UNEMPLOYMENT

The big stick

by J.W. HARDING

Otherwise there is a danger of our suffering serious divisions and

defeats in the coming year. The burden of such
defeats would be heavy indeed for the

working class.

We stress - a fighting strategy is needed. This,

and not stupid nonsense from Harold Wilson (in

his New Year message) about a “fair day’s

pay”, is what will enable us to meet this crisis.

ROBBERY

For a start, there is no such thing as a “fair day’s

pay” for workers under capitalism. The working

class is the creator of all the wealth in society -

the vast profits of capitalist firms are based on

robbery of the surplus value so created. It is only

class struggle, not

“fairness”, that has ever

won anything for the

working class. It even

appearance of a “fair
day’s pay” is threatened

now. Look at the

situation. Massive cost

inflation and huge

balance of payments

deficits, accentuated by

the oil crisis, have led to

a fall in profits and a

leap in the

cost of new

investment, with the

result that stock markets

have slumped and

investment has failed

disastrously. The

speculative rise in world

commodity and food

prices in 1973, and the

fourfold rise in the price

of oil last year, has led to

rapid inflation in every

country.

British capitalism, reliant for so long on

cheap food and oil, is especially

vulnerable. The price of basic necessities has rocketed, leading to

militant class struggles as the

real value of wages falls.

Cut-throat

competition on the world market dictates the

attacks by the ruling class on our

jobs and wages, in a

situation where -

* the building and

construction industry is

in a state of slump;

* the crisis in the

car industry is enormous;

* the textile industry

has begun a
downturn;

* the electrical industry

will suffer from

the increase in energy prices

and the fall in consumer

demand;

and all these will affect other areas of

engineering, especially

machine tools which supplies all other sectors.

In such a situation, workers will not

defend their jobs by heeding

Wilson’s pleas about the

social contract. We face

the danger that the rise in

the number of unemployments will lead on the one hand to serious divisions in our working class, and on the other, enable the magnates at the head of the trade unions to threaten militants with mass unemployment, if they push wage claims beyond the

social contract. Jack Jones in particular has tried this.

The building union leaders have already

See back page

HELP TO BUILD WORKERS FIGHT!

WITH THIS issue the weekly WORKERS FIGHT is

a year old. Launched at the beginning of

January amidst Heath’s 3-day lockout, the

response was so encouraging that we decided to

continue with weekly publication.

The introduction of photo-typesetting, costly

though it is, not only improved the paper’s

appearance, but also made it possible to increase

substantially the amount of copy in the 4 pages.

Even so, the paper has often looked crammed, and

and coverage of news and workers’ struggles has

been less than adequate.

Now, after a year of the 4-page weekly, we feel

strong enough to increase the size of the paper
to a regular 6 pages, beginning with this issue. It

means that coverage will be more extensive,

layout less cramped, and there will be more room

for reviews, discussion of socialist ideas, and

letters from our readers.

The price rise to 5p will just cover the extra cost.

With 8 pages, readers’ support and collaboration

becomes more important than ever. We need

reports and photographs to publicise the work

and struggles of socialists and militants, and we

need more people prepared to go out and

SELL the paper — a paper that tells the truth about

the struggles of the working class and oppressed

people. And we need money, too!

Help us BUILD the 6-page WORKERS FIGHT.

OPEN LETTER FOR A REVOLUTIONARY REGROUPMENT.

The Open Letter calls for a revolutionary

regroupment, lays down 12 points as political

guidelines and maps out practical steps towards

unity. Copies from Workers Fight, 96 Gifford Street, £1

CDF. Please enclose a 4p stamp.

5p

No. 81 - Jan. 4th to 11th 1975

THE WORKING class goes into 1975 faced with

the prospect of unemployment on a scale larger than for over a
generation. This is true of Britain and of every
capitalist country in the world, and it is true for both manual and white

collar workers.

In this country, although official figures are at present

unavailable, the total of one million jobless is not far away. What happened

last week in America is just one example of the way in which the economy is

breaking up the old conditions.

There is also a strong probability that the already large scale of

short time working will become more widespread. Short

time working has so far

mainly affected the “consumer goods” industries (cars, washing

machines, record players

etc.).

STRATEGY

Unlike Edward Heath’s political lock-out of early

1974, the present short-time working is a result of

the economic situation. In the United States, over six million workers

are out of a job, and there are forecasts of more to

ten million before long, which would be ten per

cent of the labour force. This will hit mainly

manual workers, especially the young and

women; a staggering 85% of all black youth in the

USA are unemployed.

