

# RED WEEKLY

Red Weekly  
sends  
Revolutionary Greetings  
to all  
class struggle  
political prisoners  
throughout the world

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# RECALL THE TUC



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)  
Occupy to defend jobs — that's what workers at Balfour Darwin, Sheffield, did throughout October and November.

# OCCUPY TO DEFEND JOBS

# Nationalise the car industry!

Amid the row surrounding the Government's £200 million 'rescue' of Chrysler UK, little has been said about one thing — at least 9,000 jobs are still to go. The Government's operation is precisely a rescue of Chrysler UK — not jobs. The American multinational is getting a hand-out of £200 million and guarantees against future losses in return for nothing. Riccardo must have laughed all the way back to Chicago.

But why the sudden about-face in Government industrial policy? Only a few days before, Industry Secretary Eric Varley had told the 1,600 workers occupying the Norton Villiers Triumph plant at Wolverhampton to end their sit-in and take their place in the dole queue. But two things were uppermost in the Government's thinking: the adverse effect of Chrysler's closure on the next, even tougher, pay deal with the TUC; and the certain loss of Scotland to the Nationalists if the Linwood plant closed.

## Secret

In a secret document presented to Varley before the rescue plan was announced, Chrysler shop stewards demanded nationalisation without compensation to defend the right to work. The document continued: 'Any national government taking on a multinational like Chrysler must have the will to take it into effective control and then to plan it in the interests of social requirements.'

Now Chrysler workers must launch an all-out fight for these demands to protect all jobs. But the problem with the stewards' proposals is that while they present

an alternative, workers' future for Chrysler, they simply demand the Government implements it without detailing how the workers themselves can prepare nationalisation to guarantee their jobs, working conditions and living standards.

## Frozen Out

The dangers involved in this are great. Alongside the Chrysler rescue last week, British Leyland management announced a four-month freeze on capital spending. This Government-sponsored investment strike is an open threat to Leyland workers that the next instalment of the Government's £1.4 billion investment programme won't go ahead unless productivity is increased by 40 per cent in engine manufacturing and 50 per cent in car assembly.

## Productivity

To reach the sort of productivity levels envisaged by Ryder, around 40,000 jobs will have to go. No wonder the Ryder Report commented that the 'most crucial factor' in increasing productivity at BL would be 'significant progress towards industrial democracy' and a 'new spirit of reasonable cooper-

ation' from the trade unions. No doubt Chrysler workers will be offered some version of worker participation in joint committees in speed-up as well.

Chrysler workers must reject the terms of the Government rescue, and launch mass factory occupations to enforce their demand for nationalisation without compensation.

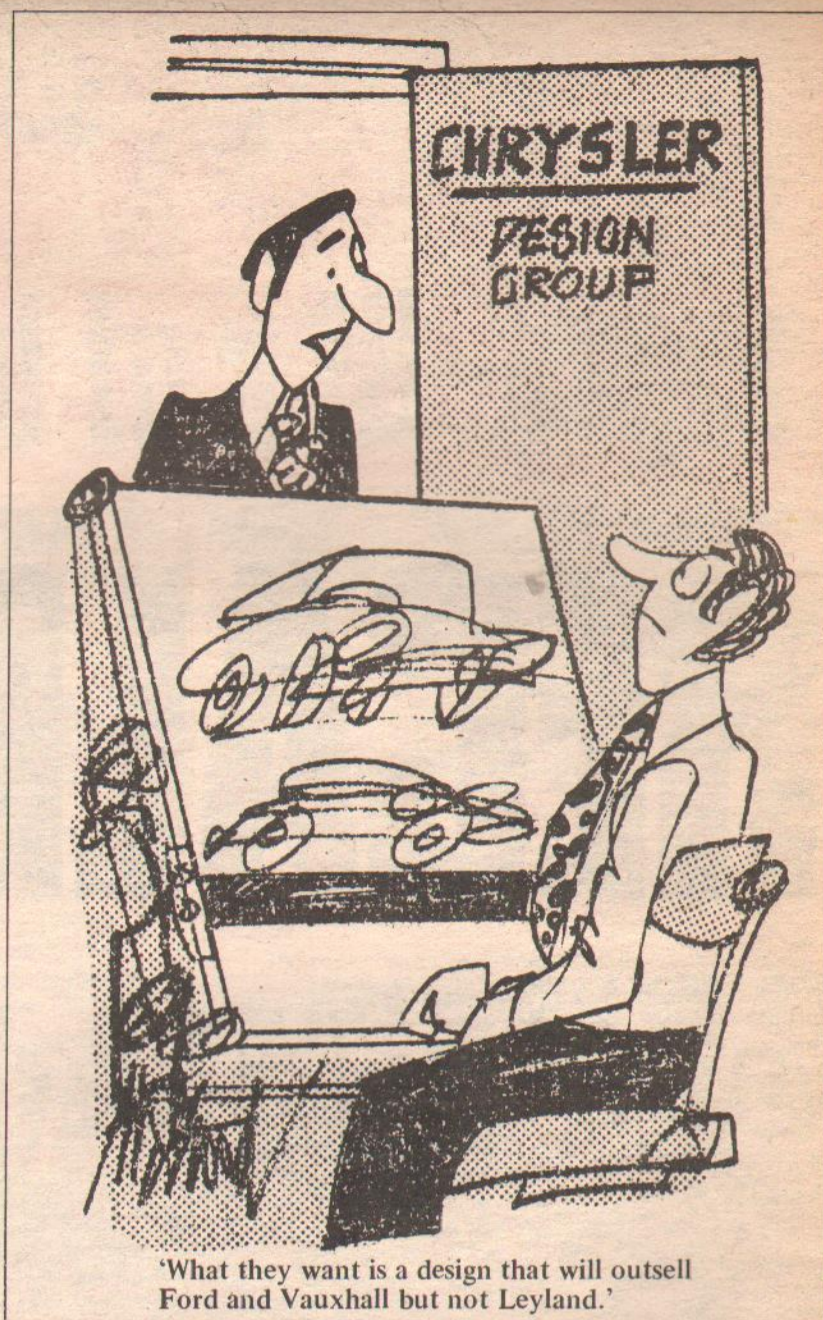
In British Leyland the fight against the implementation of the Ryder Report — rejected so far by the Triumph Assembly plant at Canley and the Rover Solihull shop stewards — must continue, although this fight suffered a setback last week when arch-collaborator Reg Parsons retained the senior steward's post in elections at the Cowley Assembly plant.

## Bankrupt

In place of rescue schemes to prop up bankrupt capitalist firms, car workers must launch a common fight for the nationalisation of the whole industry. Phoney participation schemes have to be rejected, and in their place elected workers committees should fight for the opening of the company's books in every plant in order to prepare a workers' plan for nationalisation and production which defends jobs.

A class-wide fight, not class collaboration, is the only way to stop thousands more Chrysler and Leyland workers from being thrown on the dole.

MICK GOSLING



Even the ruling class is sometimes forced to admit the stupidity of capitalist competition — as this cartoon in the *Financial Times* last week revealed.

# BUREAUCRATS' XMAS GIFT TO WILSON

JOHN GRAHAM (Birmingham AUEW)

The season of goodwill arrived early for Harold Wilson. On 8 December the national committee of the Engineering Section of the AUEW reversed its policy of opposition to wage restraint and voted 32 — 20 in support of the £6 limit.

This happened not as a result of a new-found warmth for the policies of the Wilson Government. Nor was it because of the election of new right-wing delegates to the national committee — this was a recall meeting, with no change in delegates.

It happened because a significant number of so-called left-wingers changed their position. Faced with the choice of accepting the £6 limit or leading a fight against it, the national committee went for the former course — and abdicated its responsibility to defend its members' living standards.

## 'Democratic'

After the meeting, Scanlon claimed that 'the delegates were reflecting in a truly democratic sense the feeling of their constituents'. In reality they were 'reflecting' the pressure put on the AUEW by the TUC General Council, and the confusion sown in the membership by their own lack of fight. And while the Communist Party-dominated Broad Left has fought for resolutions opposing the £6 limit, they too have refused to mobilise the rank and file for fear of upsetting their alliance with Scanlon.

Now the policy of relying on Scanlon has come home to roost with a vengeance. First Scanlon broke a union mandate and withdrew a motion against the social contract at the 1974 TUC Congress; when the idea of the £6 limit was first raised he called for the defence of the social contract; then when the £6 limit was agreed at the 1975 TUC he failed to

speak in the debate.

The CP has hopelessly tailed along behind Scanlon, leaving the membership leaderless in the face of the massive campaign launched by the trade union bureaucracy to silence and isolate any opposition to the £6 limit. Now Scanlon has been given a free hand to throw the weight of the AUEW bureaucracy behind the £6 limit, giving a further filip to the right wing throughout the labour movement and making further right-wing victories in the AUEW even more likely.

## Class-wide

But all is not lost. Many shop stewards and other militants remain opposed to the £6 limit and all the anti-working class policies of the Wilson Government. These militants must be welded together around a series of class-wide demands that can be fought for throughout the AUEW, both inside and outside the structures of the Broad Left. These must include:

- Opposition to the £6 limit — for £15 across the board, and automatic threshold increases to compensate for any rise in the cost of living.
- All redundancies to be met by mass factory occupations and national action to enforce work-sharing with no loss of pay; the opening of the bosses' books to prepare for nationalisation under workers' control; and the setting up of workers' enquiries to develop an alternative workers' plan for the economy, as militants in Lucas Aerospace have begun to do.

## Alternative

These policies can provide AUEW members with a fighting alternative to slumping living standards and the dole queues. Otherwise, this time next year... 'It was Christmas Day in the work-house'.....



# PERSONNA - Lessons of the struggle

After 11 weeks of militant struggle against redundancy — 26 days of strike action, and 53 days of occupation — the workers of Personna Razor Blades at Hillington, near Glasgow, returned to work last Thursday.

The deal secured in negotiations is a partial victory for the occupying workers. But it was only a partial victory because of the scabbing of the AUEW bureaucracy, which refused official backing for eight weeks, and when finally tor-

ced to recognise the action did nothing more than dole out strike pay.

The offer accepted by a mass meeting of the Personna workers contained a number of concessions by management — but it left some key issues unsettled. The number of voluntary redundancies has been cut from 44 to 24, and these are to be implemented only after a reassessment of work loads and further negotiations at the end of February.

Most of the stewards believe that this represents a face saver by management, and that February's negotiations

will result in either retention of the full workforce or only a handful of redundancies. However, the fact that the principle of outright rejection of voluntary redundancy — which was at the centre of the Personna struggle — has not been upheld will undoubtedly move the management to further attacks in the future.

## Chief Lesson

Gains of the agreement are that any proposals on speed-up and productivity can be implemented only if acceptable to the Shop Stewards Committee and the Paisley District Committee of the AUEW. Finally the management has been forced to pay a £25 'Christmas' bonus to every worker.

The chief lesson, however, is clear. The Personna workers waged a militant struggle. But the proposals to secure a complete victory put forward by the Personna convenor — the need for a strike to accompany the jobs lobby on 26 November, and the need for a regional shop stewards action committee with a centralised levy to fight redundancies — were not taken up by the union. The national actions which were taken — the blacking of Hull docks, and the projected tour of Manchester factories — were made by the workers themselves or with the help of small organisations like the IMG.

## Solidarity

The self-organisation the Personna workers displayed in their struggle, and their initial demand for work-sharing with no loss of pay, showed a way forward against redundancies for the whole working class. In the future the task will be to extend solidarity with such struggles throughout the labour movement through the building of Right to Work Committees in every area. That way a complete victory can be guaranteed.



# IN FOCUS

## FIGHT TO RECALL TUC

Forty thousand sackings in the steel industry; Chrysler's future still uncertain but at least 9,000 jobs to go; secret plans to cut rail track mileage from 11,000 to 4,000 miles over the next five years; a Cabinet agreement to slash public spending by £3 billion by 1978-79.

On every front last week — in the public sector, private industry, and the social services — the right to work took a hammering. One in twenty of all working people are without a job. By this time next year the figure could be one in ten. Even Bill Sirs, general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, has described the British Steel Corporation's proposals as a return to 'the harsh position of the 1930s when the employers ruled supreme'.

### Discontent

But faced with this chronic unemployment situation, the TUC have responded like sheep in sheep's clothing. Len Murray issued a warning that the wages policy of the Government might be endangered if unemployment continues at present levels. But he hastened to add that in the TUC's recent talks with the Government 'we did not ask for a consumption-led boom, and Mr Healey stressed that the (coming) package would not lead to a massive reduction in unemployment'.

In fact it has been the TUC's policing of the £6 limit that has not only cut living standards but helped to demobilise the fight for the right to work. But even the TUC is now uncertain whether it can keep the lid on for very much longer. The 20,000 strong jobs demonstration on 26 November was a powerful reminder of the simmering discontent that lies just below the surface.

# 'WE FIGHT ON!' say smelters

The seven week old strike against redundancies and wage cuts at Commonwealth Smelting, Avonmouth, is likely to go on over Christmas. Talks with management and the Arbitration, Conciliation and Advisory Service have failed to produce any shift in management's positions. They still want 114 redundancies and day working while the furnaces are cleaned — a wage cut of £16.20 a week.

by **STEVE BELL**

the region has received an appeal and money is coming in. A tour of South Wales taking in TGWU branches, miners lodges and the redundancy-threatened steel industry has been organised. In Bristol strikers have spoken to dockers, Rolls Royce and Tennaco workers. Moves have been made to meet British Aircraft Corporation workers, who are facing 1,200 redundancies.

Avon Council resources committee called by the local Committee against the Education Cuts. The links the strikers are building with the cuts campaign, their willingness to organise jointly with the Claimants' Union to get the maximum benefit from the Department of Health and Social Security, and the decision to organise a support committee are vital steps in turning the CSL struggle into a fight for the right to work throughout the region.

### Arbitration

On 8 December, a mass meeting of over 500 of the 638 striking Transport and General Workers Union members agreed to arbitration. But they insisted that this would only mean a return to work if there was a guarantee of no redundancies and if full manning and shift pay were restored. The company refused and talks broke down.

The workers are digging in for a long strike. Every TGWU branch in

Commonwealth Smelting is owned by Rio Tinto Zinc, and RTZ workers elsewhere are now responding to the Avonmouth struggle. Workers at the Bloxwich plant at Market Drayton are refusing to accept stockpiled zinc from CSL or anywhere else, while stewards at Capper Pass in Hull have arranged collections.

A delegation from CSL will be supporting and addressing a lobby of

### Pivot

With major redundancies occurring at BAC, in the print and throughout the South Wales steel industry, CSL can become the pivot around which the workers in the region can launch a fight back. For messages of support, donations, information, speakers, etc. contact: Mike O'Dea, 10 Eldon Terrace, Bedminster, Bristol.

# WORKERS PLAN TO BEAT THE CRISIS

Trade unionists and socialists met on Tyneside on Wednesday 10 December to discuss the fight back against social expenditure cuts in the area.

This was the first meeting following the successful 'Conference on Unemployment, Wage Restraint and Public Expenditure Cuts' organised by Newcastle Trades Council on 22 November, which was attended by more than 350 people.

The fight against unemployment took up the morning session. A delegate from Plessey's spoke of his experience in fighting lay-offs at the Sunderland plant of

this multinational. Another delegate criticised the futility of the Manpower Services Commission, which is currently using unemployed youths to clear driftwood off Sunderland beach. A report was also given by members of the Tyneside Unemployed Teachers Liaison Committee.

The conference passed a resolution on unemployment and wage restraint which included a call for occupations and nationalisation without compensation under workers control of factories creating redundancies. An amendment proposed by IMG members, to include demands for the opening of the books of such companies and a crash programme of socially useful public works was overwhelmingly carried. To organise a fight for this policy, a Right to Work Committee for Tyneside was due to hold its first meeting on Tuesday 16 December.

