH MILITANTS

Clann (Stickies), Sinn Fein (Provos) are always willing to supply speakers and to organise schools on Ireland and to supply details of contacts and outlets in Ireland for funds or even simple messages of solidarity. Perhaps the Prisoners Aid Committee typifies most closely the problems confronting these organisations. Since the bomb campaign in Britain, Clann and Sinn Fein have been the subject of massive police harassment resulting in fines, impri-



sonment and a sinking of morale. The worst sentence so far is of 30 years on Noel Jenkinson. Isolation has been more pronounced since the recent SAS/MI6 inspired 'campaign'. Amazingly, the response from the left and the trade union movement has been minimal. This highlights the problems of the 600-700 men interned in Long Kesh and Crumlin Road, the hundreds lifted in Mountjoy, Port Laoise and the Curragh. We are having to fight with one hand behind our back.

The British establishment obviously fear mass support from this country. This means that they have to be more careful in concealing what actually happens to internees and political prisoners, who are now getting worse treatment than that received by their counterparts in Aden and Cyprus. Nevertheless, the police in this country have benefitted, as Brigadier Kitson predicted they would, from the technology of terror worked on poor Paddy. When will the British activists realise that the time to defend themselves is now. Nevertheless, the police in this country have benefitted, as Brigadier Kitson predicted they would, from the technology of terror worked on poor Paddy. When will the British activists realise that the time to defend themselves is now, when the technology is being tried on the Irish? How long before there are regular midnight raids on British activists? When were the police first issued with CS gas? How long have they been trained to use snatch squad tactics against demonstrators and pickets? What difference is there between the illegal holding, questioning and interrogating of the so-called Belfast 10 and the treatment received by the comrades at Shrewsbury? Similarly, what difference is there between the show trials at Winchester, Coventry and Shrewsbury?

British workers must be shown the identity of interests between themselves and those in Belfast, Derry and Dublin. The Protestant worker in the north of Ireland must be forced to face the quandary of his identity crisis by resolutions, and resolutions from British trade union and left groups telling him that he is Irish and that his enemy is British imperialism, and its native gombeen collaborators in Dublin and Belfast, be they orange or green.

This can be done by:

- (i) British groups and trade unions establishing links with political groups in Ireland, exchanging delegations, ideas and literature.
- (ii) British groups burying their sectional interests and promoting Irish co-ordinating committees in each town to promote meetings, demonstrations and activity.
- (iii) Propaganda must be aimed at the working man **not** the student or experienced activist.
- (iv) Massive opposition must be voiced against the treatment of Irish political prisoners and the harassment of activists for the Irish cause.
- (v) Pressure must be put on Labour MP's, however irrelevant this might seem, as by this method the widest possible cross-section of opinion is canvassed.
- (vi) British groups should seriously examine their attitudes to the Irish situation and ask themselves what real attempts they have made to contact either wing of the Republican Movement. Ireland is not 2000 miles away and trips to Ireland for schools and information are a real possibility.

Briege McKeown

## THE PRESS FUND.

So far income and expenditure have just kept pace with rising donations and sales. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE needs a new composer, better quality newsprint to cope with a regular increase in the number of pages. Libertarian ideas have to become widespread in the class struggle which is reaching greater intensity. LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE must be able to increase its effectiveness in this fight.

