

# RED WEEKLY

INSIDE:

AGAINST  
JOB-CUTS

Pages 3, 5, 6 & 7

DEFEND THE  
RIGHT TO WORK



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## FIGHT TUC SELL-OUT



# BUILD RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEES

Workers at Herdport's in Coventry at a recent mass meeting following the announcement of 1000 redundancies. Photo: JOHN'S OHRROCK (report)

# AUEW ELECTIONS- BIG SET BACK

By JOHN GRAHAM  
(Birmingham AUEW)

A defeat for the whole working class. That is the real result of the right wing's victory in two key elections for the Executive of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

The comparatively unknown Terry Duffy eclipsed Bob Wright, the present representative for the Midlands and North-West, by 45,569 votes to 20,685. Jimmy Reid was also defeated by right-winger Gavin Laird for the Scottish seat, by 24,838 votes to 12,115. A similar voting pattern was repeated in elections for national organisers, district secretaries and divisional organisers.

## Right wing

The results mean that the decisive body of the second largest union in Britain, the Executive Committee, is now firmly in the hands of the right wing — who openly support the £6 limit and the present wage-cutting and jobs-slashing policies of the Wilson Government. Although not the policy making body of the AUEW, the EC carries on the day-to-day running of the Union — having the power, for example, to make strikes official and decide policy on issues not covered by debates at the National Conference and the National Committee.

## Shattering

For those on the Labour left and in the Communist Party who hope to change the present policies of the trade union leadership and Labour Government through the use of the block vote of 'progressive' unions at

annual conferences, this is a shattering blow.

However, militants should not be demoralised by this defeat. The voting in the ballot was not a vote for the £6 limit, as Terry Duffy claimed. It was a vote of disillusionment with the failed policies of the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left.

Scanlon and the other 'lefts' on the EC came to power in the wake of struggles against the incomes policies and *In Place of Strife* proposals of the 1964-70 Labour Government, with which the right wing was firmly identified. This struggle was waged through the strengthening and proliferation of shop stewards organisation, and on the basis of factory by factory struggles. But in a period of deeper capitalist crisis this form of struggle is no longer adequate.

## Class-wide

The need today is for class-wide policies and class-wide action, but the Broad Left in the AUEW has refused to face up to this fact for fear of losing the 'support' of Scanlon and the rest of the 'left' bureaucracy. In place of political answers, the blame for the impasse of the Broad Left has been attributed solely to a vicious witch-hunt in the capitalist press and the introduction of postal balloting. In place of campaigning among the mass of AUEW members for a new pay claim to smash the £6 limit, for automatic increases in wages to protect them against inflation, and for industrial action against unemployment, the Broad Left has resorted to bureaucratic manoeuvres to defend their position.



Jimmy Reid of UCS fame failed to win the Scottish seat on the AUEW Executive

and outside the Broad Left structures — around new policies which can take the Union forward and influence the whole working class. This requires an open fight against the £6 limit

ber demonstration, despite a resolution passed at the last National Conference to organise industrial action against unemployment. Support for the Balfour Darwin and Persona occupations was only belatedly forthcoming — and only as a result of action by the workers themselves.

To reverse the defeat in the AUEW, more will be needed than

But the attempt to reverse the vote at the National Committee in favour of postal balloting, and the attempt to exclude the Banbury members from voting in the recent elections, have simply been grist to the mill of the right wing and the press. The right wing have been allowed to pose as the true defenders of democracy in the union — one of the main planks of the Broad Left's campaign against Carron and Conway, the old right-wing leaders of the AUEW in the 1960s.

## Reverse

To reverse the defeat in the AUEW militants must organise in the localities and nationally — both inside



'Left' loser Bob Wright

and the submission of a £15 across-the-board national claim protected by a sliding scale of wages.



Right winner Terry Duffy

## Belated

In the fight for jobs a massive fight must be opened up amongst the rank-and-file against Wilson's Tory policies. But the Broad Left has retreated so far that the EC is not even supporting the 26 Novem-

the present policies and excuses of the Broad Left. It is only by winning the active support of the mass of AUEW members for socialist measures adequate to meet the present crisis that the right wing can once again be removed from power.

# CLOUD OVER CP- BUT NO SILVER LINING

The spectre of declining membership and dwindling sales of the *Morning Star* cast a cloud over last week's 34th Congress of the British Communist Party. The leadership's 'brave' hope was to get back to the 1973 membership figures, thereby recovering the 1,242 who have left the party in the last two years. Although no circulation figures for the *Morning Star* have been issued, it is common knowledge that they are less than 45,000 — with about one third of these being sold in Eastern Europe and the USSR.

At a time when Britain is in the throes of its most severe economic and social crisis since the 1930s, the stagnation of the Communist Party stands in stark contrast to the expectations of its membership. Nor can 'more of the same again' recipes dished out by the leadership offer any way out of the impasse.

The fact that the hopes of creating an alliance with the left bureaucrats have been kicked in the teeth by Jack Jones — the chief architect of the £6 wage norm — was not an item for either discussion or analysis. Gordon McLennan, the CP General Secretary, reassuringly told Congress, 'that Communists would continue to argue with some of those who took left positions on other issues but who supported the £6 limit'.

## No plans

Unfortunately McLennan had no plans for organising against the supporters of the £6 limit, nor did he call for the removal of the Labour and trade union leaders who back up this anti-working class policy. Neither Jones nor the other pro-£6 leaders will lose much sleep over McLennan's threats to 'argue' with them.

The Congress unanimously approved a resolution moved by Mick McGahey, leader of the Scottish miners, which demanded 'united demonstrative action' to free imprisoned Shrewsbury picket Des Warren. The resolution called for 'industrial action initiated and led by the TUC'. But the TUC have made it very clear that they are not going to call strike action to get Warren out of jail.

Nobody asked McGahey the 64,000 dollar question — why is he not fighting to get the Scottish miners to initiate such



CP Secretary, Gordon McLennan

action? This should spark off a real campaign, breathing new life into a movement that could spread right across the industrial scene.

The reason, of course, is that such a campaign would bring the CP into conflict with many of the 'left' bureaucrats, disrupting the alliances it is so painstakingly trying to build. Thus the CP has deliberately refrained from using its strength in various centres in the engineering industry to start industrial action, in order to hold the Broad Left together in the AUEW. The day after the Congress, this subordination of the independent struggles of the working class to electoral alliances bore fruit — the Broad Left got trounced by the right wing in the AUEW Executive elections!

Ensnared in parliamentary politics, the CP could offer nothing more 'radical' on Ireland than a 'Bill of Rights' to be

legislated at Westminster. Presumably this means that the capitalist state and its troops, who until now have been rampaging through the Catholic ghettos in an orgy of death and destruction, will now suddenly prove amenable to 'democratising' the Orange statelet. The campaign to get the troops out of Ireland — a campaign taken up by some of the more left-wing Labour MPs — was carefully ignored.

## Pressure

The urgent need to fight unemployment, the struggle against the £6 norm, the need to build independent movements of solidarity with Portugal, Spain, the fight to free Des Warren, and the National Abortion Campaign — these were simply cast in the mould of pressure on the TUC, the Labour Party and some dreamed-up alliance with 'progressive' forces. The real meaning of the *British Road to Socialism* is coming home with a vengeance. A strategy which starts from the view that an electoral pact with the 'left' can take the British working class to socialism and defend its living standards and jobs is not only utopian — it is downright reactionary.

## Learnt nothing

The CP Congress remembered nothing and learnt nothing. It finished with the usual exhortations and demands for harder work. It ignored the crisis of political perspective that is wracking the CP. It failed to address itself to the central question facing the working class — how does the left build a united movement around socialist demands to challenge the policies of the ruling class, the Wilson leadership and the 'left' bureaucrats who are giving cover to the attacks on the workers' movement.

This can only be done by breaking from class collaboration and parliamentarism, which means an unremitting struggle against Wilson and his agents like Jones.

# -WHAT'S ON-

**NEW FILMS** from Portugal and Angola: Monday 1 December, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, 7.30pm. The first showing in London of a new film about the struggle in Angola since the Portuguese announced their intention to leave. And a chance to see the Newsreel Collective's new film about Portugal. 'Fighting for Workers Power' is about the struggles over the newspaper 'Republica' and the formerly Catholic-owned Radio Renascença — both now symbols in the battle for popular power (acclaimed by audiences in Liverpool and Manchester). With speakers on the latest situation from the Angolan and Portuguese Solidarity Campaigns and a speaker from Big Flame. Organised by West London Big Flame.

**IMG CENTRAL LONDON STUDENTS** public meeting: 'Revolutionary perspectives for Ireland'. Weds 10 December, 7pm, in University of London Union, Malet Street, WC1.

**'THE STATE, The Law, and Ireland'**: conference against the Prevention of Terrorism Act, Sun 30 Nov, 2.30pm in Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST, Sackville St, Manchester. Speakers include Pat Arrowsmith, Peter Bramah (AUEW), Stan Thorne MP, Rock Tansey (Haldane Soc.), Steve Cohen (author of NCCL pamphlet), Eamonn McCann, Frank Jones (NICRA).

**FREE DESMOND TROTTER!** Demonstrate for acquittal in Privy Council, Sat 13 December, 1pm, Speakers Corner. March to Downing Street.

**PUBLIC MEETING** — 'Unemployment and how to fight it'. Chairman: Arthur Harper (Pres. B'ham AUEW E. District). Speakers: Mike Cooley, Wally Preston. Thurs 27 Nov, 7.45pm, The Matador, Bull Ring, B'ham.

**RED LADDER THEATRE** Grand Variety Night. This pioneer socialist theatre group needs money for permanent move to North of England. They will perform their new play 'It Makes Yer Sick' — about Health and the NHS — at a special benefit where they will be joined by much acclaimed women's rock band Steptey Sisters. Fri 5 Dec, 7.30, St Pancras Assembly Rooms (Kings X tube). Bar from 7pm. Tickets £1.

**'The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists'** by Robert Tressell. **MAYDAY THEATRE** now have available two campaign plays each 25 minutes long, suitable for your meeting, conference, canteen, etc. One is on unemployment and the fight back, the other is on the British Army presence in Ireland. More information from 23 Atherton Street, SW11 (223 3419).

**'REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST' 3/4**, a special double issue of the theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Communist Group on the crisis, now available price 50p. Are trade unions responsible for inflation and unemployment? Must state expenditure be cut to allow a 'regeneration' of British industry? Why has the post-war boom ended? These central questions are answered for the first time from a marxist standpoint in 'Inflation, the Crisis and the Post-war Boom' by David Yaffe and Paul Bullock, and 'On Productive and Unproductive Labour' by Peter Howell. Becoming recognised as the only marxist journal seriously confronting the major issues facing the working class, 'Revolutionary Communist' 3/4 is on sale at political meetings, from left bookshops, or direct (send 50p+13p post) from RCG Publications (RW) Ltd, 49 Railton Road, London SE24 0LN.

**REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP:** 'Unemployment, Inflation — The Reason Why'. A Rally to launch 'Revolutionary Communist' No. 3/4 Special issue on the crisis. Speakers: David Yaffe, Chris Davies. Friday 5 December, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

**RCG BRISTOL** Public Day School on Inflation and the Crisis. Speakers David Yaffe and Chris Davies. Saturday 6 December, 11am-5pm, Students Union, Queens Road, Bristol.

**RCG MANCHESTER** Public Day School on Inflation and the Crisis. Speaker David Yaffe. Sat 13 Dec, 10am-4pm. 'Lass O' Gowrie', Charles Street.

**RCG SHEFFIELD** public meeting: David Yaffe on 'The Crisis — and the tasks facing communists'. 7.30, Thurs 27 November, Mailcoach Pub, West Street, Sheffield 1.

