Tory spring offensive cuts living standards

WE CAN'T AFFORD TO LET THEM WIN

AS FROM THE BEGINNING OF April, the Counter-Inflation Act is law.

The Counter-Inflation Act will not, and is not intended to, stop prices going up. The new Value Added Tax has sent prices soaring. The removal of Selective Employment Tax and Purchase Tax was supposed to put some prices down....... but have you noticed prices falling? The Counter-Inflation Act will not, and is not intended to, stop the rich collecting a bonus of £300 million a year from the Budget's abolition of surtax. It will not stop Sir Frank Figes' chairman of the Tory Pay Board, from collecting £30 a week salary.

The Counter-Inflation Act is intended to stop £17-a-week hospital workers getting more than £2 a week increase. Whether it will or not depends on us.

A year ago the Government attempted to impose a 7% norm for wages increases. That time, they didn't fix their aims in an anti-strike law - they wanted room to manoeuvre, they weren't as hard-pressed as now.

The miners smashed that 7% norm. This year the miners have knuckled under, and it will be other sections who take the front line against the Tories. But the methods of the miners' strike are still the methods we need. Readiness to act. Massive, effective picketing. And solidarity from broad sections of the trade union movement.

FACING UP OR PHASING OUT?

IT'S JUST OVER TWO YEARS since the 150,000-strong TUC demonstration against the Industrial Relations Bill.

The demonstration did not succeed in keeping the Bill off the Statute book. But it is certainly true that the campaign of propaganda and protest against the Bill did help to prepare workers to fight the Industrial Relations Act.

Your militant speech at the demonstration, arguing for total opposition to the Bill, and the two-week strike over the 130,000 money line you led were an important part in that campaign. True, you old little, but your words... Yet now you seem to say that that campaign was wrong and pointless! You say that it should aim, not to scrap the Act, but just to modify it. You make two proposals:

1. That the Government should vet prosecutions under the Act;
2. That the register of unions should be abolished.

Suppose those two changes were made? What would be the result?

Ordinary workers would still be in the firing line and jailing for any but the most futile industrial action.

The Government and the big employers would not be much bothered. They didn't bring in the Act to defend Goad and Langston, or even Heaton. They brought it in to defend the profits of the big monopolies. And the powers that led of registration would be deprived of them to an extent secondary, reserve powers, not yet required for urgent use.

Full-time union officials would be better off than they are now. They would be freed of the risk of being penalized by 'nutty employers' or 'nutty unionists'. And they would have the security of legal status without having to register and then face the risk and file.

Where do you stand? According to your position as a full-time union official? Or with the ordinary rank and file workers who pay your salary?

Hospital workers - still fighting the Freeze

CHOICE

Is it the case that the labour movement has suffered such severe defeats since 1971 that we are forced to treat for peace with the Tories? NO! When the movement has confronted the Tories head-on - as over the Pentonville Five - we have registered clear victories. A General Strike can smash the Act.

True, we have seen setbacks recently - foremost, after your speech, the miners' decision not to strike alongside the hospital workers. But our strength is not broken. And from the employers' view, our setbacks are not sufficient to solve their economic difficulties.

But if we don't go forward to decisive action, adequate to the task at hand, then we will suffer more setbacks. Isolated struggles will remain isolated, protest strikes will just be

Continued back page

National Steelworkers' conference 13 April
THE NEED FOR A RANK AND FILE MOVEMENT

The Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions could be a bridge between the rank and file leadership within the unions. (Not "splitting" them, but "outside" them, as the Labour Movement insists represents the views of the LR, TUC, and the Belfast Union Conference at the conference. It could not be a "true" conference, for the better, the present situation faced by the working class.

To do so did not mean to be a "confrontation"—at the moment, it is not even a genuine conference. — called by a non-elected committee responsible only to the leaders of the Communist Party. It could not be a solution to the problem of the Liaison Committee in the trade unions and associated sections in the various industries. In turn, this would make unavoidable the adoption of a democratic structure for the General Liaison Committee such as the "sweat-shop" committees in big plants and combines committees have to have.

himself being the rank and file, would then take on a life of its own, allowing free play to the militant drivers of the working class. Its congresses would be democratic policy-making bodies, such as those of the Trade Union Democratic and 1905 Trade Union membership, and so on, it would work out its own policies according to the
POLICE COVER UP FOR ORGANISED RACIST ARSON

AN IDENTITIK PICTURE has appeared as the "Overseas Spotlight" of the "South London Bomber", following the fire-bombing of four Asian-owned shops in the Black Panther Unity Centre (see last wk). This person is supposed to have been seen riding on his scooter around South London on his trail of destruction. He somehow managed to do all the bombing on his own with flawless efficiency, yet was also seen in his activities that he was remembered by "passers by" so well that an Identitik picture has been released with the cooperation of Black militant Tony Soares.

Soares, Tony Soares was arrested following a fall-out in the Black community paper "Grass Roots" giving recipes for a Molotov cocktail and a "People’s Hand Grenade". The article, reprinted from the U.S. Black Panther magazine, urged readers to prepare for a acts of armed self defence against police and military repression of black people.

As Black Militants Convicted for Newspaper Article:

Tony Soares

It was published just two weeks after George Jackson was murdered with a bullet in San Quentin prison. Even though Soares consistently denied that he had any connection with that particular issue of the paper, he was found guilty on March 21st at the Old Bailey on charges of uttering threats to incite people to make bombs and commit arson.

The chief prosecution judge, King Hamilton, before sentencing him, asked for medical reports, saying:

"I want to make sure you are not mentally unbalanced. I am thinking about the draft of an article in your weekly which you handed to me. I was told that if I found Powell had the power he would send all black people in this country to the gas chamber. The suggestion is so ridiculous. No sane person could believe it. I therefore ordering a medical report."

During his four weeks ordeal, it became clear Soares was not really being charged for the "Grass Roots" article, but for all his private thoughts which he jotted down and a selection of all his literature which had been seized during police searches of his home.