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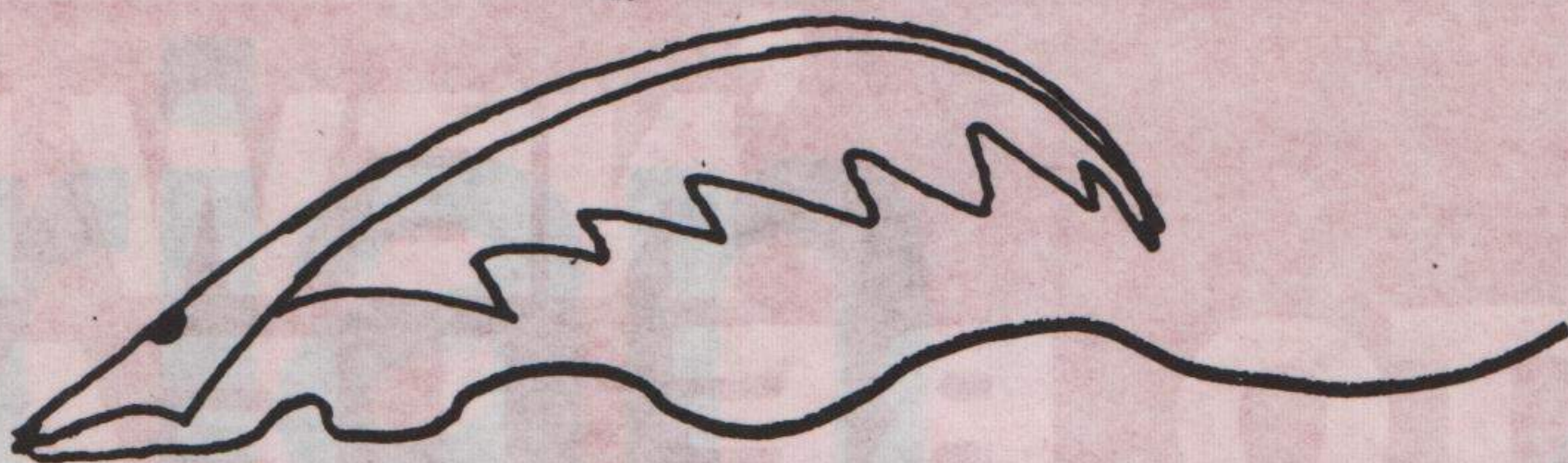
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# Letters



## MIDDLE EAST WAR

Dear Editor,  
Next time you're reading a newspaper or watching the news and the Arab-Israeli conflict comes up, then just remember that:

- \* although extremist Arabs give the number of Arab refugees as 3 millions, in fact there were only about 1 million Arabs living in Western Palestine in 1947 and about half of these preferred to stay in Israel
- \* about 1 million Jewish refugees were taken in by Israel from Arab countries while wealthy Arab rulers kept Arab refugees in concentration camp conditions as an excuse for war and political blackmail, and have preferred to spend their vast sums on armaments and propaganda rather than use any of their immense wealth on the alleviation of distress or on the raising of the living standards of the Arab masses.
- \* As British capitalists and bureaucrats preferred making the oil billionaires and motor tycoons richer rather than giving a living wage to miners and railwaymen, mines have been closed, railway lines axed and energy requirements have been geared to oil rather than coal and nuclear power
- \* as a result the oil sheikhs while still keeping the Arab masses in poverty have been able to again, at the expense of the workers, an increasing hold on stock markets and through the power of advertising and of the companies they control to influence the British press.
- \* ninety per cent of the news you read and hear is biased in favour of Arab fascism and feudal rulers and a good deal of the remainder comes from the right wing of Zionism
- \* the truth is that in order to keep the rate of production down to the rate at which they can invest their ill gotten profits, the oil sheikhs have needed a crisis and a war as an excuse for the oil squeeze.
- \* left wing Israelis have always worked for Arab Jewish unity and against the imperialists who fought against the establishment of Israel and are now attempting to destroy Israel
- \* before and since the partition of Palestine, left wing Zionists have worked for a bi-national state, but the United Nations preferring the policy of divide and rule forced through a partition between a Jewish state which became Israel and an Arab state which was annexed by Jordan

B. G. Dalton

Taking your points in order:-

- \* Actually it was 1¼ million. What you omit to mention is that this number constituted more than 66% of the total population of Palestine. Since 1947 more Arabs were driven from their homes in 1956 and 1967. This, taken with the fact that populations tend to increase — even in refugee camps — makes the number up to three million.
- \* We agree that the Arab rulers are corrupt, but has Israel a policy of accepting any Jew who wishes to immigrate to Israel? The Falasha community of Jews in Ethiopia (one of the most feudal and reactionary states in East Africa) have been trying to get into Israel for years. Unfortunately for them their skins happen to be black. Consequently they have been refused entry into Israel.
- \* Very true but is this the fault of the Palestinians?
- \* Concerning Arab influence in the British press. The Zionist lobby in Britain has far more influence with the press (and the three

major political parties) than the Arabs. The blatant pro-Zionism of the media is obvious. A claim that 90% of what we hear is pro-Arab is just not true.

