LICENCED TO KILL

ONE WAY TO SEE how sick a system is, is to look at the people it uses to keep it running.

Only a system based on maintaining the power and profit of a few parasites needs to rely on people like the Littlejohns — the two British secret police agents now imprisoned in Ireland for bank robbery.

On every point where they have been checked, their statements about the British Government are true. It is true that they met Defence Minister Geoffrey Johnson Smith. It is true that they were given the phone number of an Inspector Sinclair in the Special Branch.

There is little doubt that two known crooks were given a licence to spy, assassinate Republicans, and to commit provocations, even petrol-bombing police stations or if needed in their work killing British troops.

Just like Nixon’s White House with its “plumbers”, “Dirty Tricks” Department, hired thugs and agents provocateurs, the British Government employs a whole network of undercover agents. It also has a whole undercover regiment in Ireland — the Special Air Service — which specialises in murders, explosions and other “dirty tricks”.

So much for the “rule of law”. So much for “democracy”. So much for “keeping the peace”.

The truth is that the Government will use any means it thinks necessary to protect its interests in Ireland.

The same thing happens in Britain. The preachers of “non-violence” are the same men who rely on the crook, the mercenary, and the body. For them, any method is good for witch-hunting, and depriving them of their livelihood.

In fact, we, the militants, also use any means necessary. We do not claim to confine ourselves in the enemy’s rules and regulations which the enemy himself does not obey. We would be stupid to do so.

But because socialists in Britain, and Republicans in Ireland, are fighting for the majority of the people to control, and not the few rich parasites, we do not and cannot gain from Watergate or Littlejohn tactics.

Any militant worker in Britain will recognise that the violence of a picket line upholding the will of the majority against a scab is different from the violence of a gang of bosses’ hirelings terrorising a militant. The Littlejohn case should remind us that the violence of the Republicans fighting for Ireland’s freedom is equally different from the violence of British rule in Ireland.

CLAY CROSS DEFIANT see back page

Unions must support 24 pickets

3rd October, in Shrewsbury. That is the date fixed provisionally for the trial for “conspiracy” of 24 building workers arrested last February in connection with incidents in last year’s building strike.

Encouraged by the fact that eleven of the 24 have already been found not guilty of “affray” and “intimidation”, the Defence Committee is calling for stoppages and a demonstration on that day.

It will be a vital test of whether the Tories are allowed to get away with their attacks on picketing.

Ipswich and Norwich Trades Council have sent money to the Defence Committee, and Edinburgh, Brighton, Coventry, and Middlesbrough Trades Council have also voted support. The Defence Committee have called for a lobby of the Trades Union Congress on September 1st and 2nd.

The Scotland, North East, and North West Regional Councils of the building workers’ union UCATT have called on the union to support the 24. The other main union involved, the TGWU, has already declared support. UCATT and the T&G are to put out a joint statement by August 22nd, and pressure is mounting for it to be a statement of support.

Beyond the 3rd October, a main question is — what if the court finds the 24 guilty? As yet there are no settled plans for a response. But if preparation is started now, we can make sure that any conviction is met by an upsurge of working class anger like the one that swept away the charges against the Pentonville Five last July.

CYNTHIA BALDRY

Money and messages of support to: M. Williams, 1 Ford Park, Ocean View, Carmel, Flintshire.
IN IRELAND the struggle continues. According to some estimates there are still about 200 enemies roaming the prisons of the N.P.R.A. - this despite Whitelaw's recent release. Attacks on police barracks and the seizure of a train have been reported as the Provisional I.R.A. spread the conflict into the rural areas in order to relieve pressure on the prison population of Belfast.

Despite attempts to persuade the IRA to the contrary, Internment has not ended. From it all! The Diplock report of December 1972 clearly suggested that it should be renamed "detention." Accordingly those held are known as "detainees." But it comes to the same thing. Conditions are harsh, especially in Long Kesh, which has been deliberately overcrowded. Already there has been one suicide among the inmates, and several attempts have been made. Prisoners are stripped and searched before every visit, and protests bring a hail of blown and rubber bullets.

The Commandant turns a resolute deaf ear to complaints despite the fact that a number of U.N. rules for the treatment of prisoners are being disregarded. Recently a big advance on "Detention" resulted in "Internment." Civilian protests have been widespread, and as the second anniversary of its introduction drew near (Thursday, August 7), there seemed little likelihood of trying to "take the sting" out of the measure by releasing 100 people. Provost among those released were Michael Farrell and Tony Chain- van of the People's Democracy. These two, who had been on hunger strike for over a month, had become symbols of the whole system of unjust imprisonment without trial. The notorious Orange Judge Topping (one-time Home Secretary of Northern Ireland) turned their appeal against sentences of six and eight months respectively for "behaviour likely to cause a breach of the peace." Such is the policy for those who protest peacefully against the police state regime in the Six Counties.

Whitelaw revealed, in releasing the two P.D. activists, that he had been holding 100 people for no justifiable reason. This did not stop big protest marches in Belfast last week, as well as an anti-Internment march of 5,000 in London. CHRIS GRAY.