And it also became clear that a facts were presented in the defence that there are extensive police oppressors being kept on people who have not committed a crime, but are involved in left-wing politics.

One witness was described as having lived in a commune in the 1960s. Had he the police had any information about the address he was living at being a commune? Another witness was challenged about a letter he had written to the "Morning Star" over a year before. Who was the reader of letters to the Star, and why?

There can be no doubt that an example is being made of Soares to intimidate the Black groups. These attacks on the black groups are all part of the building class society, every bit as much as the attacks on the pickets, and the rest of the growing clampdown for 'law and order'.

MARKOVANAGH

SOCIAL SECURITY

THE FACTS ABOUT THE SCRUNCHERS

IN THE LATEST CBOU8WAL newsletter, it is being said that not only are workers who are rates responsible for raising prices, but also large amounts of the tax we pay goes on keeping "vampires and scum" who scruclerily make a handsome living off the SS.

The Daily Telegraph, favoured by judges and retired bishops, has picked up on the recent report of the Fraser Committee and since launched a series of articles which is even more vicious. A letter in the other day ended with a letter to the editor which said: "Come on, the 80s are for us!

First, some of the other sums that go astray.

Second, the actual breakdown of the Social Security abuses. Their presentation might st amish the indignation of the (some of the) people, who never in his life missed a due through sickness, hangover, industrial deafness, or plain self-indulgence.

These are the outrageous SI abuse on the part of officials who don’t pay any attention to what they do to the people who don’t know their rights.

And finally, the outright and self-evident frauds of the Fraser Committee, which determined, in its own words, to "Counteract the tendency towards the concentration of proper the bias or imbalance which we find ourselves dealing with today."

The evidence which they had to correct came in fact entirely from Department of Social Security officials themselves. And the facts which this evidence included were the following:

The total of "recoverable overpayments" in one year is around £152,000,000. Of this, not all is due to fraud — some is overpaid through mistakes.

The frauds include 1.5% of pensioners going to the trouble of claiming supplementary benefits when they really have a bit of money stashed away. They also include 4.5% of pensioners dying not to declare that they were working and earning more than the permitted amount. (That should have to work at all is a scandal).

Imagine a press campaign against "pensioner scum"! (No, the gaffer press knows better. Far more cunning to talk vaguely about "serious amount of" getting astray.

THE WORKSHY

Then there are the "workshy". The most searching official study found that only 7% of people long unemployed, at one month, who are looking for a job. Of these, 80% were physically or mentally handicapped.

In another study it was found that 1% of those claiming sickness benefit were fraudulently on the list, for example claiming for dependent wives who were really working. All these amounts go to making up that grand total of £152,000. As well as the sick and the old, there are those who clock on and sit on at the same time. The Fraser official term for this business crime is "overclaiming" — and that is a good description. Pretty well always the case in business, where people, having accumulated debts and financial problems because of the pittance paid by the SS, are forced to report immediately that they have got work.

They may even be naive enough to recede in their contributions and believe that it’s theirs by right anyway. They may even report that, since the bosses are closing, they take every opportunity they can to squeeze money out of them, they should seize the chance of squeezing every penny they can from the State.

But the Daily Express, of course, knows better. We’d like to see a full blown press campaign against the real scum of this society, the rulers of the society, those who live very well indeed off our unpaid labour — what they call profit.

As much is spent on one single annual tax exempt comparison account, as is paid to a whole family to live on for a week on the SS. The corruption, fiddles and tax dodges of the rich, both as individuals and particularly as organised oligarchic companies, amount to thousands of millions.

THE SCRUNCHERS

These are the people with full time accountants, well versed in every loophole and gap in the tax laws, who can in any single year, avoid taxes worth, for example, £75 million.

In the same year as 80% of the SS "scroungers" were away with their £125,000, the amount of illegally avoided tax that was recovered was £117,5097, and that is the tip of a very large iceberg.

So in the terms of the pensioners’ illegal takings, this amount was made up from savings amounting £1,000 per individual. In a further twist, of the £10,000 tax dodgers only 1.5% were prosecuted — DSS prosecute representation of the self-employed involved is minimal, are at rates of 22% of those discovered.

And while on the subject of tax, it’s hardly irrelevant to mention the dodging by the rich themselves.

By a fluke of the Chancellor’s budget, £200 million in surtax was given away, with an extra £500 a week going into the net take-home or carry to the bank income of thousands who will switch to a better brand of cigs and buy some more shares in Distillers or Slater Walker South African Security

And contrary to what we’re told to think, the bulk of our taxes don’t go to the hard-pressed, wage-stopped, mean-tested and sex-assessed, and poverty-trapped who are fighting to make ends meet.

Our taxes go largely on worthy causes like Concord over £1,000,000 a day, on defence £338 million every year, about one-sixth of all tax (9% of all tax), which is the expenditure for strike-breaking and police repression on the Royal Family, and on the ”non-criminal assaults” on the bosses’ State with its prisons, civil military courts and camps, police, battalions, State visits, occasional dinners, etc. Not to forget, of course, the 99% of the DSS who are snoopers, costing almost as much as the amount supposedly "wasted".

POISON

So what is all the fuss about? It’s nothing but one big propaganda exercise for the government in the present attack on the working class to split the working class into black and white, English, Irish, West Indian, Asian and Chinese, etc., etc. In the end, we don’t want to make some distinction between employers and employees, to strengthen the small company men and scabs, and to make confused, insecure people into a terrible crowd of people, right-wing Tories and the fascist National Front.

And it’s part of the preparation for yet another clampdown on strikes to add to the Industrial Relations Act and the moves against picketing — the protected denial of Social Security benefits to pickets, the whole test of "save the taxpayers" money, but signs, the growing strength of the working class and to boost employers’ profits.

RACHAEL LIVER
Argentina after the elections

In the last issue of Workers Fight, we reported on the results of the elections in Argentina. The 4 April issue of the Paris daily Le Monde contains a report of the activity of the revolutionaries in Argentina since the election.