### Thrust

The afternoon session of the 22 November conference split up into workshops to deal with four areas of the social expenditure cuts: health, housing, transport, and education. These workshops reconvened on 10 December to discuss policy under the auspices of the Tyneside Action Committee Against the Cuts, which had been set up by the conference. Each workshop elected a number of delegates to a central body which will co-ordinate the campaign and give it a political thrust. This will prevent the danger of the campaign being sectoralised into different fields of unrelated activity.

Each workshop is to draw up a survey of the cuts in its sector in the area. The health group will be investigating private practice in Tyneside, and is to affiliate to the National Co-ordinating Committee Against the Cuts in the NHS. The education group is attempting to involve teachers, students and parents in various localities to campaign around classroom

We demand the right to work



sizes, staff/pupil ratios, and the under-financing of education in general.

The transport group is contacting both rail and bus unions locally to draw up an integrated transport scheme for Tyneside, involving free and more comprehensive services. The housing group is to contact local environment groups to oppose cutbacks in council house building and slum clearance whilst more office blocks are still being erected in Newcastle.

The fight against unemployment and spending cuts has now begun in earnest on Tyneside. The Newcastle Trades Council conference has given a lead which other areas will do well to follow. It is only by organising through the labour movement to involve all working people and their families that the policies of Wilson and Murray can be defeated.

A full report of the Newcastle Trades Council conference can be obtained by sending a stamped addressed envelope to: Conference Convenors, 85 Adelaide Terrace, Newcastle 4.

**Dave Carter**

**S**  
**this concerns YOU**

Our cost cutting efforts are still not enough. Expenditure exceeds income by over £300 million and we are borrowing money to pay wages and other bills.

Next year looks no better. The only remaining way of reducing our mounting losses is a massive cut in labour costs.

This is the issue to be resolved when the unions meet management on December 11.

The ultimatum posted on the notice boards of steelworks through the country. Next day the BSC demanded 40,000 sackings.

This is why Murray issued his 'warning' to the Government last week. An open sell-out would endanger his own position. But the measures he asked for were import controls, a steel stockholding scheme, job creation measures, relaxation of HP restrictions, a little aid for the construction industry, and the introduction of an investment reserve scheme.

What will be the Government's response? Some import controls will be introduced. Their effect on unemployment will be nil, transferring unemployment from one industry to another because the resulting higher prices in these sectors will mean workers have less to spend on other goods. At the same time import controls will sow the reactionary illusion that unemployment can be fought by off-loading it onto the backs of foreign workers.

Job creation schemes? So far these have meant putting lads on low paid work clearing waste land, or driftwood off Sunderland beach. Aid for the construction industry? That envisaged by the TUC will hardly have any impact on a situation where 300,000 building workers are expected to be unemployed by next winter. Investment schemes? Well, it is the Government which has promoted the current investment strike at British Leyland.

### Totally Useless and Confused

The TUC's proposals are a Totally Useless and Confused rag-bag, which in no way put forward the measures needed to defend the jobs of workers throughout the country.

These so-called leaders of the working class must be brought to account. If they are not willing to fight for the right to work, then they must be replaced so that a centralised struggle can be waged. Alongside the building of Right to Work Committees based on the broad labour movement in every area, the demand from Birmingham Trades Council for a recall TUC conference on unemployment is one that must be echoed throughout the working class.

NO CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING



# Fighting unemployment in the 20s

## Part 2

Last week **BOB PENNINGTON** showed how the unemployed workers got up off their knees, so that by the beginning of 1922 they had started to fight back in earnest. In Part 2 of our series, below, he shows how the betrayals of the trade union leaders culminated in the defeat of the 1926 General Strike.

Although the official trade union movement had done little or nothing in this direction, the unemployed movement carried on a stubborn and often successful battle to unify its struggle with that of the employed workers.

On 18 January 1922, unemployed workers raided a factory in Islington where they had learned that the employer was not paying piece-work rates in compliance with the terms laid down by the Board of Trade.

As soon as the 'raiders' got inside they stopped the machines and locked the factory gates. One of them then addressed the assembled workers, and when the manager was brought in he was greeted by demands for the replacement of piece-work by time-work. After an hour's discussion he was forced to agree to the workers' demands, which included: back-pay for those workers underpaid on piece-rates; time-work to be applied for a one-month trial period; and no deductions from wages for time lost during the stoppage.

All over the country demonstrations of the unemployed were being held. Gone was the collecting box and the appeals for charity. Instead the workless marched under the slogans of 'Work or Full Maintenance' and 'Down with the Lloyd George Government'. The streets echoed to the voices of thousands of workers singing the 'Red Flag' and the 'Internationale'.

### Poplarism

On 25 January a demonstration of 15,000 unemployed marched to the Poplar Guardians in East London. This was a demonstration with a difference. These men and women were not marching against the Guardians as in every other area, but had come to urge Poplar's Labour Guardians to adopt the demands of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement. The response of Poplar's Labour Mayor, Charlie Sumner, was to tell them that their demands were too modest! And the



Miners were a familiar sight on unemployment marches.



Unemployed women workers on the march for jobs.

Board of Guardians then decided to operate a scale of benefits considerably higher than any yet seen elsewhere in the country.

The word 'Poplarism' was born. A Labour authority had put the interest of the workers first, and set an example of how to bring together the labour movement and the real struggles of the working class. Across the country a movement swelled up inspired by this example. Time after time, reluctant Guardians — although invariably protected by a massive show of police strength — were forced to raise their benefits.

Worried at the failure of the Guardians to keep benefits down to starvation levels, the Ministry of Health ordered local authorities to provide work schemes for the unemployed at 75 per cent of the union rate. But the Unemployed Workers' Movement swung on to another offensive. Council Chambers were occupied. Marches were made on relief jobs. The back of the scabbing scheme was broken — but again little help had come from the official movement, whose interests were most threatened by 'relief' work.

### Mass Action

When a national lock-out of the engineers began on 11 March 1922, the unemployed movement gave unstinting support to the engineers. They took the lead in picketing. They raided factories where scabs were working. They organised joint rallies and demonstrations. Mass action by the unemployed and the engineers often forced the Guardians to pay relief rates to the engineers.

The next step was the organisation of hunger marches from all over Britain. Workers converged on London from Wales, Scotland, the North-West and the North-East. Imaginative tactics were used, such as occupations of the Ministry of Health and the march by 25,000 unemployed workers down Whitehall with red flags flying on Armistice Day — the pawn tickets from their 'hocked' medals pinned to the flags.

### Charter

Under the pressure of the unemployed struggles, the Trades Union Congress in September 1923 accepted a proposal to set up a joint committee with the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement. In January 1924 this committee approved a draft of an Unemployed Workers' Charter prepared by the NUWCM. The Charter called for work or effective maintenance, a programme of government works, the cutting of the working day to six hours, and the building of at least a million new homes.

The campaign for such a programme, however, was limited by the failure of the TUC to organise effective action amongst the employed workers. The idea of a 24-hour gen-

eral strike, although much discussed, was never put into practice. The TUC leaders simply muttered about taking such action on unemployment 'as conditions and opportunity dictate'.

### Fake Unity

The eyes of the union bureaucracy were firmly fixed on either getting a Labour Government into office or persuading the capitalist Parliament to change conditions. The mass movement that swirled around the heels of the union leaders was at best a useful means of exerting pressure. At worst it was an embarrassment — after all, it threatened to challenge the whole system with which they were collaborating.

When speakers from the NUWCM attacked the Labour leaders at demonstrations they were asked to ensure 'that unfriendly criticism and divisions' were avoided. The members of the NUWCM sitting on the joint committee with the TUC themselves actually moved this resolution.

R. Page Arnot, a leading member of the Communist Party — whose members were often leaders of the NUWCM — had already complained in March 1923 that affiliation to the TUC was being presented as the main issue confronting the unemployed. This criticism expressed the doubts of some CP members who feared

programme remained simply at the level of good intentions.

### Red Friday

The Labour Government of 1924 came and went. Some small improvements in unemployment benefits were made. But by 1924 unemployment had decreased from the 1921 level of 17 per cent to 10 per cent, and some of the steam began to go out of the NUWCM.

The upturn in the economy, however, was only temporary — as the ruling class knew. In the summer of 1925 the mine owners demanded a wage cut, which was met by a threat of a general strike. The Tory Premier Baldwin, buying time, offered a nine-months subsidy to the coal industry; and the victory of Red Friday, 31 July 1925, became enshrined in the annals of the British workers' movement.

### Seeds of Defeat

The ruling class had begun to prepare for battle. But the union leaders were drugged by complacency and fear of the social forces they had brought into play. In contrast to the planning and organisation of the ruling class, inertia and a dangerous optimism in the parliamentary system paralysed the labour movement.



Labour's short-lived 1924 premier, Ramsey MacDonald — protected by the same police who clobbered the unemployed.

that the struggle was becoming subordinated to a fake bureaucratic unity limited to policies approved by the TUC leaders.

The unemployed movement had established a base of support within certain sections of the TUC and its affiliated unions. The need to use that base to launch an effective challenge to the right-wing leaders was not carried through, however, and as a result the joint committee's

The seeds of the working class defeat in the General Strike of May 1926 were being sown. It was a defeat that would lead to poverty and misery for millions of workers and their families. The unity that the NUWCM had tried to build between the workers and the jobless was to be crushed on the anvil of that terrible defeat. From then onwards it went into the by-lanes of sectarianism and the cul-de-sacs of isolation.

## —WHAT'S ON—

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**BREAK ALL LINKS** with Fascist Spain! Public meeting organised by West London Spanish Solidarity Committee at Southall Town Hall (Uxbridge Road), Friday 19 December at 7.30pm. Speakers include: Syd Bidwell MP; Fred Gore, ETU convener, Heathrow speaker from PWCC. Sponsored by Southall and Hounslow Trades Councils.

# Smash Consultants defend the NHS

The Junior Hospital Doctors' dispute appears to be subsiding for the time being. But the crisis in the Health Service is far from over. The Labour Government is still pressing ahead with its cuts. And the consultants are still on the war path.

The need to mobilise the labour movement against these attacks is vital. The planned sabotage of the consultants must be met by action from the broad workers' movement. A complete ban must be instituted on all private practice, both inside and outside the health service. This

needs action by both health workers and other trade unionists.

To get such a campaign underway means building regional conferences called by the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS (NCC). It involves turning the Spring demonstration called by NALGO and the NCC into a mighty demonstration of working class strength.

The alternative to such a campaign is the collapse of the NHS — that cannot, must not be allowed to happen.

## Why Hull dockers are backing NHS Campaign

Tony Fee is a shop steward on the Hull Docks and an active member of Hull Central Labour Party. His shop stewards' committee is represented on the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS (NCC), and last week he told *Red Weekly* why they had taken this decision:

‘We support the NCC because it works to organise the unions and the Labour Party to take action against the cuts. The labour movement has taken the NHS for granted and allowed it to go into decline. This must be stopped.’

‘We are setting up a local committee of the NCC in Hull. Like the NCC everywhere else, one of its aims will be to offset the pressure of the consultants. We must make sure that Mrs Castle does not cop out on the pay beds issue.’

‘Private practice caters for those people who can afford to pay. There should be no private competition to the health service. All the private hospitals should be nationalised.’

‘We must not simply leave the fight to health workers. The health service is

the responsibility of the whole trade union movement. We aim to involve trade union branches, Labour Parties, trades councils, shop stewards' committees. A series of meetings will be held, and then we are calling a Humber-side Conference. There must be a national movement and a national campaign on this issue.’

‘Where hospital closures are threatened, we must exert intense pressure to stop them. If health workers take action to stop the closures then I believe we should give them support. We cannot tell the hospital workers what to do, but if they act then we should mobilise the support of dockers and other other trade unionists.’

The first edition of the NCC Bulletin containing information on the cuts and local reports on the struggle against them is now on sale. This is a vital weapon in defending the NHS, so place your orders NOW. It costs 5p a copy, (or 4p for bulk orders over 25) plus postage and packing. Send your orders (pre-paid) to Dr Paul Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London N.W.1. (cheques/POs payable to 'National Co-ordinating Committee-NHS').

### National Health

.....‘a health service under the control of working people.’

Thirty trade unionists from Southampton and Portsmouth — from the hospitals, docks, Fawley oil refinery, the construction industry, and from the Portsmouth Action Committee Against the Cuts — met last week to hammer out a policy against the cuts for the southern region.

A Regional Action Committee was formed to campaign for a demonstration and lobby of the Hampshire County Council on 29 January, a regional conference on 21 February, and a demonstration against unemployment and the cuts in early March. One function of the conference will be to elect a more representative body — hopefully with the sponsorship of the South East Region of the TUC — to co-ordinate action throughout the South.



More than 700 people marched through Birmingham last Saturday in a demonstration against the cuts in social expenditure. Prominent were union banners representing teachers, local government workers, and technical staff (ASTMS); there was also a contingent of shop stewards from the Rover car plant. Among the speakers at the end, Chris Adamson of NUPE called for a local conference against the cuts, and announced that NUPE would be calling a further demonstration in Birmingham in February.

# Now they won't even teach you to read and write

Mention adult literacy to most people and they will give you a blank look. But in Manchester it is the fight for resources to teach adults to read and write which is providing the springboard for a wider fight against all cuts in education expenditure. And these cuts are savage enough:

- \* the Education Committee has announced that teacher training places are to be cut from 4,020 a year to only 1,950 by 1981 — a cut of 60 per cent;
- \* the Department of Education and Science has 'requested' the non-acceptance of 'rising fives' into schools — this would affect 6,000 children in Manchester;
- \* in the University the cancellation of all building

for three to five years means no new library, students union, or faculty of education studies — and no jobs for unemployed building workers.

It is against this background that a half-day strike of Polytechnic lecturers has taken place, a demonstration held, and the Manchester Adult Literacy Action Committee organised. Resistance to the cutbacks started in the newly opened and prestigious Abraham Moss Centre. GILLIAN FROST, a teacher at the Centre in the adult literacy department and a member of the Manchester Liaison Committee of the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions (ATTI), spoke to *Red Weekly* about the effects of the cuts and how she sees the fight back being organised.

#### ● What sort of cuts are being proposed in adult literacy?

In the very week in which the BBC programme on adult literacy *On the Move* started we were actually threatened with the closure of some of our classes. Not only were we asked to cut back classes by one per night, but to increase the number of pupils in each class from six to eight or even 10. Yet in adult literacy small numbers are essential.

As soon as we heard these threats we organised a meeting for all literacy teachers, students, volunteers and other interested people in Manchester

The 75 people who attended agreed that we did not want adult literacy expanded at the expense of other classes. A new need had been discovered that should be financed from new money. We called on the Manchester education committee 'to state publicly that no cuts will be made under any guise to existing literacy provision', and we set up the Action Committee.

Cutbacks affect all people. So we contacted the Students Union at Manchester University, which strongly supported our cause with money, the local Labour Parties, and we also have plans to contact other public sector unions.

#### ● What was the response of your union?

The North West Division of the ATTI has passed a motion supporting the demands of our campaign and calling for an immediate injection of cash tied to the cost of living. It is union policy to resist all cutbacks and fight for educational expansion.

#### ● How important do you think the demand for a sliding scale of public expenditure is?

I think it's absolutely essential, because if we don't get that it means inflation is going to be carrying out the cuts automatically. It means we're going to have to fight every week just to stand still, which would be a terrible waste of energy.

#### ● One of your demands is that the education committee publicly state what its policy is. Do you think this lack of information about the education committee's intentions is a hindrance to organising resistance?

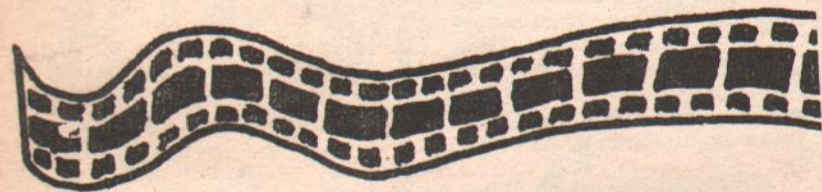
It's been a terrible problem from the start. We've heard nothing but rumours and contradictory statements. We need to know what their plans are, and the teachers and students around here should be involved in the formulation of the plans.

