

# RED WEEKLY

## Britain out of Ireland!

All out for  
February 1st demo!

Assemble SHEPHERDS BUSH GREEN, 1.30 p.m.

22 JANUARY 1976

No. 134

PRICE 10p

# STEEL STRIKE: SUPPORT GROWS

The Wilson Government has met the first real resistance to its unemployment policies. Massive hostility from steel workers has met proposals to reduce the labour bill in the industry by £179 million at the price of 40,000 jobs and wage cuts.

The British Steel Corporation's plan has been overwhelmingly rejected by the vast majority of steelworkers. Action has been widespread, calls of support for national strike action have come from numerous plants. Workers at Port Talbot remain on strike after two weeks. A decision has been taken at the Velindre and Trostre tin-plant works to remain on strike. An overtime ban at the River Don works in Sheffield continues. Scotland has come out against the proposals, as have the Midlands plants of Corby and Bilston.

The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation leadership is squirming under the fierce pressure of its membership. A national steel strike is essential to unify and strengthen the plant-by-plant action taken so far. All other unions have declared their opposition to the proposals. But it can be guaranteed that the ISTC leadership will try to force the mass movement into the blind alley of negotiations.

Scholey, the BSC chief executive and self-appointed 'hammer of the workers', has declared that management will implement the scheme unilaterally if union agreement cannot be bought. The only way in which steel workers can defend their jobs is by totally rejecting negotiations on the plans and counterposing a workers alternative to the crisis of the steel industry, to be backed up by national strike action.

## CAPITALIST CRISIS

The Labour Party 'left' leaders are refusing to support the steel workers' actions. Foot, in particular, openly justifies the loss of jobs and talks of the need for 'productivity'. But the crisis in the steel industry is not the product of unofficial strikes or lazy workers. It is the product of the capitalist economic crisis, sharpened by secret deals made with the steel monopolies in Europe, crippling debt and interest charges that have grown up over the years, and the failure of the capitalists to re-equip the industry. The secrecy surrounding these facts must be torn away by opening the books of the BSC and its counterparts in the private sector!

The steelworkers' action is defending the right to work of the whole British labour movement. Every worker should support and hold meetings to discuss solidarity action. All hands must be set to the task of forcing the TUC to stop its scabbing on those threatened with loss of jobs. For a recall TUC - break with the Government's policies!

## INSIDE

Questions facing the  
Scottish Labour Party



PORT TALBOT STEELWORKS

Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

## Save Frank Stagg



The British press has a remarkable talent for saying nothing. This is particularly so over matters that might embarrass British imperialism. Everyone gets so used to the hysterical attacks on terrorism that they don't notice the little things that get overlooked.

One such is the plight of Frank Stagg. He is an Irish Republican and he is in Wakefield prison. Like many Republican prisoners, Frank Stagg has demanded a transfer to Ireland. While this request is denied him he is on hunger strike. The ill-treatment he has suffered is such that there are now serious fears for his life.

The case of Frank Stagg is not unique. All Irish Republican prisoners in English prisons are kept in solitary confinement. These people are political prisoners. In order to have their status recognised they refuse to wear prison uniform. And so the authorities leave them naked in their cells.

Hunger strikers like Frank Stagg are force-fed. Their mouths are clamped open and tubes forced down their throats. If anything inside is punctured, well that apparently is just hard luck. That was the way Michael Gaughan was killed eighteen months ago. Public protests at this and the danger that the Price sisters might have followed Gaughan forced Roy Jenkins to repatriate the Price sisters.

## 'Improvement'

But Jenkins has improved his technique since then. There are no public protests and the press has been squared. We can be treated to the amazing spectacle of a Labour Government that makes humanitarian noises about the Chilean junta (without of course being so extremist as to stop building its warships) while continuing the torture (there is no other word for it) of political prisoners in its own jails.

The Labour Government is able to end these atrocities at the stroke of a pen. The mere fact that Republican prisoners are kept in solitary confinement (that is, are stopped from communicating with other prisoners) is tacit acknowledgement that they are in fact political prisoners. It just has to be said out loud.