On 2 April the guerrillas of the ERP (Revolutionary People's Army) seized Admiral Francisco Alenea.

Unlike the other underground organizations (the Montoneros and the PAR, Peronistists), which have practically ceased their activity following the orders of Eva Peron, the ERP, of Trotskyist inspiration, has not laid down its arms. True, it seems to be divided - one section of its militants has gone over to the idea of a post-elected Front rule. But the other, partisans of the direction, remain faithful to their leader, Roberto Santachi. The kidnapping of Admiral Alenea has provoked serious repercussions in the Army...

The ERP's adherence to the election campaign is in question.

While the armed forces do not want to give the responsibility of the struggle against "subversion" to one elected president would be a bad amnesty, the military affirm that they will not follow any hasty measure in that domain.

By mounting an offensive that is going to provoke the armed forces, the ERP is placing Campana in a delicate situation.

The 30 March issue of the French revolutionary paper Rouge contains Le Monde's report of the Peronists guerrillas giving up the armed struggle.

The majority of the other revolutionary groups (other than the Peronists), denouncing the manoeuvre of the dictatorship and the bourgeois character of Peronism, called for a boycott or a blank vote.

The Peronists' exception was the PST (Socialist Workers Party).

This organization came from a fusion between the 1st party group, a sympathising organization of the 4th International, and the PAS (Coral), a small centrist group which came out of the split-up of the ERP for the Socialists' party. It was the only organization of the Argentine left to participate actively in the election campaign.

It made this campaign a platform for resisting the political independence of the working class in relation to the bourgeois Peronist leadership.

The use made by the PST of the election campaign - this has been the principal axis of the activity of its militants for more than a year - was without substance. The problem of political prisoners - one of the central problems today - was pushed into the background.

That is all the more serious for the ERP and its followers were not without impact on sections of the broad vanguard of Argentina, particularly in the advanced sections of the trade union movement. The success of its hundreds of meetings, particularly the final meeting of the campaign in Buenos Aires, with (according to the bourgeois press) 10 000 participants, shows its impact much more than the electoral results themselves (they got 9.75% of the vote).

The PRT-ERP

Our comrades of the PRT-ERP, for their part, found Peronism's victory in particular in a difficult situation in relation to the elections. Since the last half-year, the war has been lost, and independently of the electoral schedules and the "political opening" of the dictatorship, they have undergone repression without a let-up. Access of comrades, for the most part cadres of the organization, has been difficulty, joining in the elections of the regime of the two hundred or so already jailed.

Using the framework of its strategy of "revolutionary war", the PRT has had for two years a precise orientation: the victory of armed organizations. The turn away from struggle of the Peronist armed organizations has left our comrades totally isolated in the military field.

Moreover, the press gained by the PRT-ERP as a result of its armed struggle has been, for the time being, capitalised politically. The diffuse sympathy of broad sections of the Argentine masses towards our comrades - to the extent that it wasn't explicitly counterposed and punished - has stood up to the electoral rallies and political demonstrations of Peronism. So in the framework of the isolation in the military field there has been a certain political isolation.

The impossibility for the PRT-ERP, as a banned organisation, to continue its armed struggle has been only added to the difficulties. Our comrades have had "base committees" legal and public structures, with the aim of campaigning on a campaign for the freeing of political prisoners and for boycotting the elections.

They have denounced the bourgeois nature of Peronism and the mass character of its vanguard, the bourgeoisie through these elections, namely, "to isolate the fighters of the revolutionary war from the masses". Along with this, they continued to carry out certain armed actions......

This orientation hasn't been without difficulties and internal crises. Thus a dissident group has been created, a split-off from the ERP, calling itself the ERP-22. While reaffirming the necessity of the armed struggle, the ERP-22 has, in a spectacular way, called for a vote for the Peronist candidates, even in the name of the defence of the immediate interests of the workers. It goes without saying that such a position is totally foreign to revolutionary Marxism. Our comrades have completely broken with some of the fundamental ideas of Trotskyism (Rouge).

Clearly, our comrades meet in solidarity with the comrades of the PRT-ERP, against the repression, in a future issue of Workers Fight, we will publish further reports and our comments on the problems of strategy facing socialists in Argentina.
The farm manager dismissed the maintenance fees as "flibbertigibbet" and said that he himself received plenty of milk. Any that was left over after the cows were given to the Bandi.

**Starvation Wages in S. Africa**

**TIME FOR US TO ACT**

BAD MEALIE MEAL — staple diet at Slater Walker estate at Boscombe near Pietermaritzburg

DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL war in the 1860s, Lancashire cotton mill workers chose to see their own families go hungry rather than work the slave-picked cotton that came from the Southern Confederate states.

That striking example of international working class solidarity has been all but forgotten today. But it is by no means that kind of a thing — and at far less cost to us now — that is needed to lift South African workers to lift themselves out of their abysmal slave labor conditions.

The facts that have been published in the last few weeks, initially in "The Guardian", reveal a scene of desperate poverty established and maintained through brutal repression.

It has been estimated that (on average) 34 black babies die every day from diseases caused by malnutrition. Many others suffer permanent brain damage. A recent reference written in "The Guardian", "If every day, 34 black babies were shot dead by white South Africans, there would be an outcry. Instead, they get 34 a week: disease, and eventually death, out of sight, out of mind!"

Compared with an English — and while South African — infant mortality rate of about 23 per 1000, the African infant mortality rate is as high as 330 per 1000.

These figures are an index to the situation where white workers, whose Trade Union are legal (and only concerned with maintaining the race differential) can sum up to 20 times the wages of black workers doing the same job.

Investors love South Africa. The profits are fabulous — second highest in the world. British companies are the biggest investors in South Africa, accounting for 58% of total foreign investment in 1970. This year, in 1976, a 50 million is invested in the Apartheid state, bringing in profits of around 50 million.

British companies have subsidiaries in South Africa where wage rates are often actually lower than those of South African firms. Some workers are paid only that kind of a week (including overtime and bonus) of corn, 3 a week to have housing and food for their families. This consists of bare huts with the cruelest facilities, and poor starchy "mealie" — with scraps of meat a week.