THE GOVERNMENT SPONSORED HIJACKERS

THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT has once again embarrassed its allies, acknowledging reluctant condemnation even by its primary hijackers, the U.S. imperialists, after it had forced an Iraqi plane to fly to Israel, an act of the highest "arresting" some of its passengers.

Last week's outrage is the latest in a series of Israel-inspired international terrorist incidents. In December 1968, an air attack on Beirut airport (Lebanon) blew up and destroyed 13 civil airliners. Hundreds of people could have been killed.

Then in February 21st last year, a Libyan flight was forced down over Sinai by the Israeli air force. 108 people were killed. The great thing for the status of Israeli lawyers (including 13 women and children) were killed by Israeli raids on villages and refugee camps in northern Lebanon. Two months later, Israeli invaders killed 80 in the flight and shot down the hijackers.

On August 14 an Israeli diplomat was flown from Norway. The man, a "secretary of the armed forces" suspected of murdering a German on July 21st in a small Norwegian town.

As well as murder, Israeli agents have stepped up kidnapping activities, after a new law was passed in Israel enabling the courts to try people for alleged crimes.

400 in Coventry protest

OVER 400 PEOPLE joined the demonstration organised by the Coventry Prisoners' Defence Committee against continued internment in Northern Ireland and the continued detention of the Coventry 7.

The demonstration ended with a meeting. Gerry Lawrence (I.M.K.) and the speakers from Coventry and Blackwall Defence Committees stressed the need to link the Defence Committees throughout the country, and to support the growing campaign to withdraw the troops. Michael Gallagher (Son Pelt) in a stirring speech, reminded the audience that the British Empire had invented the concentration camp when they started 60,000 to die in the Boer War. The British Empire is now in decline and the Irish people determined to give its final kick.

Andy Bevan (I.R.S.) stressed that British workers were also suffering from the Tories with Conspiracy Laws and so on. It's time for real conspirators are the government.

Eric Harrison (Workers Fight) stated that he was on the demonstration because he was a socialist and as such wanted to show solidarity with those fighting imperialism in Ireland.

A bulletin was distributed on the demonstration by the Defence Committee set up in Northampton, on the initiative of Workers Fight, to defend a recently arrested local Irish republican activist. This was accused of "demanding money with menaces" with evidence such as letters in handwriting which does not fit his own. This attempt to witch-hunt a republican militant has recently been followed by another similar arrest.

This was the first sizeable political demonstration to take place in Coventry for many years.

DAVE SPENCER.
Low wages and overcrowding in the
DEATH TRAP BUILT FOR PROFITS

EVERY WEEK, in the factories, mines, building sites, working people are killed or maimed, as safety is subordinated to profits. For two or three weeks a year, we escape on holiday. But even there the search for profit has claimed its victims. The death toll from the Summerland, Isle of Man, disaster now stands at 49. The gutter press has had its usual sensational headlines, the blame will be placed on certain individuals or committees, and then we will be expected to quickly forget about it.

The hundreds of Summerland and the friends and relations of those killed, will always remember being burnt alive by intolerable plastic is unforgettable. Whatever the police want to say about "three boys running away" or someone else "looking guilty", we can definitely list the following as among those responsible - whatever the direction they are running in:

1. Kohn and Haas, the American company who patented the plastic Oroglass and pushed it onto the British market via W.J. Cox of Tingey who manufactured it.
2. The architects, J Phillips Lomas Ltd., who allowed the building to go up without adequate combustion tests.
3. The Isle of Man Government and Douglas Corporation, who ignored their own antiquated fire regulations in order to complete the building as quickly and cheaply as possible.

Mr Byrd in Construction News writes: "...gross deviation from basic building control principles - with recognised local authority requirements seemingly ignored for economic reasons - have played a part in Summerland's tragic fire."

Let us look at the management of Summerland, the Trust House Forte chain. Mr G. Paskin, deputy managing director of THF Leisure Division, has said that they had never -

- checked the materials used in Summerland;
- heard of Oroglass when they first took it over;
- given most of their staff any fire training this year;
- had a single general staff fire drill.

Not could THF explain the four-minute lapse between the first alarm at Douglas Fire Station, and the general alarm sounded in Summerland which registers automatically in the Fire Station. When the whole building was engulfed in flames in ten minutes, those four minutes could have saved lives. It is not surprising that the staff knew no fire drill. Like many Northern resorts, the labour force is made up of kids on school holidays, and casual labour from Glasow and Ireland. In 1972 Summerland paid 28p per hour for women and 35p for men. There are no overtime rates or shift rates, and conditions are bad. Hiring and firing is done at the personal discretion of monster-type sub-managers in each department. Turnover is high.

In the height of the 1972 season, the underground disco was regularly packed over its fire limit of 400 by 100 or 150 people. When employees on the door pointed this out, they were told to shut up.

To make money, THF - like Budella, like any big business concern - would run any risk with the safety of holidaymakers and of its staff.