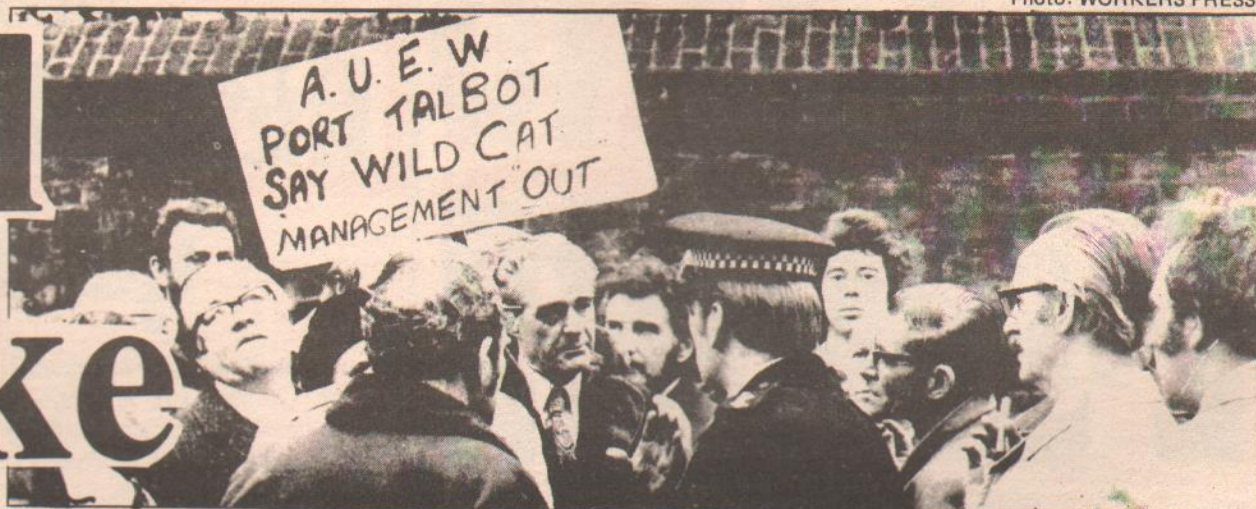
Of course, that would destroy all the fine notions about a war against terrorism in the Six Counties. It would mean that the aspirations of the Catholic working class in the North of Ireland would have to be taken seriously. It is this that Jenkins finds unthinkable. Preserving the interests of British capital comes first for him. It is those interests that lead a Labour Home Secretary to condone torture of political prisoners and that may well kill Frank Stagg.

MARTIN O'LEARY

# RECALL THE TUC

# Unite for national steel strike

Photo: WORKERS PRESS



Port Talbot steelworkers at lobby in London earlier this month

Steelworkers throughout Britain are facing their toughest battle ever — the fight to stop the British Steel Corporation from introducing a massive economy package which will lead to at least 40,000 redundancies and the closure of steel plants up and down the country.

The present strikes in South Wales represent the biggest upsurge in militancy in living memory in steel. All over the industry, where there is virtually no history of struggle embracing *all* steelworkers in a common fight, a new mood of determination has emerged.

## EXAMPLE

For every worker facing redundancies and pay cuts in the present recession, it is the steelworkers who are providing an example of how to fight back to defend jobs and living conditions.

The BSC has launched an all-out attack on the steelworkers. There is no other word to describe it. BSC chiefs are calling for an end to week-end shift working (meaning pay cuts of £15 to £20 a week), a free hand to carry out compulsory redundancies, complete flexibility of labour, an end to unofficial strikes, and the setting up of joint management-union teams to carry through these agreements. It is only the threat of workers spreading the strikes that has so far stayed the pen of Mr Bill Sirs, leader of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, from signing away the future of his workers.

BSC talk in the abstract about the need to double productivity. They

talk in the abstract about reducing manning levels. But what this will mean *concretely* is the closure of all steelmaking plants outside of the big five (the oxygen steelmaking plants at Scunthorpe, South Tees-side, Ravenscraig in Glasgow, and Port Talbot and Llanwern in South Wales).

## CLOSURES

There is no other way that productivity levels can be doubled. Places like Shotton and Corby will have their old open hearth steelmaking plant closed down, leaving only a few hundred men to carry out secondary finishing operations. This is where a good deal of the 44,000 redundancies will come from.