# WHAT WE FIGHT FOR

In February 1974 the Tory Government was swept from office. Its three-pronged attack on the labour movement — through the Industrial Relations Act, unemployment, and incomes policy — had been smashed by a wave of working class struggles greater than anything previously seen in post-war Britain. Behind UCS, behind the Pentonville Five, behind the miners, the working class swung into action — and won.

Yet today, barely twenty months after the return to office of a Labour Government — a victory guaranteed by the miners' refusal to call off their strike action despite the pleas of Wilson and the Labour leadership — the working class is facing an unprecedented attack on its jobs and living standards. Living standards for the low paid had dived by 5½ per cent in a year even before the introduction of the wage-cutting £6 limit. The dole queues are growing at the rate of a thousand a day. One and a quarter million people are now officially without jobs.

The leadership of the TUC has backed the Wilson Government right down the line. By policing the £6 limit the trade union bureaucracy has pledged itself to a 'social contract' to safeguard capitalism. Behind their crocodile tears for the unemployed lies the reality of their attempt to sabotage the

26 November demonstration by telling trades councils not to support it.

But so far the people in the best position to fight the betrayals of the Wilson Government and the TUC leadership — the Labour and trade union 'lefts' — have not lifted a finger against the £6 limit or put forward the measures necessary to defend the right to work. Their campaign for import controls is both useless and reactionary. While trying to export 'our' unemployment onto the backs of workers abroad, they try to hide the fact that eliminating cheaper imported goods will simply push up prices. In a situation where wages are being held down through the £6 limit this will mean the working class is able to buy less — and jobs 'saved' in one industry will therefore be paid for by workers sacked in other industries.

While the International Marxist Group will fight for united action against unemployment and for the formation of Right to Work Committees in every area, involving all sections of the labour movement, we believe that the demands put forward by these bodies must actually be capable of defending the right to work. This is why the International Marxist Group fights within every organisation of the labour movement for the following measures to combat unemployment:



## 1 NO REDUNDANCIES — WORK-SHARING WITH NO LOSS OF PAY

This is what the workers occupying the Personna razor blade factory in Glasgow are demanding in their fight for jobs. It is a demand that should be taken up throughout the labour movement to defend the right to work.

In the engineering industry, even allowing for short-time working, 1.6 million hours a week are worked in overtime. The abolition of overtime working alone, without any reduction in the 40-hour week, would lead to the creation of 40,000 more jobs. The situation is similar in the construction industry, where seven day working is still common even though there are more than 172,000 construction workers on the dole.

In industries particularly hard-hit by short-time working, such as the motor industry, work-sharing with no loss of pay must be enforced through the throwing open of the company books by workers' committees in every plant. These can calculate the amount of work available and divide it up equally between plants and inside the factories.

## 2 FOR A 35 HOUR WEEK

The 35-hour week extends the principle of work-sharing with no loss of pay to the whole working class — employed and unemployed. A 35-hour week in the mechanical engineering industry alone would create another 200,000 jobs. Throughout society it would create another five million. Unions committed in policy to a 35-hour week, such as the Engineers and the National Union of Public Employees, must be forced to launch a common fight for this demand — a demand which could wipe out unemployment at a stroke.

## 3 FULL PAY FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

The unemployed are the victims of the crisis: they shouldn't be forced to pay for it. The workers on the dole have the greatest interest in the fight for jobs, but too often they are ignored by the unions. The unions must be forced to campaign for full pay for the unemployed and the unemployed should be given full trade union rights.

## 4 NATIONALISE ALL FIRMS CREATING REDUNDANCIES

Capitalism is bankrupt, and every day more firms are going to the wall. The Labour Government's answer to this is not to take over these industries but to pour vast amounts of money into bankrupt capitalist firms. The £1,000 million being pumped into British Leyland is only the biggest example of this.

These vast amounts of money are being used not to defend jobs but to 'rationalise' the industry — meaning speed-up and mass sackings. In the same way, instead of nationalising Chrysler outright as a short step to taking over the whole motor industry, Wilson is desperately seeking a deal to get the American multinational to stay on in Britain.

The IMG says: nationalise all firms creating redundancies and place them under workers control to guarantee all jobs. No compensation to the exploiters, who will just re-invest their money in more profitable sections of the economy and thus increase their power!

## 5 STOP THE CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING — IMPLEMENT A PROGRAMME OF SOCIALLY USEFUL PUBLIC WORKS

The Wilson Government is one of the biggest creators of redundancies through its slashing attacks on the social services. We say: force the opening of the books by trade unionists employed throughout the public sector. Let the workers see the extent of the cuts. Explain to working people what the effects of these cuts will mean on standards of treatment and service.

Develop a campaign throughout the working class to throw back the cuts, improve the services and defend jobs through the drawing up by trade union committees in every area of a programme of socially useful public works to improve housing, health and the education services. Defend social spending against inflation by automatic increases in expenditure to keep pace with inflation. Nationalise the whole of the construction industry to carry out these proposals.

## 6 OPEN THE BOOKS — PREPARE A WORKERS PLAN FOR PRODUCTION WHICH DEFENDS JOBS

Capitalism is falling apart, but the waste and anarchy of

the system is shrouded in the mists of business secrecy. The books of the employers must be opened to expose the way in which the wheeling and dealing of capitalist competition creates misery for millions; to show the need for nationalisation; and prepare the way for this on the basis of a workers' plan to guarantee jobs drawn up by workers' committees in every industry.

## 7 REMOVE THE WILSON/HEALEY LEADERSHIP

It is the Wilson Government which is co-ordinating the present wave of attacks on the jobs and living standards of working people, and it is this same Government which will most bitterly resist any policies which are capable of defending the right to work.

It is for this reason that the IMG believes it is necessary to campaign not only against the pro-capitalist policies of the Wilson/Healey clique, but also for the removal of these people from their position of leadership in the labour movement. Unless this is done the battles of today will have to be fought again and again — until the working class becomes first demoralised and then defeated.

To the left Labour leaders we say — you will be judged by what you do in practice in the fight for jobs. We demand that you support every single struggle that breaks out against redundancies and support and encourage local Labour councils that refuse to implement the cuts. We say to Benn — if you really wish to defend the right to work you should resign from Wilson's Government and lead a fight against his Tory policies.

## 8 BUILD RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEES

While remaining merciless in our criticisms of the reformists and their inability to put forward real solutions to the problem of unemployment, the IMG will fight for united action with all sections of the labour movement to smash unemployment. In every locality Right to Work Committees should be established which are representative of the broad labour movement. These bodies should organise immediate solidarity with any struggles that break out against unemployment and draw up a common jobs policy for the area which can be enforced on the bosses and the Government by the united action of the whole labour movement.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK AGAINST THE WILSON GOVERNMENT



# SCOTLAND AGAINST THE SACK

STEWART MACLENNAN reports on the struggle against redundancies North of the border.

## 1). CHRYSLER SHOW NO WAY

With top Chrysler officials in Detroit predicting a lightning shutdown of its UK operations unless the Wilson Government bails it out in the next week or so, eight hundred shop stewards from factories throughout the Glasgow area met on 19 November to discuss support for the Chrysler workers' fight against redundancies.

Draped along the front of the massive platform of the Rosevale Hall was a huge banner saying 'Nationalise Chrysler'. But the message of the union officials and Labour dignitaries who packed the platform was not the clear demand of the Linwood workers for nationalisation without compensation, but plaintive pleas to Wilson and his cronies for import controls.

### ORCHESTRATED

Nobody, of course, actually opposed nationalisation; nobody omitted the call from their speech — and nobody had anything to say on how the fight for this demand could be organised. Even the speakers called from the carefully orchestrated floor show repeated the 'left' rhetoric of Labour MP Norman Buchan and others for import controls. Such was the nature of the 'discus-

sion' on the floor that twice a fraternal delegate from Coventry rose to complain about its completely artificial nature.

Nobody even combatted the nonsense spouted by Buchan, who maintained that Chrysler workers 'have large numbers of managers on your side. I was watching Gilbert Hunt as he sat beside Riccardo — these people too want a job.' On the contrary, the meeting was 'entertained' by the hollow demagoguery of figures such as Bill Niven, TASS official and member of the General Council of the Scottish Trades Union Council, who proclaimed that 'nationalisation is only the first step to the total transformation of society'.

### 'TRANSFORMER'

Another grand 'transformer', this time Don MacQuarrie, chairman of the *Scottish Daily News* action com-



Hundreds of Chrysler workers headed 2,000-strong demo for jobs in Glasgow last Saturday

mittee — a leading Scottish Nationalist who joined *SDN* just before it collapsed — suggested *SDN* workers could combat redundancies by 'dramatic action — a mass petition to Wilson'.

To cap it off Alex Ferry, a prominent local Labour 'left' and AUEW Glasgow Secretary spent most of his summing up time attacking Willie McFaul of UCATT for arguing that the source of the crisis at Chrysler wasn't a sinister Detroit conspiracy but part of the world-wide economic recession and crisis of profitability. Dangerous stuff this, said Ferry: if it was true, the fight for import controls would be a meaningless diversion!

With time running short for Chrysler workers, it is only by complete rejection of all collaboration with bosses and nationalists — and nationalist arguments, Scottish or British — that jobs will be saved. Occupation of all Chrysler plants can be the springboard from which to demand nationalisation without compensation enforced by workers control — which is perhaps why this meeting failed to take anything as 'subversive' as even a floor speaker from the militant occupation against redundancies at the Personna razor blade factory in Glasgow.

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## Edinburgh Conference

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At another conference against the cuts and unemployment mounted by Edinburgh Trades Council later in the week, a real challenge to the 'lefts' was mounted from among the 170 delegates who attended.

Amid another carefully selected 'discussion' dominated by full-time union officials, International Marxist Group militant George Kerevan spoke on behalf of Edinburgh teachers. He challenged National Union of Mineworkers Executive member Eric Clarke, who is Chairman of the controlling Labour group on Lothian Regional Council — which is at present planning massive cuts in education and social expenditure — to vote against all cuts. Kerevan issued the same challenge to Labour MP for Leith, Ronald King-Murray, who was also present. King-Murray promptly left the conference.

In summing up Clarke stated he would vote against the cuts 'if the necessary support existed'. In discussion afterwards he seemed moved by a desire not to be placed in the same situation as the Clay Cross councillors. It did not seem to dawn on him that it was precisely behaviour such as his that had placed the Clay Cross councillors at the mercy of the State and the Labour right-wing.

## 2). PERSONNA-TENTH WEEK

Meanwhile the workers occupying the Personna plant at Hillington, Glasgow, have entered their tenth week of struggle, encouraged by a regular flow of financial aid which has boosted their fighting fund to over £1,000. Having forced the leadership of the AUEW to lend official support, and with eight weeks back strike pay, the workers are now on the offensive. A call has been issued for the blacking of all Philip Morris products, and on Monday an urgent message went to Hull docks shop stewards committee appealing to them to issue a national call for blacking.