JOHN REMINGTON

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New, Smoother Tories - not such a good buy

"CLASS consciousness in the factory, on the housing estate, or in politics, must give way to a new spirit of partnership". So said the 1964 Liberal election manifesto. It is no accident that the basic programme of the Liberals is so similar to the latest 'democratic' policies of the Tories and Labourites: "worker participation", "profit-sharing", absorption of the trade union movement into the role of a state institution... in short, making the labour movement take responsibility for the running of capitalism.

The working class - if we are so foolish as to go along with this ruse - will be allowed to 'control' only in the leading-strings of the capitalist state, of course: the legislation and the administration remain in the hands of the crowd at Whitehall, not to mention economic power.

But the Liberals now realize that their importance at present springs from people's expectation of something better than wage freezes and rising prices. Unlike their elder brothers of the Tory party, they have seen to manoeuvre opened by the fact that they are not in government, nor likely to be. They can afford empty promises. Thus the aim to make every policy sound that bit more radical under the general wishy-washy slogans of 'community politics' and 'people power'.

What would the Liberals do if they did manage to boost their vote in a general election and hold the balance between Labour and Tory? Jeremy Thorpe has spoken of a coalition with either party. The Tories would continue their present policies, while the Liberals would "we would like to do something different, but we're in a minority". Or Labour would continue its 1964/70 policies, saying "we would like to do better, but we have to rely on the Liberals".

The spirit of partnership - their partnership in pulling the wool over our eyes. Remove the wool, and the Liberals are left to do nothing but smoother Tories.

ADRIAN HALL

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IMMIGRANTS

POLICE STEP UP WITCH HUNT

ONE OF THE MOST SINISTER aspects of the current witch-hunt for so-called 'illegal' immigrants is the recent discovery that the police have - since mid-March - had an Illegal Immigration Unit. It was this unit which was responsible for the seizure of 27 immigrants in Cebis last week.

So far this unit has been collecting a list of those suspected of illegal entry. It claims to be aiming at the racketeers, who make vast sums of money out of bringing people in to the country. But they have made it clear that any illegal immigrants they do come across in the course of their search will be dealt with by local police forces. The Unit is cooperating with Special Branch and refuses to say how many names are on its file. There is no doubt that its main effect will be to further increase insecurity and fear for illegal immigrants, and to make racism and witch-hunting against blacks more respectable.

BRUCE ROBINSON

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"I checked the materials used in Summerland; heard of Oroglass when they first took it over; given most of their staff any fire training this year; had a single general staff fire drill."

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BRUCE ROBINSON
KICKED INTO DARKNESS

H.M. Prisons
A world beyond the Law

IF YOU EVER THOUGHT that being a guest of Her Majesty involved merely loss of liberty, livelihood and fun, an atrocious diet and hideous accommodation, you can think again.

PROPs (Preservation of the Rights of Prisoners) has recently issued a statement listing 30 demands. Each one belies the organisation’s name; prisoners in fact have no rights to preserve — none at all.

Just listing a few of these demands shows how little this society has moved from the dark ages in vindictive treatment of those who step out of line.

The right to belong to a prisoners’ union and be represented by it; the right to be represented at negotiations on pay and conditions; the right to vote in national and local elections; the right to institute legal proceedings without the special consent of the Home Office; the right to consult legal advice in confidence, without interference or censorship; to be legally represented and call defence witnesses in internal disciplinary proceedings, to which the press should have access; to be legally represented at parole applications, to have expert assistance in making applications for parole, to have access to reports considered by the Parole Board and the opportunity to refute allegations of misconduct or unsuitability, and the right of appeal to the High Court against Parole Board decisions.

All these demands show up the holopresence of the prisoners. Once convicted, he is totally denied any civil rights, and in particular those which probably affect him most keenly, that is, the rights of access to the legal process. With sentences varying by several years according to conduct, the fact that a man can be “judged” on the supposition of any mark or screw who has it in for him, without the right of reply, is quite scandalous.

Why, PROPs says, should not “the rule of law” (such as it is) not apply in prison.

Then there are the petty, personal harassments which deny the following rights —

The right to be visited and communicate with the press and the public; to send and receive as many letters as desired without censorship; to be allocated to institutions within their home region; to adequate and humane visiting facilities, including the ability to exercise their ‘confinual rights’; the right to enter into marriage and to attend funerals of all near relatives; to consult independent medical advisors; to own and sell the products of leisure activities such as hobbies, fish arts, and writing; to receive gifts for personal use.

A third group of demands show how the prison regime works against all real chance for the prisoner to start his life anew. They include —

The right to start educational or vocational training courses at the beginning of any sentence, to sit examinations, and to have all appropriate facilities, the right to have home leave, to purchase courses, an equal right with all other applicants to employment in state concerns; the right to a fully-insured insurance card on discharge.

Most of the people who end up in prison should never be there.

The big bosses who live off profits, that is by robbing and plundering exploited workers, are considered pillars of society. When they kill workers through inadequate safety precautions, a mild fine is considered suitable.

Ordinary people who resort to one-man-war tactics to fight back against those bosses are jumped on. The big criminals sit in judgment over the small ‘criminals’.