The demand for the opening of the accounts to workers' inspection is very important. As long as their plans and finances are kept secret they can always mystify everyone and divide and rule.

#### ● Do you think it's necessary to link up with other workers fighting the cutbacks? Would you support a labour movement conference to organise a plan of resistance against the cuts?

Yes I would. Even within education itself we have to make it very clear that we're not fighting for more for ourselves and less for somebody else. We're fighting to defend social expenditure as a whole. We don't want more on education at the expense of health or social services. We have to get together with everyone to make sure no cuts are made at the expense of anybody else.

On 5 December the Manchester Adult Literacy Action Committee held a very successful public meeting attended by around 100 people. It was decided to broaden the basis of the Action Committee to take in representatives from all trade union and labour movement bodies interested in the campaign. For more information write to MALAC, c/o Abraham Moss Centre, Crescent Road, Manchester 8.



## 'THE CUTS.... AND HOW TO FIGHT THEM'

'When we were making the film we put forward some policies...things like 'open the books under workers control', 'sliding scale of public expenditure', 'nationalise the drug companies under workers control'....but these don't appear in the film.'

These words from a TGWU militant, who appears in a section of the film, at a discussion meeting held after the film's first national showing underline its main weakness.

As an informative documentary, showing examples of how and where the cuts are occurring in all the main sectors of the welfare state, the film is very useful. We are shown, through interviews with those directly involved, cuts in house building in Glasgow, nursery cutbacks in Islington, hospital closures in Sheffield and Tower Hamlets, cuts in school building and teacher training on the Isle of Dogs and in South London, and — through an interview with GLC councillor Ken Livingstone — a glimpse of GLC cutbacks.

The film also rightly stresses the link

as part of the Labour Government's strategy to drive down living standards through cuts in both wages and services.

But when it comes to the main question — how to fight and what policies to put forward — the film unfortunately has little to offer. Apart from a guided tour of a *Daily Telegraph* 'rogues gallery' of leading industrialists, and tales of the horrors of their power and wealth, we are left with little more than a prescription for large doses of rank-and-file militancy; defensive action, estate by estate hospital by hospital.

By concentrating almost exclusively on fragmentary interviews with those activists involved in fighting cuts in local areas and sectors, the film gives the impression that class-wide policies are not needed or will arise spontaneously from these actions. Yet despite these shortcomings the film should be widely used as a means of stimulating the kind of discussion which is needed to thrash out these policies.

Mick Sullivan

# AUSTRALIA:

## Why Labour was smashed

TERRY FARR is an active militant in the Australian Metal Workers Union (AMWU) in Brisbane, Queensland. He is also a member of the Communist League (sympathising organisation of the Fourth International). *Red Weekly* asked him about the reaction inside the working class to the ousting of the Whitlam Government and the subsequent development of the Labour Party's election campaign.

### ■ What was the reaction of the workers when Whitlam was sacked?

There was immediate anger throughout the working class, followed by scattered work stoppages on the same day. On the following day there were general stoppages throughout all industries: metal workers, storemen, packers and so on. In one case in Brisbane, on a building job, the workers stopped work and marched from their job site to the Trades Hall, and on their way into town they called out all the other building sites who marched with them.

There was a call for a General Strike throughout the working class as a whole. The workers who marched to the Trades and Labour Council in Brisbane forced them into holding a rally on the first afternoon of the sacking of Whitlam. This was the most militant rally ever held in Brisbane.

In other states as well as Queensland there were immediate marches on Liberal Party offices, and spontaneous demonstrations outside. Demonstrations broke out everywhere — people took to the streets under banners which demanded 'smash the Fraser Government' and called for a General Strike.

However, although the response was immediate — because they saw the need to defend the Labour Government as a class reflex — they were simultaneously critical of the policies of the Australian Labour Party (ALP), with its wage indexation scheme (another name for wage freeze) and its unemployment policies which have led to closures in the shipyards, car industry, building trades, etc.

### ■ What do you think a General Strike would have achieved?

A General Strike was necessary to bring down the Liberal Government. But the aims of the strike would quickly have gone beyond that because of the critical attitude that has developed in the working class towards the Labour Government.

Any Labour Government returned in that situation would have found itself under much more immediate and organised pressure to act in the interests of the working class.

### ■ What was the Labour Party's response to calls for a General Strike?

They successfully moved to stop it. Bob Hawke, who is president of both the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the ALP, put out a call for no anarchy; for a responsible reaction; for a fight through the ballot box. They were afraid that they wouldn't be able to contain the strike. They asked for no strike action but one day's pay for the Labour Government instead.

The ALP described the industry-wide stoppages which did take place as anarchy, and said that this type of action would only strengthen the hand of the Liberals. The truth, however, is that the Labour Party realised only too well that their policies of wage cutting — an absolutely integral part of their policies to fight inflation at the expense of the working class — couldn't have survived such action.

### ■ Was this response also true of 'left' Labour leaders like Jim Cairns?

The left wing of the Labour Party have almost been wiped out. They have been pushed off the Labour Party platform, almost without a fight. The only comments from Jim Cairns have been on the loans affair which brought about the present crisis — apart from that he has made no other statements.

### ■ What effect do you think the right-wing policies of the ALP will have on the outcome of the election?

I'm certain that they will lose the election as a result of it. What was necessary at the time was to keep up the enthusiasm of the workers. By giving no leadership, and suppressing the self-activity of the workers, the ALP has served to sow even more disillusionment amongst them.

**'If the British ruling class and the British army succeed in smashing the Irish workers and the national struggle in Ireland, then the British working class will be set back at least a hundred years...'**

In London last week BERNADETTE McALISKEY (DEVLIN) talked to *Red Weekly* about the recent split in the Irish Republican Socialist Party, and the tasks facing British socialists in relation to Ireland.

### Q. How do you see the present situation in Ireland?

A. The reality of the present situation is bleak. The working class is in retreat — no amount of self-delusion changes that fact. That is not to say that it can't be altered. But it certainly can't be altered if we continue to pretend that it's not happening.

In the South, the trade union bureaucracy has successfully negotiated another national wage agreement. There is absolutely no leadership for trade union militants, and there is a growing frustration and demoralisation among the more politically conscious and militant sections of the southern working class.

In the North there is now practically nothing standing between the Protestant working class and a definite trend towards an increasingly reactionary and at some levels classically fascist position. And you have growing confusion, fear and demoralisation in the Catholic working class because of the posturings of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the inability of the Provisionals to make any political gains out of their military campaign over the last seven years, and the prospect of a major Loyalist offensive against the Catholics.

That paints a fairly pessimistic picture — but on the other hand, you also have a situation where although the convinced revolutionary socialists may be few in number, there is a vast wealth of experience from the overall crisis situation and from the learning through past mistakes.

Given a concerted and determined effort on the part of socialists to work together in principled discussion towards the development of a revolutionary programme for Ireland, which would also enable them in the short term to initiate immediately at least the groundwork for revolutionary activity — for example with regards to building a united front against the Loyalist offensive — even a very small socialist organisation could have a considerable impact. It could begin to make major gains in restoring the political confidence of Catholic workers, in highlighting and focusing on the contradictions within the Protestant working class, and in challenging establishment policy in the South at this time.

In essence, we have exhausted every excuse available to the revolutionaries for not building the revolutionary party, the failure of the IRSP constitutes the dissipation of the last excuse, and there is nothing left to be done but to get on with the work of building that Irish revolutionary party.

### Q. What lessons have you personally drawn from the failure of the IRSP?

A. There are a number of reasons why it failed. I think the first mistake — which was essentially forced on us, and not of our own making —

was that the IRSP was prematurely declared as an organisation. That was forced on us by the murderous attack of the Officials, and you had the position where the IRSP was born without having a principled agreement on a basis from which a revolutionary programme could hopefully develop.

The problem was the fear by many sincere members of the IRSP of shedding the Republican tradition — of being a bad Republican. But people had to face the facts: Republicanism is not a socialist ideology, but developed independently and in isolation from working class organisations; they are not one and the same thing. When they realised that in order to move forward they were going to have to reappraise critically the whole of the Republican tradition and shed many long held beliefs — well, a lot of them just felt it was turning traitor on the dead. They just couldn't face up to the fact that there were

the national liberation and the revolution, but that the Republicans will do it and the working class will support them.

Republicanism is also a conspiracy — with a secret conspiratorial armed wing. While that may have had its place in the development of the national struggle — before the urbanisation of great sections of the Irish working class — you can no longer approach the question and attempt to build a mass organisation of workers on a conspiratorial basis; it is completely alien to the organising of the working class.

I think that is one of the major stumbling blocks which Republicans have got to get away from — the idea that we build the political organisation and then the leadership will fish in that organisation for people who are capable of carrying guns, so that even within the organisation our comrades will not know which of us is carrying the gun. This breeds dishonesty, deception and distrust inside the revolutionary organisation; there can't be a full discussion of issues, because you don't know from what basis other comrades are talking. It separates the role of armed struggle from the role of political struggle.

So you get a situation where the militarists tend to drift into an armed wing which grows apart, while the working class is nowhere, left completely behind. There is no attempt to accustom the working class generally to the use of arms.

You can see it in the North today — the Provisionals say, 'we are the defenders of the people'; the Officials say, 'no, we are'; but neither of them wants to move to a position where the people, armed on their own behalf, will defend the people. It has always got to be somebody who is going to do it for them.

### WELFARE APPEAL FROM BERNADETTE McALISKEY

The collapse of the IRSP in Derry has meant that 15 members of the party from that area who are now in jail have been left without financial support. The absence of an alternative organisation denies us the opportunity of securing ongoing financial support for their families.

At the moment, the eleven former executive members who left the IRSP are taking personal responsibility for the welfare of the prisoners' dependants, i.e. we are paying them out of our own pockets. The problem is temporary, but until it is resolved we urgently need help in providing financial aid to the families of the 15 Derry prisoners. Anyone who is prepared to help should forward their donations to: Jim McCorry, 139 Stewartstown Park, Andersonstown, Belfast.

any limitations in what those people had fought for, and so they moved back into an increasing isolated Republican position.

I accept it was my failure that despite the fact that factions were declared illegal, an unconstitutional faction did exist around the leadership. We should have said — to hell with the constitution, let's form a faction and get down to discussing the major issues, and if we have to pull out or are edged out, let it be on the basis of a clear political programme. What actually happened was that without any such discussion we were finally engineered out of the party anyway for reasons of structure and ideology.

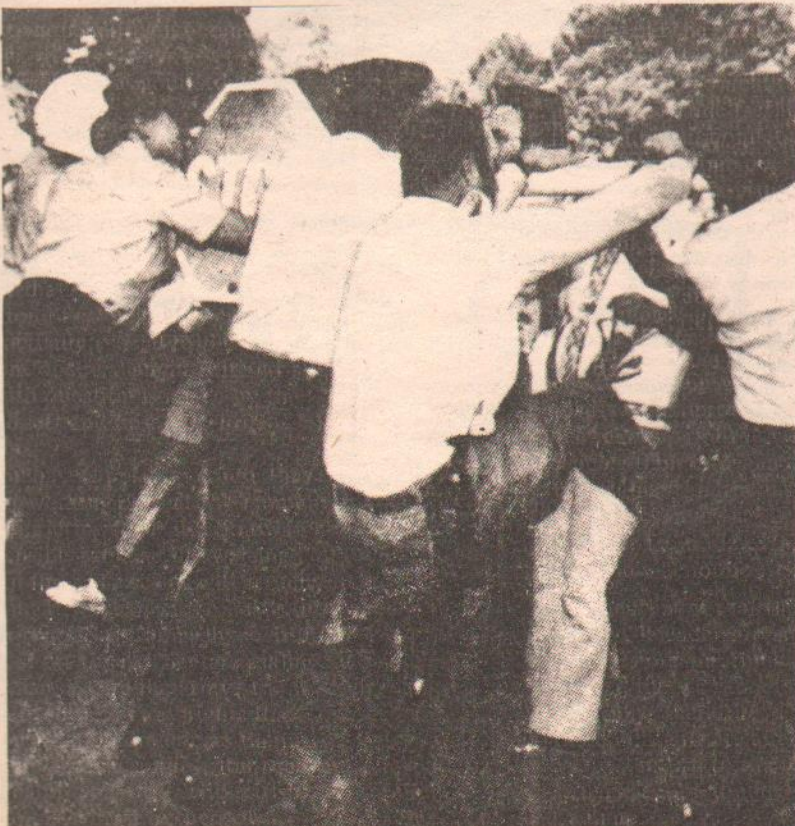
### Q. What do you see as the negative aspects of Republicanism?

A. Well, for one thing it's elitist — the Republicans have the idea — not that the working class will effect

### Q. How do you think socialists in this country can aid the Irish struggle?

A. Socialists in this country must realise that this is not just a general question of socialist consciousness. It is actually crucial to the development of socialism in Britain that the Irish question is raised by the British left and raised by British workers.

You have a position where the British working class at the moment are clamouring for legislation which is ostensibly to keep the warring Irish in their place, but will actually be brought to bear on the heads of the working class themselves within a very short time. They are asking the police, asking the army, asking the state to take away rights that they spent a hundred years fighting for, simply because they don't see that in actual fact the whole Irish question is central to their own development.



Australian police putting the boot into angry demonstrators outside the Governor.



Bernadette McAliskey addressing the successful rally organised by the Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee in London on 11 December. The task facing British socialists now is to build for a massive demonstration on Sunday 1 February to help ensure that there are no more Bloody Sundays.

British army succeed in smashing the Irish working class and smashing the national struggle in Ireland, then the British working class will be set back at least a hundred years as a result of the repressive experience gained in Ireland by

the ruling class and the mentality created among British workers over the Irish question. The British left must counter that by making the Irish situation central to their programme. They must face up to the question

that British imperialism is at the root of the problem, and that British workers are actively supporting it because they are unaware of the nature of it. It must be rammed home over and over again that every lesson learnt, every gain made

by the establishment in Northern Ireland will be used in Britain tomorrow.

*Q. There are those in Britain who say that the answer is to press for a Bill of Rights to be passed by the British Parliament. What do you think of this approach?*

A. I think there is no harm in a Bill of Rights — like there is no harm in a lot of things — but there is no good in it either. I am not saying I would be opposed to the kind of ideas that are incorporated in the Bill of Rights — I would love to see a situation where there is no religious discrimination in Northern Ireland. But even the most reactionary young Provo, who just knows that the Brits have got to be got out, knows that legislation on paper in the kind of democracy that we've got isn't worth the paper it is written on.

There is no point in offering the people in Northern Ireland a piece of legislation which says that you are all going to be treated humanly, and if you are not then you can go to the courts, when these are the very same courts that are putting us away for life at every available opportunity. They ask us to support and actually divert our energy into fighting for a Bill of Rights supposedly safeguarded by the very institutions which are strangling us at the moment.

The same applies to the demand for the withdrawal of troops to barracks. They would just fall about laughing on the Falls Road at such an idea, because the barracks — well that's the end of the street. So what's going to happen when the crunch comes? Are the soldiers really going to sit there twiddling their thumbs, when all they have to do is to open the barracks door and three minutes takes them back down the Falls Road?

These demands are all contortions of the mind so that elements within the trade union movement and the Communist Party can

appear to be both respectable and revolutionary at one and the same time. Within themselves they are contradictions. If you are going to withdraw the troops to barracks then why not be honest and say you don't want the troops withdrawn at all?

# BWNIC Acquittal victory for free speech on Ireland



Wendy Butlin, one of the BWNIC 14 speaking at the Conway Hall meeting.

unaware of the legal position in view of the vast armoury of weapons already in the hands of the British establishment to silence critics on Ireland — the PTA, the ban on Trafalgar Square, and so on. But we have a message for those who are trying to stop the left in this country from drawing attention to the repressive role of British imperialism. You can attack our meetings, you can try us in your courts, you can smear and bluster; but we will not be silent, for we regard such attacks as a sign of your weakness, not ours.