In France, unemployment is expected to reach 700,000

this month, while at least half a million other workers are on short

time.

Everywhere you look, there are similar developments:

recession, inflation, rising

unemployment, and a

concerted attack on the livelihoods of the working class.

No worker, in the aftermath of the New Year celebrations, should

underestimate the seriousness of this situation, and what it

means to his or her life

and the lives of his or her

family. The working class movement needs to unite

now around a fighting strategy to defeat the

bosses’ plans for

unemployment.

A New Year’s resolution which says simply that we

are against unemployment is next to useless. What we

have to do is more active

ACTION.

This means the sit-in tactic at factories and offices

where redundancies are announced.

It means combining demands for nationalisation without compensation with

concrete steps to implement workers control in some factories and offices.

It means working towards the opening of the books of all capitalist enterprises to

see exactly what the situation is, how many swindles are going on, what the bosses

know about and which are playing hard to get.

Inside the unions, we should campaign for a fighting policy against

pressure and gagging.

Spread the word. Reduce the hours. Cut the working week to 35 days

per week to a 30-hour basic week. Stop the wage robberies, stopping

people being blackmailed into working 60 hours a week, sliding scale of hours

within industries, no poaching.

No overtime: instead, a minimum wage more than adequate. A national

wage. No more wage depression.

The development and extension of economic committees, both nationally and

locally, is key. To co-ordinate the struggle and achieve real social

action. Instead of the anti-

American campaign of the “England” campaign of the Labour

party, the movement should be

down on the job of building real unity of the workers of Europe who

are fighting against their own

governments.

A national rank and file committee is necessary for

more urgent and necessary than ever. A united labour leadership not only

won’t lead, will actively fight our Government. There exists a considerable

potential for both rank and file committees in factories, towns and

mass meetings. There exist rank and file committees like the

Building Workers’ Charter, the Labour League for the Defence of Trade Unions

against the Communist Party), the National Rank and File

movement associated with the Workers Unity Group. These need to be

linked and fused into a strong, democratically controlled, rank and file

movement to fight for the struggle.

Such a policy can mould a real and conscious class

unity in the struggles ahead.

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MOTOR INDUSTRY WORKERS CANNOT AFFORD TO CARRY THE CAN

B.L.M.C.

Now things are getting worse. In the present climate of far-stiffer competition is likely to be falling in absolute terms. For instance, only the first quarter of 1974 was 1,165,900 units, while for the same three quarters of 1972 it was 1,418,800. The last time B.L.M.C. was in this situation was at its founding. It emerged after a series of mergers as the successor to the old United Kingdom Motor Corporation (a creation of the 1966 Labour Government). At that time it had a $25 million silver spoon in its mouth to herald its new way and it also got a $10 million first birthday present after one year.

But that was not enough. As the journalist Management Today reported in 1973, ‘Capital expenditure had been very low for many years…The high profits about which so many boards were made were thus derived from a declining base, and too high a proportion was paid out to shareholders.’

One year after the merger, for instance, ‘B.L.M.C.’s fixed assets per employee were 1936, as against Ford UK’s 2,299!’

Now the likelihood is that with government backing and co-operation — the company will try to find an easy entry into the market by concentrating on its most profitable sectors: commercial vehicles, trucks & buses, Jaguar-Daimler. This may spell trouble for the private sector, but it will mean a whole new career for the government workers, or for those who want one.

The only answer is not to fight the government, but to use a few more of the tricks that worked in the past to bring about a revolution in the company’s way of working. The only answer is to fight for the good of the country, to fight for the rights of the workers, and to fight for the future of the company.
TREASON TO SPEAK THE TRUTH: SAY ZIONIST ‘LIBERALS’
by Stephen Vines

A GREATER part of the information about Israel’s treatment of Palestinian Arabs in occupied territory and within the Occupied Territories of the State itself — as well as a vast amount of material relating to the denial of civil rights to all citizens of Israel — has come from the Israeli League for Human Rights. Its present chairman and a life-long campaigner, ISRAEL SHAHAK, is now living under the threat of arrest on charges of treason.

Shahak, a Polish-born Jew, came to Israel after escaping the horrors of a Nazi concentration camp; once inside the country, however, he soon became active on behalf of the oppressed of his new home. At the same time he pursued a remarkable academic career, leading to his appointment — in the face of a good deal of opposition — as Professor in the Department of Organic Chemistry at the Hebrew University.