They are not given a chance to earn a reasonable living at a decent job. Those who have been so betrayed by the system that they need psychiatric care are rarely given sympathetic treatment.

Instead, they are thrown into a brutal and brutalising environment which is designed of depriving them of any real chance to take a place in society — and perhaps learn the need for collective, rather than individual, war against the system.

PROPs demonstration outside Brixton Prison in support of 300 prisoners on strike for basic rights — see above.

IT IS NOT JUST prisoners themselves who are treated as subhumans. Our ‘welfare’ state gives the same treatment to their wives and children.

My husband was arrested when I was 7½ months pregnant. The police arrived at 2 in the morning. Without a search warrant, so I refused to let them in — but they pushed their way in, four of them, and I was informed that my husband was being held by them. They turned the place upside down and even went into the children’s bedroom.

I told them to leave the house. One of them said the others would go and get a search warrant, but he would wait with me until they came back. Meanwhile he was striking my hair in a sadistic manner. By the time they left I was near hysterics.

Then there was the waiting. When we went to visit my husband in prison, they would make us wait for hours on end. In the Social Security they made us wait at the very least three hours.

The bareness behind the desk seemed to enjoy humiliating me. One thing he would do was pass loud remarks about my husband being in prison. I took this for four weeks, and then the powers that be decided that I should have an allowance book for the magnificently sum of £9.90, plus 99p family allowance.

We tried to manage on that — but three weeks after my baby was born, they came and disconnected the electricity supply. This was in late October.

I went to the ‘welfare system’ for help. They gave me the usual lecture on how to eat grass instead of food, and in that way I would be able to raise the money further.

I asked the probation officer who had been dealing with my husband to show me what helpfull! He asked me if I could borrow some money to pay the electricity bill!

Eight weeks went by without light or heating. What was my husband guilty of that three young children should be made to suffer in such an inhuman way? Their father had been punished for trying to make life a little more pleasant by committing a crime against property'. He had tried to wage a one-man-war on this oppressive system and had been caught. He had dared to attack the ‘ord, Property.

One night, three weeks from Christmas, I sat feeding the baby, by candlelight. In the darkness I dropped some candlewax on her. She screamed. That did it for me. I became a 'criminal'. I went and switched the electricity back on. Fortunately they never found out.

But I wouldn't have cared if they had. This oppressive society had turned me into a 'criminal' by their standards, standards that said that three little children should live without warmth or light.

ROSE SPELLMAN
"THE SOCIAL SECURITY system is based only to a very limited extent on the vertical redistribution of income — from richer to poorer. At present social security is a system whereby the State redistributes income from certain parts of the individual's life cycle to other parts."

Jim Kincaid's book, Poverty and Inequality in Britain (Penguin 6th) shows that some 2 million people in Britain live in acute poverty and that the rich, rather than financing better benefits, have been allowed to successive governments to grow richer.

Let us take some examples. The taxation system, for a start. These are some figures for the proportion of income paid in taxation (1969):

- £11 - 13 31%
- £13 - 16 33%
- £16 - 19 25%
- £19 - 23 39%
- £20 - 60 16%
- £60 plus 39%

Today, means-tested benefits can mean that a married man with two children and a wage of £21 per week would end up £70 per week worse off if his wages go up to £24 per week. The family would lose through loss of tax concessions, loss of welfare benefits, and loss of exemption from welfare charges.

Likewise, for example, a family with four children where the father's wage rises from £23 to £24 is 80p worse off.

In fact, the welfare system never granted adequate support for those in need. At the creation of the modern system in 1948, National Insurance was supposed to be only sufficient for the subsistence of those claiming it, while future benefits were meant-tested and awarded on a discretionary basis. In practice, N.I. was defined so as to be inadequate for the subsistence of most people.

The burden of financing the scheme was supposed to be shared by employers, employees, and the state (via payments from general taxation). In practice, governments have always tried to keep the Treasury contribution as low as possible. This limits the size of redistribution from rich to poor (via taxation). Most of the employers' contributions, too, are simply passed on in the form of higher prices.

In a further attempt to keep the burden on general taxation low, earnings-related schemes have been introduced for pensions by the Tories, and for sickness and unemployment benefit by Labour. These schemes take a varying proportion of all incomes within certain limits, increasing as the incomes approach a ceiling of £42. They sought in money now, and proportionately more from working people than from the rich. The benefits are small and far in the future: £3.10 a week if you contrib-

BRUCE ROBINSON

As Kincaid points out, it is quite possible to change this set-up. To anyone familiar with the mood of rank-and-file workers in 1971 it is clear that a properly prepared campaign — especially on the use of old-age pensions — would evoke enthusiastic support from workers, extending possibly even to a willingness to take some form of strike action on a national scale.

But, as he notes, "British trade-union leaders would move in this direction only under the strongest pressure from the mass of their union membership".

Such pressure is not impossible. "It's only in the past two years there have been major strikes over housing and pensions." But any concessions forced from governments by the threat of working-class militancy will be rapidly taken back as soon as struggle dies down — unless one thing happens. Unless, that is, the militancy goes forward to overthrow the vested interests that keep inequality in place, to break the capitalist state and build workers' power.

