

# Anarchist Worker

Formerly **LIBERTARIAN STRUGGLE**

**Inside: Ireland,  
Workers' Power  
& Drugs**

June 1976 Number 28

10p

## National Interest or Workers Unity

HOW DO the present leaders of the most powerful 'workers organisations' in Britain — the Labour Party and the Trade Unions explain their attitude to the crisis?

WHAT — apart from their fat incomes and the numerous benefits of power — encourages them to sturdily set their features in those grim battle poses, whilst the rest of us actually pay the price demanded by the system they so resolutely defend — declining real wages,

regard for these concessions when the system gives declining profits, but their existence even when they are under attack can be pointed to as an example of how good life in a top nation can be.

Nationalism, in other words, doesn't just attempt to dupe us into thinking that we, under the banner

This is something which goes deeper than the actual manifestations of racism in the Labour Party and the TUC.

### Import Controls?

The Labour Party and Trades Union 'lefts' are quite clear where they stand.



Occasionally they present us with something approaching an open ideal objective we are to 'preserve threatened way of life' or 'keep labour government in power', most common reason given for we should accept declining standards is, however, much more in content. It is that old well-used lie - the 'national interest'.

It is evident that in advanced capitalist states like Britain, appeals are based upon this 'national interest' of service only to those in power. They film over the irreconcilable antagonisms of class society consolidating rather than challenging them.

You might call Britain 'your' country, but how much of it do you really own? What say have you got over present economic policy, compared with those who actually control the means of production and distribution (that is all but complex mish-mash of international monopolies, 'home' companies and, of course, governments)? Why should the profits of this

## Minority

minority, rather than the needs of the majority, determine the conditions of our lives - from whether we're on the dole to what we can make if we do find work?

So all right, that's putting the matter a little crudely. Neither nationalism nor the 'British' bosses could be so secure if they didn't have to pay the goods. The present crisis in 'British' capital is just one aspect of capitalism as an international system - an international system from which the workers under advanced industrial states have made concessions when the going has been good for the exploitation of the less well organised working folk of the 'underdeveloped' areas of the world.

Naturally, the bosses show scant

from the exploitation of other workers, (after we've tightened our belts enough for them to become 'competitive' in the world market again).

The present situation is something like an economic equivalent to the First World War, when millions of workers under the advanced states found themselves in the position of slaughtering each other to settle which state would be best placed to plunder workers in the rest of the world.

So far we're only being asked to 'sacrifice', rather than to kill, better!

## Circus

Where do our real interests lie? In joining this senseless, vicious and divisive circus of misery and expropriation with the expectation of becoming top underdogs for so long as it can survive its growing internal contradictions?

Or in resisting it now, in every quarter, alongside all the oppressed of the world?

We all know which choice the ruling class wants us to make.

The AWA's response is also explicit - we reject any attempt from any direction to make any section of labour in any part of the world pay for the crisis of the present system.

We regard this, moreover, as being only the first step towards its total annihilation.

## Fascism

It would be wrong to conclude even a short attack on nationalism without pointing to one of its most repulsive consequences, which is gaining increasing prominence in contemporary political life.

The widespread presentation of nationalist arguments to the working class by these labour leaders who have influence and respect is reaping a sinister harvest in the growth of fascism.

## Needs not Profits

The very refusal of substantial, influential sections of the Labour Movement to openly challenge nationalistic (and capitalistic) solutions to the crisis, coupled with the immediate effects of this on housing, jobs, wages, health services and education, leaves the door wide open to those who thrive by peddling scapegoats from platforms bedecked with the 'respectable' Union Jack.

The fascists of the National Party and the National Front batten upon real grievances and a real sense of impotence among working people before which the nationalist 'socialism' of the Labour Party finds itself helpless and compromised.

It is all the more important under such circumstances that class based



On an anti-National Front demonstration in Blackburn. photo John Sturrock (Report)

politics and actions should be clearly opposed to any species of 'national interest' compromise.

Determination to resist the attacks of capitalism in crisis, despite all nationalist appeals to sacrifice,

aggression, or race hatred, begins the development in struggle of global workers unity.

**Put class before nation, needs before profits!**

I.G.

## SQUATTERS ATTACKED

ON SATURDAY May 15, and again on the evening of May 17, London's East End bore witness to vicious attacks by gangs of youths upon four Bengalis, all squatters in the vicinity of Stepney Green.

On May 18, between 30-40 people many squatting in the area, turned out to patrol the streets and to prevent these attacks.