The companies themselves place the value of this at $5 a week. "This is not wages," said "the comment of an personnel manager, Air Force Morit's "no salary, "but you have to remember these guys are mostly illiterate..."

**FIGHT BACK**

A comprehensive official study last year showed that 80% of the African employees of British companies were receiving wages below the Poverty Datum Line (PDL). Some of them are as low as 30 cents a day. It has been calculated that a family of four can just survive on. It allows for a bare subsistence of food, clothing, and housing, but does not include medicine, education, savings, holidays, furniture, bricks or even bare fares — nor the cost of burial for those dying of starvation and disease. And God help the family of more than five or with, say, black trade unions are forbidden. Strikers are illegal — and breaking the laws of South Africa's Apartheid police regime brings terrible penalties. The workers who come out in the recent strike wave risked at the very least, loss of their jobs, and also jail without trial, beatings, and tear gas attacks; and, since in their numbers, nine dozen were shot in the back at Sharpeville 13 years ago, sudden death is not excluded either.

But the black workers have begun to fight back. They put up a show if we do not come forward with the necessary solidarity action. The Liberal papers such as the Guardian perform a useful service in detailing the facts. But their solution falls far short of what is needed, and amounts to little more than the hope that the explorers will mend their ways as result of public pressure'.

Yet the facts which they themselves report belie this hope. First, the report last year revealing that 80% of African workers in British firms were paid below (some far below) the PDL, was buried up by mutual agreement of the firms involved. Yet now they claim that their "never knew" about the conditions and that "just can't explain the wages up."

A typical response was that of Jim Slater of Slater Walker SA (profit $1.15 million last year) some of whose African workers earn the grand sum of 24p a day for themselves and their families: "Neither my colleagues nor I know anything about conditions of South African employees...". A spokesman for Hoover's South African business said "I had only just learned that the company's rates of pay were low."

They were all "looking into it" and "would be putting up wages...". Meanwhile, they sit tight and wait for the public to declare its rights to swing away... and have a good laugh while shares change hands from those with a liberal conscience to hard-headed businessmen who don't mix sentiment with their investment.

British trade unions, however, know that it is struggle which decides, not sympathy and publicity on their own.

Our demands will not be for 'some improvement', nor for a minimum subsistence wage for African workers.

Our demands must be first of all for Trade union rights for our South African brothers, so that whatever level of wages our fight can force for them, they can fight to keep and others use the complete pay of wages and conditions. Such actions as that of the British trade unions which last month blacked a British ship in response to the manner of the crew are far more effective for sport or consumer boycotts.

The TRC in 1968 decided to support a boycott of all South African goods. We presently know that? Not surprisingly, it's not had much effect. If the US wanted to do more than say, "I'm conscious, it would organise the much more effective action of cracking down on South African goods.

British workers can take the initiative in such action, demanding complete pay of wages, conditions, and trade union rights for black South African workers. They are some of the big British businessmen whose South African subsidiaries are paying many workers below the Poverty Datum Line: Associated Portland Cement, T.Lye, Metal Box, Courtaulds, Tate & Lyle, Electric, Bata, Climex Chemical, Assessment, Foods, and British Leyland.

Strike action in his home town would rapidly change the British outlook "concern" into action.

MAXI

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**Nixon's New Threat**

A NEW THREAT FROM NIXON: The last air lift of US troops from Vietnam took place, it seemed the Vietnamese to "have no doubt as to the consequences if they fail to comply with the agreement."

At a 15 March press conference he had issued a similar warning, based on his actions over the last four years.

The picture is clear. It's the continuing ground war between the liberation forces and Thieu looks like tripling the regime. Nixon witnessed once again the B52 bombers on Vietnam, justifying himself on the grounds that the North Vietnamese have broken the agreements. The war is not over.

10000 or 20000 US civilian advisers remain in Vietnam. 100000 US soldiers, the 7th Fleet, and 600 US planes remain in South East Asia.

In Laos, the date fixed in the agreement for the formation of a coalition government — 22 March — came and went without any coalition being formed. In Cambodia, the B52 bombing is estimated to be the heaviest ever, and is now striking at the national of the capital, Phnom Penh. It is even possible that in the next few weeks the US could bomb the central itself. the puppet regime is in serious with rebellions in the army and massive popular discontent in its wake.

Together with Nixon's rhetoric about North Vietnam, the US has also increased the number of its advisers in South Vietnam, and the US military has been increased.

These attempts to build up a new offensive (if Nixon needs it) is based on hypocracy. There has been 200000 political refugees, many of them kept in conditions of incredible filth and unemployment. Those few who have not been parleyed and disabled as a result of their treatment.

Nixon is guilty of at least five violations: Failure to dismantle US bases (article 6), murdering military personnel as civil personnel (art. 5), bombing Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam (art. 20), delay in clearing mines from North Vietnamese ports (art. 2), bringing military supplies into the area (art. 7). If the Vietnamese have indeed broken the agreements, we reserve our full support. The US has no right to bring war into Asia in the first place.

The agreements include concessions wrung out of the Vietnamese through massive bombing and debilitation campaigns: if the Vietnamese feel strong enough to take back those concessions, that's good.

Martin Thomas,

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**Indochina Solidarity Campaign**

**DECEPTION**

5th May, Trailerpark Square 2pm

Freedom for a group of Vietcong and North Vietnamese POWs.
A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE ELECTION of the Tory government, Heath made a speech to the United Nations General Assembly, in which he stated: "It may be in the 1970s, civil war, not war between nations, will be the main danger we face.

After nearly two years of the 'Tories' provocative methods of class rule, after the near general strike situation created by the imprisoning of trade unionists, Heath's resistance to civil war can be seen as more than a casually dropped remark.

Certainly its significance would not be lost on the top brass of the British army, for within the army's top ranks a new breed of politically minded officer has grown. Far removed from the Colonial Empire cartridge of a politically ignorant, army officer, the new breed see themselves as having a political role which has previously been taboo.