BRUCE ROBINSON

AND CREAMING IT OFF

Life can be complicated for those unfortunate who can't fit their money under a mattress. The more you have of it, the sees, the less you can afford to manage it yourself.

It comes about that these people have to pay four different professional types to look after their affairs — solicitors, accountants, stockbrokers, and bankers! And, to keep tabs on what they're up to, it's necessary to learn the sort of arithmetic that isn't taught in your average state school. It's not just a matter of knowing how to tot up the pounds and pence, but knowing what on earth "irredeemable debenture stock" is, or what "convertible loan stock" or "5% Treasury Stock 1993/77" are worth.

Then there are the worries about the CIT (not, no the French trade union federation: Capital Gains Tax), Estate Duty (whether you can expect to live for seven years after signing over your money to your wife to avoid the taxman), and the Surtax Office.

While the rest of us only have to work out what our yield from over-time, piece rates, or dirty job bonus might be, these poor people have to plough through Railways' Statement if it has been an "enforcing

year", they have to watch to see if the Market has got bears

or bulls in it, and whether buying has been "trick" or "slogged" from day to day.

And how frustrating it must be, to have thousands of pounds and only live off the income it brings as dividends, for fear of killing the Golden Goose — and actually having to go out to work for their living!

There are problems we wouldn't dream existed: as if a family isn't enough to support in these inflationary days, one aristocrat recently bewailed to his solicitor that "I also have my daughter's horse to support"....

And while we toll on, minding our own affairs, they've got the problem of watching us. Imagine getting a report like this from your stockbroker:

"We don't know how militant labour will react, but the miners in Derbyshire refusing to work during the luncheon interval, as they normally do, and refusing to work over-time because they want to solve an employment problem by employing more workers to do the same job, isn't exactly helpful. There may be other trouble too. The dockers are always ready for trouble, although we hope they will be peaceful.

"The amazing thing is that, clever as these creatures are at knowing how to fill in three different tax returns every year, how not to get trampled to death on the floor of the Stock Exchange, and how to buy the right "securities" respectively for high income or high accumula-

tion, they all live in a fairy-tale world of thinking that money is some sort of plant or animal that just grows.

Ask any of them where the profits actually come from to pay them the dividends on their holding of Anglo American Tobacco, or Tumber

... and Newall, or GEC or Marks and Spencer, and a blank glazed look will come into their eyes.

Perhaps they will never understand that they are parasites, liv-

ing off the wealth produced by the people who do all the work. Never, that is, until the day when we show them in practice — when we show them that workers can quite well control industry without them and their dividends.

Rachel Lever.
COSTA-GAVRAS, who directed Z and The Confession, has teamed up with Franco Solinas, who wrote the script for Battle of Algiers, for Queimadas, to produce an explosive-ly good political film.

A STATE OF SIEGE (as yet only showing at the Curzon in London) is both politically far more important than Z, and a much richer film. In Z, Costa Gavras told the story of the murder of Leonidas, a Greek liberal leader, by the right wing. In State of Siege, the arena is far bigger; instead of exposing one 'plot', the film is concerned to expose a central aspect of the relationship between the USA and South America - the measures taken by US imperialism to ensure the continuation of its economic exploitation of the South American continent.

It has been said that Costa-Gavras and Solinas have made each of their films. That is true. The events of the film, the 'documentary script', take us through the week in which the Tupamaros urban guerrilla kidnap and execute a US official of the Agency for International Development (AID) - the 'letter' to the President of Uruguay and the trial of the Central in the 'People's Prison', the reactions of the Government, the speeches in Parliament, the press conferences, the police searches, the state funeral. This is the theme that is developed through the centre of the action, we gain an in-depth examination of just what Phil Ruffin, by the right wing, the obscure official of an apparently benevolent and charitable American agency, was really doing in Uruguay.

Police

Starting with a suspicion that Santoro was up to no good (the cynical fittop treatment of his funeral and the knowing enquiries of the old journalists are enough to tell us that) we find out that under the cover of being a "communication and trade expert", his job was to train the local police in techniques of counter-subversion.

1000 policemen were trained locally, another 600 went on courses in the USA; high officials attended the National Police Academy in Washington, along with "collaborators" from every country in the "Free World"; others were selected for a special course on explosives in Texas. You are familiar with our "students", they are told at the Academy, "brutes, student unrest, demonstrations, guerrillas, and so on."

The interrogation of Santoro in the "Tupamaros" People's Prison builds up a picture of the training syllabus he has taken his pupils through: how to apply electric shock torture; how to gather intelligence; how to use explosives to create panic and confusion in a demonstration, "that's the game!"

Santoro's job of defending the "foundations of our society, the Christian civilisation, the Free World" does not stop at the technical level, nor is it confined to Uruguay alone: he had already been behind the overthrow of the parliamentary regime in Brazil and had also helped to establish the "law and order of the United Fruit Company" in a counter-revolutionary military dictatorship in Santo Domingos in 1965.