A gang of youths who were suspected of being involved in the beatings were confronted, and warned to lay off.

The streets were patrolled for the next following few evenings, and since then, there has been no re-occurrence of the violence.

On the night of the second attack, three of four minicabs from a local firm owned by a member of the National Front were seen cruising in the area.

It appeared that they were using their car radios in order to co-ordinate the actions of the gangs responsible for the attacks.

This seems to lend evidence to the fact that the National Front have been stirring up racial hatred in the area in the aftermath of press campaigns against 'immigrant' Asians.

A further, alarming, feature of the attacks was that, apparently, other black and half-caste youths were involved in the beatings.

The Bengalis in the area are awake to the threat of racist violence, and are organising to protect themselves - this within a few days of the incidents.

At a first meeting for many months of the Tower Hamlets Squatters' Union, the problem was discussed. It was realised by many that greater contact had to be made between squatters and council and private tenants.

Otherwise, radicals involved in squatting would remain as 'outsiders' and there would be a greater chance of fascists whipping up hatred against squatters and racial minorities.

As one person at the meeting said, it was a pity that only now, after this racist threat, was any attempt being made to break down these divisions.

Mellish (ex-Labour whip), Enoch Powell, the media and the fascists spew out their hatred and try to divide the working class by playing the race card.

It becomes increasingly obvious that this propaganda will lead to attacks on racial minorities like:

*the firebombing of an Asian home in Stratford, East London.*

*the murder of two Asian students in South Woodford*

*and several other incidents.*

We give full support to West Indians and Asians organising to defend themselves against racist and fascist attacks, while seeing the urgent need to counter the NF and the other racists, on as many levels as possible.

EAST LONDON A W A

# Alternative

alisation of the 'Protestant  
y' — sectarianism was built  
as an integral part of its

y territorial rationale was  
t geographical area within  
testant Unionism could  
me degree of economic  
coupled with a permanent  
c' mandate.

democracy' was further  
y gerrymandering and by  
ng of local government  
n the Unionists' favour.

more, Unionist political  
omic hegemony entailed  
r jobs and housing.

y, for instance, where  
ave a numerical majority  
ng except seats on the  
ne heads of all the City  
partments in 1966 were  
of 177 salaried employees

Protestant and 32 Catholic.  
the most notorious  
arland & Wolff's shipyard  
the city's biggest employer,  
workforce of over 10,000  
000 of them Catholic.

## Discrimination

le, in 1971, male  
nt in the Catholic Falls  
was 33.8%, as opposed to  
Protestant Shankhill Road

discrimination operated  
n ways. The first was to  
nts into better homes.

nd was to re-house  
rather than Catholics (eg  
uses built by Fermanagh  
ncil between the end of  
World War and 1969,  
to Protestant families:  
the 1961 Census, 53.2%  
gh's population was

as to refuse to re-house  
except in certain

eg, reduced housing commitments  
rather than build for Catholics outside  
South Ward.

Does anyone need to be reminded  
of the sectarian police apparatus  
which completes the picture?

Does anyone think any of these  
things irrelevant?

What has been presented with  
over the last seven years — and what  
has made things even worse for the  
Six County minority (not to mention  
everyone else who has suffered) — is  
a crisis within this divisive apparatus  
of repression and discrimination.

It had become unstable partly  
because of the *changing patterns* of  
British and international capitalist  
interests in the island as a whole.

But ultimately it proved to be the  
oppressed minority itself which rose  
to threaten the system of repression.

This crisis has brought into sharper  
focus the crucial nature of  
specifically British involvement.

Most noticeably the British Army  
— introduced to stabilise the situation  
— became itself patently enmeshed in  
sectarianism.

Because the only 'peace' it could  
produce was a *military* one, and  
because the Protestant Ascendancy  
could not be attacked except by the  
dismantling of the Six County state, a  
tendency developed for the troops to  
be used almost wholly against the  
minority population.

A telling example comes from the  
early months of 1970.

The army knew by then that there  
were unregistered arms in some of  
the Catholic enclaves.

They knew that these were  
insignificant besides the vast  
*registered* Protestant armoury, and  
that they were seen by the inhabitants  
as a last defence against the real threat  
of armed attack.

They also knew that to attempt to  
seize these arms was to throw  
themselves behind the whole rotten

Yet their primary activity in this  
period became the search for them.