In particular, *Red Weekly* will continue to bring home to the working class of this country what British imperialism is doing in Ireland. In particular we will continue to demand: self-determination for the Irish, troops out now!

The prosecution spent 51 days trying to prove them guilty; the jury took only 90 minutes to find them innocent. That about sums up the extent of the ruling class defeat when the BWNIC 14 were acquitted last week on charges of conspiracy and incitement of soldiers to desert.

This victory for the working class movement was gained not just because of the absurdity of the prosecution's case, but because of the solidarity campaign waged within the labour and progressive movements. The right to leaflet soldiers — particularly those going to the North of Ireland — was defended in trade union branches, student organisations, and also by some Labour MPs. The publication in the left press of the leaflet which the prosecution declared illegal was a major act of solidarity, which displayed the determination of the labour movement as a whole to defend the right of free speech on Ireland.

Two weeks before the acquittal, the National Front had tried to break up a meeting on the Prevention of Terrorism Act in Manchester; they viciously assaulted some of those at the meeting, but were unable to stop it from going ahead. The attempt of the Labour Government to silence the BWNIC supporters was another example of such thuggery, this time dressed up in legal terms. And again this attempt to impose silence on any critics of British imperialism's role in Ireland has failed.

But hardly had the BWNIC defendants left the dock than the British establishment was launching a further attempt to stifle those who expose its role in Ireland. The packed meeting in Conway Hall addressed last week by Bernadette McAliskey was branded even before it began as 'provocative' by the *London Evening News*. A Tory MP was reported as commenting: 'I would like to know whether this meeting is legal.'

It is not surprising that the MP was



Last Thursday's meeting addressed by Bernadette McAliskey marked an important step for the Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee, which is organising the 'Troops Out' demonstration on 1 February. Not only did it draw together supporters of the campaign, but it attracted numerous people who were keen to help by taking sponsorship appeal forms and by taking bulk orders of the new 'Bulletin' produced by the campaign.

In the last week Middlesex Poly Students Union and the Magazine branch of the National Union of Journalists have joined the list of sponsors. The Poly students have followed this up by donating £50 and the NUJ branch £15.

This is the model that must be followed. The BSCC appeals to all readers of *Red Weekly* and IMG branches to write in now for new sponsorship appeals and for bulk orders for the 'Bulletin'. The latter is an attractively produced broadsheet designed for sale in the trade unions, Labour Party, student unions, women's groups, and so on. You can get yours at 5p a single copy (plus 7p p&p) from BSCC, c/o 1 North End Road, London W.14.

Q What is the nature of the repression in Chile today?

A Mass repression is not the main weapon. Mass raids are infrequent and irregular — they usually involve the popular quarters, and generally follow particular incidents such as the killing of Dagoberto Perez and the ambush of comrades Pascal and Gutierrez (all leaders of the MIR — Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

At the moment the Junta is concentrating on selective repression. Its aim is to prevent the political re-organisation of the left and of the revolutionaries, whose activity — even if it is still conducted among only small sections of the masses — is laying the basis for a solid movement of popular resistance. The isolation of the Junta also forces it to make the repression less dramatic and more easy to conceal — without making it any less sinister or bloody.

Q How far does this isolation extend?

A It is one of the most obvious aspects of the situation in Chile. The policy of the Junta, reflecting the interests of big capital, inevitably clashes with the interests of the mass of the population. To give you one example of how far it extends — they had to use threats against teachers and school students to get any turn out at all for the celebration of the second anniversary of the coup. The Junta is based on repression — nothing more.

Q So what is the situation inside the working class?

A Unfortunately the overall political framework has not changed dramatically over the last two years. The general dynamic of the workers' movement is still the one imposed by the defeat of September 1973: dispersal, demoralisation, and a general retreat.

However, some signs of a change have appeared here and there over the last few months among the most advanced sectors, taking the form of trade union struggles, spontaneous demonstrations, the struggle against the 'labour code' etc.

CONTAMINATION

The United States has had to return to Chile whole assignments of prawns, mushrooms and fruit valued at over a million dollars. The reason: contamination with excrement.

# First Stirrings of Chilean Resistance

For the first time since the coup of September 1973, there are growing signs of a new mood of resistance inside sections of the working class in Chile. This is the message from the interview below with a comrade of the Liga Comunista de Chile (sympathising organisation of the Fourth International), which also goes on to outline the tasks facing revolutionary militants inside Chile today.

The following consists of extracts only from a much longer interview which will be appearing in a forthcoming issue of *Inprecor*.

Q Can you be a bit more specific about the struggle against the 'labour code'?

A The trade unions which now exist are those accepted by the dictatorship. But that doesn't mean that they are all completely controlled by it. Certain unions are still headed by men who are in contact with the opposition, and who make use of the limited margin for manoeuvre they possess.

Thus for example several dozen trade union leaders openly rejected the attempt by the military to impose a new 'labour code' of a corporatist nature, and expressed their 'concern' at the declining standard of living of the people, as well as their 'unease at the lack of

any real guarantees for the expression of trade union rights.' On the question of the 'labour code' the Junta has had to retreat, deferring its adoption until there has been further discussion.

Q What are the central political positions of the Liga Comunista?

A One of the reasons for the defeat suffered by the Chilean working class was undoubtedly the absence of a revolutionary party rooted in the masses. Today we have to struggle for its construction, and that is our strategic aim. In this framework the struggle against the fascist dictatorship has for us a clearly anti-capitalist character. For us the struggle

against the dictatorship must also mean the struggle for a workers' and peoples' government.

When we talk about anti-fascist unity, that must have a clearly defined class character. It must mean the unity of the exploited against that of the exploiters. Therefore the struggle against the dictator-

FIGHTING LAY-OFFS

Various trade unions are fighting the threat of redundancies. Bata shoe-workers denounced a plan to lay off 35 per cent of the workforce, forcing the bosses to issue a statement that the workforce would not be reduced. A joint assembly of workers in the plastics industry, comprising 200 shop stewards, demanded that the Ministry of Labour halt any reductions in the industry's workforce.

ship must be openly waged under the leadership of the working class and its organisations. We put forward a policy of the anti-fascist united front based on this general orientation.

Furthermore, we think it is necessary to establish in Chile a strategic alliance between the different revolutionary forces. This will lay the basis for regrouping those forces which are essential in order to put this conception of the anti-fascist struggle into practice.

Q How are you putting this general orientation into practice?

A Our main activity at the moment is one of agitation and propaganda. Every month we publish two journals: Resistencia obrera y popular, which is of an agitational nature, and Combate, which is our central organ. These two publications act for us as 'collective organisers'. It is around them that we have developed the activity of the organisation in different fields of work. Resistencia is the main instrument for our work in the working class.

Q How is your press distributed?

A The journals are distributed mainly on the basis of individual contacts. They are sold or given directly to a large number of comrades with whom the militants of the organisation — usually on an individual basis — have regular discussions.

Often these sympathisers or regular readers of our press will become distributors. Individually they will push copies wherever they have an opportunity.

The regularity with which we have brought out these journals over the last 18 months, the regular contact



important fruit. In this way we have built up a real network of regular readers, contacts, distributors of our press. They constitute an important periphery if you take into account our organisational limitations and above all the political situation in which we're working.

Q Is the work of the LC militants basically limited to distribution of your press?

A Not at all. The Distribution of our press is certainly the central task for each militant of our organisation. But besides this task, besides internal tasks (notably education), the comrades are nearly all involved in mass work. Of course, 'mass work' has a rather different meaning in Chile than elsewhere. For us it means political and organisational work in the resistance committees or anti-fascist committees, which are very limited structures.

On a wider level — and one which is also more varied politically — our comrades are involved in local structures aiming, for instance, to help the unemployed, to organise soup kitchens in working class neighbourhoods and so on.

When it is possible — and when it has any meaning, given the present state of the trade unions in Chile — they take part in union activity.

Finally, where possible they push forward partial and local struggles around immediate demands which are capable of involving the largest possible number of workers.

Q Could you describe some struggles in which the organisation has taken part?

Unfortunately I cannot give you



## Trade La

A large proportion of British trade with Chile is connected with armaments. Of the £130 million owed Britain, almost half is for armaments. Those involved with the arms trade include: Babcock & Wilcox, who are building boilers for two US-built cruisers; Anthony Brown, who is doing arms sales to Chile and providing the Chileans with finance to build and refit a number of British shipyards; Hawkers, up to 39 Hawker aircraft, of which the last seven or eight have been delivered, or have been planned to be delivered.





**PAPER WORKS**

pro-Junta magazine *Ercilla* carried out a fire in July at a paper and card works owned by the big Ed-Alessandri firm. The fire was clearly sabotage, coinciding with a dispute over reduction of productivity ordered by the bosses. According to *Ercilla*, the blaze destroyed tons of paper intended for the production of cardboard boxes, means of several million escudos.

tailed reply for obvious reasecurity. But I can give you ample without being too spec-

important shipyard was on the point of closing, and regular wages hadn't been paid for several months. One of our militants succeeded in mobilising the whole of the workforce, and they gathered outside the firm's offices to demand their money. A motion to this effect was sent to the tribunal of conflicts.

passed, and as work didn't resume the bosses eventually agreed to pay up the arrears. That doesn't mean very much. But for the workers' hard, this little victory had a great importance. It restored their confidence in the possibility of struggle. One example of our comrades'

**VE SABOTAGE**

At the mine of Paipote, 10 workers were detained for what the newspaper *El Mercurio* called 'passive sabotage'. The workers had started to work extraordinarily slowly in defiance of the military 'interdiction'. The local union leaders were subsequently banished to the northern city of Hualde.

What are the medium term perspectives of the LC?

We are very aware of our own limitations and our weaknesses, faced with the enormity of the tasks facing Chilean revolutionaries and the extraordinary difficulties confronting them. But we believe that the possibilities of developing our work in Chile are real and important, even though we have no illusions about the extent of the defeat suffered by the Chilean working class.

In the past two years we have managed to hold two congresses, which have permitted us to unify the organisation politically. Our numbers have multiplied sixfold. We have developed from a tiny nucleus of militants to become a small but solid political organisation — an organisation in the process of carving out a real political presence in important sections of the working class.

The degree of conscious political commitment and courage which it requires to be a member of a revolutionary organisation in Chile is one indication of the quality of the militants who are engaged in building our organisation.

At the moment we are doing everything possible to strengthen our links with other political organisations (notably the MIR and the co-ordination of the Socialist Party inside Chile). And we hope that in the medium term this will help to build not just the LC but the whole resistance movement.

The examples of resistance boxed above are taken from *Chile: News of the Resistance*, the exterior bulletin of the MIR — available price 37p (inc. postage) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

# RESISTENCIA

## OBREERA y POPULAR



CONSTRUIR EL  
PARTIDO REVOLUCIONARIO  
AL CALOR DE LA  
LUCHA ANTIFASCISTA

## Labour won't stop

le is con- which Chile ts. Firms & Wilcox, bs, finan- lean navy vessels in er Hunter been de- in the last for ships

*Williams and Riveros; Plessey, AWSI and Target Indica- tion radar for Williams and Riveros; Rolls-Royce, East Kilbride, aero-engines for Hawker Hunters; Scott's Shipbuilding and Engineering, Greenock, building two "Oberon" class submarines for the Chilean Navy; Short Bros & Harland, Belfast, Seacast missiles fitted on Williams and Riveros and new frigates Condell and Lynch; Swan Hunters, Tyneside, extensive refits of Wil- liams and Riveros; Weirs, Cathcart, pumps, possibly for frigates or submarines; Yarrow & Co, Scotstoun, build- ing two "Leander" class submarines for Chilean Navy.*

# SPAIN - THE SAME

# OLD FACES

King Juan Carlos has just finished putting together his new Government, and there are few surprises in it for any- one. Without exception every member of the Government is part of the same Francoist clique that has been ruling the country in a brutal manner for the past forty years. At the head of the Government stands Prime Minister Arias Navarro, the man whom Franco chose to run things after his favour- ite son, Admiral Carrero Blanco, was suddenly elevated by a Basque nationalist bomb.

But this apparent stability of the dictatorship papers over a bitter factional struggle. Arias Navarro does not remain as Prime Minister because of his popularity — on the contrary, his connection with Franco and his involvement in the brutal murder of five anti-fascist militants earlier this year make him something of an embarrassment to the King and his supporters, who are trying to give a phony image of 'democratisation' to their policies. Arias Navarro clings to his position for one simple reason — the different factions fighting it out inside the dictatorship cannot agree on any- one to replace him.

## Francoists to core

On one side there is the King and his backers: such people as Fraga Iribarne (previously Spanish ambassador to Britain), the new Minister of the Interior, and the Count of Motrico, now Minister of Foreign Affairs.

These men are Francoists to the core. Fraga Iribarne was Franco's Minister of Information for seven years, and drafted the press law under which Spanish newspapers are today regularly fined and suppressed for the least criticism of the regime. The Count of Motrico was a Franco supporter during the civil war, and was made mayor of the Basque city of Bilbao after the Franco forces captured it in 1937. He also served as Franco's ambassador to Argentina, where he negoti- ated the important trade deals that kept the dictatorship afloat in the difficult years after the war, before becoming Spanish ambassador to the US at the height of the Cold War.

However these veteran reactionaries are also closely tied to the most important circles of the Spanish capitalist class. They share the view that the existing policy of repression cannot work indefinitely, and should be replaced by a moderate programme of reforms designed to make Spain 'ac- ceptable' in the rest of Europe. This would allow the ruling classes of 'democratic' Europe to bring Spain into the EEC and throw their collective weight behind the Spanish regime.

From the history of these men it is obvious just what they mean by 'democracy' — a few changes that would still leave intact the Francoist engine of repression that has kept the Spanish working class down for forty years.

## Engine of repression

And this is why even their highly moderate programme of reforms comes unstuck: it is based on the maintenance of this engine of repression, while the engine drivers do not share the desire for 'reform'. These latter forces constitute the backbone of the 'die-hard' right-wing faction in the regime — the powerful political and para-military police, the top officials of the State-run trade unions (the biggest enemy of the Spanish working class after the police), and other functionaries of the national and local machinery of the dictatorship. These make up very powerful opposition to the so-called 'liberals' in the regime, controlling as they do the Francoist 'National Movement' and the armed re- pressive machinery of the dictatorship. From these positions they can not only put up a bitter fight inside the regime to slow down efforts at change, but they can also effectively sabotage any moves that are made without their agreement.

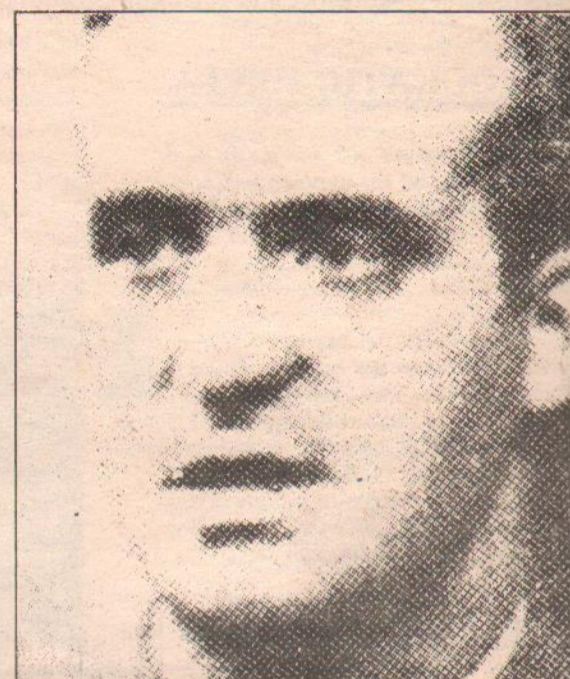
This is, in fact, what they have been doing over the past few weeks. No sooner had Juan Carlos tried to 'prove' his liberal intentions by letting a token number of prominent political prisoners out of jail (while keeping the vast major- ity still inside, of course) than the police rearrested two of the most prominent and unleashed a brutal wave of attacks on demonstrators demanding a real amnesty for all polit- ical prisoners.