- \* are you suggesting that the only reason for the war has been to give oil sheikhs an excuse to reduce oil production? The main reason for the war (on the Arab side) was to head off the rising internal discontent with the existing Arab regimes.
- \* it is true that some Israeli left wingers fight imperialism but the rest of what you say is untrue. The US has used every means possible to help the Israeli territorial expansion, and without that aid the Israeli State would collapse. Britain and France in 1956 supported Israel to the extent of invading Egypt. The USSR voted for the establishment of Israel in the UN in 1947. Even now Russian policy is ambiguous when it comes to the demand of re-establishing Palestine.
- \* so it was the UN and not the Zionists who wanted to partition Palestine? This is a falsification of history. Presumably, this is the reason, you would advocate, as to why the Israelis seized large areas of Arab land in 1948 after the original partition lines were drawn up by the UN and used the Stern gang to terrorise the Arabs into leaving their homes.

Editorial Group

## SW conference

Dear Comrades,

I was interested in your report of the recent Socialist Worker conference. Writing as a delegate to the conference, I thought your report reasonably fair. However, it hardly dealt with the part of the conference that was really worthwhile. This was when speakers from the floor — the ordinary trade unionists — spoke of their day-to-day experiences at work which led them inevitably into conflict with union officials. It was also surprising that you didn't mention the Shrewsbury 24 speaker who told how when they picketed one site, they were met by the bosses' son carrying a loaded shotgun. I've not seen this reported anywhere in the left press. There were other items of information which you didn't print.

Surely your paper should be carrying the opinions and aspirations of the ordinary rank and file militants and not lengthy descriptions of the speeches of Cliff — we can read this in Socialist Worker.

Yours, for direct workers' power,

B. McKinley

## Rents

Dear ORA Comrades,

Readers of your November issue may well have been confused by the contradictory political conclusions of the article 'Rents: Legalised Theft'. As the contributors of the original article, such confusion would seem to us fully justified. The analysis we presented of State housing policy within the context of an overall anti-working class State offensive directly leads to the conclusion that existing forms of defensive organisation of the working class cannot meet the State offensive, and that consequently this represents a crisis in working class politics.

By substituting your own conclusion that they are in fact adequate to the task, and that tactical recommendations can resolve such a political crisis, you effectively knock on the head all the key organisational and political questions raised for the working class movement by this analysis.

Hence our conclusion of IS (and ORA) that uncritical defence of current forms of working class struggle effectively depoliticises these struggles by actually reinforcing increasingly inadequate versions of what the struggle is fundamentally about.

What is needed at this point is the debate, a debate through which the revolutionary potentialities of the struggle can be recognised and built upon.

Yours fraternally,

Giles Oliver,  
on behalf of East London Anti-Rents Group,  
7 Queensgate Villas,  
Victoria Park Road,  
Hackney, London E.9

In the November issue of Libertarian Struggle, which was edited by ORA (N. London), an article appeared entitled 'Rent: Legalised Theft'. Although this article was based on an article provided by the East London Anti-Rents Group, it did not throughout reflect the opinions of this group, having been edited and its conclusion rewritten. N. London ORA apologises for any misleading impressions that resulted from the juxtaposition of this article and an advertisement for a pamphlet put out by the East London Anti Rents Group.

Furthermore, as it appears this group were mistaken in believing that material provided by them would not be edited or rewritten (as was the case) we must also apologise for this.