PARANOIA
Such activities have come up against increasing intolerance inside Israel, as Israeli politics move inexorably to the right. The mounting general paranoia, stimulated by a new sense of isolation in the world, has brought a closure to thinking and action within the state — especially when thatDone as more than work damaging Israel’s already tarnished image abroad.

It is hardly surprising therefore that attention has been focussed on the activities of the League. Shahak himself has been subject to a campaign of intimidation. It is well known that his concentration camp experiences have left him a permanently sick man — and it seems almost as though he has been targeted precisely because he is sick.

Every day new patients come to the Quang Ngai Civilian Rehabilitation Centre, the victims of violence. This story, from Tran Thi Bé tells the tragedy of many Vietnamese women who were married to American soldiers in 1965. These are the women who cuddled in her 19 year old sister’s lap, up against the fence and walking on her new artificial legs. Hundreds of thousands of young soldiers were married to young Vietnamese women in the hope that their babies would be American babies. They were wrong.

Shot for a bet

One young soldier, aged 34, was working in field in the Moc Duc area, when a soldier was walking along the road apparently bet a companion that he could shoot his rifle with one shot. He shot once with his rifle, hitting Thi’s left leg.

The soldiers kept walking and laughing, while friends took Thi to the provincial hospital, where the leg was amputated below the knee. He is now being treated at a rubber-tire “Ho Chi Minh sandals”.

They tried to disguise them, saying they were Liberators, but the people in the houses recognised them as youths from their village, the “Defence Forces, who by day patrolled in the villages and by night attacked the villages”. The people were forced to give the soldiers poultry, clothes and brasserie. If they refused they were forced to be in the “liberation soldiers” would come again.

In the morning the Self Defence Force was announced publicly that the night before, the NLF had attacked the town. They privately warned the whole village to be on their guard, to keep quiet or be shot.

A young woman who was in the prison ward at the Quang Ngai Hospital told us she was doing a “Viet Cong” by a young man whom she refused to marry, and as a result she had been imprisoned, shot with electricity, and forced to drink whitewash

SPENS

Helping to give it more weight, the whole of this campaign has been moved by a leading member of the liberal opposition, Professor Amnon Rubinstein, who has written a regular column in the Israeli daily newspaper ‘Haaretz’.

Rubinstein goes further and calls for Shahak’s dismissal from the University, saying “A redundant job at the university does not mean that it is possible to have no enemies while retaining one’s job.” (Haaretz, 22/2)

The campaign of smear and lies is now in full swing. The Israeli liberals are showing their true face, as they attempt to restore their political credibility by showing themselves to be better birds than the hawks on the right.

Today a film is being shown at the desk of the Minister of Justice, which has yet to be seen whether or not to bring charges of treason.

WEARY

In London, a packet of Israeli drugs were sent to the West Bank. This campaign, however, is new. The campaign of smear and lies is now in full swing. The Israeli liberals are showing their true face, as they attempt to restore their political credibility by showing themselves to be better birds than the hawks on the right.

With one of Israel’s most significant opponents out of the way, the door would be wide open to get the peace process underway. A clever public relations officer has the law on their side. It took a decision of the Supreme Court to somewhat surprisingly to over-rule this decision.

In recent weeks the campaign has taken a new turn — that of an unpredecented public will attack. The signal for this was Shahak’s appearance at the Dutch Palestinian Committee in Amsterdam, an appearance which is hardly new of out of character for Shahak. The fact that he used the platform not only to denounce repression in Israel but also to expose the various loopholes and opposition to the terrorist attack on the Israeli embassy at Maalot (something which his audience, who had to be in the hall, was of course overlooked).

SMEARS

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Today a film is being shown at the desk of the Minister of Justice, which has yet to be seen whether or not to bring charges of treason.

There are many occasions in history when it is said that this or that period represents a ‘watershed’ in the history of a particular country or region. In fact this is the present period of the Middle East is certainly no exception in this regard. For the past few years we are likely to witness an entirely new political situation emerging. Not only will the Arab world increasingly realise their dreams of achieving a meaningful form of national self-determination, but also the Israeli Jewish state must certainly undergo a transformation of the worst kind of its structure. In the Arab world as a whole there will be such tremendous economic and social changes as a result of the rapid development of new industry that it is hardly possible to imagine such a profound change occurring without some form of political and ultimately social upheaval. Thus there is quite a obvious need for constant observation and analysis of these changes as they happen.