### HIGHLIGHT

Copies of the list of Philip Morris subsidiaries prepared by *Red Weekly* together with copies of the management's briefing charts on redundancies discovered in the factory after the occupation have been reproduced by Glasgow IMG. Copies from A. Jamieson, 18 Carrington Street,

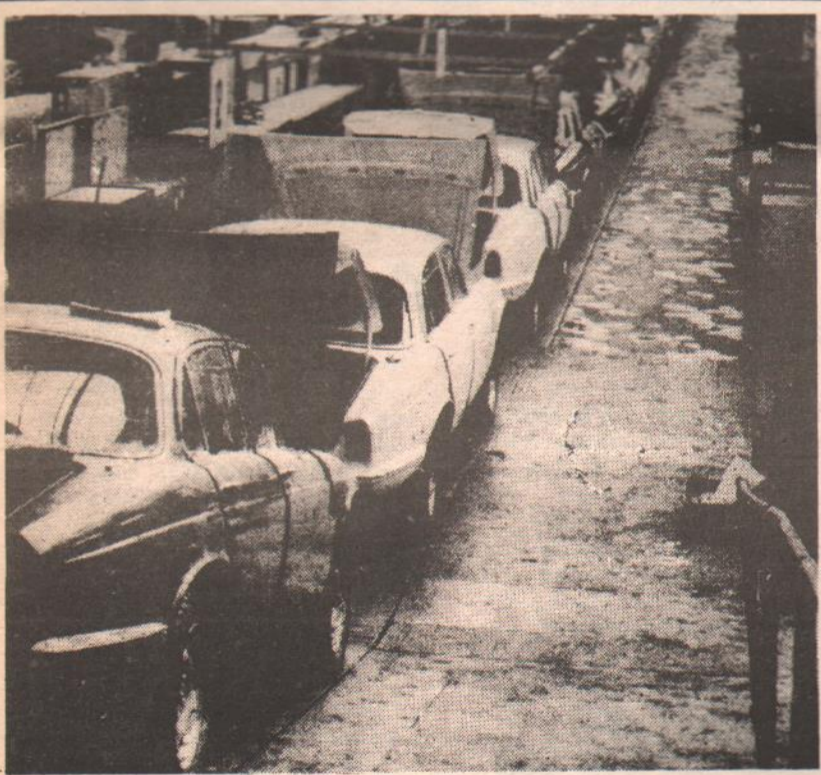
Glasgow G4 (041-332 8728).

The highlight of this week's activities at Personna was the visit of a representative from the Portuguese worker-controlled paper *Republica* and the Portuguese Workers' Co-ordinating Committee. Attempts are now being made to develop international working class solidarity (see page 10).

### OUT IN FORCE

Finally Personna workers will be turning out in force for the jobs demo on 26 November, where they will be attempting to extend their fight and win their demand for work-sharing with no loss of pay in answer to the bosses' attempts to sack the workers.

Messages of support, requests for speakers, and the largest possible donations should be rushed to Ruby Duncan, 27 Bowfield Crescent, Penilee, Glasgow.



## Cowley back in firing-line

With 25,000 Chrysler workers' jobs on the chopping block — and rumours circulating that Wilson will demand that at least half of the... go even if the Labour Government steps in — management at British Leyland are also stepping up their offensive against jobs.

Once again Cowley Assembly Plant is in the firing line. Management are threatening to close the North works, which produces the new Princess, unless a target of 28½ cars an hour is reached.

As revealed in last week's *Red Weekly*, the Joint Shop Stewards Committee backed 'Open the Books' Committee has already exposed the reality behind management claims of 'shoddy work' and 'unsatisfactory performance'. Faulty components and shortages have existed in some cases for as long as twelve months. And why, we may ask, if the need to produce

cars is so urgent, have Leyland management seen fit to shed 20,000 jobs over the past year and put many more workers on short-time?

Behind management's claim of shoddy work is an intense speed-up offensive. The way for this has been prepared by the Ryder proposals for 'worker participation' — the system of so-called 'joint committees' was endorsed just three weeks ago by senior stewards.

Leyland management hope that this and fear of 'another Chrysler' will leave the shop-floor leaderless and intimidated in the face of their attacks — and what better place to start than that hotbed of agitation, Cowley? Smash Cowley, it is hoped, and the rest won't even fight. The response needed from Cowley workers is clear. They must insist that stewards withdraw immediately from all meetings of the joint committees and in particular boycott the special meeting with Ryder himself on 9 December.

Leyland workers at the Standard Triumph assembly plant at Canley, Coventry last week showed the way by delivering a real blow to Ryder's schemes — voting by a majority of 434 to reject the participation proposals. Cowley workers must now seize hold of the opportunity that Triumph workers have given to them. By breaking up the working of the participation system and refusing to move if management attempt to send them home from the North works, the long-awaited fight against Leyland's mass redundancies plans can be launched.

## BRISTOL SMELTERS STRIKE AGAINST JOB-CUTS

For three weeks, 638 members of the Transport and General Workers Union at Commonwealth Smelting Ltd in Avonmouth, Bristol, have been striking against redundancies and wage cuts. Management are trying to axe 114 jobs and transfer another 400 men from shift work to day work for the duration of the furnace clean-out — a wage cut of £16.20 a week for ten weeks.

The T&G's response at a mass meeting was to demand no redundancies and no loss of wages through the dropping of shift working. An eight hour sit-in in defence of a worker threatened with victimisation after the T&G's withdrawal of flexibility was also organised. Later in the week the management at CSL — a subsidiary of Rio Tinto Zinc — dropped procedure and issued redundancy notices. A round the clock sit-in began, and for a whole weekend management were off site while the T&GWU kept this 'enormously complex' process ticking over by producing unsaleable metal!

### TOKEN SUPPORT

But worried by the token support likely to be forthcoming both from the T&G bureaucracy and the TUC, the stewards decided against full occupation, the locking of management off site and raising the demand for the Labour Government to nationalise CSL. Yet even if a prolonged strike wins victory, the workers at CSL will still be faced with a management that demands 'rationalisation' to keep the firm viable in the capitalist market.

As it is, AUEW, EPTU and ASTMS members are all crossing the round-the-

clock picket lines, although some traffic has been stopped at source, and work is still continuing at another RTZ subsidiary on the same site. Militants in unions scabbing on the strike should raise the dispute in their branch and send resolutions of support to the striking workers.

### DELEGATION

Appeal sheets have been produced, a CSL speaker addressed a recent Bristol Trades Council meeting, and a delegation from the smelter will be on the 26 November demonstration. Ron Thomas, a local Tribune MP, has publicly supported the strike; and the local Claimants Union organised a march of 200 strikers and their families on the DHSS last Friday.

The whole of the chemicals industry on Severnside is watching closely the dispute at CSL. Bristol Chemicals and Fisons are threatened with short-term closure by the dispute. What happens at CSL will largely determine whether management or workers win out in the area for some time to come.

Last week's report on a meeting of shop stewards and convenors in the occupied Personna factory unfortunately telescoped the comments of Bro. Gilmore of Anderson's and Bro. John Whyte of British Cables, attributing them both to the former.

Bro. Gilmore quite bluntly expressed the view that the fight for support for Personna should be limited to maintaining pressure 'through the proper channels' of the AUEW apparatus. Bro. Whyte, on the other hand, spoke out clearly for the defence of the occupation and the extension of the struggle against redundancies through the building of a 'fighting committee of shop stewards' in the area.



## The Manchester Engineers

The largest single number of occupations to occur at any one time took place in 1972, when the leaders of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU) — refusing to launch a national struggle — decided to pursue their claim on a plant-by-plant basis. But the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF) refused to negotiate locally and referred any such claims back to the national level. In the meantime they organised compensation for any of their members hit by industrial action, as well as planning area lock-outs where necessary against any actions by the unions.

The Manchester area has the greatest concentration of engineering firms in Britain. If progress was to be made by the unions, a victory here was vital. On 1 March, 'carbon copy' claims were submitted to all firms in the Manchester district of the CSEU for a £4 increase on the weekly rate, an extra week's holiday, and for substantial progress towards equal pay for women. In support of this claim the Manchester CSEU was to initiate a work-to-rule and place an embargo on piece-work from 27 March.

### Isolation

The workers at GKN's Bredbury steel plant, however, decided to take action in advance of the Manchester area as a whole. Management threatened a lock-out, and on 16 March 900 workers occupied the factory. This was to set a pattern followed by at least 34 other factories in the Manchester area, involving between 25,000 and 30,000 workers. But although certain individual factories in Leeds, Sheffield and one in London were also occupied, there was no general move by engineering workers to follow the Manchester example — which on a national scale thus remained isolated.

Even in Manchester the wave of occupations never involved more than 15 per cent of engineering workers at its height. Several major firms did not occupy but staged traditional strikes, and others — such as the giant Trafford Park AEI works — opposed any extension or intensification of the struggle.

These serious divisions within the Manchester engineers resulted from the failure of the key engineering union, the AUEW, to give any real leadership throughout the strikes and occupations. All initiatives and responsibilities for taking action were left to the local rank-and-file on a plant-by-plant basis. Hugh Scanlon, 'left' President of the AUEW, continually promised support for the occupation but never seemed able to deliver the goods.

Throughout the entire Manchester dispute, Scanlon and the leadership of the CSEU (with the implicit support of the Communist Party) steadfastly refused to take the only path that could have led to victory over the employers' united front — national co-ordinated action. Instead they used the verbal support given to the occupations and strikes as a militant smoke-screen to take the spotlight off the need for national action. Indeed the failure to give a central lead was put forward as confidence in the rank and file and belief in local democracy.

### Weaknesses

The advantages of the occupation strike were stressed: it was a guarantee that management could not introduce scab labour nor continue production; gathered together the strikers were given the opportunity of greater participation in decision making, and because they were not dispersed to their homes there was an enhanced feeling of solidarity; the mere fact of having occupied the employers' property greatly increased the strikers' self-confidence; and by being indoors the workers were much more comfortable than they would have been outside on a picket line in the cold and wet.

But these advantages were by no means sufficient to overcome the strategic disadvantages the strikers faced. The Manchester engineers,

the giant step forward.

In the face of acute social problems and a politically bankrupt leadership, the rank and file used its imagination, took independent action, and learnt from each other's experiences. On this front more progress was made in 1972 than in the whole of previous decades. This new mood was epitomised by the actions taken by the Briant's print workers occupying against redundancy, who in the course of their occupation produced material for and on behalf of the campaign to free the Pentonville Five.

But the limitations of this elemental progress have also been clearly seen. It has been the reputations of Benn and other left social democrats which have been most enhanced by these developments. By demagogically confusing the meaning of workers' control and — initially at least — appearing to save jobs through the creation of co-operatives, these 'lefts' appeared to be 'delivering the goods'.

That the British working class has not, after its experiences, drawn any general political lessons from the work-ins and occupations is test-

FIRM	DISTRICT/TOWN	NO. OF WORKERS
Mirreles (Hawker Siddeley)	Stockport	2,000
Rushley Paxton (GEC-AEI)	Warrington	2,000
Hawker Siddeley aviation	Stockport	1,200
James Mill Steelworks (GKN)	Stockport	1,000
AEI	Openshaw	800
Archibald Edmeston	Openshaw	800
Archibald Edmeston	Eccles	100
Lawrence Scott	Openshaw	800
Francis Shaw	Openshaw	500
British Steel Corporation	Openshaw	500
Joseph Robinson	Salford	300
Electro Hydraulics	Warrington	300
Redpath Pearson	Trafford Park	300
Redpath Pearson	Warrington	300
Davis and Metcalfe	Stockport	180
H.O. Serck	Openshaw	130
Pearl Engineering	Hyls	100
Flexibac (Burmah Oil)	Wybarnshaw	150
Metal Box Company	Timperley, Cheshire	300
Barlow and Chidlaw	Salford	120
Linotype and Machinery Works	Broadheath	1,000
John Plumpton	Manchester Road	1,000

The list increases every day and sometimes firms that have declared a sit-in may lift it while negotiations with management continue. In addition to these occupations 3,000 men at AEI's giant works on the Trafford Park estate are locked out.