This not only appeared in itself as  
unwarranted aggression to the  
minority populations — it also  
provided the basis for the intimidation  
of entire communities through mass  
house searches.

(At the time, incidentally, no  
British soldier had yet been killed in  
the Province.)

## Sectarianism

Subsequent events, through the  
Falls Rd curfew, internment (the  
first internees were all Catholic; later  
Catholics merely formed the vast  
majority) and 'Bloody Sunday' to the  
present day, have repeatedly  
demonstrated that the Army's only  
answer to 'sectarianism' has been to  
bear down on the minority  
population!

And is this not understandable,  
insofar as it is operating *within* and to  
*preserve* an essentially sectarian  
structure?

The depressing counterpoint to  
the role of the troops has been the  
growth of those currents in Unionism  
itself (eg Paisley and the UUUC)  
which aggressively reject 'political  
solutions' harmful to the ascendancy.

Reaching maturity through their  
opposition to Faulkner's  
'power-sharing' executive and through  
the Ulster Workers' Council strike of  
May 1974, which gave the final blow  
to this latter, their hegemony in the  
Unionist camp and their willingness  
to strain their own independence  
from British governments to the limit  
is a frustrating price for the majority  
of the British ruling class to pay for  
its own policies.

Nevertheless, the reality which  
remains at the heart of this Unionist  
intransigence is the realisation that  
only one thing can destroy the  
Protestant Ascendancy — the  
withdrawal of the British connection  
which sustains it.

Fear of this may induce a degree  
of compromise — continued direct  
rule or ultimately even power-sharing  
a la Craig.

that it is not until the Six Counties  
are severed from the British state that  
sectarian rule can be fully broken.

The demand 'self-determination  
for the Irish People as a whole' is  
intended to focus upon the crucial  
position of the British state in its  
relation to Partition and to  
sectarianism in Ireland.

## Troops Out

Raising it, along with the  
complementary 'Troops Out Now', is  
the way in which British workers can  
most effectively contribute not  
merely towards a resolution of the  
present troubles but also towards a  
situation where the working class in  
Ireland will see more clearly the  
outlines of their mutual class interests.

The withdrawal of troops, within  
a 'self-determination' context will  
probably not, it must be admitted,  
end all immediate prospects of  
violence.

It is however, the only policy  
which can produce the long-term  
conditions for this, and for the ending  
of present oppressions and working  
class disunity.

## Imperialism ?

An apology must be made, in  
conclusion, for the failure to reply  
directly in this article to the extensive  
comments on para-militarism and  
imperialism in the majority article.

The reason for this was that given  
the amount of space available it was  
thought advisable to concentrate on  
the main point at issue — the  
consequences of the British  
connection.

It is only within the parameters of  
this that the different implications of  
the various forces concerned can be  
fully appreciated, any attempt to  
merge all 'para-military' groups into  
an almost undivided 'reactionary  
bloc playing straight into the hands  
of the ruling class — especially with  
regards to the Republican movement.

It is only, moreover, in coming to  
terms with the political and economic  
complexities of this

## Sexual Politics

ON Saturday May 22, there was a  
seminar on 'Sexual Politics' held in  
London which was organised jointly  
by the London groups of the AWA,  
Social Revolution and Solidarity.

75 people came, despite there  
being only a small amount of  
publicity, in the main word of mouth  
and groups mailing contacts.

Four speakers opened the meeting  
with 15 minute speeches on the  
changing family as a function of  
changing class society, sexuality and  
the traditional left, family and  
conditioning, and socialising patterns.

After lunch, we formed small  
groups where people discussed the  
family in class society, the role of  
morals in a future society, womens  
groups, mens groups and political  
groups; socialising patterns and several  
general discussions.

Being the first seminar in what is  
hoped to be a series organised by  
the three groups as a means of  
working towards libertarian unity, it  
was poorly organised, speakers not  
knowing beforehand how long to  
speak for, loss of time through late  
comers objecting to the way the  
meeting was structured, and so on.

Among the things made clear by  
the course of discussion, is that there  
are many women around who, having  
become disillusioned with the  
womens movement and who are  
dissatisfied with the sexist politics  
and male-orientated organisations of  
the left are floating around in no  
group.

There is likely to be an initiative  
in the near future to bring together  
some women like this.

As a contribution towards the  
discussion, some members of North  
and East London groups of the AWA  
translated two articles from *Front  
Libertaire* which were handed out as  
a leaflet, copies of which are left.

If you want a copy of the leaflet,  
or want to be informed of