He hasn't only been organising the police, but also the Fuerza Read, which specialises in quietly killing off left wing activists in the night and setting up radical bookshops. In another flashback scene, the policemen are shot down by the police and we have no doubts about Santoro's role here, too.

Tupamaros

The interrogation of Santoro by the revolutionaries, which brings out what he was doing in South America, forms the central part of the film, and Santoro is central "character". But the film is also about the Tupamaros, their methods and their tactics, and, more obviously, their relationship to Uruguayan politics and society.

They have their strengths. They are well organised and equipped, mature, rational, and self-assured. They influence public opinion and enjoy sympathy and respect, if not wholesale approval, from workers. But their actions are self-contained, isolated, and not co-ordinated with other struggles, and they seem to lack a coherent over-all programme for actually taking power.

Their effectiveness is examined in the film only in the context of what they set out to do in the time-span of the film, that is, kidnap a man important to their enemies and use him as a bargaining counter for the release of political prisoners. The fact that the failure is not inevitable (at one point they nearly succeed) means that the method is not inevitably wrong.

What's wrong is not that they carry guns, "explosive" cans, and take hostages (that doesn't even need to be justified, it goes without saying when we've seen unarm'd demonstrators shot by fascists, snipers, the uselessness of the students' defiance, the trade unionists' use of a power of inertia in Costa-Gavras' words, "the is as sincere as were the Inquisitors of the Catholic Church". If, by their interrogation of him, the revolutionary forces do not rough him up, that's not because the film is idealising him; it's because they didn't need to. They have all the information they need and the interrogation is in fact a trial, a process of stripping away his lies and evasions, until he knows he's caught by their knowledge and spells out his credo as a confession: "You are people to be fought by every means."

Necessities

His death is also a matter of political necessity, not retribution. Though it is an element in their personal attitudes that he deserves to die, the important question is that, having made an ultimatum, it would be a debilitating show of weakness to release him when an exchange is refused: a demonstration all the more significant and damaging, in that the struggle isn't confined to one country.

The film is particularly relevant to the situation in Britain in relation to their attitude to the struggle in Ireland, where politics is as naked and violent as the situation depicted in State of Siege, for the fascist death squad read SAS and VUP, for Santoro and the undercover provocateurs he recruits read Littlejohn and co., where an occupying power is ruthlessly determined to suppress the revolt of an oppressed people, and where the armed underground force fights with whatever weapons are at hand and effective.
THE FASCISTS IN WHITE SHIRTS

POLICING their 5,000 votes in the West Bromwich by-election, the fascists of the National Front are mounting a racist and anti-immigrant campaign in West Bromwich and Smethwick area.

In an attempt to gain respectable status, they have thrown away their swastikas and burnt their portraits of Hitler and copies of "Mein Kampf". Instead, they are wearing white shirts and gray suits. Pick up a copy of the "New Telephone", the local weekly newspaper, over the past couple of months, for a correspondence page, and there they are with their facts and figures to prove that there are "too many immi-

grants in Smethwick and West Bromwich. Of course by "immigrants" they mean blacks.

They talk about "humanity" repa-
nation (humanity for whom?) And go to great pains to prove that they are not fascists, because fas-
cist is dictatorship and the Nation-

al Front believes in democracy.

The political respectability they desire has been boosted by the recent interview in Smethwick with John Powell. The fascists have given them at West Bromwich when he refused to speak for the Tory candidate, who lost their confidence is growing.

But don’t be fooled. Remember the 1956 General Election? Remember what happened in Smethwick? Peter Griffiths, a racist of the first water, gained the seat for the Tories.

Fascist gang roamed the streets. Headlines broke up meetings.

The Labour candidate, Patrick Gordon Walker (a notorious "white right-

liner") was accused of being a "bigot-lier". The demagoguery resulted in a victory for the fascist candidate. Some blacks were intimidated against voting; others turned away in disappointment.

Some white workers were taken in by the racist propaganda. The"Daily of that elections still remain, and the bosses can still count on splitting white workers from black workers in Smethwick.

For instance, during a recent dispute at Elmdir Qualcast Pounds over overtime, the bosses crossed a mainly white picket line.

Before the strike they may have put on a different face now, but they haven’t changed their nature.

The Wrekin branch of the International Socialists (Smethwick is part of Wrekin) recently organised a pub-

lic meeting in a pub run by an Indian. The National Front threat meant to close the pub if the meet-

ing went ahead as planned. U.S. didn’t give in, they went 6 with the meeting. The fascists didn’t blow up the pub, but they did send along a few thugs who were soon evicted from the meeting.

And they must be "evicted" whenever they appear – whatever face they go under.

KEVIN CROWI

POLICE THREATEN WOMEN PICKETS

POLICE gave women pickets at G.E.R. Coventry Street five minutes to disperse or be thrown in the black miasma. The order came after police threatened to carry a load of meat for the works canteen through the picket line. Shop steward John Knapo recalled: "We are here to stay and will lie down in front of the lorries if necessary," so far no arrests have been made.

The strike of over 150 women is about piece-work retiming for 400 girls on an "impossible" job. Their job has changed drastically, over the past 12 months their wages are as much as £5 a week down as com-

pared to other workers.