8 April 1972 — 22 factories in the Manchester area are occupied by the striking Engineers.

mony to the continuing dominance of reformist ideas in the workers' movement. Challenging these ideas will require more than the shouting of advice from the side-lines of the class struggle. It is only through forcing the reformists into united action in defence of the right to work that the bankruptcy of their strategy will be exposed and the working class will be able to develop in practice an alternative use of the mass occupation.

The mass occupation can be a really effective tactic. But militancy and determination are not enough on their own. Many occupations have come to resemble Custer's last stand because they failed to offer to other workers a policy to defend jobs in which they had a common interest.

### Class-wide

Far too often this or that occupation has demanded 'special case' treatment — as at Meriden and the Scottish Daily News — cutting them off from the launching of a common struggle against unemployment. It is only through campaigning for common class-wide policies — such as the nationalisation of all firms declaring redundancies, and the development of workers' control over production — that occupations can become the spear-head of the fight against unemployment.

### PART 4

isolated on a plant-by-plant basis, were facing a nationally united employers' organisation willing to finance and support those of its members involved in dispute (the EEF paid out more than £2 million to strike-hit firms). Gradually the individual enterprises settled one by one, usually well below the original demands, obtaining perhaps a £2.50 a week increase, one day's extra holiday in 1972 and another in 1973, rarely any reduction in hours, and no moves towards equal pay.

The outcome of the Manchester engineers' sit-in strikes marked the end of the initial phase of uncritical enthusiasm for occupations. The failure of the occupation tactic on such a wide scale as Manchester to achieve any significant results removed from it the aura of sure-fire success, and showed it for what it was: a tactic — certainly a very important tactic, and a big step forward in working class militancy, but nevertheless a tactic to be used as circumstances determined.

### Lessons and Limitations

The Tories were elected on a union-bashing programme, and 1972 was to have been a victory for them on all fronts. But the initiatives and imagination of the mass of the working class turned it into a year when the labour and trade union movement — not the employers — took



Inside the occupations — workers relaxing in one of the Manchester factories. Elsewhere so were their leaders

# Org

Occupations at Personna in Glasgow by thousands of GEC workers in Conferences against unemployment in many ment from trade unions and Constitu prospect of a massive jobs demonstrat signs that the struggle for the right to

But as the struggle increases, new p ember demonstration should be a real How can the thousands of workers on campaigns against unemployment in e going into struggle receive solidarity r often in the recent occupations — but paign be mounted for work-sharing w gency programme of public works; op ed; nationalisation of all firms creati sary to gain the right to work?

The first significant steps in the right dition have been taken by conferences organ by the trades councils in many areas. In Leter, for example — where 13,000 are unemp ed compared with 7,000 at the beginning of the year — such a conference was attended 80 delegates from all the major unions. The conference decided unanimously to fight fo occupation of factories as the most effectiv means of resisting closure; for nationalisat without compensation and under workers c trol of all firms threatening redundancies; fo opposition to all schemes of voluntary redu dancy, productivity deals and wage cuts; an for opening the books. The conference also decided to produce a monthly bulletin to popularise these policies and convene a fur- ther conference.

It is precisely these types of developmen which can lay the basis for a real local Right to Work Committee. A powerful campaign propaganda and agitation around these dem ands would really begin to alter the situati on in an area.

### Solidarity

Despite such successes, however, the Bri labour movement still lags far behind many its European counterparts when it comes to organising real solidarity with key struggles against unemployment. Even at the height of the UCS struggle, which forced the Tories to reverse their 'lame duck' policy, solidarity v not developed in an organised way beyond the holding of meetings, a few demonstrati and collections. This was sufficient to win some gains in the struggle, but it was still quite small compared to what occurred in France, for example, over the struggle by workers at the Lip watch factory.

In this struggle, at Besancon in eastern France, 1,100 workers occupied against red undancies in June 1973. As well as restarti production to sell watches to finance their struggle, the workers saw developing worki class solidarity as the key to winning their struggle.

This wasn't just a case of money raising. The 'publicity committee' of the occupatio saw as its aim the popularisation of the pol ical demands of the workers. Immediately support committee was established in the t with representatives from all the major fact ies. Soon 'Lip support committees' sprang in all the major industrial centres in France

### Occupations

The Lip example inspired a wave of fact occupations which is still going on today. When 3,000 riot police evicted the workers in mid-August the Lip support committees were able to play a decisive role in mobilisi 100,000 people for a march on Besancon o 29 September — despite the opposition of the leaderships of the Communist Party an Socialist Party. Delegates from every strug against redundancies in France attende. To achieve this, films and cassettes made by th Lip workers explaining their struggle were used and 'six hours for Lip' meetings organ ised in most major industrial centres.

The French ruling class was only too v aware what was at stake. Even according to opinion polls half the population supp the 'illegal' seizing of capitalist property b the Lip workers and endorsed their dema for no redundancies — a flat rejection of right of the capitalists to manage. As lo

# Organising the fight for jobs

Balfour Darwin in Sheffield; demonstrations in Sunderland; labour movement conferences; protests raining in on the Labour Government; Labour Parties all over the country; the 26 November. These are just the latest that is hotting up. Demands are coming to the fore. The 26 November forward, but the problem is — what next? How can a demonstration be organised for powerful areas? How can we ensure that workers after many weeks — as has happened all too often — immediately their fight starts? How can a campaign be organised for the loss of pay; the 35-hour week; an emergency of the books; full pay for the unemployed; and all the other demands neces-



Part of the gigantic 'march on Besancon, 29 September 1973. Over 100,000 workers from all over France turned out to demonstrate their solidarity with the workers of Lip in their fight for jobs.

Printworkers at the occupied *Parisien Libere* plant have since followed the example of Caron-Ozanne. They have used the boss's presses to run off a million copies of a 16-page paper popularising their struggle; and six special teams financed by their union have spent the last fortnight travelling through France to distribute it at factory gates, office entrances, market places, etc.

The only workers in Britain who have taken similar action were those occupying Briant Colour Printing in July 1972, who played an invaluable role in producing posters and leaflets for the struggle to free the Pentonville Five. The workers at the *Scottish Daily News* had the same opportunity, to convert the paper into a weapon for the whole Scottish working class in the struggle against unemployment. Instead they relied on the Labour Government, maverick capitalist Robert Maxwell, and an assortment of Liberals, Tories and Scottish Nationalists — which more or less guaranteed that the venture would end with new threats of redundancies and closure.

The *SDN* could have played a vital role not simply in generating solidarity but in promoting the *centralisation of demands and action* which is necessary to turn sympathy into outright struggle. The importance of this was shown at the beginning of 1975, when a few hundred Belgian glassworkers at the Glaverbel plant in Gilly took on the might of the French-based multinational BSN in defence of their jobs — and won.

## Conference

The Glaverbel workers occupied in early January as soon as they heard of the company's closure plans. Earlier regional struggles against victimisation and around wage demands — involving ten simultaneous occupations and a regional strike committee — had prepared the way for a regional and national response. The local region of the Belgian TUC was forced to call a delegate action conference to discuss the Gilly situation. This was attended by 500 delegates, many of whom pledged themselves to strike action in support of the Gilly workers.

The workers voted to sell glass to boost strike funds. A series of sympathetic stoppages in the glass industry took place and workers elsewhere came out on token strike. The possibility of a general strike in the region to enforce the workers' demand for no redundancies and no rationalisation together with the installation of a float glass process was on the cards. At one stage the Belgian TUC was even forced to call off all talks with the Government until the threat of closure was suspended.

## Work-sharing

An international demonstration of Belgian, French and German glassworkers also occupied the Paris headquarters of BSN and confronted the bosses on the spot. A few days later a settlement was reached. A new enterprise is being established, and meanwhile the company has been forced to agree to a system of *work-sharing with no loss of pay*. The workers also set up a control committee to oversee investment, subsidies and so on, to prevent any behind-the-scenes rationalisation. The lessons of the struggles in France and Belgium — and in a different way in Britain — point to the same conclusion. It is not enough to solidarise with existing struggles. The most effective form of solidarity is their political generalisation and extension to the whole working class.

This will take place both through the strengthening of existing combine committees, through the establishment of support committees around particular struggles, and centrally through Right to Work Committees representative of the labour movement in every area. Whatever their name, these bodies must have a single aim: to support any struggle against sackings, and to open the books of the local authorities, the nationalised industries and the private bosses to expose the effects of the Healey cuts in public spending on jobs and services and the bosses' plans for redundancies, thus preparing the way for a co-ordinated fight back around common demands which defend the right to work.

by Mick Gooling

**GLAVERBEL - GILLY**  
**SOLIDARITE!**

**NON** aux licenciements  
**NON** au démantèlement

No to redundancies, no to closure. The demand the Gilly workers fought for — and won.

nine months after the struggle broke out, the Lip workers were able to win a settlement with no redundancies — although some concessions, such as the re-deployment of labour and partial division of the plant, were forced on them due to the scabbing of the CP and SP leaderships.

Thanks to Lip, occupation became almost a reflex action by the French working class when faced with redundancies. Last month saw a new factory occupation almost every day! What is more, there has been an increasingly systematic development of support committees throughout the country.

For example, last December 86 workers occupied the Piron factory at Bretoncelles, a tiny French town of only 1,000 people in Normandy. After opening the books, they declared the bosses useless and sacked them. But the workers immediately recognised the importance of turning interest in their struggle into active support.

By the beginning of January two support committees existed. Ten days later there were fifteen. A central meeting of delegates from support committees alongside the struggle committee, decided on a mass rally in the

Following this, the workers put out leaflets to all the factories in the area facing redundancies, calling for a common struggle: 'We denounce the chronic inability of the capitalist system to satisfy our elementary needs. The workers of Bretoncelles want to make contact with you — we must co-ordinate our struggles. The victory of the workers depends on it.'

Workers at Radiac in Briare and Fils Latex agreed at once. Thus the first concrete step was taken towards building a united struggle against unemployment in the region. It was further decided that the support committees should also attempt to co-ordinate struggles. These support committees are for the most part still functioning today as the Piron workers enter their twelfth month of struggle.

Other workers in France have shown a similar consciousness of the need for political popularisation of their struggle. Those occupying the Caron-Ozanne printworks — which printed the newspaper *Ouest France* — produced their own paper, *Ouest Licenciements* (West Sackings), to explain their struggle and develop links with other workers fighting the

# 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast



The attention of the anti-Unionist working class over the past few weeks has quite understandably been almost exclusively concentrated on the feud between the Official Provisional IRA. Understandably, because the feud must surely be one of the most shameful and tragic episodes in the history of Irish Republicanism.

The feud has reinforced all those tendencies in the nationalist community who favour collaboration with the Loyalists. Even the best militants have not escaped the deep feeling of frustration at the political blindness being displayed by the major anti-imperialist organisations.

Yet it is not hard to see why the present dispute has taken such a fratricidal form. Irish Republicanism is a force committed to the democratic national struggle for self-determination. Yet it is itself characterised by a very undemocratic internal regime. The most striking example of this — and also a prime factor leading to it — is the rigid division between political and military action which is endemic to Republicanism.

Military objectives have always taken precedence over political ones, quite naturally leading to a situation where the handing down of commands from the Army Councils has eclipsed democratic discussion of strategy. There is no room within the Republican groups for dissidence, and certainly none for political tendencies opposed to the line of 'the Leadership' i.e. the Army Council. As Eamonn McCann pointed out in the Irish Times (18 November), it is almost inevitable that disputes between Republican groups will be solved

by military might.

The result of the feud has been a weakening of support inside the nationalist community for the anti-imperialist struggle. Fewer people are willing to resist the infiltration of the Royal Ulster Constabulary back into Republican districts or to protest against the harassing searches and arrests made by the British Army. There is also increasing scepticism about the ability and willingness of the IRA to defend the Catholic ghettos from the 'security forces' and the sinister activities of the Loyalist para-militaries.