But the BSC isn't talking openly any more about 'closing down' plants. That would be too dangerous, as the attempts to 'close' Ebbw Vale and Shotton have shown. Instead the BSC hopes to railroad through a new national agreement with the unions, a new regime in steel, which would allow them to achieve the same result more quietly and effectively.

The basic plan was outlined in the Benson Report ten years ago. It is to carry out this plan that Wilson nationalised the industry in 1967. But it is only now, with the international recession and the betrayals of the Labour leadership throwing the working class onto the defensive, that the BSC has judged the time ripe to make the decisive moves against the steel unions. In doing this, the BSC thought they would get the new agreement without too much trouble. After all, the ISTC has one of the most right-wing trade union leaderships in the country, with no record of struggle. But the strikers in South Wales, Corby and elsewhere have upset these plans.

## REJECTION

Already the steelworkers have successfully fought off the BSC's demand to end the guaranteed working week — an agreement whereby the majority of steel workers get 80 per cent of their earnings in the event of a shortage of work. Rejection of *all* the BSC's current econ-

omy proposals is what steel militants must be demanding of their leadership. Spreading the current strikes into a *national strike* against BSC's economy package is an immediate necessity.

But what policy is needed to defend jobs? The old agreements are not sufficient. The only real guarantee that workers will not pay the price of steel modernisation by walking the dole queues is an agreement on *work-sharing with no loss of pay* for all steel workers.

Already, the guaranteed working week partly embodies the principle that the workers should not pay for the crisis. That agreement must be extended into an instrument for ensuring that BSC — and behind it, the capitalist class as a whole, whose needs for cheap steel are the principal concern of Monty Finniston & Co — bears the cost of any modernisation carried through.

Militants everywhere must come to the assistance of their brothers in steel. Right to Work Committees, shop stewards committees, Labour Party organisations etc. should organise meetings, pickets, demonstrations and so on in solidarity with this struggle.

## CAN BE WON

The battle in steel could provide every worker with concrete proof that the fight against redundancy *can* be won, that the fight against the Wilson Government and its attacks on the working class *can* be carried through to victory. It could be the first step in turning the tide against the bosses. What is more, it could provide an example of the sort of programme which every worker needs to fight redundancy.

- \* No abolition of weekend working.
- \* Reject BSC's 'economy at the expense of the workers' package.
- \* For a national steel strike.
- \* Open the books — for a workers' enquiry into the BSC's real plans for closures and redundancies.
- \* Work-sharing with no loss of pay for all workers — the only guarantee of jobs.
- \* Nationalise the private sector.
- \* A workers' plan for steel.



Some of the people involved in the recent elections seen at a mass meeting in 1970. WRP member Tom White is on the left in a white jacket. Cowley senior steward Reg Parsons is centre with back to camera. Alan Thornett is on the right in a donkey jacket. Speaking is R. Fryer.

# Polarisation at Cowley

The outcome of the elections for deputy senior stewards at the Cowley Assembly Plant represents a setback for the left wing and the stewards opposed to the scab policies of senior steward Reg Parsons. Five of the elected deputies featured in the list of 'moderates' circulated by Parsons. The only elected candidate committed to resistance to Leyland's attacks is Bob Fryer, the former senior steward.

Parson's week-long witch-hunt — orchestrated by his allies in the national press — paid dividends as his list of useless non-entities featured in every newspaper. The betrayal by the trade union bureaucracy of the Chrysler workers also took its toll, as workers at Cowley could see no immediate alternative to Parsons' collaboration and therefore voted for his puppets in the vain hope that his policies would somehow save their jobs.

But recent events — and the election of Fryer — show a growing polarisation in the plant. Fryer will provide the focus for the vast majority of stewards who oppose Parson's sell-out policies; and the recent election victories by the left wing in the Transport and General Workers Union 5/293 Branch show that resistance is not finished.

Parsons' response has been to try to smash the stewards' strength through a manoeuvre. He has sought to get the company to prevent stewards from different sections meeting without his permission, and he has tried, so far with little success, to raise a petition amongst members to start yet another TGWU branch which would be under his control.

## Manoeuvre

But Parsons' willingness to collaborate with the company does not stop there. Last week the national officials manoeuvred a deal with the company in an attempt to settle long-standing regrading claims from several sections of the plant. Parsons did his utmost to ram this manoeuvre down the throats of the Assembly Plant quality inspectors, who have for months been operating an overtime ban in an attempt to win their struggle.