One of those rearrested, the Communist workers' leader Marcelino Camacho, has since been released; but the King has had to agree to the continued imprisonment of the other — worker-priest Padre Paco Garcia. At the same time the police — aided by 'unofficial' fascist thugs — have been brutally cracking down on strikers and demonstrators fighting for democratic rights.

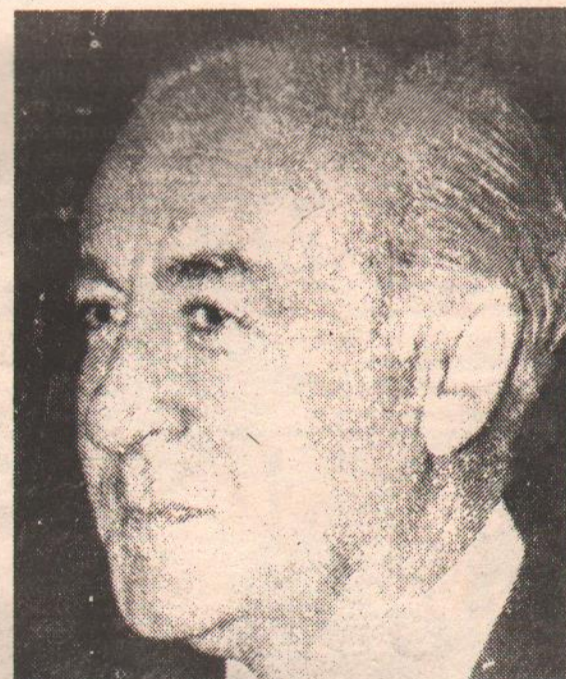
## Prevent reforms

As long as the power of the Francoist machinery of re- pression remains in existence, the power of the right wing will be sufficient to prevent even the mildest of reforms. This machinery cannot be 'tamed' by Juan Carlos's gang of Francoist politicians. Nor will it be fought by the 'liberal' capitalists and the middle class opposition groups with which the Communist Party and Socialist Party are so busy flirting. Only one power in Spain today can break the back of this machine — the organised might of the Spanish working class.

That is why the fight for democratic rights in Spain to- day can only be carried out by fighting for unity of the working class in an all-out fight to destroy every vestige of the Francoist order.



JUAN CARLOS—put up by Franco to rule Spain



COUNT OF MOTRICO—Franco's ambassador



ARIAS NAVARRO—Franco's Premier continues

# Reformists jostle for crumbs

One of the most notable features of the present situation in Spain is the refusal of the reformist parties to launch an all-out struggle against the dictatorship. Instead they are up to their necks in class-collaborationist schemes of 'national reconciliation'. These schemes presently find their expression in two cross-class alliances: the Democratic Junta, headed by the Communist Party; and the Platform of Democratic Convergence, headed by the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE). Below we look at how these alliances came into being, and their composition and programmes.

## DEMOCRATIC JUNTA

The Democratic Junta was set up as an attempt to rally all the opposition forces around the Communist Party during Franco's first major illness in July 1974. But Franco recovered, and the Junta failed to attract any dominant sections of the bourgeoisie into its fold.

In late 1974 the CP was very active in setting up branches of the Junta in all the major centres, and there was even talk of a national strike in October. But nothing came of it; and when the Basque Workers Commissions called a general strike for 11 December, the CP went so far as to distribute leaflets asking workers not to support it (with little response — 250,000 workers came out).

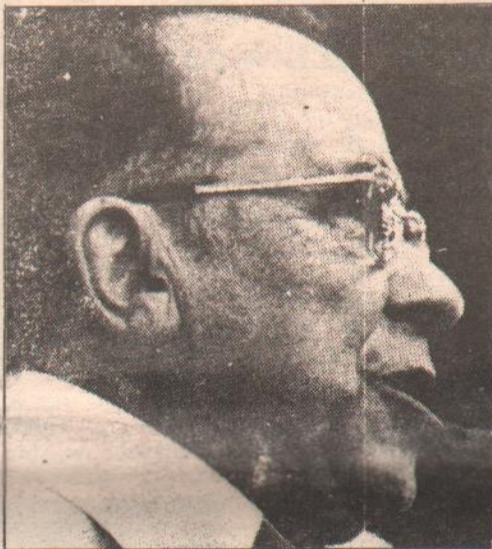
### ● Bloody clashes ●

This year has seen some of the most massive struggles since the Civil War. There have been huge strikes, demonstrations, bloody clashes with the police, mass arrests, and then the executions of five militants in September. In all this time the Democratic Junta has done nothing to mobilise action around concrete slogans for the overthrow of the dictatorship. It has merely contented itself with pious declarations, because these are the only basis for the CP's alliance with the other forces in the Junta.

The CP's allies in the Junta are, in fact, relatively few in number. One of the most significant is Rafael Calvo Serrer, a bourgeois opportunist who in his time has been a clerical-fascist, a Falangist, a member of Opus Dei (right-wing Catholic technocrats), a Francoist monarchist, and now claims to

be a liberal democrat after being exiled to Paris in 1971. His present prominence is entirely due to the CP, which has promoted him for all its worth as a sign of its good intentions towards the bourgeoisie as a whole.

Then there is the Popular Socialist Party, a group of university professors and lawyers which peddles a kind of legalist non-violent



SANTIAGO CARRILLO

socialist humanism. Its leader, Enrique Tierno Galvan, told *Le Monde* in 1969: 'The socialist parties, and the left in general, should understand that it is contrary to their interests to put forward a programme which incites citizens to struggle for power. What they should do is struggle so that the administration reflects more and more the interests of the community'.

Also now in the Democratic Junta is the Spanish Labour Party (PTE), a group which split from the CP in 1967 on a pro-Chinese



More than 100 people marched to the Foreign Office last Saturday to demand the unconditional release of Desmond Trotter, the young Dominican militant framed and sentenced to death a year ago for his opposition to the repressive regime headed by Patrick John.

From reliable reports it seems that Desmond's sentence will probably be commuted to life imprisonment, reflecting the pressure of the defence campaigns in the Caribbean and in France, Britain and Canada. But the Dominican Government must not be allowed to get off the hook in this way. Desmond was framed for a crime he did not commit, and made a scapegoat in a wave of repression which still continues today.

An urgent appeal has been issued by the Free Desmond Trotter Campaign in the Antilles islands in the Caribbean to step up the campaign by informing public opinion of the case and campaigning for solidarity amongst workers and youth, 'to obtain the unconditional release of Desmond Trotter'.



PSOE supporters demonstrate for release of political prisoners in Madrid

basis but has now settled down as a more militant version of the CP without any real programmatic differences. It originally denounced the Junta as 'a platform for the salvation of the oligarchy', but has now decided that it provides a 'democratic alternative to fascism'. The PTE has a certain working class base, and was prominent in the construction workers' strikes in Madrid last week.

The programme of the Junta, as one might expect, is built around the theme of 'national reconciliation'. One of its declarations talks about 'the disappearance of the historical, ideological, economic and strategic factors on which Franco's exceptional power has been based, and the modern convergence of the moral and material aspirations of the working class, the big bourgeoisie, the professionals and the intellectuals'.

Suddenly, almost overnight, the historic, economic and ideological factors which hurled one class against another in 1936 (at the cost of one million dead) have miraculously disappeared. In a country with the highest strike rate in Europe, both workers and capitalists now apparently have the same moral and economic aspirations!

### ● Peaceful points ●

We have dealt with the 12 points of the Junta's programme at some length in a previous issue (*Red Weekly*, 6 November). Here it is merely worth noting its 'amnesty' for all the reactionaries and fascists; its attempts to play down the self-organisation of the working class through the Workers Commissions, by counterposing working class control of the vertical trade unions (CNS) inherited from Franco; its emphasis on peaceful action, relying on the 'political neutrality of the armed forces'; its failure to assert the right to self-determination of the national minorities in the Basque country, Catalonia, and Galicia; and its stress on the need for 'integration into the Common Market' (and also retention of the American bases).

Just as striking, however, is the total omission of any demands relating to the living standards of the working class. But then, as CP general secretary Santiago Carrillo recently declared: 'We believe that it is essential to keep Spain's economic apparatus as it is for the time being. A country which emerges from fascism needs a bourgeois-type democracy' (*Morning Star*, 1 December). The message of the Democratic Junta is clear: the capitalist exploitation of the working class can go right ahead as long as the CP gets a piece of the action alongside the bourgeoisie in government.

## PLATFORM OF DEMOCRATIC CONVERGENCE

The Platform of Democratic Convergence was set up in July 1975 on the initiative of the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE).

The Platform is basically a manoeuvre to outflank the CP in winning an alliance with important sections of the bourgeoisie. The PSOE knows very well that such forces find the prospect of an alliance with social democracy infinitely preferable to one with even such a 'democratic' and 'liberal' CP as that headed by Santiago Carrillo. After all, who has been the recent saviour of capitalism in Portugal but Mario Soares, aided by his international social democratic colleagues Brandt, Mitterrand and Wilson.

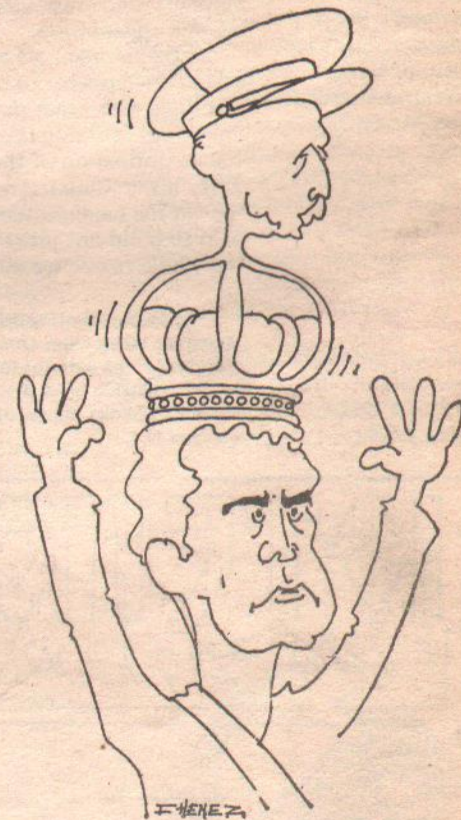
The PSOE has had some success with this line, attracting the following bourgeois groupings: the Social Democratic Union of Spain (USDE), founded by disillusioned Falangist

intellectuals; the Christian Democratic Left, headed by ex-Falangist Ruiz Gimenez; the Christian Social Democracy, led by Gil Robles (former leader of the clerical-fascist party CEDA, which paved the way for Franco); the bitterly anti-communist Basque Nationalist Party (PNV), which represents very little since the rise of the ETA; and the Carlists, who favour a different branch of the monarchy and were part of the Junta until the Platform offered itself as a preferable alternative.

### ● Judicious ●

But through a judicious use of socialist phrase-mongering, the Platform has also attracted a couple of important revolutionary groups who see it as a 'left' alternative to the CP — although one of these groups, the Revolutionary Workers Organisation (ORT), has since announced its departure. The other, however, the Communist Movement of Spain (MCE), is a Maoist splinter from ETA which has grown to be the largest grouping on the revolutionary left, and has played an important role in the strikes and mobilisations in the Basque country.

The programme of the Platform is nevertheless very similar to that of the Junta, despite the overlay of socialist rhetoric. It too calls for a democratic regime, although it



nods in the direction of the working class by calling for, 'through popular consent, the adoption of urgent measures which will change the socio-economic and cultural structures, and obtain a better standard of living for the people'. But what measures? Why doesn't it call for concrete measures around defence of wages and jobs — such as a sliding scale of wages, nationalisation, workers control, etc?

The answer, of course, is that the Platform — just like the Junta — is a means to head off the struggles of the working class rather than lead them towards the overthrow of the dictatorship and the capitalist system in which it is rooted. The working class has no interest in such schemes; rather, it will accomplish these tasks through the development of its own organisations, which have so far reached their highest point in the co-ordination of the Basque Workers Commissions.

'At the moment the commando regiment isn't satisfied. It thinks that there is still a lot to be done, and it is determined continue to the end.'

These words of commando chief Jaime Neves on 1 December show that the most fascist-inclined sections of the military hierarchy in Portugal are hoping to complete the process set off by the events of 25-26 November. They would like to move on from the purges in the paratroopers, the military police and the light artillery regiment (RALIS) to sort out the rest of the military units - dealing on the way with the factories of the Lisbon industrial belt, whose militancy they don't really appreciate.

But on the same day, Major Melo Antunes appeared on television to reaffirm his 'attachment' to socialism. 'In liberty', of course - that's the slogan of the moment. With order and discipline, above all. Nevertheless, Antunes went on to stress his conviction that the Revolutionary Council should set its face against any 'right-wing lurch'.



Jaime Neves and Melo Antunes - 'divided we rule - for the moment'.

### COALITION

Melo Antunes has gone to a lot of trouble to establish a well ordered bourgeois democracy - with its parliament to promulgate laws, its army to defend them, and its police to implement them. But because of the working class radicalisation which has taken place over the last 18 months, he is convinced that this can only be undertaken with a reformist coalition of the Communist and Socialist parties to throw the workers off the scent.

While Jaime Neves aspires to be a Pinochet, Melo Antunes is a sort of Portuguese Michael Foot in uniform - capable of scolding Soares/Jenkins for his blindness towards the advance of the right wing, which will end up by occupying the outposts of political power at the Socialists' expense. Antunes isn't a fascist - he is a clever bourgeois politician who knows that in a pre-revolutionary period the 'socialist' label is necessary to sweeten the pill for the workers; it may even be necessary to use the organisations of the working class to ward off the fascist threat coming from sections of the military hierarchy and big business.

Are Antunes and Neves like the plague and cholera - equally dangerous? Obviously no. Other things being equal, it is clearly important for the workers to know whether their rights to expression and organisation are to be maintained (despite attempts to defuse their explosive potential), or whether an effort will be made to liquidate them altogether, by force if necessary.

### 'FASCIST COUP'

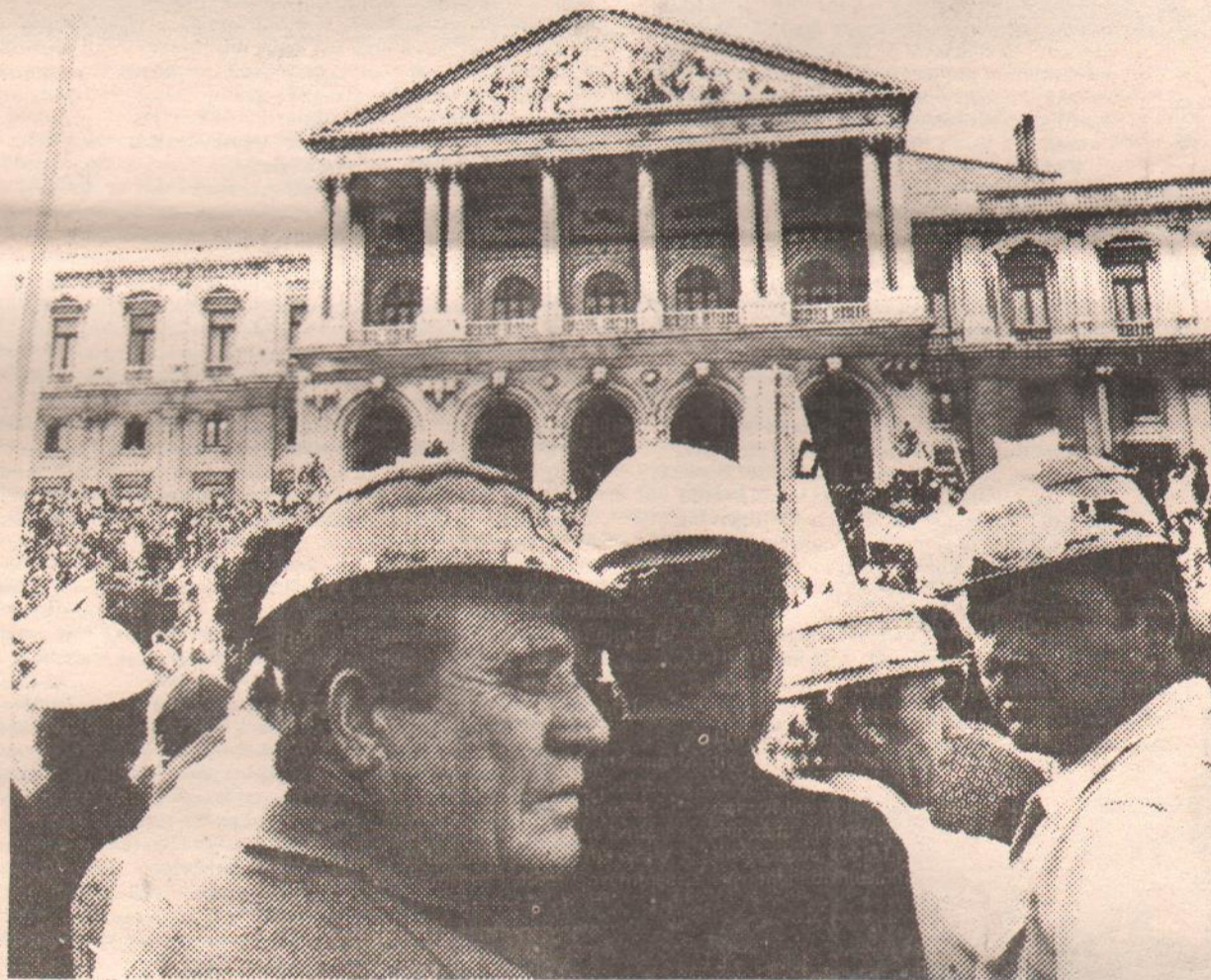
In other words, it is vital to understand the nature of the present regime in order to understand the means to combat it. One does not use the same methods to fight the republican bonnet of bourgeois democracy as one does against the black shirts of fascism.