That isn't to say that we're due for a military coup d'état, but it is clear that the army is mapping out for itself a role in internal "law and order" which has up to now been the sole responsibility of the civil authorities.

Nuclear weapons have meant that a large standing army is superfluous in any major war. Instead, for the past 25 years, the army has been concerned with suppressing nationalist and communist movements in Britain's former colonies. Kenya, Malaya, Cyprus and Aden have all been scenes of operations for "counter-insurgency" and "counter-subversion"... 25 years' involvement in this type of warfare has resulted in the emergence of a number of experts on what is technically called "low intensity operations".

These experts hold many high ranking posts in the army's command structure and now that the political vacuum the future has to be a political animal, giving advice to a number of select government departments from the police to local authorities. It is, say, political experts, to be arrested by a military operation, then it is this army which has good political intelligence (such as could be provided by the police Special Branch) in order to identify the leaders, and also the operation will have to be made politically acceptable to the population using the press, radio, and TV. The former of these functions, "intelligence" and the latter, "psychological operations", are stressed by Kitson as vitally important, and together with "Public relations and resources control", they should come under a supreme counter-subversion civil-military command.

Kitson is in favour of the unification of military and civil intelligence services, although he sees some difficulties here. The civil intelligence system (in this country, the Special Branch) rests on "high grade" sources that is, trained agents infiltrate political organisations and feedback information on the leaders, the strength, and the activities of the organisation.

For military operations, however, "low grade" sources are better. Under this system, a lot of untrained agents are recruited and they give information about the area they live in or the place where they work, rather than be "required to infiltrate.

Kitson sees difficulties about running the two systems together in the same organisations. He also stresses that intelligence isn't just a specialised task, but the job of every soldier - thus soldiers should be encouraged to keep an ear open when they go to the pub or dance hall. Journalists are also a good "low grade" source, and many useful pieces of information can be obtained by giving a journalist a preferential treatment in getting to the scene of a "counter-subversion".

SPYING

Kitton lays great stress on "counter-subversion" being one of the vital links in the system. Since there can be no division between purely military operations and civil rule, the success of the future has to be a political animal, giving advice to a number of select government departments from the police to local authorities. It is, say, political experts, to be arrested by a military operation, then it is this army which has good political intelligence (such as could be provided by the police Special Branch) in order to identify the leaders, and also the operation will have to be made politically acceptable to the population using the press, radio, and TV. The former of these functions, "intelligence" and the latter, "psychological operations", are stressed by Kitson as vitally important, and together with "Public relations and resources control", they should come under a supreme counter-subversion civil-military command.

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N. IRELAND

On "psychological operations", Kitson remarks how Britain is lagging behind the rest of the world. However, if this were true when Kitson wrote the book, the past few years in Northern Ireland have surely done something to redress the balance. "Psychological operations" means roughly propaganda - in particular "blasting" stories in the press and TV.

Thus, in Ireland, the Army Information Service provides stories for the press, and inevitably in any incident it is the version handed out by the army which finds its way into the press. It is very rare that the press mentions the source of the story, with the result that when the story is blatantly untrue the Army reserves the account of what has happened and two contradictory versions of the event appear in the press.

This has happened on more than one occasion. Besides this, army officers are now given TV appearance training before they go on service - bad performances are not allowed to appear in front of the camera. In this sphere, as well as that of intelligence, softening up journalists has its rewards.

Kitson also wants specialised army units to act as strikebreakers. Of several alternatives for army expansion he remarks that one of the least expensive is the keeping of "specialist individuals and units within the army to enable essential civil services to be maintained in the event of civilians being unable or unwilling to maintain them."

He then goes on to bemoan the fact that the army has a far greater capacity for strike breaking immediately after the war than it does now, and adds ominously "Even within the United Kingdom, a situation might arise in which the army was required to provide men for this purpose."

How much support does Kitson have for his new ideas? To what extent have they been put into practice already?

It is difficult to say with any certainty. As Kitson himself notes in relation to his proposal for military advisors on government committees, "There is no danger of political repercussions to this course of action, because compensation can be carried out in strict secrecy."

But it is unlikely that Kitson was given a year's paid leave and a place at Oxford just for the purposes of academic study. It is much more likely that some secret proposals were prepared for the Ministry of Defence and these would be a lot more specific than his book.

Moreover, Kitson is not isolated.

new laws, new-style army and police
he possesses are repairing for a long war

IN RESPONSE TO THE GROWING number of recent strikes, using new tactics on a massive scale, the following are some of the outcomes of this meeting.

Meanwhile the Confederation of British Industry is agitating against mass pickets, solidarity picketing, and flying pickets. They want laws to restrict the powerless employer to so much money and to so such an extent. The following is an example of this: 

IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS A CT

Most of these laws have been passed, not if not even enforced. Therefore, the 1906 Trades Disputes Act, though the discretion of the powers of the police ("I thought there might be a breach of the peace of a band of men{Name}"") were extended by the Peas Commission (1964: 30), with the Industrial Relations Act (1972), there is a defamatory action in the number of illegal acts that a moderately ordinary picket can commit.

First, it can't be an "industrial" dispute. Any and all picketing is illegal if it's in support of a strike, in support of tenants facing eviction as a consequence or fighting the Housing Finance Act, or a strike against the Police or the Industrial Relations Act (such as the one on May 16). Second, it is illegal for anyone (even a registered union or picket) to picket the customers and/or suppliers of a firm in dispute (even if the dispute itself is not an "industrial" dispute on its own), and even if the pickets are shouting "Come on out, Bill, and not "Rotten scabs, we have your guts for supper".

Then there is a whole battery of "unfair industrial practices", and picketing in connection with them can be brought under the National Industrial Relations Court and fined and/or jailed, as were the Pentonville Five. But not all.

If the dispute is illegal under the Industrial Relations Act, then it is not directly in breach of criminal law. But that is not all.