The re-building of the confidence of the anti-Unionist working class will depend on the willingness of all anti-imperialist groups to participate in united action. In the recent past both the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish section of the Fourth International) and Peoples Democracy have proposed that such united action be based on mass mobilisations demanding the immediate withdrawal of the British Army, no return of the RUC to the Catholic ghettos, and an end to internment and all repressive legislation.

## IMMEDIATE STEPS

These are the immediate steps necessary to defend the resistance, and all Republican militants who recognise the need for anti-imperialist unity must fight for their own organisations to participate in these mobilisations. Furthermore, where their organisations refuse to take their heads out of the sand, such militants must be prepared to take the initiative themselves.

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British political celebrities have been dashing in and out of the North over the past few weeks. Their itinerary is always the same: shake hands with Merlyn Rees on the steps of Stormont; pat the backs of a few soldiers on the streets of Belfast (wear flak-jacket if possible); quick helicopter trip to view the outback of South Armagh; and to round it all off, a press conference to ooze sympathy for 'the long-suffering people in this part of the United Kingdom'.

Two of the most recent visitors have been Tory leader Margaret Thatcher and Labour's Under Secretary of State for the Army. Thatcher takes the conflict in the North so seriously that she didn't even bother to read the United Ulster Unionist Council's Convention Report before she came — a fact that didn't exactly gain her the admiration of the Ulster Loyalists.

As for the Under Secretary of State, he was totally lost for any serious comment on what he had seen. On Ulster TV all he could do was repeatedly mutter how 'no other army in the world could do the job being done by the British Army with such good humour'.

Next day the Coldstream Guards gave a demonstration of just what the Under-Secretary meant. A 32-year-old spastic, Joe Hughes, went to Fort Pegasus in the White Rock district of Belfast to inquire after his younger brother, Gerard, who had been picked up by troops after a raid on their home that morning. Joe was beaten up. No doubt the brave men of the Coldstream Guards will write home to say how they dealt with another IRA 'terrorist'. After all, these gun-toting thugs have a great sense of humour!



## Bloody Sunday demo gains support

The Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee, which is organising a demonstration on 1 February on the basis of 'opposition to British involvement in Ireland', is slowly but surely gaining support in the labour and student movement. It has already been sponsored by Labour MPs Joan Maynard, William Wilson, and Maureen Colquhoun; GLC deputy Labour leader Paddy O'Connor; the Troops Out Movement; Hackney and Wandsworth Trades Councils; TGWU 1/524 branch; and three North London branches of the Labour Party Young Socialists. BSCC supporters will also be fighting for sponsorship from this weekend's Connolly Association conference on Ireland at Goldsmiths College in London.

The BSCC organised a highly successful social two weeks ago in London which raised over £160 and which also brought together many activists for the first time in the campaign. The next step is a big public rally on 11 December in London, at which Bernadette McAliskey will be the main speaker.

A call for support for the demo will also be made at the forthcoming National Union of Students Conference in Scarborough, where Broad Left executive member Al Stewart will be debating with Paddy Prenderville of the Troops Out Movement. City University and Central London Poly have already given their backing.

Activities are also getting off the ground in the localities. The South London TOM has organised six college meetings as well as a public meeting for January. Other London TOM branches are planning similar activities.

### 'SERVICE'

In Birmingham, where the National Front held a 'service' last Friday to commemorate the victims of last year's pub bombings, anti-fascists mobilised against it on the basis of troop withdrawal from Ireland, and a call was made to support the

Bloody Sunday demonstration. In Manchester a local BSCC is being formed next week, while in Sheffield militants are using a public meeting with Pat Arrowsmith and Eamonn McCann on 28 November to launch the campaign.

It is important to start mobilising now for Bloody Sunday, rather than leaving it until after the New Year.

The Craig-Paisley split, on whether to integrate the SDLP into their plans for smashing the nationalist community and restoring a Stormont-style sectarian regime, may have given the Labour Government a much-needed breathing space, enabling it to reject the UUUC (pro-Paisley) majority Convention report. But in order to maintain the confidence of the Loyalist bloc (and Britain's foothold in Ireland), Rees has had to more or less end the truce, close the incident centres, withdraw political status from Republican prisoners, and step up harassment of the nationalist minority.

### STAGE SET

The stage is now set for new Bloody Sundays. That is why we must fight for this demonstration.

The BSCC has functioning trade union, student and sponsorship sub-committees. Get delegated or come and help out for this demonstration. For sponsorship forms and leaflets contact BSCC c/o 1 North End Road, W.14.; or ring 278-9529.

If you want to know the truth about Ireland....

HEAR

Bernadette McAliskey (Devlin)

All-London Public Meeting

Thursday 11 December, 7.30 p.m.

at the Conway Hall  
Red Lion Square  
(nearest tube Holborn)

Also speakers from:  
Bloody Sunday Commemoration Cttee.  
Troops Out Movement

Organised by: BSCC

## CATTLE MARKET OVER - BACK TO THE REAL WORLD

Miss Puerto Rico — variously described as a model and a student — told reporters after her 'victory' in the Miss World contest: 'This is an opportunity which does not normally happen to Puerto Rican girls.' She can say that again!

Perhaps she was referring to the fact that 71 per cent of the island's 3.3 million residents depend on US federal food stamps. Some 40 per cent are unemployed, with perhaps another 35-40 per cent 'under-employed'. This is the result of more than 400 years of colonialist rule.

The present puppet government and its US imperialist backers have two basic solutions to the problem. One is to export thousands of Puerto Rican workers to the mainland every year to do the dirtiest, lowest paid jobs in America. The other is a mass enforced sterilisation policy to reduce the population. As a result one third of all Puerto Rican women cannot have children.

as the world's ideal of beauty. Whose ideal, whose beauty — whose world?

Puerto Rico's neighbour Cuba, by contrast, has thrown off imperialist domination. The use of the title 'Miss Cuba' by an exile living in the USA was hotly condemned by the Cuban Government in a message to the organisers. Whatever shortcomings remain under Castroism, the vast improvements in the lot of both women and men brought about there since the revolution bear witness to the combined nature of the struggle against imperialism and its related sexual and racial oppressions.

### DEGRADING

But then that wouldn't interest Mecca boss Eric Morley. His only concern is to boost his profits through this degrading annual parade of female flesh. If that means elevating the occasional black woman, so be it. On a day-to-day basis, however, Mecca's position is quite different: the firm has recently been convicted twice of racial discrimination — for turning away a black customer in Leicester, and for refusing a black woman a job in Birmingham.

Sheila Coxhead

### GROSS AFFRONT

What a gross and cynical affront to these women, chained down in poverty and oppression under the yoke of imperialism, that a pampered Puerto Rican 'student or model' is proclaimed in the West

## RED LADDER BENEFIT

Red Ladder Theatre is holding a Benefit on 5 December to raise funds for their move to Yorkshire this January. In the last few years much of their work has been in the North, and the move is planned to take them closer to the bulk of the audiences to whom they perform.

At the Benefit they will be performing their new show 'It Makes Yer Sick'. It's a serious examination of the problems of health in our society, especially in the NHS — but with plenty of laughs and songs as well. It has been made with the full cooperation of workers in all areas of the Health Service.

Also appearing will be the Stepney Sisters, one of the leading groups in a movement to introduce a feminist and progressive content in rock music.

The Benefit is being held at St Pancras Assembly Rooms, Camden Town Hall, Euston Road, at 7.30 pm (bar from 7.00). Take this opportunity to see Red Ladder, as they won't be performing again in London until next May.







# NF SPLITS

For some time a severe crisis has wracked the extreme right-wing National Front. In very rough terms, two major factions have existed — though sophisticated observers of the Front claim that up to five political currents can be found. On one side are the 'hardliners' — such as Tyndall, Webster and Andrew Fountaine — and on the other are the self-styled 'Populists' — who include NF chairman Kingsley Read, and Roy Painter. The tension between these two wings has now developed into a dramatic public confrontation.

The Populists recently appeared to be carrying all before them. And there were good reasons for this. They were not tarred with the brush of Nazism that could so easily be applied to Tyndall and Webster. They understood the potential value to the NF of mass campaigns and how to use every repressive measure of the state to build their own forces. The NF has therefore become the most enthusiastic partisan of the Special Patrol Group, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, etc.

## RHETORIC

In some respects they understood the nature of fascism better than Tyndall and his supporters. In the final analysis, fascism must become a mass movement that defends capitalism and attempts to destroy the labour movement. To build a mass movement, it is essential to utilise a pseudo-radical rhetoric that is superficially anti-establishment.

The paper of the Populist faction — *Britain First* — has made a regular habit of attacking the international finance system and the multinational companies. It has posed as a paper defending the interests of British (read white) workers, and has raised demands for import controls to defend jobs, for worker participation, for interest-free loans to local councils, and for taking over the banks.

The Populist team was made up largely of ex-Tories, and generally exuded a more respectable aura than Tyndall, Webster, and the rest of the gaul birds. This enabled Kingsley Reed to make some small — but potentially very important — contacts with big business. The Populists could also convincingly demonstrate to the NF rank and file that they were just as racist and just as willing to consider violence as the Tyndallites at the end of the day.

The progress of the Populists appeared to be all conquering. Tyndall was removed as Chairman of the NF and then from the Directorate itself. *Britain First*

was expanded, while the circulation of *Spearhead* (Tyndall's journal) was deliberately restricted. It also looked as if Tyndall's old comrade Martin Webster, with the practised eye of a seasoned opportunist, had jumped onto the Populist band wagon.

The NF claims a membership of over ten thousand. In reality, less than two thousand of these are active. Tyndall therefore waged a fight-back by building up support amongst these activists. *Spearhead* was used to promote his slate for the NF Directorate. He also organised a whole series of faction meetings up and down the country.



Webster — out but not down

The fruits of this campaign were gathered at the recent Front AGM, when Tyndall and his allies won a majority of seats on the Directorate: they took twelve seats, the Populists got six, and there were two waverers. Webster came back to the fold, and the third member of the hardliners' team was wealthy landowner Andrew Fountaine — who had previously been expelled from the Front for extremism, but is now National Vice-Chairman. Some of the flavour of the debate at the AGM can be gathered from the intervention of Webster, who argued that the time was coming when it would be decided that 'they no longer need a political party — they need an army'!

More recent events show just how fierce their faction fight has now become. The six Populists on the Directorate called a secret meeting and suspended the twelve Tyndallites. They then made an early morning raid on the NF headquarters with a group of men armed with pick handles, changed the locks and refused admittance to an indignant Martin Webster.

The Tyndallites then held a meeting in Birmingham where they drew up a list of branch officers for every NF branch, and are in the process of attempting a purge of rivals at the base of the organisation. Plans are afoot to expel Kingsley Read from the Blackburn branch, while John Finnegan — a leading light amongst the Populists and a personnel manager at GKN — has been removed from the position of Midlands organiser. To complete his discomfiture, Mr Finnegan was visited by three masked men who beat him up with iron bars.

The Tyndallites now intend to call a General Meeting of the Front in the New Year but it is impossible to predict at this stage what will be the precise outcome of the present crisis. Fascist groups have in the past proved able to paper over worse splits than this.

## NOT A PINCH

Even if the NF does break in two it is not certain which wing, in the long term, will be the victor. Both are essentially thoroughly fascist and, in their differing ways, pose dangers to the working class. The Populists are more sophisticated and have a far firmer grip on the sort of strategy needed to build a large fascist movement, but a number of Tyndallites also understand the need for mass work and radical demagoguery. There is not a pinch to choose between them when it comes to viciousness and violence.