Some revolutionary organisations, like the Movement of the Socialist Left (MES) and the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP), are talking about a 'fascist coup' on 25-26 November. They equate the failure of the military revolt with a profound decline in the militancy of the working class. Placing their hopes in a last-minute involvement in 'the insurrection' of the Communist Party, under pressure from the extreme left, they now denounce its betrayal.

Their line is that the treachery of the CP leadership and the working class organisations it dominates opened the way to a fascist coup. Logically, therefore, a number of these militants are already talking about a return to the forms of struggle adopted under Salazar and Caetano.

To this end they have establish-

# PORTUGAL The Alternatives



Huge mobilisation of 16 November showed potential power of Portuguese working class.

ed a 'Commando of Revolutionary Anti-Fascist Unity' (CURAF), whose first declaration (dated 27 November) concludes: 'The CURAF will accomplish its mission by providing guidelines for the soldiers and workers, co-ordinating the action of the patriotic (sic) forces at a national level. Socialism or death! Victory is certain!'

Certainly the silence of the CP leadership and the mass organisa-

tions it controls was criminal. Without launching into a premature test of strength, the CP was nevertheless in a position to mobilise the workers against the imposition of the state of siege in Lisbon. It could and should have called on the workers to resist the repression (led by 500 commandos at most) being directed against the 'red' regiments of the capital.

But it is not because of the refus-

al of the CP leadership to move that the working class has undergone a defeat. And the forces of the working class - its mobilising potential seen in the huge demonstration of 16 November, its independent organisations, its previous gains - are for the moment intact. To smash them now would require a real confrontation in which the right wing couldn't be sure of the outcome.

### DIFFERENCES

In this context, the differences between the hardliners (Jaime Neves) and the advocates of a more limited and selective repression (Melo Antunes) have a certain relevance. What they express is the present inability of the Portuguese bourgeoisie to inflict a thorough and lasting defeat on the mass of the working class - bar a temporary demoralisation of part of the vanguard - without the forcible destruction of its ability to struggle.

In no way, however, does this mean falling in with the CP's pres-

ent objective of building a 'progressive' alliance with the Antunes wing. A Government based on these forces would still be a Government of 'order', which wouldn't hesitate - with the agreement of the CP - to set itself against the workers' struggles. It would also be incapable of halting the economic and political sabotage by the right wing, because that would mean arming the workers - if only with the desire to arm themselves.

In other words, such a Government would manage the affairs of the bourgeoisie rather badly, but still at the expense of the working class.

### ONE SOLUTION

There is only one realistic and viable solution for the working class to the crisis of power. That is the extension, unification and centralisation of the independent organisations which the workers have created for themselves in the factories, the neighbourhoods, the agricultural estates and the barracks. Isn't this a bit utopian after what has happened in Lisbon? Not really.

It's true that certain officers have been arrested and replaced in some of the barracks, but you can't change the whole body of soldiers from one day to the next. You can't even do it with the militia officers and NCOs. The workers commissions and the trade unions haven't been dismantled. The village councils still exist, and the agricultural workers commissions haven't been affected.

### SELF-DEFENCE

The struggle will certainly be more difficult in the army; but this emphasises more than ever the need

for self-defence organised by the soldiers and workers commissions against the dangerous plans of fascists like Jaime Neves. The press and radio will be less available to the workers' organisations; but the imposition of new editors and administrative boards won't alter the existence of the printing workers, whose struggle for workers control over the means of information is already something of a tradition.

The intervention of revolutionary militants will be vital in realising all these possibilities. Only the drawing up of a balance sheet, the rectification of various errors, and the recomposition of the revolutionary left - on the basis of a united front policy aimed at the CP and SP workers - can offer a way out of the dead-end to which both the reformist and ultra-left orientations have led.

### BBC REJECTS

### JOURNALISTS'

### APPEAL

The two Portuguese journalists sacked from the Portuguese section of the BBC's External Services, Jorge Ribeiro and Antonio Cartaxo, have had their appeals against dismissal turned down. The case, which followed accusations from Tory MP Winston Churchill of 'communist propaganda' from the section, is a blatant example of political victimisation.

Since the April 1974 overthrow of the Caetano dictatorship the BBC has acted as the mouthpiece of Portuguese and international opponents of the revolution - giving air-time to arch-reactionaries like Spínola and Sanches Osorio involved in the abortive March coup; and quoting from the reactionary British press ad nauseam, whilst ignoring or vetoing the left press.

In this context it isn't difficult to see why, for example, a remark by Ribeiro about the *Daily Telegraph* being 'very conservative' was deemed to be so subversive.

Despite the failure of the appeals the case is continuing. Ribeiro and Cartaxo are now taking the case to an industrial tribunal, and the Media Support Group of the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class is attempting to gain the largest possible support for the two throughout the labour movement. All those wishing to help should contact the Group c/o PWCC, 12 Little Newport Street, London W.C.2.



This special issue of *Luta Proletária*, brought out by the Portuguese Trotskyists of the LCI on 26 November, was the only paper to appear that day in Lisbon. In the coming weeks, *Luta Proletária* can be a crucial weapon in the struggle to recompose the revolutionary left following the recent events. But financial support is urgently required to ensure its regular publication. Please rush donations to: Red Weekly

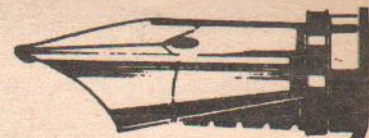
## ORGANIZAR A MOBILIZAÇÃO GERAL



(Iberia) 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.



# PORTUGAL FORUM



I was astounded to read your coverage on Portugal last week (4 December). For it is a very long time indeed since I have read in a supposedly Trotskyist publication (apart, of course, from the Workers Press) such falsification of events.

You write of the so-called paratroops rebellion:— 'What occurred in Lisbon was not a heroic uprising but an insane adventure ..... There is not the slightest doubt where the responsibility for the act lies ..... The act ... was prepared and carried through as a result of the line of petty bourgeois left officers in the army and ultra-left organisations such as the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat and the Movement of the Socialist Left.'

You repeat the claim a few lines later:— 'Now these organisations have had their insurrection.....' and two pages later:— 'What occurred in Lisbon was an insane adventure carried through by ultra-left political groups and left-wing officers.....' and yet again:— 'The PRP with its "immediate insurrection" line was responsible more than any other organisation for imposing this bitter defeat on the Portuguese working class.'

The one thing you do not do, however, is provide any evidence to back up your claims that the PRP and the MES were behind the paratroops insurrection, whether directly or through sections of officers who were close to them. You cannot provide such evidence. Because the claim is false from beginning to end. It is, to use simple English, a blatant lie.

Far from being the work of the PRP or the MES, the decision of the paratroops to seize various air-force installations and the radio and TV stations was taken under the influence of sergeants and officers belonging to the CP and to the CP-influenced Fifth Division.

The revolutionaries were taken quite by surprise by the turn of events. Far from planning either a coup or still less an insurrection, the PRP were putting a lot of effort into an internal party meeting to discuss the effectiveness of a propaganda campaign in the factories. As late as mid-day on 25 November (several hours after the paratroops had moved) CP-influenced officers visited the PRP offices to beg them to give support to the paratroops.

The situation with the MES seems to have been the same. A leader of the MES told *Revolution* the next day: 'The rebellion of the Tancos paratroops was a complete surprise for revolutionaries. Not only had these units only passed over to the left very recently, but they were influenced politically by the CP' (*Revolution*, 27 November 1975—a week before *Red Weekly* published its 'account').

The revolutionary groups—and for that matter the 'left-wing' officers of Copcon—were faced with

## 'falsification from beginning to end'

CHRIS HARMAN (editor of *Socialist Worker*) replies to 'An Open Letter to the International Socialists on Portugal' (*Red Weekly* 128)

a fait accompli. All the left groups (except for the right-wing Maoists of the MRPP, etc.) decided they had no choice but to support the paratroops movement. Not only the MES and the PRP issued statements to that effect, but so did the LCL. 'This is the moment', its statement of 25 November said, 'when the revolution and the counter-revolution face one another in a fight without truce in the factories in the localities, in the barracks' (text in *A Capital*, 25 November).

*Republica* could conclude quite unequivocally five days later: 'One thing is certain. This was not a "coup" or an "insurrection" of the FUR.'

Even the present Portuguese Government, which is trying to integrate the CP leaders so as to control the masses, has had to admit that 'elements of the Communist Party participated in the rebellion.' Yet the so-called Trotskyist *Red Weekly* does not mention the role of the CP at all.

Once the sections of the CP who had started the rebellion had managed to force the extreme left to choose sides, the CP did a rapid about-turn, sacrificed some of its leading officers, and did a deal with Costa Gomes. On 25 November, for instance, the CP-controlled Metal Workers Union issued a call for strike action. On the 26th the CP forgot this and did its utmost to stop workers moving to support the paratroops. When workers moved despite this (as in Setubal) the CP officers prevented soldiers from arming the workers.

It was because of such behaviour that the first issue of *Republica* after the 25th had the headline: 'The soldiers were betrayed'.

One would have thought that this conclusion would be at the forefront of any revolutionary appraisal of the events of 25 November, whatever tactical or strategic conclusions you might like to draw as well as to the response of the Portuguese revolutionaries. But it does not figure once in the *Red Weekly* account—an account which could have appeared in virtually any Stalinist paper.

Compared with this gross distortion of fact, the other points you make fade into insignificance. But it is necessary to deal with them briefly.

You claim that the PRP equates the Socialist Party with fascism, because it says that the leaders of the Socialist Party and the PPD are preparing the ground for fascism. Yet Trotsky was always quite clear that social democracy does open the door for fascism, even though the two phenomena are not the same:

'Social democracy has prepared all the conditions necessary for the triumph of fascism .... It is absolutely correct to place on the social democrats the responsibility for the impending danger of fascist savagery' (*Fascism, Stalinism and the United Front*, p13).

'Social democracy by its whole policy prepared the blossoming of fascism' (*ibid*, p9).

Of course the fascists, once mobilised, attack reformist as well as revolutionary organisations. This provides the basis for united, defensive action between revolutionaries and reformists.

This point may be reached at some point in the future as regards the Socialist Party in Portugal. But that has not been the case in the immediate past. Quite the opposite. The Socialist Party has been openly inciting rightist elements to attack the gains of the workers movement. It has called demonstrations of support for Jaime Neves, under the slogan, 'Jaime amigo, o Povo sao contigo' (Jaime, our friend, the people are with you); it demonstrated on the streets of Lisbon with the openly Capitalist parties after the first military occupation of the radio stations on 29 September under the slogan 'More occupations' (ie more attacks on the left in the media).

By providing the extreme right with an opportunity to organise, and by calling on troops under right-wing influence to attack the left in the armed



forces and the media, the Socialist Party leaders were 'preparing the conditions for the triumph of fascism'. While the SP leaders are working with the right against the left, the basis for a united front simply does not exist, even if it will be created in the future, when the right attacks the SP as well.

There is little space here to go into the discussion as to whether the Socialist Party is a classical reformist party. Certainly its organised base within the working class (as opposed to its passive, electoral support) is very weak. In most of the union elections in the Lisbon area it has depended on Maoist cadres of the MRPP to organise support for it, its own working class cadre being so weak. But even if it were a classical reformist party, it could be absolutely correct to warn its members that its leaders were opening the door to fascism. To pretend otherwise is to cover up for Social Democracy as well as Stalinism.

One final point. I am quoted in your paper as writing in *IS Journal*: 'While the CP retains some (sic) influence in the workers movement .... with SUV the revolutionary left has emerged as a major contender in the national struggle for power.'

So enamoured are you with the quotation that you repeat it twice, once in small type, once in large type. Apparently it proves that I regard the CP as a negligible force.

But the first half of the quotation is a complete falsification. In the original the sentence immediately preceding the reference to the SUV makes it quite clear that only 'some of the base' of the CP has been 'undercut' by the revolutionaries.

The point is reiterated several times: 'As the crisis increases that could mean increased support among the less politicised and militant workers for the CP'; 'the CP's influence in the class is being undercut—but not as fast as the revolutionary left would like'; etc.

The phrase you quote actually comes 46 lines after the phrase about SUV with which you couple it—and has the opposite meaning to that you impute to it. Far from under-estimating the hold of the CP it warns the revolutionary left to be careful because, even if the hold of the CP diminishes, 'while the CP retain some influence in the workers movement' they can undermine 'some of the militancy in the military units.'

Can anyone doubt that your treatment of the events of 25 November was distorted and dishonest from beginning to end? Readers of *Red Weekly* who want an honest appraisal of events in Portugal (including fraternal criticism of the PRP, the MES, and other revolutionary organisations) would do better to read *Socialist Worker*, *International Socialism*, the various pamphlets of IS in English; and *Portugal na Encruzilhada*, *O Caminho A Frente*, *Licoes do 25 de Novembro*, and the articles from *Socialist Worker* printed in *O Seculo*, *Republica* and *O Setubalense*.

In these you will see what real internationalism means: fraternal solidarity and support for those attempting to build a revolutionary workers' movement on the one hand; clear criticism of those of their policies we regard as mistaken on the other.

This approach is quite different from that of those like *Red Weekly* who cover up for the role of Stalinism and Social Democracy while retailing complete lies about the actions of the revolutionary left.

In 1921 the German Communist Party leadership engaged in what was, in reality, a complete ultra-left adventure—the March action. For publishing an account of these events that did not show any solidarity with the revolutionaries involved in the undertaking, one of the Party's former leaders, Paul Levi, was expelled from the Comintern by Lenin and Trotsky, 'for stabbing the party in the back'—even though they agreed with many of his political conclusions.

At least Levi's account of the March action was substantially correct. The article in last week's *Red Weekly* was a falsification from beginning to end. It attacked fellow revolutionaries in Portugal without mentioning once the treacherous role of the CP and the SP. We call on the leaders of the IMG and the Fourth International to take appropriate action against those who were responsible for its appearance.

CHRIS HARMAN (Editor, *Socialist Worker*)



'PRIME responsibility for the defeat lies with the Communist Party leadership, which initiated the rebellion and then abandoned it to its fate.'

Cliff and Harman writing in *Socialist Worker*, 6 December 1975.