The problem is how to enforce the laws they've got. An official publication prepared by the recent ministerial statements ... indicates that the Government feels that the present law properly enforced is adequate to cope with the situation (our emphasis). Right now MacMillan is busy drawing up a code of illegal picketing in an attempt to turn their new paper laws into real ones.

The problem is how to say that they may not decide to add laws, for instance, in any of the CBI's recommendations, for use in another situation.

The problem is how to say that they may not decide to add laws, for instance, in any of the CBI's recommendations, for use in another situation.

The government is on the offensive with new anti-picket police squads. We must prepare to meet this. We must expect such action to turn into an all-out general strike if we are to get rid of the Industrial Relations Act.

Rachel Lever

PP.8&9: A WORKERS' ARMY & A BOSSES' ARMY

This was established by Donaldson, Chairman of the National Industrial Relations Court, interpreting Lord Denning, who had tried to rule that if the method of picketing was legal, then the strike was legal by the nature of a dispute under the Industrial Relations Act.

If it is not just a question of innocuous under the Industrial Relations Act but also prosecution under other laws made possible by the Industrial Relations Act, then: 

- For anyone except a registered Trade Union to induce a breach of contract, including a contract of employment: that is, practically impossible.
- Any action in support of an "unfair industrial practice", e.g. if workers take action outside a shop like Langston or Gardn, or
- Any action while a strike is in progress is the National Industrial Relations Court on Commission on Industrial Relations.

In the event of an industrial action while a strike is in progress is the National Industrial Relations Court on Commission on Industrial Relations.

every man a criminal

Many is the solid, law-abiding citizen who would be horrified to know just how many laws he broke on the picket line.

Certainly, picketing is legal. But, as defined by law, that means "obtaining information or peacefully communicating information". It is actually illegal to physically prevent access to work, even if this is done ever so peacefully. That is "obstruction of the highway".

This is the law. It leads to 95,000 V-signs, etc. are "insulting behaviour". Then there is threatening behaviour. All that is before the law even gets around to assault, or such sinister crimes under the Conspiracy and Protection of National Security (Temporary Provisions) Act already been committed in the 1875 like "persistently following" or "harassing and intimidating".

Picketing the home (or the inopportune vicinity of the home) of a scavenger or employer is illegal, however peacefully it is done.

If the police tell you to disperse, or tell the picket leader to disperse the picket, and are not obeyed, then that's obstruction of the highway. The police don't need to have any reason for telling you to disperse however law-abiding the pickets were, all the police need to say is...
Dublin 1913: how the workers met police violence

Dublin’s workers of 1913 have some lessons for British workers faced with the battles of 1981. We already face specially trained and organised police and picket squads. All signs suggest the government is at least considering the creation of a state of emergency in Dublin to back up their anti-union laws with the necessary degree of physical force against pickets.

THE IT&GWU

The Irish Economy at the turn of the century was a backward appendage of Britain’s. The working class was organised in a few unions. The government did not consider the creation of a state of emergency in Dublin to back up their anti-union laws with the necessary degree of physical force against pickets.

In 1913 the dispatch workers at the Irish Independent newspaper were given an ultimatum by Murphy, its proprietor—“Leave the union if you want your job.” Murphy immediately dispatched “black” by the union. Murphy also owned the Dublin tramways so on August 25th, 700 tramway workers went onto the street, leaving the trains wherever they happened to be at that moment. The employers had organised a federation in 1911, and had been working towards a showdown. On September 3, 1913, 400 agreed to a lockout of their workers, and deposited sums of money as surety that they would never make peace until the union was smashed. Soon 2000 workers were affected.

The State moved to back up the bosses. The Royal Irish Constabulary was not like the British police force then, or so far now. Ireland was in fact a British colony, ruled often by brute force. The police was also an arm of occupation. Its barracks, dotted round the country, were small occupation forts. It was an armed police force trained for systemic brutality and hardened to the use of force against the people.

As in the currently emerging practices with the picket squads in Britain, constables had never been allowed to police their native districts, lest any false feeling or sympathy should hold them back. In Dublin the RIC was composed of country recruits.

CITIZEN ARMY

“The locked-out worker who attempted to speak to a scab in order to persuade him or her not to betray the class they belonged to was mercilessly set upon by uniformed bullies, and hauled to prison, until the prison was full to overflowing with helpless members of our class. Women and young girls by the score, good, virtuous, beautiful Irish girls and women were clubbed and insulted, and thrown into prison, pressed and imaginated—there is a whole book on to clean the shoes of the fear of this sort of thing which would have been passed in Ireland, the whole press of the country was shamelessly engaged in poisoning the minds of the people against us. One man who was burned who was chosen was shot to murder and together with the workers who stood by their Union.

Four men, James Nolan and John Byrne, were clapped to death in the street”—and 400 were injured on this bloody Sunday.

To the economic blackmail of the bosses, trying to starve the workers of Dublin into submission, was now clearly, to be added unreserved use of police violence. That Dublin’s workers had indeed, as Connolly put it, learned self-reliance in the great school of Labour. They were not going to “crawl back into our slums, abase our hearts, gnaw into our own flesh”, but, and claw once more to kick the hand that would smite us.”

The Workers of Dublin set up their own militant to defend themselves. When the police had let it be known that their pickets were main instruments of the band of the Angler & IT&GWU branch (which had done it to popular taste). “The Peeler and the Goal”, which mocked the RIC, the branch decided it wasn’t going to let them break their instruments.

Next time they paraded the band was flanked by lines of pickets swinging hurls—clubs somewhat like those unions used in the Irish national sport. After Bloody Sunday the idea caught on.

Here was a test for the union leadership. Were they going to continue to fight back, escalating the struggle, and the means of struggle, where necessary? Labour had meant it when they said that they could do no more than kill him—and if they did, others would replace him.