The company is extremely embarrassed by this ban, which prevents the clearance of much needed production to the dealers. Under pressure from the company the trade union officials were not averse, at a time of mounting unemployment, to instructing the inspectors to work overtime!

The inspectors flung this betrayal in Parsons' face, voting by 118 to 101 to continue the ban. Parsons, who has often prattled about his love for democracy, then called a separate meeting of TGWU inspectors, promising them the district official's offer of protection if they would scab on the majority decision. To their credit most of the TGWU members stormed out, leaving Parsons in his element with a rump of hardened scabs.

These developments show to what lengths the bureaucracy will go in their drive to implement the Ryder Report and save Leyland at the workers' expense. They also show how vital is the question of leadership.

Parsons' continual sell-outs will expose his bankruptcy to those who voted for him. But clear and viable alternative policies are necessary to break them from Parsons' collaboration and set them on the path of solving the crisis in *their* favour. That is the task still facing the revolutionary left in Cowley.

Cowley IMG

Next week Red Weekly will be carrying a full feature on the need for a new strategy in the car industry to coincide with the Institute for Workers' Control conference on this subject.

# Support these actions

Over the coming weeks the International Marxist Group will be organising support for two activities which can help to give a central focus to the fight for the right to work.

The first of these is the Right to Work March organised by the Rank and File Co-ordinating Committee, an organisation dominated by the International Socialists. The second is the Labour Movement Assembly on unemployment at Central Hall, Westminster on Saturday 27 March called by the No. 8 District of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

Red Weekly urges all its readers to get delegated to these activities on the basis of the policies needed to fight for the right to work:

- Work-sharing with no loss of pay and rejection of all voluntary redundancies.
- Nationalisation under workers control of all firms threatening redundancy.
- The opening of the books so that the secret plans and finances of the firms are made known to the workers' movement.
- The immediate introduction of the 35-hour week.
- The ending of the £6 paynorm and the introduction of a sliding scale of wages to protect workers and their families against inflation.
- The right to work for all — the right of women to work.

Of central importance in organising this fight is the demand for a recall TUC to break with the unemployment policies of the Labour Government. On this basis every militant should be putting down motions of support and seeking delegation to these initiatives.

The address of the Right to Work Campaign is: 46 Prince George Road, London N16. Credentials for the Labour Movement Assembly can be obtained from Mr Bill McLaughlin, No 8 District CSEU, 28 Denmark Street, London WC2.



How the media crowded at the turnout of only 300 on the demonstration against unemployment in Coventry last Saturday. The Lord Mayor was there, Audrey Wise was there, but where, inquired the gentlemen of the press, were the 15,000 workers invited.

The demonstration was originally called as the result of an angry meeting of 300 shop stewards who sharply criticised the inactivity of the local Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions on unemployment. The spirit of the resolution was for a day of strike action, which would have provided political support for the struggle at Chrysler. But the union bureaucracy, led by Frank Chater OBE, a leading light of the right-wing Catholic Action, cynically ignored the feeling of the meeting and delayed the demonstration until after the defeat at Chrysler.

The demand on which the demo organisers attempted to mobilise the membership was for Coventry to be made an assisted and redevelopment area. Such a policy has no correspondence to the immediate needs of Coventry workers, simply diverting the struggle for jobs into interminable discussions with the

Department of Industry. What a prospect — no wonder so few Coventry workers bothered to turn out.

Meanwhile, the 'moderates' in the Coventry/Chrysler shop stewards committee, having sold their membership down the river, are now running as fast as their feet can take them by applying for voluntary redundancies. The rush has been led by Bob Morris, right wing T&GWU convenor at the Stoke plant. Morris's contribution to the Chrysler struggle was to denounce as 'left wing rubbish' any idea that Chrysler's problems weren't the responsibility of the workers.

Those remaining stewards who supported the Chrysler-Government deal should be turfed out by the membership. A new leadership should be elected in the plant, committed to opposing the implementation of the deal and the massive productivity drive being launched by the Chrysler management.

In Coventry as a whole, the fight to build a right to work committee and a conference of the local labour movement to halt the retreat and adopt a policy to defend jobs must be the conclusion drawn from Saturday's fiasco.