One clear lesson, however, can be drawn now. The crisis in the NF was created by the anti-fascist activities of the Left. It was this pressure that cut down on the NF's room for manoeuvre and so built up the internal tension to its present pitch. A relatively small fascist group can be disrupted and disoriented by the activities of anti-fascists. Whatever finally happens to the NF, it will still be as crucial for the left to fight fascism wherever it shows its head and in whatever disguise.

ANDREW JENKINS

# ROME DEMO AGAINST ABORTION ATTACKS

by LEONORA LLOYD

Thousands of women daily face death or serious injury rather than continue with unwanted pregnancies. Nearly 50 per cent of the world's women cannot get legal abortions on any grounds, except perhaps that of risk to their life. And, in many countries, liberal abortion laws are under attack

In the late 1950s the East European countries (except Albania, where abortion remains illegal) followed the Soviet Union's example by making abortion for the first 12 weeks on demand. But following high rates of Hungry in 1973 have all re-enacted restrictive legislation.

In Rumania, the birth rate then rose from 12.8 per 1,000 in 1966 to 39.9 in 1967, but dropped to 18.8 in 1972. During the nine years when abortion was legal the Baco Hospital performed some 15,000 terminations with no maternal deaths; in the following two years there were five deaths from illegal abortions!

In Japan, where the 1948 law allows abortion on demand in practice, it is an important method of birth control. Religious groups and the Movement to Treat Life Respectfully are pushing for restrictions, whilst the doctors who make huge fortunes out of abortion want contraceptive use limited — the women's organisation Chu-Pi-Ren claims the pill is being sold at 400 per cent of its real price. The Government is considering changing the legal grounds from 'socio-economic' to 'mental health' — which, claim the women's movement and the left, would put the 'blame' on the individual woman rather than on society, without in any way tackling the problem.

## STERILISATION

In Latin America, contraception and abortion are widespread and increasing — but remain illegal. The greatest threat to women's right to control their own fertility comes from enforced sterilisation. In Colombia, women having babies sign English-language consent forms, unwittingly giving permission for sterilisation. In Guatemala, women are used for experiments in sterilisation techniques. And in Chile, half the \$30m. donated by the World Health Organisation funds a 'family planning' project — sterilisation aimed at controlling working-class fertility — headed by US doctors.

In the US, itself, abortion rights are under attack in the courts. Early this year, Dr Kenneth Edelin was convicted in Boston for 'manslaughter' following a legal termination; in August Dr Floyd was indicted for performing an abortion at 25 weeks. In New York, anti-abortionists are attempting to get restrictions enacted, in spite of evidence that illegal abortions are decreasing only in those states with liberal practices.

## PUNISHABLE

In Spain, Portugal, and Italy, abortion is practised on a wide scale even though it is illegal — in Portugal, despite the overthrow of fascism, it is still punishable by imprisonment for both the abortionist and the woman.

It is fitting that on 6 December an international pro-abortion demonstration will take place in the heartland of Catholicism — Rome. This is part of a continuing struggle in Italy to change a situation that condemns some 1½m. women a year to illegal abortions, ending in death for several thousand. The dem-

onstrations, called by a conference in October of women's groups which run self-help clinics, is also an important chance for the movements in Europe to demonstrate their solidarity and mutual support. It is being supported by many abortion movements and left groups, including the Fourth International.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The British abortion movement has a particular responsibility to support both the right of foreign women to continue to get their abortions here, and to help them change the law in their own countries. It is worth pointing out that the 1967 Abortion Act does not apply in the North of Ireland; while in the South abortion remains illegal, forcing some 20 women a week to come here to seek them. In Hong Kong, a British colony, abortion is illegal.

Only when all women, everywhere, can control their own fertility will our fight be won. The Rome demonstration and other actions on 6 December give us a chance to unite with other women fighting for that aim.

\*\*\*\*\*

NAC is organising a trip to Rome, leaving London on Thursday 4 December and costing about £25. NAC supporters should get their trade and student unions to sponsor them.

In Britain on 6 December NAC is organising pickets of embassies of countries where abortion is illegal, difficult to get, or currently under attack. It is hoped that women and men from the countries concerned will offer to take part and help organise the pickets. For example, on that day, abortion demonstrations are taking place in New Zealand and Australia to mark the end of International Women's Year — hopefully women from those countries will organise solidarity actions here.

Contact NAC at 30 Camden Road, London NW1 (01-485 4303) if you need details, or can help.

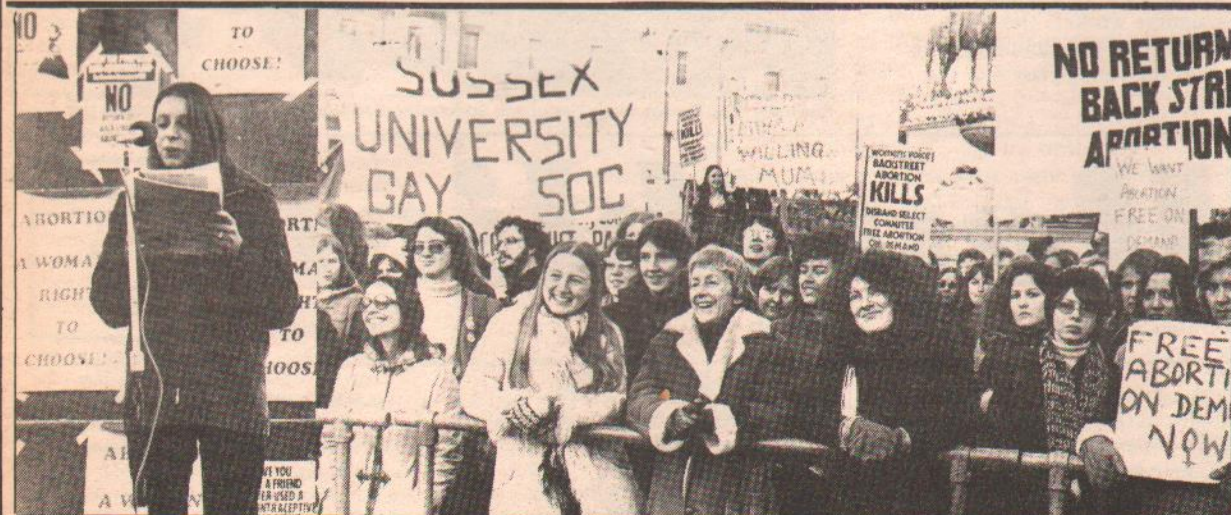
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## JOINT LABOUR-NAC MEETING IN HULL

Dr Berry Beaumont, a member of the NAC Steering Committee and of the Socialist Medical Association, spoke to a highly successful meeting in Hull last week jointly sponsored by the local NAC group and the Botanic Ward Labour Party Association (part of anti-abortion MP Kevin McNamara's constituency).

Leading docks shop steward Tony Fee, who chaired the meeting, said that whilst campaigns for abortion and contraception were difficult topics to introduce to male workers, it was vital to take the campaign into the labour movement as a whole. Local Labour Councillor Pat McMullan, who also spoke, said that as a Catholic he considered that abortion should not be decided by the conscience of individual MPs, but by the woman herself.

Support for the meeting was received from members of a number of trade union branches, including the T&GWU, ASTMS, NUPE and APEX. A resolution calling for Kevin McNamara to implement Labour Party conference policy and to resign from the Parliamentary Select Committee on abortion was unanimously passed.



Hundreds of National Abortion Campaign supporters rallied in Trafalgar Square on Saturday to end London activities in the nationally co-ordinated Week of Action against the re-constitution of the Select Committee. Messages of support were read from a number of MPs and Clive Jenkins of the General Council of the TUC. Several speakers called on NAC supporters to take up the fight to implement the policy of the TUC and Labour Party — and pointed out that this would mean a fight against the attacks of the Labour Government on this democratic right of women.

Karen Margolis of the Working Women's Charter Campaign (speaking above) stressed that in addition to abortion, the other demands of the Charter were all necessary if women were really going to have the right to choose. Dr Berry Beaumont of the Medical Practitioners Union argued that a fight for free abortion on demand, to which her union was committed, involved a fight for out-patient abortion clinics, a sliding scale of social spending to offset increases in the cost of living, the removal of reactionary gynaecologists from jobs where they can impose their views on women, and a workers' enquiry to investigate the real abuses — the sabotage of the 1967 Abortion Act.



MPLA militants celebrate independence in Luanda

# ANGOLA: MPLA holds the line

Two weeks ago the red and black flag of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was optimistically raised over Luanda, while in the north and the south the armed wing of the MPLA attempted desperately to hold out against the reactionary offensive that has been launched to isolate Luanda. In spite of the escalation of military intervention by South Africa and Zaire on the side of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the MPLA has — except at the town of Malanje — managed to keep these forces at bay.

In the north the FNLA has been unable to make any advances at all. But the South African-UNITA offensive to the south is being directed towards Dondo, which supplies Luanda with water and electrical power. The capture of Dondo would have disastrous effects on the city.

The capitalist press in Britain has of course concentrated its attacks on the 'Russian invasion' — not a word is said against the supply of military and financial aid by the USA to the FNLA, nor against the military intervention of South Africa that has existed for months. In a statement revealing of the meaning of 'detente' Kissinger has denounced the USSR's intervention in Angola as being 'incompatible with detente' — that is to

say, incompatible with a policy that allows rampant imperialist intervention against the struggles of workers and peasants.

A similar policy exists between the African neo-colonial regimes and the racist regime of South Africa, such that there is a conspiracy of silence amongst the majority of the African states regarding the South African intervention in Angola. In essence, the military intervention is very much a part of this policy of detente. As the *Financial Times* has commented: 'Unfortunately for

Angola(!), the country is potentially too rich and too strategically important to be left alone to work out its own future....the politics of whoever wins control will have a decisive influence on southern Africa as a whole.'

It is therefore not surprising that desperate moves are also being made in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) for a 'peaceful settlement'. The international bourgeoisie is well aware that the rise of the struggles in Zimbabwe will quickly become connected to the dynamic of the struggles in An-

## 'Close Links'

Other struggles in the region are also being forcefully linked to the struggles in Angola: while in the past SWAPO (South West African People's Organisation) of Namibia has maintained 'close links' with UNITA, such links are now being smashed by the open collaboration of UNITA with South Africa. Each blow that SWAPO aims at South Africa is *objectively* a blow in favour of the workers and peasants of Angola under the leadership of the MPLA.

But without a greater escalation of aid to the MPLA, and its acceptance by the Neto leadership, the present balance of forces still lies heavily against the Angolan revolution. And from the Labour Government in Britain, there is not a word of concern; only a smile that the British-owned Benguela Railway Company is back in 'safe' hands (of UNITA and South Africa), and once more operating as an export outlet for the copper-dependent Kaunda regime in Zambia.

JULIUS KARANJA

### READING ON ANGOLA

- \* **AFRICA IN STRUGGLE** — contains a full-length article on Angola, price 30p, post 9p (published by the African Commission of the IMG).
- \* **ANGOLA** — a pamphlet explaining the aims of the Angola Solidarity Campaign, price 10p, post 7p.
- \* **ANGOLA SOLIDARITY BULLETIN** — so far there have been four issues of this duplicated monthly bulletin of the ASC. Price 5p, post 7p. Latest issue only.
- \* **INPRECOR** — three issues containing analytical articles on Angola, dealing especially with the political character of the MPLA leadership. £1 the set, including postage. Small quantities only.
- \* **MPLA ANGOLA** — this is an interview in depth with Paulo Jorge, the MPLA

director of information. Although published in 1973, this has a lot of useful information and argumentation and is especially revealing on the outlook of the MPLA leadership. Price 38p, post 9p. Small quantities only.