As a socialist who has been involved in research and activities connected with the struggle for a socialist Middle East, I welcome the opportunity given to me by the editors of this paper to supply occasional articles which I hope will contribute to an understanding of events and developments in the region. As I have some important differences with Worker’s World Press (which are in any case more apparent to the paper’s close supporters).

LIFE AND DEATH IN VIET NAM

horrifying account by an observer at quang ngai

This gripping story is related by Claudia Krich, who works at the Quang Ngai Quaker Rehabilitation Centre in Vietnam, writing in a Wisconsin magazine called The Progressive. It is, she says, typical of the everyday violence of a country where the Vietnamese’s act of peace is a bitter joke.

Every year between the ages of 18 and 45 is expected by the Thieu regime to spend a minimum of six months in some sort of military service. The war, however, is not over, and by Saigon’s statistics 50,000 Vietnamese military have perished since the signing of the ceasefire in 1973 (compared with 4,000 deaths in direct US involvement).

The demoralisation and enthrallment in Thieu’s army has led, too, to a terrifying prevalence of casual violence throughout the society. Soldiers tend to use violence to solve personal problems, settle old scores or just have a bit of sport.

Local boys used to smuggle weapons into the hospital, but the people in the houses recognised them as youths from their village, the “Defence Forces, who by day patrolled in the village and by night attacked the villages”. The people were forced to give the soldiers poultry, clothes and brasserie. If they refused they were forced to be in the “liberation soldiers” would come again.

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In the morning the Self Defence Force was announced publicly that the night before, the NLF had attacked the town. They privately warned the whole village to be on their guard, to keep quiet or be shot.
LETTER: OUR FIRST DUTY?

LAWRITE WHITE

How Lawrie White concludes that ‘we fail to condemn the IRA’s crimes’ is beyond me, as is the whole of his article. Is he not aware that atrocities committed by the IRA are the same as those committed by redundancies and cuts? Is he not aware of the power of the IRA? Is he not aware of the power of the state? Is he not aware of the power of the IRA?

HERETICAL

We must not fail to condemn the IRA’s crimes, for the IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland. The IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland.

CHAUvinIST

White is correct to say that revolutionaries in Britain must fight the British ruling class and the British state. But we are not talking about the essence of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. We are talking about the essence of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. We are talking about the essence of the bourgeoisie or the proletariat.

JUSTIFIED

It is a short, sharp, logical, step-by-step demonstration of the class struggle in Britain, and thebourgeoisie and the proletariat are at war. We must not fail to condemn the IRA’s crimes, for the IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland. The IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland.

ATROCITIES

It is possible, though by no means easy, to explain the situation and the events that lead to the collapse of the IRA in Northern Ireland. It is possible, though by no means easy, to explain the situation and the events that lead to the collapse of the IRA in Northern Ireland.

ROMANTIC

We affirm the right to resist the IRA in all its forms, not just its terrorism. But we must not fail to condemn the IRA’s crimes, for the IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland. The IRA is the main force in the struggle against British imperialism in Ireland.
An appeal from Dublin’s socialist prisoners

Comrades - We are a group of political prisoners in the Curragh Military Barracks, and we are one of the many active parties in the struggle and the problems of revolutionary leadership for the working class. We are appealing for any socialist literature that would help us in study.

We fully understand that most comrades are struggling to keep their organisations out of financial difficulties, so the contributions, no matter how small, will be appreciated.

We are preparing the working class for its historic mission. The present generation is unfit to represent the working class as the class collaboration, compromise and treachery can only bring defeat as it did in Spain, Germany and most recently in Chile. While we are in prison our comrades, in the struggle, is to educate ourselves politically for the coming battles. Therefore, comrades, we are asking for your assistance in this task.

Sincerely,

Eugene Norrby (6 years)
Joe Flannery (7 years)
Joseph Dillane (6 years)
Patrick Dillon (6 years)
Eoin MacTurlough (15 years)
Roman Dillane (15 years)
Danny McCowen (2 years)
Military Camp, Curragh, Ireland.

The organisation of the Provisional Sinn Fein - the movement of the Irish people - has decided to mimic the manning of the IRA and refuse on their pledge to refuse to stand in Six-County local and "national" elections until internment is ended. This decision has speeded the process of fragmentation of the official party.

The article below, published on the website of the Republican News, the Belfast paper of the Provisional Sinn Fein - the organisation the Officials have the cheek to refer to as "extreme right" - demonstrates once again the disintegration of the Provisionals, but this article should demonstrate that "right wing" is an insult, rather than an acceptable description.