In September 1913, the union formally organised its own militia, calling it “The Irish Citizen Army.” It soon taught the police to respect the union’s meetings and demonstrations. No longer faced with a mob, the police were less anxious to break heads—because they weren’t anxious to get their own heads broken.
The strike dragged on for many months and the workers longed for the end of the bitter months. At last, the strikers were given a victory. They won, and the strike was called off. However, the workers were not satisfied. They wanted more. They wanted justice. They wanted their rights. They wanted the company to recognize their unions. They wanted fair wages. They wanted better working conditions. They wanted respect. They wanted dignity. They wanted recognition. They wanted the company to listen to them. They wanted the company to understand them. They wanted the company to value them. They wanted the company to see them as human beings. They wanted the company to see them as workers. They wanted the company to see them as people. They wanted the company to see them as equals. They wanted the company to see them as valuable. They wanted the company to see them as important. They wanted the company to see them as necessary. They wanted the company to see them as irreplaceable. 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If you hold a conference in the middle of a wage freeze and an anti-union attack by the state, you have to cater to the situation. Otherwise it runs the risk of alienating the public.

Worse, that the organisers of the 9th Annual Conference of the Industrial Relations Council had understood this. Indeed, they were doing so much as an attempt to spell out what corporate demands for workers’ control should have in a programme for action for the working class in 1976.

Consequently, debates ranged from the formal to the farcical. In one session where part of the debate was between John Hughes of the Bank of England and John Maynard Keynes, and Keynes in particular, argued that the working class should not only be dismissed out of hand, but that the working class should decide for itself, the meeting decided.

We argue against the whole package because we know that you cannot get the right stamps if you buy the wrong paper. We argue that the union is not responsible for the working class and that the working class is not responsible for the union. We argue that the union is only possible because the working class is not responsible for the union. We argue that the working class is not responsible for the union because the union is the only possible way to organise the working class.

This is a war against the working class. It is a war against organised workers in the form of a war on the workers. It is a war against the working class because it is the only way to organise the working class.

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N.U.S. dithers

SOME 30 STUDENT UNIONS have been called to a special congress on halls of residence this term. They are campaigning for an adequate increase in the number of halls of residence. In many places the strikers have been a minority of perhaps a couple of hundred striking in the thousands of total students. Some minor local victories have been scored. Effect, at least, to prove that there is a possibility of success.

At Dundee University, 100 students are threatened with being taken to court over the action. (The majority, and the great majority of the militants who don’t live in halls of residence mobilise in response to this threat.)

The recent Exeter conference of the National Union of Students reviewed the situation. It was clear that the Communist Party-led Executive was looking towards the employers to find a solution. One motion from the Executive – not one brought forward by the strikers – called on employers not to launch any rent strikes next term until and unless the employers get assurances of no victimisation; and to end rent strikes if a cut in hall fees is gained even if there is no rent strike.

Two motions passed by narrow margins were opposed by the Executive. One said that any Government offer on the grants question should be a condition of the conference of NUS, not just by the Exe.

In the smaller, and therefore weaker, colleges, many students have been in the same position as the Dundee students. Their grants are not fixed by law, but depend on the decision of the local authority. Their first concern is to secure a form of settlement which gives them some security that they fear they may lose the NUS may ‘dump’ them if it gets an offer on the same basis.

There were several motions of amendments passed without the Executive but the Executive did not pass the amendments without the Executive. But the more politically explicit generalities motions generally failed. Clearly there was a lot of dissatisfaction with the Exe but it wasn’t all politically aware.

On the politically central issue of ‘army’ – of the independence of the student union – the Exe carried the day. A motion to affirm that autonomy is not negotiable was lost by a 40-40 margin. And an amendment calling on the Exe to give full support to colleges fighting for autonomy was defeated.

The same trend was indicated in the Executive elections. Those college officials managed to get in, and the ‘outside’ Randall defeated the ‘of course’ Terry for President (the two are getting on well). But in a move to prevent them from getting on, the executive decided to recommend them for non-membership of the NUS. The Executive did not actually meet.

The student police are trying to pick off the lucky 34 and isolate the Exe as an example. That is why solidarity is especially important.

Andrew Horning surveyed other important developments in the police drive against picketing. Special named police units are known to operate in major cities. On pickets and demonstrations, previously, it was – as a rule – this or that especially vicious individual cop who went out of his way for a punchup. Now the street-arm men are so systematically and planned and on some demonstrations must have found out the police opposing them are local.

The other speaker was Mark Palmer, SEPTU General Secretary at St George’s Hospital, who only a few days later was himself to be arrested on the picket line.

When the hospital workers had started their struggle, he said, they had been without any experience in picketing. As soon as they started turning torres back, the police were accusing them of threatening violence.

With experience, their picketing had tightened up, and now St George’s was striping everything bar essentials out of medical supplies. The NUS claimed its police drive was a failure. ‘Mark Palmer, was only the way for the hospital workers to win, even if it means that hospitals like St George’s have to be shut down and the patients transferred to the guaranteed unithedness of non-striking hospitals.

The meeting closed, after discussion, with a collection for the Workers’ Platf Fledging Fund.

Next public meeting:

IRLAND: TWO NATIONS?

November 14, 7.30 pm, Golden Lane pub, corner of Kings Cross Rd and Brick Lane.

Copies of the Shinolf building workers’ leaflet can be obtained from NUS at 96 Cliff St, London N1.

Donations and messages of support to N.W. Williams, Morton Centre, Ocean View, Carmel, P.l shire.

Docks—national fight needed

LONDON DOCKERS were LOCKED OUT DURING THE WAR.

On Monday, 2nd dockers in the enclosed docks came out. In response to the action of the strikers in the Royal, Royal, some riverside streets, and the container depot in Barking and Chobham, a call for solidarity was made by the dockers and their supporters.

The scene for this confrontation was set some weeks ago when London enclosed docks workers and employers offered to name the dockers’ wages 2.60 plus 44 days off. The employers had said that they would withdraw cooperation of the employers over Clause 12 of the Donw Break agreement. This clause refers to mobility of labour (usually between ship and ship, ship to shore, and batch to batch), and possible conditions.