N. London ORA

## Ireland: support for Provos

Dear Comrades,

With regard to R. Sandell's letter in December L.S., I would like to make a few points. His criticisms of certain declarations and actions of the Provos exhibiting eg. racism, are accurate, and obviously these aspects are to be deplored. But to let such facts take precedence over the central struggle in Ireland is morally and tactically incorrect. Anyway, R.S. should be aware that the reactionary views of some Provos are not those of them all. For example, Gerry O'Hare, formerly part of the Provo leadership and now in prison in the South, is a left-wing socialist. Also one finds an increasing revolutionary consciousness amongst the younger Provos, (eg. the Andersonstown Provo paper reviewing Fanon) There are many other examples.

The Provos' struggle is an anti-imperialist one. It is true that it was the British ruling-class's attempts to 'unite' Ireland in the 1960s that provoked the Orange reaction and the present crisis. But surely no libertarian socialist would be stupid enough to assert that military struggle against Britain's imperialist armed forces is not harmful to imperialism's interests. Out of an anti-imperialist struggle an explicitly revolutionary struggle can arise, but not separately. Our main criticisms of the Provos must be their failure to involve the Southern working-class in the struggle, as well as at all times the reactionary aspects R.S. cited. We have to see Ireland in terms of an imperialist relationship since the 17th century. Consequently, I hope ORA soon changes its policy to one of solidarity with the Provisional IRA's military struggle.

Yours fraternally,  
R.

# REVIEW

**THE THREE PHASETRICK**: a handbook on inflation and phase 3. Counter Information Services sixth anti-report. Price 30p from — C.I.S., 52, Shaftsbury Ave., London W1.

"Since November 1972 the growth of real incomes has been held back whilst prices and profits have soared. These trends will continue under Phase Three.

We document what has happened to prices, wages and profits since the governments present policy was introduced; we demonstrate that the causes of the present inflation are rooted in our economic system and we conclude that the policy cannot succeed in its professed aim, to restrain inflation by controlling wages, prices and profits.

What the policy may succeed in doing, if we let it, is to hold back the living standards of wage earners to the benefit of profits. The profiteers will be shielded from the consequences of the inflation which will continue unabated. This we believe is the policies real objective."

## 'HEATH'S CONCERN'

This pamphlet completely exposes the Tory governments prices and incomes policy, and shows that the state pay laws amount in fact to a disguised wage cut. Wages as a proportion of total incomes have fallen while profits have increased substantially. Meanwhile price rises, particularly food, have continued to bite into the real wages of workers. For example, a manual worker with two child ren on the average industrial wage of £36.20 in October 1972 would have received a net increase of only 5.4%, which is under the norm of £1 plus 4%. This in a period when prices rose 9%, and the cost of basic foods even higher.

But what of Heath's alleged concern for the lower paid? Surely if all those greedy dockers were to have their pay rises curbed the lower paid would benefit as the rate of inflation slowed down? So Heath's public relation argument runs.

In fact the plight of the lower paid has worsened during Phases 1, 2 and 3. They pay a far greater proportion of their incomes on basics — food, heating, rents etc., which have risen more rapidly than anything else. Moreover, the fact that the lower paid are poorly organized means that they cannot fight effectively for even nominal wage rises. Many workers in this sector are also subject to the poverty trap by which wage rises are often followed by welfare cuts, thus leaving the worker in a worse condition than before. Even the Financial Times has commented that the lower paid sections are worse off — pointing out that "to cover the rise of more than 10% in living costs which this group has suffered he would need to raise his gross pay by 18%".

## CRISIS RIDDEN

Inflation must not be seen as some blemish on the otherwise immaculate face of capitalism but as a natural result of declining, crisis-ridden, stagnating capitalism which is characterised by a decline in productivity, a decline in capital investment in important sectors of the economy and galloping inflation as firms no longer absorb increased production costs.

In Britain the spiral of inflation has been intensified by E.E.C. entry, V.A.T., the Housing Finance Act and speculation with raw materials and foodstuffs. The real point for the Tories is not to control inflation but to ensure that British capitalists don't have to pay for it.