BREAKEUP OF THE OFFICIALS

The present break up of the NLF (Official Sinn Fein) is a judgment on its bureaucratic leaders. They have been trying to break away from the Irish Republican struggle for national independence for a long time, but they have been doing so to concentrate on sectarian hate and bigotry, and this has resulted in the failure of the organisation. They are paying the price of their failure.

Eventually, Holly gets bored with it all and Kit produces the story of recognition for his deeds, deliberately lets himself be caught. More than ever he plays it up - building a pile of stones to mark his capture, and talking to the assembled policemen as if he were a film star giving a press conference. When a cop asks why he did the killings, he replies, with great self satisfaction, "I guess I'm kind of a rebel." And his last words to Holly, again printed out of some old B picture, come out as "Too bad about your father. We're going to have it sit down and talk about that sometime." Yet Kit and Holly are not monsters. We see them as quite ordinary, amiable, backward people, and though they also happen to be murderers, they are quite without remorse or guilt because their actions are never real to them.

The film is so objective and unhurried - as if watching a film within a film. It is a loving, photographic portrait of moral indignation or artistic demagoguery; we are shown how the consciousness created by capitalist conditions and fostered by a mind-deadening culture leads to the kind of aimless militancy which gives the film its title. It is also appropriate. The vast Montana plains serve to de-personalise Kit and Holly, dwarting the very word "human" as a topos of narcissistic. The endless Nothingness of the plains is the bane of their dialogue and how the couple, still understanding of their own actions, is a symbol of the novelty wears off and the adventure becomes as boring as life was before it.

The NLF's centre of gravity used against the Republican Movement was "sectarian bombing". It is only now finally becoming clear and accepted, the sectarianism will always be as long as the racist-dominating anti-national six-county state remains. This is an insult to the NLF and its leaders, who have been working to bring about a society in Ireland where all men are equal.

The NLF claim to be the heirs of the tradition of the Republican Movement, but this is a lie.
Jan 14th named as day for pickets lobby

CRACKDOWN ON IRISH COMMUNITY STEPS UP UNDER "JENKINS ACT"

 WHILE the attention of the TUC leaders was primarily focused on whether one man, John Stonehouse, would be "forced to flee" to Australia, Albie O’Rawe was facing deportation from Britain to northern Ireland as the tenth man to be expelled under the "Jenkins Act." About 15 police officers had Mr O’Rawe at his home in Kilburn, London, yesterday, and found out, according to the police, in order to arrest a man they were looking for by the name of O’Rawe family.

The police went to Mr O’Rawe's house back in 1968 and even emptied Mrs O’Rawe's purse claiming that this was "IRA money." They then repeated this 1968 story when they were once again in the family's home for a second time.

The police told Mr O’Rawe that they were going to Kilburn police station and gave him 40 minutes to identify all the photographs. One of the forty has said he recognised almost all of the scores of pictures he was shown. The police, however, were all taken in "The Times," his home in Kilburn was searched and pictures were seized.

At no time was Albie O’Rawe charged with any particular offence and therefore inevitably against Irish people with whom he has had official connection with Irish Americans and others however, still harrassment. The treatment of Albie O’Rawe by Margaret Crowley (who is now dead) of the British government (who could not be "excluded") fits into this pattern.

Police use new Act to harrass students

IN RECORD TIME, the new Jenkin Act ("Prevention of Terrorism") is already being put to use against students.

A student union has put out a statement saying the way police have used the new Act to effect a court order for theamous students who support the campaign for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

The police are perfectly aware of our position, despite that the Act is already being put to use against us. It is necessary for the British government to withdraw from Ireland.

The police are also aware of the fact that the Act cannot be used against the numerous political documents in that the Act cannot be used against the numerous political documents.

In addition to that other people are also aware of the fact that the Act cannot be used against the numerous political documents.

We accuse the police of taking advantage of the new Act in order to harass a member of the IMG and student union's activities on other societies in Bath. We believe that this incident is an example of the brutal and isolation from the repression of the students' union in Bath and Bath Students' Union.

In Bath, the TUC branch of the IMG was questioned by the police in connection with the recent bombing of the Bath Institute. The police, however, have not been able to substantiate the claims that were made about the bomb being in Bath.

The police also gave notice of its intention to take action against any further use of the bomb by the National Union of Students.

The International Marxist Group issued the following statement on the bombing in Bath and subsequent inquiries.

The TUC, [no date is given] a member of the Bath branch of the IMG, was questioned by the police in connection with the recent bombing of the Bath Institute. The police, however, have not been able to substantiate the claims that were made about the bomb being in Bath.

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