The agreement was signed in September 1970. It simmered the end of the battle against Devlin’s rather than the bitter and bitter.

In opposition to Clause 12, the managerial committee decided that to name the agreement was a decision. The Port of London Authority, would lead out by the employers. It was led out by the employers. It was agreed to name the agreement.

There is no feeling for a national fight, but no port can also London has taken on the job of securing them.

The meeting of the National Ports Services Committee on Saturday April 7th must take up this job. London has called on the employers/owners to join the strike and to name the agreement.

The absence of the employers/owners on the PLAs. The PLA’s role in the strike has been largely that of a neutral in the battle against the employers.

We need a full scale strike, but what kind of one? The strike is as different from a ‘wage’ fight. The London dockers have faced consistent, and that is where the Organisers of all the ports.

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Hospitals face 'bonus' threat

HOSPITAL WORKERS ARE STARTING INTO A NEARLY-UNPRECEDENTED STRIKE on which is loaded the TUC's hopes and held by the union leaders. In one hospital, the picketing even threatened to shoot dead the title of militancy that has swept the hospitals in the last few months. In the other, however, is a more dangerous bullet.

The sweet promise, put forward by the union leaders, is that there be bonuses schemes to be used to raise a few extra pence, maybe even pounds.

The bonus idea stems from a Private and Board Executive report six years ago. But many hospital workers have fought hard against for years. They argue that it is a case of productivity bargain-

ing - meaning an excuse for lower rates, a pressure to increase workloads and split the workers, and a mandate for loss of jobs. Only 30 or 4000 of the 220 000 hospital workers are either in such schemes or about to have them introduced.

There is a real possibility that bonus schemes will be rejected this year's conferences of the National Union of Public Employees, the position of the leaders of all the four unions involved in the hospital's struggle when he said he would take the proposal to the Board, and push for a settlement to be granted within days, not months. But the march began, with the police in evidence everywhere, a reminder that so far five hospital workers have been arrested on the picket lines. The official aim of the march was to lobby Parliament.

But militant hospital workers had planned a meeting to consider in detail the way to forward.

Jack Sutton, a NUPE branch secretary from Manchester and a member of Workers' Fight, spoke. He stressed the importance for the rank and file to build their own organisation within the unions, as an alternative to the bureaucratic and official leadership. "The need to build solidarity based on shop stewarts' committees was discussed. Without such a structure, there is little hope of a strong left wing tendency within the unions being built.

Nationally, the picture is brightened by the Sheffield workers calling for a period, but overall the picture is one of decline in active activity. The effectiveness of the work to rule tactic has been uneven. Observations of the failure of the pickets to enter the struggle alongside them has set the hospital workers back seriously. It is doubly unreal for other sections of workers to give all support possible.

Stephen Cornish

Shotton calls for unity in steel jobs fight

WISH TO APPEAL TO ALL STEEL AREAS AND STEELWORKERS, BOTH IN THE BSC AND PRIVATE SECTOR, TO SEND DELEGATIONS AND ATTEND THIS VERY IMPORTANT RANK AND FILE CONFERENCE IN THE CIVIC HALL, CORNISH'S QUAY ON FRIDAY APRIL 12th 1973 at 1.30 pm TO 5.30 pm.

We feel that the necessity for this conference stems from the attitude of the TUC, the BSC and individual unions. In our opinion, the bureaucratic and official unions have sold us down the river.

This was made abundantly clear at the abortive meeting held in Sheffield on March 7th, 1973 where we were not allowed to make resolutions or make recommendations.

Both the BSC and the ILGWU promised full negotiations before the White Paper was implemented in this area. This promise was renounced, instead we have had BSC batchet deals and cosy deals with them, and with their policy with the apparent blessing of the TUC and other bodies.

This may be a result of the area of promised expansion we cannot allow Moloch, Finston, and over-competitive and destroy other areas in order to achieve their aims.

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TOM RAMSEY

1000 march

ON THURSDAY APRIL 5th, OVER 1000 LONDON WORKERS FROM HOSPITALS AND OTHER SECTORS of industry marched against the Tory pay laws and in support of the auxiliary workers' pay struggle.

The meeting at the start of the march was pathetic. Leaders of unions who could organise really practical, active support for the hospital workers spoke, and instead of action, there was just talk of solidarity.

Alan Fishley, leader of the National Union of Public Employees, gave a rousing presentation. He appealed to the leaders of all the four unions involved in the hospital's struggle when he said he would take the proposal to the Board, and push for a settlement to be granted within days, not months. But the march began, with the police in evidence everywhere, a reminder that so far five hospital workers have been arrested on the picket lines. The official aim of the march was to lobby Parliament.

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Stephen Cornish

SCANLON...from p.1

whole AUETU out with the hospital workers even if you tried. OK. But sufficient militant would have come out on your call to hurt the government.

GOVERNMENT

And how do you expect people to be ready to come out, when you tell them that the government has a "right to govern", and that "conciliation will work far better than ... brutalisation and confrontation"?

You know that the present government - and the 1964-70 Labour government - operates under the orders of big business, with no respect for any promises made to working people. You know that the only right is in the government in the right of might, of the right of exploiters to exploit.

You know, or, if you don't, that rank and file militants do know - that incomes policy under capitalism is a con for keeping down wages. You know that the only real working class answer to Phase II is to say that the government has no right to cut our living standards, and to organise a militant trade unionists' movement to resist every section going ahead to improve its wages.

But it's more comfortable, when the rank and file call you to action, to say: go ahead, organise action yourselves, isn't it?

So you choose to knock under. If you have any self-respect as a representative of the members of your union, you will take back your statement and turn to a fight against the Tories.

The necessary tasks remain: a United front against the Freezing and the General Strike. If you want to work for them, then the rank and file must organise itself to carry them out in spite of and - if need be - against you.

K M Monte, 25 Chester Close, Shefield, S11 3RJ

Looking forward to seeing you all at this conference. I would like to thank the workers Fight and any other paper that has helped us.

Joseph Pleasants, L. McLaughlin (chairman)