In this they have had much success. The sullen acceptance of Phase 4 and the defeat of those sections of workers who challenged the restrictions of Phase 2 necessarily meant that capital benefited at the expense of labour. With wage levels held down the bosses have had a field day. The increase in profit levels has been phenomenal. The % increase per employee rose dramatically when compared with the June 1971 — March '72 period.

Phase 3 too will be characterised by inflation, cuts in living standards and boosts for profits unless workers use their industrial power to smash Phase 3 and kick out the Tories.

Al McNeillie



# CHILE: 'NEW LESSON' TO BE LEARNT AGAIN

The fascist coup resulting in the massive defeat of the Chilean working class in September of last year had been expected for months. It was the direct result of the reformist policies of Allende's Unidad Popular government.

The three years of Allende's office made apparent precisely what the implementation of such a limited and reformist programme like that of Unidad Popular would mean: compensation for the international monopolies; appeasement for the national bourgeoisie; exhortations for greater productivity and restrained consumption directed towards the workers.

Throughout his reported statements Allende stressed the willingness of the UP leadership to 'exercise the law and compensate in fair manner'. With the knowledge that over a period of 40 years the copper industry alone drained 40% of Chile's national wealth, compensation for assets expropriated from international corporations was to take the form of annual cash instalments paid over a period of thirty years plus interest. This contradicts the statement of Allende, made in his first Annual Message to Congress: 'The agreement with American industry has shown once more that the government is giving a fair deal to foreign capital without renouncing the basic interests of our nation'. However, such contradiction is nothing when compared with the marxist stances and actual political practice of the Unidad Popular coalition when faced with the 'threat' of revolutionary expropriations by the Chilean workers, and that of a relatively unified ruling class with the support of the armed forces.

The fear of alienating powerful sections of the bourgeoisie as a result of 'ultra-leftist' acts like mass factory occupations, seizures of land, etc. posed the question of survival to the first 'democratically elected marxist



PEACEFUL ROAD ENDS HERE

government' in no uncertain terms. Either a working class inspired by the prospect of real socialism would push the UP leftwards until, in the face of the reformists' reluctance, it would be swept away or transformed under the weight of the workers' demands, or - with a split existing between the government and its mass base - the ruling class would seek to re-assert their rule by crushing the workers and peasants left undefended. In just this

situation, the CP/PSU coalition under Allende sought to woo the middle classes and the military - precisely those sectors who participated in the coup. Such a decision was not made within the context of a politically backward working class which could not be 'trusted' with power. On the contrary, the Chilean peasants, considered backward by President Allende, went much further than the land reform policies of Unidad Popular - essentially a continuation of those started by Frei and the Christian Democrats - by taking over the large estates.

'professionalism' and national as opposed to class character peddled by UP slowed down the developing awareness of the need for an armed and organised working class. With full knowledge of the existence of armed landowners on estates in Cautin, Bio-Bio and Malleco provinces Allende declared: 'I have stated categorically that I do not want Chilean steel to be wrought into weapons with which Chileans will fight other Chileans. We want our steel to be made into picks, hoes, hammers - tools with which to work'.

## Publications

**Organisational Platform of the Libertarian Communists.** (ORA pamphlet) advance orders to D. Young, 91, Burghhead Drive, Linthouse, Glasgow.

**Mole Express** Manchester voice of revolutionary struggle. News/reviews/exposes/graphics/features. 10p monthly from 7, Summer Terrace, Manchester M14 5WD.

**The Tyranny of Structurelessness** by Jo Freeman. Obtainable from Leeds Womens ORA, 29, Cardigan Rd., Leeds 6. 5p plus 3p post. 'Libertarians in all movements should study this pamphlet because it contains the core of the argument that ORGANISED libertarians have stated.' Review in April Libertarian Struggle.

**Front Libertaire** fortnightly paper of O.R.A. France. Sample copy from North London group, subscription details from 33, rue des Vignoles, 75020 Paris, France.