The strikers say this is the third week that the women have been out. After the first strike they went back for negotiations to take place and to give notice of strike action in order to make the strike official. Albert Beasom, the union con-

vener in the plant, was soundly booted and jostled when he announc-

ed that the strike was unofficial.

D.S. 13.8.73

S.E.I. VICTORY!

ALL ECCLES AND HEYWOOD plants of S.E.I. have agreed to go back to work on 13 August, with a mass victory picket at Eccles. The terms of settlement are 30% increase for the men, across the board, and £1.60 plus £1.47 for the women, again across the board. The strikers hope for further increases from negotiations to take place afterwards.

The strikers say they will work with the scabs, but try to pressure them into joining the union.

See Amal 10.8.73

THE STRUGGLE AT SIMCA

In the factories of Simca – the French branch of the internation-

al CHRYSLER company – the union is a fascist, the CFT. This pamphlet gives details of the activities of the CFT, the oppression of Simca’s immigrant workers, and the fight back.

From Coventry Workers Fight: D. Spencer, IT Winsted Avenue, Barlby, Coventry. 15p including postage.

POLICE threaten women pickets.

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D.S. 13.8.73

Tenants defy courts

KIRKBY COUNCIL has recently taken further steps to evict the rent strike on the Tower Hill estate.

Three weeks ago they decided to go to the country court and take en-

ings attachment orders against those on rent strike. This applica-

tion for attachment orders, which hasn’t yet come through, will affect the tenants selectively – dealing first with those with the highest arrears, and then working down.

The continued effectiveness of the rent war and mass strike, started last October, can be gauged by the officially admitted figures. Arrears for the estate are now sup-

posed to stand at £12,000 and are ris-

ing at £2,000 each week.

And the Kirkby housing manager said they had instructions from New Housing Board that tenants were to take place of those on rent strike.

The reaction of the Tower Hill Act on to this latest move has been the same as their reaction to previous legal moves ag-

ainst them – refusal to have any-

thing to do with any court proceed-

ings. As their secretary, Tony Royle, said: “The courts will not get involved for us. We will not fill in their forms and will not attend any hearings.”

The Rent Action Group are also planning to lead lists of local factories calling on them for industrial sup-

port, and they have called a nation-

al demonstration in Trafalgar Square on Saturday, September 1st. This de-

monstration will leave from the "Mill Hill" (the Hill) park at 2 on the jets.

JOHN BLOXAM

FIGHTING FUND IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

READERS will have noticed that an article went up to 5p, with the last issue. We have delayed this in-

crease as long as possible, but with the prices of goods going up, we have decided to do this.

This issue is thinner, at 8 pages, because of the holiday per-

iod, and it will be followed by a three-week gap before issue 33.

But in that three-week gap we will be getting a new printing ma-

chine installed. And with the new machine we hope to be able to go to a bigger format.

With the bigger hire purchase repayments on the new machine, our PIGEON FUND is becoming more important than ever. The total now stands at £602.92

Elise Mole, strike leader

Chrysler: bosses' bluff

CHRYSLER have once again threat-

ened to abandon production in the UK and close all their 31,000 man-

ufacturing plants if they are on strike over a pay claim.

The electricians won a pay deal last year similar to that of the Chry-

seller toolroom, giving them £250 a year and staff status. But the deal,

unlike that of the toolroom, was caught by the pay freeze.

They accepted a pay rise last February of £1 plus 4£ with a pro-
mise from the company to pay the £2000 from July this year. The com-

pany are now refusing to pay up.

The electricians' union local official Maurice Crafts lectured pathetically: "We have always co-

operated with the company and have never been strike-prone. It is not our Union's policy to fight the government on the industrial front..."

With friends like that... and therein lies the rub. Chrysler work-

ers just back after the holidays and their four week strike are not even sympathetic to the 155 staff status seekers who have not been noted for their support towards.

Hence the Chrysler threat is designed to divide the workers, as indeed is the staff status deal.

The need for a united stand by the Shop Stewards’ Committee on all pay deals is clear.

D.S. 13.8.73

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Published by Workers’ Fight. 98 Gifford St. London N 1

Printed by voluntary labour

To help campaign against racism, workers’ Fight has produced a 20-page pamphlet which takes up the ‘reasonable doubt’ racist arguments.


The Industrial Relations Act and the Fight for a General Strike

Just out, a collection of reprints from Workers’ Fight on the general strike. A short introduction outlines the events of July 1972 and the situation leading up to them. The central section contains articles, including Britain 1919-26; France May 1968; the 1972 Quebec general strike, and a new translation of Rosa Luxemburg’s Delusion, 1902. A third section deals with the development of trade unions and the State, and an appendix discusses the positions of the Left in the General Strike and the July Crisis of 1972.

Price 20p plus 5p postage from: 98 Gifford St. London N 1

Use this Pamphlet

Racialism

The Working Class
Port stewards call fight for registration

THE RECENT MEETING of the National Port Stewards at Preston showed that registered dockers are retaining their confidence, that they are breaking out of the defensiveness which followed the series of defeats suffered at the hands of the government and employers.