\* **ANGOLA — FIVE CENTURIES OF PORTUGUESE EXPLOITATION** — a thorough survey of the key aspects of Angola's relationship with Portugal. Price £1.05 (post 14p). Small quantities only.

\* **IN THE EYE OF THE STORM — ANGOLA'S PEOPLE**, by Basil Davidson — this is the definitive book on Angola, and is extremely useful despite the weaknesses of the author's politics. Price 90p (post 16p).

All from RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (01- 278 9529).

## WORKERS DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

Val Coultas reports on a recent trip to Portugal which included a visit to the Lisbon offices of the paper *Republica*.

'When you look at the front page of the bourgeois newspapers in Portugal you see the faces of Cunhal, Soares and Costa Gomes. In our paper we prefer to show pictures of working people in action — not just leaders.'

Members of the workers' commission of *Republica* were explaining how they are using their paper since they took it over, and why it is so important in the fight which Portuguese workers are now waging.

'Our criterion for printing an article is whether or not it advances the interests of the working class; that is how we judge, for instance, what is said about the Sixth Provisional Government.' The paper always tries to go for its news and reportage to the workers themselves: to the democratic bodies of the workers' movement — the workers' and neighbourhood commissions — to the workers in struggle. Because of this *Republica* has become something vital to the Portuguese struggle: the mouthpiece of the workers.

### Outrage

The Portuguese ruling class realises very well the danger of this freedom for the working class to express itself. The Government recently took the extraordinary step of blowing up the transmitter of Radio Renascença which had been similarly taken over — so much for 'freedom of the media'.

The reaction of the working class was one of universal outrage. The very fact that the Government had to blow up the transmitter because it could not get support (even

from its own army!) to take it over shows its weakness.

The ruling class cannot risk an open attack on *Republica*, but is doing everything else it can to bring it down. All other papers receive loans from the Government, but *Republica* faces a financial boycott. The workers told us: 'We have to finance the paper from the workers' commissions and from our sales: we have to distribute it ourselves, whereas other papers are distributed by the State.'

The paper has nevertheless stabilised its sales at around 34,000 and has raised widespread financial support through its campaign to 'give the price of a cup of coffee to *Republica*'. The importance of this campaign is not just the money received — the financial situation of the paper is still desperate — but the extent to which the whole workers' movement have joined in and contributed.

The newspaper is run by a com-

**SELL  
AND  
SUPPORT  
REPUBLICA**

*Republica* became an instrument of practical international solidarity this week with the visit of Salvador Dos Santos from the paper's workers' commission and the launching of a special English edition.

As well as speaking at enthusiastic meetings in Manchester, Liverpool and London, comrade Dos Santos visited the occupied Personna razor blade factory and *Scottish Daily News* offices in Glasgow on the initiative of the IMG. Dos Santos and representatives of the Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee did interviews with Personna, SDN and Chrysler workers for publication in *Rep-*

mission of 13 elected from the 190 workers. Whenever necessary they convene meetings in the *Republica* offices to decide on the editorial line. The criterion they always use is: 'Will it reflect the interests of the workers in Portugal?'

*Republica* is a living example of workers' democracy in action. It demonstrates every day that bourgeois press freedom is a sham, that there is an alternative. This is why such a campaign of slander has been launched against the paper internationally, and why the Portuguese ruling class are so desperate to destroy it.

As the workers themselves told us: 'You will not find the truth about *Republica* in your own press. You must tell British workers the truth, as we in *Republica* tell the Portuguese workers the truth, through their own mouths. This is what the ruling class fear the most.'

# República

Fundado por ANTONIO JOSÉ DE ALMEIDA

DIRECTOR: JORGE PIREIRA DE CARVALHO

PROPRIEDADE DE JORNAL REPUBLICA RUA DA MISERICORDIA 116 — LISBOA 2 TELEFONES: 32 65 32 — 32 65 34

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*ublica*; and the workers' commission will be asked to contact the commissions at the Portuguese subsidiaries of Chrysler and Philip Morris (who run Personna), with a view to organising practical solidarity.

In discussions with the Personna workers, Dos Santos also raised the possibility of recommencing production at Personna under workers' control in order to raise funds and popularise the struggle. It was suggested that the workers' commissions in the steel industry in Portugal could be contacted to guarantee supplies of the high-grade tungsten steel needed to produce razor blades,

given the shortage of stocks at the factory and the absolute certainty that the ruling class would not supply steel to an occupied factory.

The tour by Dos Santos was organised by the PWCC to raise funds and support for *Republica*, and coincided with the launching of a special English language edition of the paper which is already selling briskly.

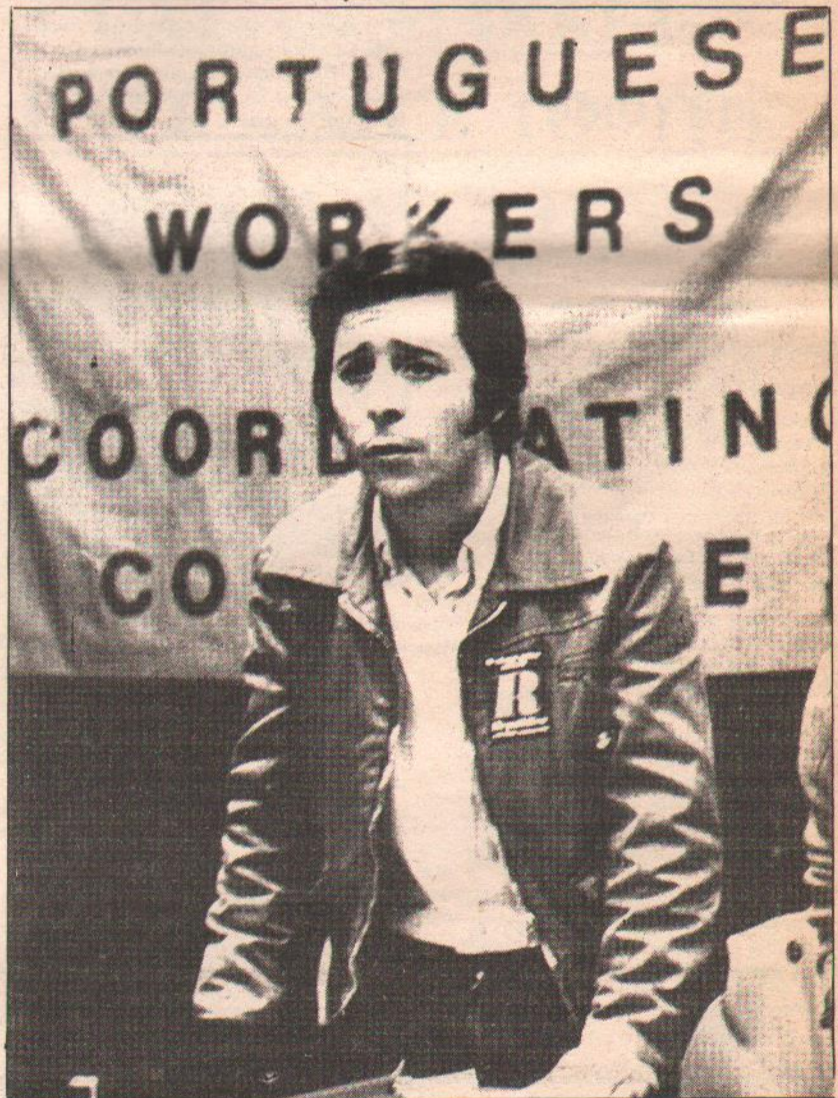
*Republica* has shown the possibility of generating practical international solidarity. It has shown us workers' democracy in action in Portugal. It deserves the wholehearted support of British socialists and trade unionists. The most

practical ways to support it are:

\* **Sell the English language edition as widely as possible — all proceeds to *Republica*.**

\* **Hold meetings and film shows on *Republica*: an excellent special film made by the Newsreel Collective and lasting 20 minutes will shortly be available.**

\* **Send messages of support and donations as advertisements in *Republica* from your trade union, Labour Party branch or student union. £5 will pay for a solidarity notice two inches deep and one column wide — send to: *Republica*, Rua da Misericórdia 116, Lisbon 2.**



Comrade Dos Santos from *Republica* addressing a solidarity meeting in London last week

**Q. What does the LCI see as the major tasks facing the Portuguese workers' movement today?**

**A.** The main task facing the workers' and revolutionary movement today is the struggle for the generalisation and centralisation of the organs of workers' and popular power, leading to the establishment of a National Popular Assembly — the main organ of power through which the workers can realise the proletarian, socialist revolution.

This can only be done by organising armed workers' defence against the armed attacks of the reactionary bourgeois and fascist groups. This must be organised through the workers' own organs — the workers commissions, the neighbourhood commissions, and the popular assemblies.

This also makes it urgent to push ahead in developing links with the commissions of soldiers and sailors, and in generalising the emergence of these in every barracks. In this I must stress the importance of the SUV ('Soldiers United Will Win'). The SUV was set up precisely as a way to strengthen this self-organisation of the rank-and-file independently of the officers and the structures of the Armed Forces Movement.

But the achievement of these tasks depends on our ability to overcome the divisions which presently exist inside the working class. This is the great problem of the Portuguese revolution — it is the main obstacle to the development and centralisation of the organs of popular power.

**Q. How does this appear in practice?**

**A.** The centralisation of these organs is in line with the aspirations of the more advanced workers. But at the same time, certain parties are using these aspirations to impose a bureaucratic centralisation of those organs which they dominate.

For instance, the secretariat of the workers' commissions of the Lisbon industrial belt is controlled by the Communist Party; while the Movement of the Socialist Left (MES) has opportunistically set up the TUV ('Workers United Will Win') in an effort to cash in on the prestige acquired by the SUV. We think this is a grave error by the MES, because it simply responds to the CP's bureaucratic manoeuvres by adopting the same methods.

We are calling for — and we have just begun a big campaign for this in all the organs of workers' and popular power — a national conference of all these organs to discuss all these problems and adopt a clear perspective for the advance of the revolutionary process.

**Q. What is the importance of the Revolutionary United Front (FUR) in this situation?**

**A.** The FUR could potentially play a very important role in developing a revolutionary alternative in the present situation. When it was set up it provided a real possibility of unifying the efforts and the forces of different organisations, giving an example of how organisations with different ideas and different programmes could work together in the development of the organs of popular power and in the struggle for the advance of the revolutionary process.

The problem is that the FUR, because of the policies of some of its component organisation, has tended to remain a prisoner of the same sectarian conceptions, particularly in relation to the Socialist Party.

**Q. Could you say something about the specific problem of the Socialist Party?**

**A.** The first thing to understand is that the Socialist Party is not like any other current in the workers' movement. It was only founded at a congress in Germany in 1973 by a group of bourgeois politicians — it had no organic link with the working class.

After 25 April 1974, it began a very subtle policy by adopting in its first legal congress a 'left' programme. — and then electing a right-wing leadership headed by Mario Soares. This enabled the Socialist Party to win a certain base in the working class — even among advanced workers, who had perhaps been influenced by the Communist Party in the struggle against fascism, who wanted an alternative to the bureaucratic methods of the Stalinists, and didn't find any kind of alternative in the revolutionary organisations.

But as the class struggle has deepened the margin of manoeuvre of the SP leadership has become less and less. It appears more and more openly as an instrument of the bourgeoisie inside the working class. Increasingly workers are realising that the SP is trying to hold back the struggle and stabilise bourgeois power in Portugal. Today this can only be done through a serious defeat — a bloody defeat — of the working class. And this is the basic contradiction of the Socialist Party.