# FACTS OF LISBON EVENTS

Chris Harman's letter is an extraordinary document. He devotes over half of it to the totally secondary question of who organisationally initiated the Lisbon events; attempts through this to refute a position which no-one has suggested — that the PRP organisationally initiated the action; meanders through some historical questions — the expulsion of Paul Levi from the KPD — on which he is singularly ill-informed; and throws in for good measure some factually ridiculous charges against the CP.

Indeed virtually the only question on which he has not a word to say is the one thing which is really important, and to which we devoted the whole of our 'Open Letter to the IS' — the political line of the PRP and the IS in relation to Portugal. We never accused the PRP of organisationally initiating the Lisbon events. On the contrary, we stated unequivocally that the 'revolt' was initiated by a government provocation, but that the PRP's political line (short term insurrection, belief that the bourgeois army had disintegrated, concept of the role of the Socialist Party) was completely wrong and guaranteed that the left would be caught up in a disastrous adventure or government provocation.

It is in this political sense that we said — and still do — that the line of the PRP, the MES, and various of the left-wing officers was responsible for the defeat, and that they perpetrated an adventure. To anyone looking for a serious discussion, that is obvious — since when has any Marxist analysed events not in terms of class forces and political lines but in terms of 'who started it'?

However, as comrade Harman does not seem to understand this, we will go through a blow by blow account of the facts of the Lisbon events. Despite the fact that it takes a lot of space, this should remove any suggestion that we want to 'avoid questions'. Next week, however, we will deal in detail again with what is really crucial — the political line of the PRP and the IS on Portugal.

The first place to look for organisational initiators of the Lisbon events is the Tancos airbase — where the 'rebellion' started. But here we meet the first obvious fact. The Tancos paratroop regiment had moved in literally a matter of weeks from being a right-wing to a left-wing regiment. No left-wing organisation, including the CP, was so implanted in the unit in this space of time that it could control it — which is why not even Azevedo has been able to come up with evidence of a plot here. On the soldiers' side, no organisation whatever could have planned anything even if it wanted to.

On the Government side however, it is clear that a real plan was involved. Already some weeks before, the Government had made general plans for dealing with a revolt in Lisbon — notably by shifting communications and arranging for the transfer of television to the North. At Tancos also it is clear that a government plan was carried out. All planes from the base had been moved to the NATO base, the officers made virtually no serious struggle before leaving and heavy arms had been transferred from the base. Tancos was no left-wing plot but a definite put-up job by the Government.

As for the events in Lisbon there were obviously elements of some plan — actions such as the seizure of the air force headquarters, television stations, etc. did not all occur at the same hour spontaneously. Whose plan was involved is unclear — and anyway it doesn't much matter, as literally dozens of plans for



coups and insurrections had been floating around the Lisbon garrison for months.

As to who was organisationally involved in the events in Lisbon, it is of course hard to say — quite apart from the fact that we have no interest to finger anybody. However, at least two officers were openly involved — Tome, the major of the Military Police who was involved in the barracks, and Durand Clemente, one of the ex-leaders of the Fifth Division, who appeared on national television announcing the rebellion.

They and some other officers have been associated with the CP and the 'Goncalvist' wing of the army; but they are not cadres or leaders of the CP and have, particularly in the last period, been equally associated with the revolutionary left.

The triggering of this plan, no matter whose it was clearly took the entire political left by surprise. The confusion in the PRP, MES etc. to which cde. Harman refers is confirmed by all comrades in Lisbon.

Furthermore, it is clear that the CP was also taken by surprise — throughout 25 November it was all over the place, with some officers involved in the 'rebellion', others refusing to join, some unions calling for strikes, others to stay at work, and with the central leadership appealing for calm. The whole CP showed none of the cohesion which would have been evident if the CP leadership had centrally taken a decision to act.

Only one view is consistent with the events in Lisbon. There never was any left wing revolt, rebellion or coup initiated by the PRP, the CP or any other left-wing political force. What we saw was a classic case not of a 'left wing coup', as the bourgeois press would have it, but of a right-wing coup carried through by the classic means of creating a provocation to cause an isolated action of the vanguard and then stepping in to crush it.

The only organisational 'contribution' of the left to this was the unplanned response of the Tancos paratroops, and the fact that this triggered off one of a dozen half-baked plans for an insurrection in Lisbon.

In reply to these obvious facts of the situation, however, the PRP and the IS have invented the theory of a 'CP betrayal' to cover over the bankrupt-

ty of their 'insurrectionist' political line in the light of events. According to Cliff and Harman: 'Prime responsibility for the defeat lies with the Communist Party leadership, which initiated the rebellion and then abandoned it to its fate.' (Socialist Workers, 6 December — our emphasis). Unfortunately, this line, which is mysteriously known only to the PRP and various Portuguese ultra-lefts, the IS — and for their own reasons the right-wing PPD and the CDS — is supported neither by facts, argument, nor elementary logic.

Firstly the organisational evidence is clear; the CP's apparatus in the Lisbon garrison is much stronger than those elements which took part in the 'events'; and if the CP leadership had decided to launch an uprising, it would have been on a qualitatively different scale to what actually took place. As for the CP's forces outside the army, they were as we have noted, all over the place. It is clear that — far from organising it — the CP leadership was taken just as much by surprise as anyone else.

Most importantly however, to have initiated the events makes no sense in terms of the politics of the CP. Its announced line for weeks has been to get more seats in the Government — not stage a coup. All its actions, not to mention its general political positions, indicate that this was indeed its line; and in relation to Tancos it had already announced and initiated a policy of mobilising massive civilian support in supplies, strikes etc. for the paratroops something completely different from what actually took place.

It may well have been the case that individual CP officers took part in the events, but it is absurd to believe that the CP leadership initiated what took place.

The 'evidence' which Harman brings forward against these obvious facts is ridiculous. That certain officers of the Fifth Division who were in the CP visited the PRP to ask for support we can well believe, but it proves nothing about the line of the CP — only the obvious fact that individual CP members participated in the events.

Harman's second piece of 'evidence', however, really takes the cake. He writes: 'Even the Government has had to admit that "elements of the Communist Party participated in the rebellion".'

Your faith in the honesty of Azevedo's

Government is really touching, comrade Harman. Do you really expect him to say anything else? Do you really think we should accept his word as the truth? The very fact that you bring forward such nonsense shows that your argument hasn't got a leg to stand on.

On the basis of the type of 'argument' and 'evidence' used by cde Harman it would actually be very easy to 'prove' that it was the PRP which initiated events — particularly, as Harman puts it, "through sections of the officers who were close to them". Certainly the people who were indisputably involved, Clemente et al, were really supported by the PRP noted approvingly in an article in *Jornal de Noticias* that 'the opposition group, specifically Captain Clemente, said that it was necessary to seek new forms of struggle to keep the country from being dominated by Social democrats'. From then on the PRP played up the Clemente current fairly consistently.

This culminated in the publication of a 'Manifesto' by Tome, Clemente and Matos Gomez on the front page of *Revolucao* on 21 November — i.e.



Five hundred people packed Conway Hall last Friday at a meeting organised by the Angola Solidarity Committee in solidarity with the struggle led by the MPLA. The next issue of *Red Weekly* will carry a further eyewitness report on Angola by Tony Hodges.

four days before the Lisbon events. This spoke of the existence of a 'desperate reactionary offensive', and proposed to counter this through an orientation based on the central political slogan of the PRP — a 'regime of revolutionary unity'.

Does it follow from these facts — which are much more substantial than comrade Harman's gossip — that we think the PRP was organisationally linked to the initiation of the events of 25 November? Not at all. If it is clear that no organisation initiated the events, and this is evidently the case, then it is ridiculous to charge the PRP, the CP or any other organisation with having been behind it.

All that this proves is that we said in our 'Open Letter to the IS' — that the PRP shared with Clemente and others an insane political line which was totally at variance with the facts of the situation in Portugal and which was bound to fall into adventure or any government provocation. If the disaster hadn't come with the Tancos airbase it would merely have come some other way.

But it is here that we come back to the real point of the discussion. What is at stake is not the organisational responsibility of the PRP, but the political responsibility of its line. Was its orientation to a short-term insurrection correct? Was it based on a correct analysis of the situation in Portugal? If not, what was it bound to lead to? It is to these real questions that we will return next issue.

POSTSCRIPT: On questions of history, Harman is as lacking in facts as on everything else. We don't know what the norms of the IS may be, but we can assure comrade Harman that no one in the Communist International was ever expelled for such a nebulous and psychological charge as showing lack of solidarity. They were expelled only for definite acts, or because they held views incompatible with communism. Levi was a member of the Central Committee of the KPD, and published a public pamphlet denouncing the actions of the party. He was expelled 'because of his unprecedented violation of discipline and because, by his action, in the given circumstances he dealt the party a blow in the back'. (Resolution of the EECI of the Communist International, 29 April 1921).

ALAN JONES



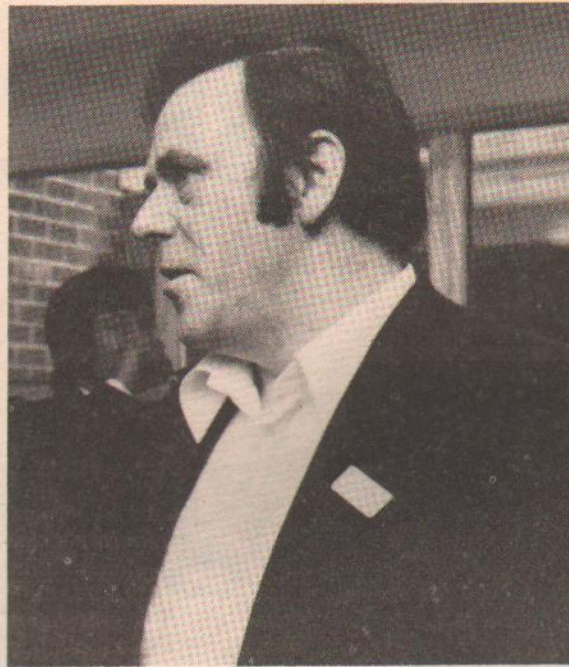
# PORTUGAL FORUM



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

# DAYS OF HOPE

## “Every worker who’s opened a few books wants to write doesn’t he?”



Jim Allen. Photo donated by Futura Publications who recently published *Days of Hope* in paperback (price 60p).

The four-part series *Days of Hope*, shown recently on television, was one of the finest productions of the year. Carl Gardner went to interview the author JIM ALLEN (who also wrote the TV plays *The Big Flame* and *The Lump*) at his home on Langley Estate, near Middleton in Lancashire.

**Q** Could you start by giving us some idea of your political background?

**A** I came out of the army in 1947, and joined the Labour Party at the time of the Korean War — this was the thing which triggered off my generation. Became involved with the left wing, the Socialist Outlook. Went through the '50s — the purges, the Bevanite scene etc.

**Q** What were you working at then?

**A** Oh, I did everything. I was a building labourer, hod-carrier, docker — you name it, I did it. Finished up in the pits. I went through the usual scene you went through at that time. The Labour Party was just bursting at the seams with all kinds of left-wing groupings. I was finally expelled in '62 from the Labour Party.

**Q** What made you start writing?

**A** Down the pits I edited a paper called *The Miner*, a rank and file paper. I did that for 2½ years, and then when I temporarily left the pits and couldn't get back — I was black-listed in the Lancashire coal-fields — I got into the habit of writing.

I think every worker who's opened a few books wants to write, doesn't he? So I went to London, did my *Big War and Peace* — a load of crap — for about 3½ hours. Then I came back home and slung the idea, because working class people have this thing that for them to write is nonsense anyway.

So I went on the building sites, scaffolding, and suddenly out of the blue I got a call from Granada — would I write *Coronation Street*? Well, anything to get my foot in the door. So I went on the Street, and then did *The Lump* and took off from there.

**Q** When we reviewed *Days of Hope*, the main point we made was that the last one — on the General Strike — concentrated over much on the bureaucracy and what they were doing. The feel of the masses was missing.

**A** I think there is a lot of merit in that criticism, and we were aware of it. Initially when we set off we decided to do the lot in the coal-field, where we'd see the interplay of the rank and file and so forth.

Now visually this is exciting for a writer, and a hell of a lot easier to do. It's good drama, it shows the rank and file, it's good politics and so forth. But the decision to confine ourselves entirely to what was happening down at the TUC was my decision.

ision.

The real lesson to be learned is the politics down at the TUC, the backstabbing. We have to lift up a few stones and show the sort of mechanics which move Len Murray today.

People are familiar with the scenes of pickets fighting the police; but they are not familiar with what were the possibilities within that strike as

the first stage of a revolution, and the way it was sold out, and the role of the Communist Party and the role in particular of the 'lefts' of the day — which have their parallels today with your Foots and Wedgie Benns.

We thought it was crucially politically important to fetch out that role. We thought that by showing that, we could ring a few bells for

today, and draw some lessons from that.

Looking back, we are in agreement that what we should have done was only devote half of the film to that, and the other half to the coal-fields. But these are things you only learn afterwards.

**Q** I still think that there was the impression, not that they were acting under the pressure of the masses but that they were cooking up a deal in isolation.

**A** I think it did come through ..... but what you have to bear in mind is our budget. We ran out of money on that programme. People say, why didn't you put this in — what they don't realise is that to have put this in might have meant another week's filming.

And another thing you have to be careful of is that you're trying to do drama. You have to be careful you're not making speeches, otherwise it becomes like a bad Unity Theatre production. You suddenly stop the action and say: 'Now folks, the political commercial!'

It's bad writing, it's bad art, it's bad drama and you lose viewers. And we did that a couple of times and it makes us cringe when we see it.

**Q** The stuff you've done so far has been big TV projects. But the limitation of TV is that you can't interact with it — unlike a production where you can talk to the writers and actors afterwards.....

**A** That's the way these things are made. Yes, I agree you can't interact with these people but the

compensation is that you can speak to groups of people afterwards, perhaps even show your work to groups of people then.

We are hoping to take *Days of Hope* to Cardiff, to the NUM executive.

What we would like — it would be perfect for us — is to show *Days of Hope* across cinema-screens and have hundreds of people and argue. It's a question of whether the BBC or the ITA would release this type of stuff, would allow you to do it. But if somewhere in the labour movement the technical resources were there .....

I prefer TV, as long as I can get my stuff on, because I can get bigger audiences; but it is a pity that once you've done the stuff, it is not made available to the people you've actually written it for. I don't know the politics of this thing .... we sell a product in the market-place under capitalism, they buy the product and use it in whatever way they want.

**Q** What do you have in mind for your next projects?

**A** Ideally, what Garnett, Loach and I wanted to do, but the cash ran out, was to continue *Days of Hope* and do another chunk of work throughout the '30s — the degeneration of the Communist Parties is a very interesting subject — and take it certainly up to the war and perhaps even up to today.

This would involve quite a few years' work ..... but the Corporation's skint, the money's not there, and so I don't think we're going to get the opportunity to make that kind of stuff.

**Q** What do you see as the purpose of your drama? Is it simply didactic — giving lessons to the working class — or is drama an important medium for giving the working class a wider view of the world?

**A** Well, I find this a difficult question to answer, but I don't think workers should be ashamed of taking the material of their own lives and fashioning it in the same way that the ruling classes over the centuries have used writers and poets to turn their lives into art and drama. In so far as I manage that, well you can call it art, call it what you like.

The motive force is didactic really, to make sense of what's happening, to put a dramatic polish on it. I don't like to think I'm just throwing out messages, I could do that by writing articles. Always, always try to create characters as well.

**Q** What I was trying to get at is the fact that a working class bloke like you can write, can express his experience in words .....

**A** That is the most important — of all the important things that is the most important. The mystique of writing, it's a load of crap ..... and I'm just one of the lucky few.

Society's a big waste machine, it just devours people, talents and so on. And if they ever opened those flood gates we'd have some fucking good writers — but what chance has a man got to be a writer when you spend ten hours a day at a factory bench, and you come home to a house with three rooms and no place to sit? I mean privacy is a commodity under capitalism.