The meeting decided to block containers not "stuffed and stripped" by dock workers. The dockers are to insist on knowing who has done the work — whether registered men or not. And if the container had been worked by unregistered men then it could be in danger of being left on the quayside.

The meeting voted against Hall's proposals for a strike against unregistered ports. The proposal was defeated mainly because stewards were uncertain if men would follow.

Before the men can follow, the stewards must lead. The first thing is information: the men must know about the issues. The stewards must campaign to tell every single dockworker what the issues are, what the solutions are, and then lead the fight for those solutions.

The key issue is whether the National Dock Labour Scheme survives or does not survive. The issues of containers, unregistered ports, and manning scales will be no serious problem if the National Dock Labour Scheme is firmly in the hands of, and controlled by, the rank and file dockworker.

One of the main discussions at the next meeting of the NPSCC (on September 16th) will be on how to deal with them. For that reason it is worth looking at what is happening in Britain.

This port was one of the first to recruit temporary labour. Nearly 250 men now work on the docks. Recently the registered men have begun to agitate for these temporaries to be recruited.

There is a possibility that the men will refuse to work the machinery of the scheme to boost productivity if the temporaries are not transferred to the full register. There is a long strike.

It is important that militancy in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and Tilbury fight to draw other ports into this meeting on September 16th.

Remember that the fight to keep the NDLR as a weapon of the dockers to further the survival of the dockworker.

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CLAY CROSS PLANS 'SHADOW COUNCIL' 

Clr. Dave Nuttall talks to Workers' Fight

David Nuttall on steelworkers' demonstration

CLAY CROSS council is still defying the Housing Finance Act — and now it has come out against Phase 2 as well, by giving the council workers £5 to £5 increase. They are still giving free milk to school children paying for it. Councilor for the Labour group on the council's chairmanship (Clay Cross plans to reorganise council) DAVID NUTTALL: what do councillors' plans mean?

TC: The High Court has decided against your appeal over the £1000 surcharge ordered by the District Auditor. What happens next?

DN: The decision means that all rights will be taken away from us, even the right to vote, since we will refuse to pay. But we can still refuse to implement the Housing Finance Act by setting up a Shadow Council.

TC: Just what do you mean by a Shadow Council? How will this relate to the new council which will be elected?

DN: The appeal in the High Court will be eventually taken to the court that decided the case.

TC: If the new council is elected, will the new councillors who have been disbarred?

DN: Yes. We'll be there in an advisory capacity and at the same time take part in decision-making. But I feel sure the new councillors are guaranteed clinic to the same policy.

TC: The council proposal to continue to defy the Housing Finance Act in short, no rent rises, no rent rebates. What effect will that have on the area? We wonder how you think there was no support from other councillors?

DN: We have initially been surcharged with about £7000 plus £2000 costs. However, a further surcharge is most probable, accounting for the rent increase money not collected since the date of the last audit.

TC: So the national papers are all wrong when they talk in terms of £5000 all.

DN: Yes, that's right — it's such a high amount I'm not sure how they know how it is, but it's over £1000 a week.

TC: After next April, under the local government reorganisation, Clay Cross will come under a North East Derbyshire District Council.

DN: The Labour group for the new District Council has decided that it will not implement the Housing Finance Act.

TC: Outside the courts after the hearing I was struck by the way the house shouldn't be protected from infestation.

3. No reliance on government statistics. Trade unions should set up committees of workers and housewives to work out increases in the working class cost of living.

4. A cost of living scheme shouldn't act as a foot in the door for long-term agreements which inevitably take control away from the shop floor.

5. Lump sum rather than percentage increases. This gets round the disparity between basic wages and actual earnings and would also reduce differentials.

Such a clause would not only provide a genuine economic gain for the working class (which is in itself justification), but would also involve workers in seeing the production process as a whole and not just from the restricted view as wage earners. Also if pensions, unemployment benefits and family allowances were tied to the same cost of living index then unity would be preserved between all those who are oppressed by the government policies of inflation and wage restraint.

ANDREW ROBERTS

DISCUSSION

COST OF LIVING AGREEMENTS CAN BRING GAINS

PAUL ITZIE (WP 31) is quite correct to point out that the carrot of a three-year surcharge doesn't in the least change the fundamental aims of Tory pay policy, which is to contain wages so that profits can expand. However, he is wrong to reject altogether cost of living agreements.

The demand for a sliding scale of wages has traditionally been seen as a demand which can be used to increase the real income of the working class. The claim that the increase remains the same for the duration of the agreements is certainly true.

Now the many holes in the hole as at present operated are pointed out well enough in the article, but rather than simply saying "no to thresholds" shouldn't we be demanding a cost of living agreement which establishes real gains for the working class?

Any such agreement should be based on the following principles:

1. Negotiations for the basic wage should be separate from the cost of living clause, i.e. a cost of living clause shouldn't be used as an excuse for demanding low increases.

2. A threshold of 9% (or near to it) at the start. There is no reason why the whole of any increase should be protected from inflation so that the real value of the increase remains the same for the duration of the agreement.

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