This is why we apply the policy of the united front with the Socialist Party, because we know that inside the party this contra-

# "The self-organisation of the workers and soldiers is our number one priority"

Red Weekly interviews FRANCISCO TEMUDO, a member of the leadership of the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International).



Aerial view of the 100,000 strong demonstration on Sunday 16 November against the Sixth Provisional Government called by the Communist Party-controlled workers' commissions in Lisbon.

diction is going to have bigger and bigger repercussions. Many members are becoming increasingly worried about this: already Socialist Party members have been attacked in Braganza in the Azores; and even in Lisbon a bomb has been set off outside

some SP offices.

Against this we have to pose very concrete defensive actions against the fascist forces. That means appealing to the Socialist workers, who can then see how serious the leadership of their party is in

fighting the fascists.

We cannot reach the workers who are still in the SP ignoring their party affiliations, as some groups in the FUR seem to think. A sectarian approach to

the SP will merely reinforce their 'party patriotism'. And without winning the majority of the workers who are still inside the Socialist Party for the struggle it will be impossible to achieve the proletarian, socialist revolution.

**Q. Against this policy of the united front, some groups in the FUR seem to have the perspective of an immediate insurrection. How do they justify this?**

**A.** These illusions about the possibility of an immediate insurrection — which predominate in the PRP (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat) and the MES — flow from the extreme decomposition of the state apparatus, especially in the military field. This creates the illusion that it is possible to take power now — and not only to take power, but to apply a revolutionary programme, to win broad sections of the population to the revolutionary process, and so to maintain the revolutionary forces in power.

There is of course an amazing contradiction here. No-one can believe that the FUR by itself could constitute a government of revolutionary unity, so these groups agree on the necessity of what they call a 'reformist component' — that is, the Communist Party.

In other words, incredible as it may seem, they expect a reformist party to go along with them to take power, and form a government applying a revolutionary programme. Of course this has no sense — unless they really believe that the CP has somehow changed its nature as a reformist party.

We think this whole perspective is very dangerous, because it is a diversion from the main task of struggling for the generalisation and centralisation of the organs of popular power.

It is precisely because the workers are still insufficiently organised in this way that it is impossible to talk yet about taking power. Yet these groups seem to think that it is possible to take power alongside this 'reformist component' and then to decree popular power, rather than seeing the emergence of popular power as the outcome of a conscious struggle.

**Q. Don't these organisations also have an ambiguous attitude to the MFA 'lefts' like Carvalho?**

**A.** The LCI is the only organisation in the FUR which has consistently fought for the self-organisation of the soldiers and sailors and against any illusions in relation to the MFA.

We said that in its political (not social) nature the MFA was a petty-bourgeois movement, which as such reflected within it the contradictory pressures of all the main forces of society. So of course some sectors, some officers, were radicalised in relation to the struggles of the working class. But we always said, unlike some other organisations, that only advances in the self-organisation of the soldiers and sailors could ensure that this radicalisation came down firmly on the side of the working class.

We emphatically reject the concept of a special relationship with particular figures in the MFA, such as the PRP seems to have with Carvalho. No-one can forget his manoeuvres for an alliance with members of the 'Nine' during the summer. We think that to cultivate such a relationship is very dangerous; the self-organisation of the workers and soldiers must be the number one priority.

## Get out your wallets comrades we need £15 an hour!

We need to raise £1,400 by the end of November to meet our target of £4,000 on the way to that £15,000 Fund Drive total. And with just four days to go to the end of the month, that works out at £15 an hour — every hour, on the hour!

We have to admit that this is probably more than the combined salaries of Len Murray (TUC) and Campbell Adamson (CBI). But having already raised £2,600 this month, we are optimistic.

The events of the past week confirm once again the over-riding requirement for international solidarity, and the impact that this can have on the struggles being fought in Portugal, Spain and Ireland — as well as on the position of our very own Labour Government.

In Portugal, the Sixth (hopefully very) Provisional Government has gone on strike while Mario Soares — Harold Wilson's heartthrob — says the 'socialists' will physically attack the left in order to win freedom. And even before the emaciated body of that other impressive exponent of freedom on the Iberian peninsula has had time to turn in its grave, Wilson has despatched an underling to convey his condolences.

So take out your watches and your wallets. £15 an hour is 25p a minute. That doesn't leave us with any spare time on our hands. We hope the Fund Drive will not leave you with any spare cash in your pockets.



# WILSON BOWS TO FRANCO'S CORPSE

# RED WEEKLY

General Franco is finally dead. And who should be first in line to mourn the death of this ancient and brutal enemy of the workers movement but.....the leaders of the European Social Democratic parties! West Germany's Social Democratic Chancellor Schmidt sent a telegram of 'condolence' to Spain's Prime Minister and ordered flags to be flown at half mast in mourning, while here in Britain the Labour Government sent off a cabinet minister, Lord Shepherd, to pay their respects at the dictator's funeral.

These scandalous actions should come as no surprise. The European ruling class is terrified that the passing of Franco will touch off a huge explosion in Spain as the workers and other oppressed sections launch a determined struggle to wipe out every vestige of Francoism. Such an explosion, coming at a time when the workers of Portugal are shaking the very foundations of capitalist rule in that country, would rapidly place the struggle for socialism on the agenda.

## Determined

Furthermore, a determined struggle for socialism by the working class of the entire Iberian peninsula would threaten capitalist rule not just in this corner of Europe, but in every European country.

The European capitalists are hoping and praying that Juan Carlos, now officially King of Spain in line with plans drawn up by Franco him-

## Chris Balfour

self, will be able to hold back the struggle of the Spanish masses. As the *Financial Times* put it: 'If his hand falters on the valve, the resulting explosion would sweep away him, the monarchy, and much else besides.'

The European ruling class are thus prepared to throw all their weight behind Juan Carlos' dictatorship, and will try to bring it into the Common Market and NATO military alliance. The deep hatred of the European working class for fascism and its offspring prevented this from being done while Franco was alive. So now the ruling class must sow the illusion that everything is different with Juan Carlos: that 'democracy' will eventually be introduced by the King, even though it may 'take time' and be 'very difficult', etc.

In line with this, the capitalist press were busy last week writing apologies for Franco and attempting to patch up an 'acceptable face' of the Spanish dictatorship. The *Times* obituary of Franco was entitled 'General Franco - A dictator who gave Spain a period of law and order' (needless to say, no mention was made of the tens of thousands of working class militants who had to be murdered to make this 'law and order' possible).

## Identical

In what was far more than a coincidence the *Sunday Times* and the *Observer* carried almost identical headlines on their stories of the swearing in of Juan Carlos: 'Spain's

new king hints at change' and 'New king of Spain gives hint of change'. This was how they described a ceremony in which Juan Carlos swore to be loyal to the National Movement (the official Francoist party), pledged full support for the Francoist Army, and also 'hinted' that he would pursue the old favourite right-wing demand of reclaiming Gibraltar!

## Conspiracies

Just as the right-wing leaders of the Labour Party and their colleagues in other European countries faithfully uphold the needs of capitalism at home, so they do abroad. This is why they have been in the forefront of conspiracies against the Portuguese revolution.

Spain will get the same treatment. Schmidt, in his telegram to Spanish Prime Minister Arias Navarro, expressed his 'confidence in the fact that Spain is on a road which will more and more bring it closer to the community of other European countries'.

As the *Sunday Times* explained: 'The decision to send Lord Shepherd was made as a gesture of goodwill to the new ruler.... There is anxiety that the dictator's death might lead to a repetition of the chaos in Portugal that came after President Salazar's death, thus undermining Western security.'

These actions should provoke a massive outcry from every quarter of the labour movement. We must insist that the Labour Government stops this hob-nobbing with the heirs of Franco (included in the company Lord Shepherd found in Madrid was Chile's General Pinochet) and breaks all links with Spain until the downfall of the dictatorship. Resolutions, letters, and telegrams to this effect should pour into Downing Street. But it will take more than paper to stop the pro-capitalist treachery of Wilson, Callaghan and their ilk: it will require the building of a massive solidarity movement with the struggles of the Spanish working class.

# 6th Government totters in Portugal

Portugal is once more on a knife edge, as the Sixth Provisional Government looks set to follow its predecessors into oblivion after suffering a series of humiliating defeats.

The first of these occurred when Prime Minister Azevedo was forced to grant building workers' demands after being besieged in his offices. Then the blowing up of the Radio Renascenca transmitters turned into a Pyrrhic victory when the paratroopers who had been conned into carrying out the operation turned on their officers and forced most of them to resign.

## Compromise

Finally, a compromise solution drawn up by the military Revolutionary Council, whereby the new 'intervention forces' (AMI) would be dissolved in return for the replacement as Lisbon military governor of 'leftist' General Carvalho by 'moderate' Vasco Lourenco, fell flat when regiment after regiment voted to resist the latter's appointment - by force if necessary.

News reports from Portugal now refer to the possibility of partitioning the country - a transparent manoeuvre

to allow the right wing to consolidate its forces for an all-out assault on Lisbon and the south. At the centre of these goings-on is Brigadier Pires Veloso, the northern military commander, who has backed an offer by the extreme right-wing head of the commandos, Jaime Neves, to use his troops to occupy left-wing newspaper offices and remove leftist military officers.

The relationship of forces in Portugal is fortunately too favourable for such threats actually to be carried out, but they show which way the wind is blowing. They also highlight the urgent need to build an international campaign of solidarity with the struggle of the Portuguese working class.

An important first step in this campaign will be the 'European Conference in Solidarity with the Portuguese Revolution', to be held in Paris on 13-14 December. This Conference, launched following a meeting in London convened by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, is already beginning to attract wide support - among its latest sponsors are two members of the Central Committee of the French Socialist Party. Further details of the Conference and arrangements for the British contingent can be obtained from the Solidarity Campaign

with the Portuguese Working Class, 12 Little Newport Street, London W.C.2. The Solidarity Campaign in Britain is also planning to hold its own conference on 7 February 1976. If this is to provide a really representative basis for an on-going campaign, then the battle for sponsors, delegates, and above all affiliations to the Campaign must begin now. Two important weapons here are the English edition of *Republica* (price 20p) and the PWCC bulletin *Our Common Struggle* (price 7p) - both available from the above address (add postage).

## Big boost

The tour by a *Republica* speaker has already given a big boost to the campaign (see page 10). In London a 250-strong public meeting was preceded by a picket of Bush House, the offices of the BBC external services, where two Portuguese journalists have recently been sacked for questioning the right-wing bias of broadcasts. A Media Support Group of the Campaign has now been set up which will be holding its first meeting next Tuesday, 2 December, at 7 pm in St. Bride's Institute, Bride Lane, off Fleet Street. Media workers are particularly invited to come along.



Last Monday saw a picket outside Australia House in London to coincide with the opening in Australia of a frame-up trial of two militants and one supporter of the Australian black movement.

## £500 OR BUST!

A big thank you to our readers this week. More than £50 came in for our November Fund Drive from individual supporters, including £25 from one Newcastle comrade. But the response from IMG branches wasn't too good apart from £10.54 from North London, £2 from Cambridge and £2 from Bath.

It's particularly up to the other IMG branches to raise the £200 we need to hit that £500 target by the end of the month. It's a lot of money, but if you want *Red Weekly* - if you want the paper to expand to 16 pages - then we must make sure that we get that £500 every month. So don't hold on to your money, it will only depreciate with inflation. Give it to the best socialist paper in the country - and help spread the ideas that can provide a socialist solution to inflation and defend working class living standards. Rush donations to *Red Weekly*, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.



Part of the picket outside the BBC's headquarters to protest the sacking of two Portuguese journalists by the BBC.

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