They impose their history on us, they impose their culture on us, they impose the fence that we're going to be fenced in, they put the margins and the limits, and say that's where you belong. And I think when we can crash through that and say that we can also do this as well as you and even better, this is very good.

I never get fed up talking about this, because it's vital. There's no mystique, there's nothing great, it's just a job of work and something lots of people can do.



Scene from Jim Allen's powerful television play *The Lump*.

# God rest ye, merry gentlemen...

It's not often that Marxists pay very much attention to the Virgin Mary. This year however, someone has managed to make us aware of her. That someone is a certain Archbishop Murphy, writing in the Catholic newspaper *The Universe*. His article, believe it or not, is headed, 'The Woman who initiated Women's Lib'. The Archbishop explains that she is 'the woman who created Christmas, and placed woman for the first time on a pedestal'.

This is all rather surprising. You don't usually associate the Catholic Church — the force behind the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, the sanctifier of Franco, the crusader against socialism — with any kind of support for the aspirations of women. Once, so the legend tells us, St. Patrick drove all the snakes out of Ireland. His successors are attempting the same miracle — but for lack of

by  
**JANICE MILLS**

mess as usual. That is the reality of the family. But it is a reality that depends on the acceptance of certain vital ideas.

The one the good Archbishop has put his finger on is what the feminist writer Lee Comer has called the 'Myth of Motherhood' — the

varies greatly.

In the time of the industrial revolution, the family practically disappeared in the working class. With men, women and children working twelve or more hours a day, and with child care taking place in pit or factory, there was simply no room for it. As things settled down, however, later in the nineteenth century a big effort was made to ensure that workers accepted the joys of family life.

## Evangelists

This was one of the principal messages of evangelists like Moody and the Salvation Army. It was also part of the message of Dickens. The sickly sentimentality of *A Christmas Carol* and other such outpourings are nothing more than propaganda for acceptance of the role of women as comforters and manufacturers of plum pudding.

But that old style propaganda will no longer do, and Archbishop Murphy knows it. The social and political crises of the early part of this century shook up the extended family structure of the nineteenth century, leading to the emergence in the '20s and '30s of a smaller unit, the nuclear family. It is this form that Archbishop Murphy wants to defend, and Dickens and co. are no longer much help.

There is an aspect of all this that Archbishop Murphy manages to neglect. The defence of the family at a time of crisis involves not merely rebuilding the structure but also accommodating many of the horrors that have been unleashed.

## Divorce

The rise in the divorce rate, the increases in wife-beating and child-battering, indicate that the economic crisis is making family life impossible to maintain for the working class. At the same time the rise of the women's movement and the fights currently being waged for abortion on demand and against cuts in education, health and nursery facilities indicate the possib-

## FIGHTING THE CUTS

Preparations for the London 'Women and the Cuts' Conference called by the Working Women's Charter on 28 February are now going ahead. All labour movement organisations should begin to build this conference to carry forward the fight against cuts in social expenditure and unemployment — attacks which are hitting women particularly hard.

Sponsorship and delegate letters are available, and are being sent out to trade unions, Labour Party branches, tenants' and women's organisations, etc; and donations are urgently required to finance the conference.

For further information and copies of the sponsorship and delegate letters, contact: Michele Ryan, 39 Parkholme Road, London E.8. (tel. 01-249 3072).



Oh, a wonderful pudding!

ility of throwing out the family, together with its seed-bed of class society, once and for all.

So fresh ways of wrapping the old package are appearing. Hence the Archbishop's more trendy statements. Hence also a new all-time low in sexual values with the rise of the porn market, wife swapping magazines and the like.

Archbishop Murphy concludes his article: 'If you want a meditation this Christmastide, think of a

woman walking the streets during nine months expecting God. It will make your Christmas.' I would like to rephrase this intelligent enemy. If you want a meditation this Christmas, think of the mass starvation caused by capitalism, think of the gross tyranny of the factory and the petty tyranny of the home, think of the degradation and obscenity this society has spawned. It will ruin your Christmas, but determine you to destroy everything Christmas represents.



## The first liberated woman.....???

snakes, have turned their energies to contraceptives.

And in fact it soon becomes plain that Archbishop Murphy is no different from his colleagues; just a little more subtle. His real problem is this: 'There was a short period when Catholic theologians.. were playing down the role of the mother of God....during that same period we had an added criticism of the Holy Father [i.e. the Pope] and the Church.'

## Slavery

We have pointed out many times that the family and the moral values it enshrines are simply a framework for the domestic slavery of women. Christmas makes that all too apparent. It is time for children to make themselves sick, for men to drink and burp their way through the Queen's speech and noisday football — but for women it is a time to cook twice as much as usual, make twice as many beds as usual, and mop up five times as much

notion that women's function is simply stockbreeding. On this notion depend a whole range of other attitudes.

With women locked in the child-rearing cage, everything is in its place and authority remains intact. There is no questioning of the Holy Father — a term which signifies not only the Pope, but also sweat shop employers, social security spies, and all our petty domestic tyrants. They all assume the mystical power of the father, and all depend on the mystical notion of the mother. Once women are seen as human beings, the spell is broken — and Archbishop Murphy knows it.

In his article the Archbishop devotes a good deal of space to an attack on the 'Dickensian Christmas'. There is a reason for this, and it is closely allied to his gushings about 'women's lib'. So long as a ruling class needs an ever renewed supply of labour, and the training of the young in docility and acceptance, then we will have the family. But the form this imposition takes

# ULTIMATE BARBARITY

**NEW YORK (Special-UP1)** — Police said yesterday they are investigating reports of a bizarre sex film described as the "ultimate in obscenity." The film's climax shows the murder and mutilation of an unwitting actress — and it's all gory reality.

New York police began investigating the existence of the so-called "snuff" or "slasher" films about two months ago.

Horman said he has received dozens of tips concerning the films, which he said retail for about \$300. A print costs \$1,500.

He said "very reliable" underworld sources claim there are eight "snuff" films being circulated. Viewers at private screenings pay up to \$200 to witness the filmed murder.

"Several weeks ago they supposedly had a private showing in New York," he said.

"I first heard about them from a reporter. As a result of that initial inquiry I sought out my sources in the underworld. They said that in the end, the climax depicts the actual murder of the female."

Horman said the film begins with an actress making love with several actors, one at a time and all at once. Soon, however, a knife is brought out, and the actress is stabbed to death and dismembered.

"The information I received said they were probably shot in Latin America. Argentina was the word I got," Horman said.

"The thing that is really astonishing," said Horman, "is that there is such a market. That's the sickening part of it. That's almost as astonishing as the fact that someone would commit a murder for the purpose of making a film."

Horman said anyone showing such films could only be prosecuted under obscenity laws. The FBI said any prosecution would involve transporting pornographic material across state lines.

"The murder is in another jurisdiction," said Horman, "and proving it would be very difficult."

Toronto Sun, Thursday, Oct. 2

We were going to run this clipping without any editorial comment, as there seemed to be nothing to say that would not have the effect of trivialising its obscenity. However, there is one further aspect of the article which draws out even more the total depravity of the story.

It costs up to \$200 to see one of the films. \$200 is less than the average per capita annual income in:

	\$		\$		\$
Botswana	(118)	Democratic Yemen	(96)	Mali	(50)
Central African Republic	(122)	Afghanistan	(83)	Niger	(70)
Dahomey	(81)	Bhutan	(138)	Somalia	(85)
Gambia	(118)	India	(93)	Sudan	(109)
Lesotho	(77)	Khmer Republic	(123)	Uganda	(132)
Madagascar	(134)	Nepal	(80)	Tanzania	(106)
Mauritania	(146)	Sri Lanka	(163)	Zaire	(119)
Nigeria	(130)	Solomon Islands	(184)	Bolivia	(191)
Rwanda	(57)	Burundi	(68)	Yemen	(77)
Sierra Leone	(158)	Chad	(70)	Bangladesh	(111)
Togo	(125)	Comoro Is.	(97)	Burma	(78)
Cameroon	(183)	Ethiopia	(75)	Laos	(71)
Upper Volta	(62)	Guinea	(79)	Maldives	(86)
Haiti	(111)	Liberia	(184)	Pakistan	(193)
		Malawi	(84)	Thailand	(193)

# RED WEEKLY

## Solidarity with class war prisoners

For hundreds of thousands of people the season of 'goodwill' and 'festivity' stops outside the prison walls. They are the political prisoners of the world, whose struggle to put an end to the misery and exploitation of capitalism has put them behind bars.

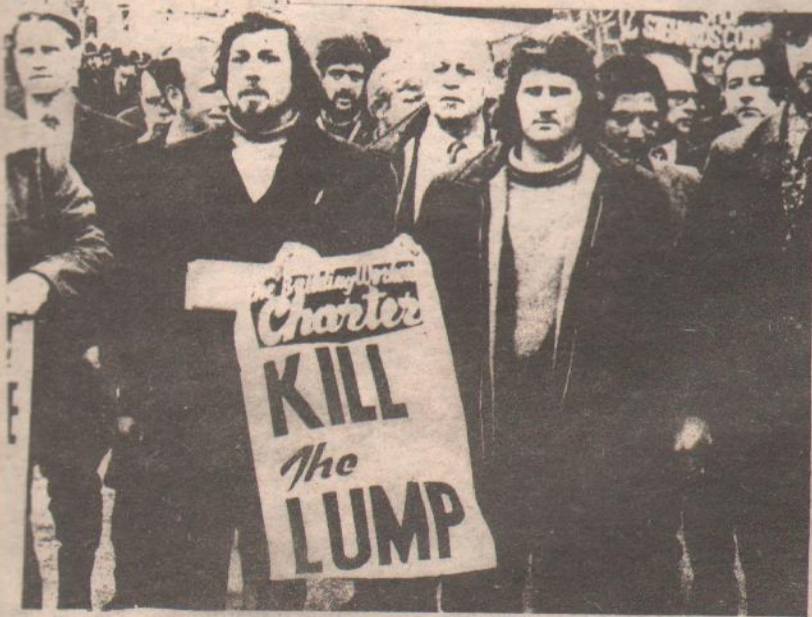
For the militant opponents of the bloody Pinochet dictatorship in Chile, Christmas will bring no respite to either their suffering or their determination to build a new society. Nor, we are sure, will the Price sisters, Noel Jenkinson, and the other Irish Republicans incarcerated in the jails of British imperialism feel any more goodwill to their jailers, or any less determined to fight for a united Ireland.

As the ruling class begin their hypocritical preparations for the 'festive' season, and many workers settle down for a holiday break, it is right to remember all our comrades who have been jailed for fighting exploitation and oppression.

The *Red Weekly* therefore salutes imprisoned Shrewsbury picket Des Warren. We hail our black brothers and sisters locked away for fighting racialism in Africa and the United States, and we extend the hand of solidarity to the thousands of revolutionaries in Mrs Gandhi's prisons and to the militants crowding the Indonesian jails — now being joined by the freedom fighters from Timor. We send greetings to the imprisoned socialist revolutionaries in Czechoslovakia, the USSR and the rest of Eastern Europe, as well as to the jailed conscripts of the French Army and the revolutionary soldiers of Portugal.

In sending finally our communist greetings to the political prisoners in Spain, we are confident that the Spanish workers will soon unlock the doors that hold them, and that the revolutionaries educated in the university of the political jail will be in the vanguard of the Iberian revolution.

The message of *Red Weekly* this Christmas is not one of peace and goodwill to all men. It is a message of revolutionary solidarity to all class-war militants and an affirmation on our part that we will do everything in our power to intensify the class war so that in time the prison gates will be opened for them.



Des Warren (right)—faces third Christmas in jail

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## Forward to a 16-pager



THIS WEEK *Red Weekly* takes one small step towards becoming a 16-page paper.

Over the past two and a half years the paper has gone from being an 8-page fortnightly to a 12-page weekly. Throughout that time *Red Weekly* has been a campaigning paper. It has systematically dealt with the major issues confronting the working class — such as the Shrewsbury picketing trials, the struggle to bring down the Tory Government, the fight against British imperialism's rule in Ireland, and opposition to the capitalist Common Market.

In the more recent past, we have been able to draw on the resources of the Fourth International as well as our own staff to provide unrivalled coverage of the unfolding revolution in Portugal and Spain. *Red Weekly* has also provided a forum for debate on the lessons of the Portuguese revolution with members of groups like the Communist Party and the International Socialists — something which no other paper on the left has been able to do.

But the ability of *Red Weekly* to draw on the international struggles of the working class to explain the future problems that the British working class will face in the struggle for socialism has not been limited to the borders of Western Europe. *Red Weekly* carried blow by blow accounts of the victory of the revolution in Vietnam and Cambodia; it has carried unique material on the resistance in Chile; it has campaigned for the release of the political prisoners in the degenerated and deformed workers' states.

But despite these undoubted successes, there are many things that *Red Weekly* has been unable to do for lack of space and resources. For instance, it is difficult for our designers to present our material in the most vivid and interesting way when they have to cope with 40 inches of copy a page. This week we've cut that by one eighth.

But to establish this on a permanent basis, with real design improvements, means that more money is needed to finance new production and typesetting equipment, expanded photo files, and so on.

Nor are the problems just technical. With a 12-page paper there are many aspects of the class struggle — its history, its culture, political polemic — which

are down-graded in order to allow us to deal adequately with the most politically urgent questions. A 16-page paper will allow us to present the programme of revolutionary marxism through a much greater variety of means.

The paper has to be strengthened journalistically as well — through more on the spot reports, interviews, letters, guest articles, and so on. This will require an extra effort from all our supporters to produce material for us, as well as the numerical strengthening of our editorial staff so that we have time to research articles properly and report struggles as they arise.

All these things demand money — *your* money. If this week's 16-pager is a small step in the right direction, there are three big steps all our readers and supporters can help us to take:

1. Help us hit that £15,000 Fund Drive target. The £5,000 going to *Red Weekly* from this will mean new design and typesetting equipment, re-equipped premises when we move, and extra journalists.
2. Help us build up the circulation of the paper. We need at least 1,000 extra paid sales a week to go to 16 pages. So why not take extra copies for your branch or a bulk sub for friends who aren't getting the paper.
3. Help us reach the £500 *Red Weekly* Fund Drive target every month. We can't rely on a few generous individuals. We need you, our readers, to raise that amount each month to guarantee production of the paper. So far this month we have only received £190 towards our target, which shows that we may have a long way to go before we take that step to 16 pages. So, comrades, it's up to you. The *Red Weekly* staff can produce a paper. We want you to help us produce a bigger, better paper with much greater variety. Forward to the 16-pager! Make that your New Year Resolution for 1976, and rush an extra donation for 1975 to: Red Weekly, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

Readers will be disappointed to hear that there will be no issue of *Red Weekly* on Christmas Day. The next issue of the paper, reduced to eight pages, will be sent out to IMG's branches etc on Wednesday 31 December.

# £15,000

	SO FAR RECEIVED	TARGET
SCOTLAND	600	£2,000
N. EAST		£250
YORKSHIRE	131	£1,000
LEICESTER	120	£1,000
W. MIDLANDS	36	£1,000
E. MIDLANDS	20	£250
WALES		£250
E. ANGLIA		£250
LONDON	273	£1,500
S. EAST	21	£1,000
S. WEST	4	£500
OTHER	308	£6,000

There may be only six more shopping days to Christmas — but there are 13 more days left in December to donate money to the IMG's £15,000 Fund Drive.

Our December target is £5,127.95.

If every reader of *Red Weekly* were to donate 50p between now and 31 December we would easily make our December target. So come on comrades — just because the capitalists talk about 'Goodwill to all men' at this time of year doesn't mean that the struggle is suspended for the next few weeks.

At this time of the year, when there are so many pressures on people to spend their money on useless Xmas objects, it is good to see people resisting those pressures and donating money where it is most needed — to the struggle.

Rush all donations to Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (cheques/POs made payable to 'The Week'). Don't leave it till tomorrow — the Xmas post will delay your contribution enough as it is.