**De Vrije Socialist** paper of the Dutch Libertarian Socialist Federation. For copies write to, Jan Bervoets, Willem de Zwijgerlaan 104, Den Haag, Netherlands.

**Inside Story** the radical magazine which specialises in the stories Fleet St. won't print. For sample copy send 25p to Dept. AP 20, 3, Belmont Road, London S.W. 4.

**Solidarity**, a paper for militants in industry and elsewhere. 6p. plus post from 123, Latham Road, London, E.6.

**Street Research** for practical, grass roots research. Issue No. 2 on researching an individual, No. 3 on researching local authorities and the legal system. 15p per copy plus p postage to S.R.B., 86 Raiton Rd, London S.E. 24.

**Gay Group:** Any comrades interested in discussing the formation of a gay group in ORA please contact: - Martin Baillie, c/o 56, Norfolk Street, Lancaster.

The attempted coup by Col. Souper in June 1973 provoked a major upsurge of militancy within the working class who occupied more than 500 factories in Santiago alone. They had to fight against both the owners and the bureaucrats of the government who opposed many of the occupations in terms of legality under bourgeois democracy. Widespread sabotage of the Chilean economy by threatened middle classes (such as the October 1972 strike by the lorry owners) which were meant to undermine UP's popular support in fact awakened the masses to the necessity of building their own organisations. So too did the inevitable clashes with the landowners and factory bosses, since the government could always be relied upon to act in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The UP policy in the face of large scale land seizures by the peasants was made clear by Allende in a speech delivered, aptly enough, in the Plaza de la Constitución: 'It is not we who have used the government to transgress the law. Whenever an estate has been occupied we have gone immediately and tried to reason with the farm workers'.

The demands and aspirations of the Chilean masses were constantly pushing beyond the pathetic reforms upon which 'socialism was to be founded' in Chile. This awakening of revolutionary consciousness completely shattered the rigidly formulated transition to socialism envisaged by UP.

Through the workers' struggles against the reaction of the right and the reformism of the coalition, there developed the 'cordons industriales' - assemblies of delegates elected from local factories - which could have founded the base from which an out-and-out attack on the capitalists might have been launched. Indeed, the workers in the cordons came quickly to the realisation that armed defences were necessary. However, the attitude of the Allende regime was wholly antagonistic. Workers were arrested for the expropriation of farms and factories, the Chilean Communist Party would allow none of its members to participate in the cordons until mid-August 1973 - harassment came from every side. These factors, plus the mystifications about the Chilean armed forces

Despite attempts on an international scale to present the Chile 'experiment' as an indication of the manifestly bankrupt strategy of the CP the real lessons of the military takeover must be learnt and used - not least by the workers of Chile who continue to struggle in spite of the state repression and previous disillusionment under Unidad Popular. The disillusionment was well under way months before the coup took place. The failure of the UP government could not be hidden when everyday inflation was attacking the living standards of a people already living in poverty, when the black market flourished and continued to supply the wealthy, when the government supposedly 'laying the foundations for socialism' clearly moved rightwards - negotiating even with the Christian Democrats who, at their most leftward extreme, advocated a meal-mouthed version of workers' participation acceptable even to Tories in Britain - and inviting the 'professional' Chilean army to participate.

The success of the coup d'etat was not an inevitable result of the balance of class forces as some have said. What was inevitable was an armed clash between the bourgeoisie and the working class in which large sections of the army lower ranks could be expected to side with the workers and peasants. It was this that Unidad Popular failed to see and failed to prepare for. Doubtless many of the Unidad Popular militants who have somehow escaped the butchery and imprisonment realise this mistake also and are now fighting the Pinochet junta. The failure was so obvious to many sections of the working class before the coup that it may yet prove to be the most helpful feature of UP's rule insofar as such an awareness may have given the opportunity to prepare for the inevitable, prolonged guerrilla war which will be waged by the Chilean workers.

**SOLIDARITY WITH ALL ANTI-FASCIST FORCES**

**VICTORY TO THE CHILEAN WORKING CLASS!** John Bowie

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