## THORN'S: Import controls won't save jobs

'Most of us came here on the promise of good homes and good jobs. We got nowt except high rents, 'cheap' homes and the nag of wondering whether a job would be there next year, next month or, this time, even next day.'

Those were the feelings of one worker in the Lancashire new town of Skelmersdale last week. The dream of a New Jerusalem of high density housing and stable employment for those fleeing the slums of Merseyside has turned very sour indeed. Unemployment already stands at nearly 10 per cent. If the closure of the Thorn's TV tubes factory goes ahead, another 1,370 will join the dole queues. The nightmare of nearly 20 per cent unemployment will become a reality.

The closure of what is one of only two remaining colour television tube factories in the country was announced

after months of secret negotiations between management and the Government. In the course of these talks, Thorn's were paid nearly a million pounds by the Labour Government to delay mention of closure until 31 December.

### Blind alley

Thorn's announcement has predictably been greeted with a chorus of demands for import controls from the trade union 'lefts' and the Tribunites. The blind alley of a campaign to 'stop the flooding of Britain with Japanese TV tubes' has been opened. But as Bill Connor, leader of the Labour group on the West Lancashire District Council, told *Red Weekly*: 'Import controls are only a question of the working class solving the interminable strife between the warring capitalists of different countries'.

Even more bizarre than the idea of import controls was perhaps Thorn's stewards' telegram to the Japanese embassy, asking them whether any industrialist in Japan would like to take them over. With the ability to land 22 inch colour tubes in this country at a cost of £34, Toshiba, Hitachi and Sony are not likely to be interested!

A mass meeting on Sunday voted full support to any actions the stewards take to prevent the closure. But so far the only suggestion of how a real fight for jobs can be waged has come from the local Labour Party and the Labour Group on West Lancashire District Council, who have pledged themselves to support a sit-in at the factory.

### Open books

At a meeting organised by Skelmersdale Labour Party Young Socialists, Bill Connor called for a broad-based action committee to be set up to defend the Thorn workers' jobs. He went on to call for the books of Thorn's to be opened to the workers, and for the nationalisation of the factory without compensation and under workers control.

Such a policy can provide a fighting basis for an occupation to defend all jobs at Thorn's. In the wake of the Chrysler defeat it would provide a focus for every militant who wants to fight the unemployment policies of the Wilson Government and the treachery of the TUC bureaucracy. That way Skelmersdale would not become Skelmersdale and a blow would be struck for the right to work of every worker.

Merseyside IMG

# IN FOCUS

## Bring the bureaucrats to account!

Two confidential documents revealed by the Tory press over the last fortnight show the real meaning of the industrial policy unveiled by the Government at the private meeting of the National Economic Development Council at Chequers in November.

According to the *Sunday Telegraph* (18 January), the secret document NEDC(75)67, outlining criteria for support for industry, has such a hard approach that 'any Tory industry spokesman who made a speech urging these criteria on the Government would be denounced as a monster'. The *Telegraph* city editor goes on to exult: 'The section I particularly enjoyed (this is after all the official Government policy) is the one on rescue operations. It amounts to a paean of praise in favour of receivership as a means of industrial organisation'.

This is more than a sick joke. The Government has more or less taken over the industrial tactics of Sir Keith Joseph. The document states: 'A receivership or a liquidation does not necessarily involve the complete cessation of a company's activities, since the responsibilities of the receiver will often best be fulfilled by maintaining the business as a going concern in order to secure the highest price ..... Consultations with the work force cannot be taken to the point of, in effect, negotiations with them about the disposition of public funds'.

### RESCUE SCHEMES

This document explains the enthusiasm of industrialists for the outcome of the Chequers meeting. It provided the teeth for the vague generalities to which the TUC leaders put their names. That is why the Government is so keen to keep it hidden from the mass of the working class in this country.

It also explains the tactics of those loyal supporters of Government policies in the steel industry and Chrysler — men like Bob Morris at the Stoke, Coventry Chrysler plant, and Bill Sirs of the Iron & Steel Trades Confederation — when they try to divert the struggle for jobs into demands for negotiations. The Government is all in favour of negotiations, but only within the framework of a 'rescue scheme' which automatically leads to mass redundancies.



Healey, Wilson and Varley announce new Chequers strategy at press conference

On 14 January the TUC side of the NEDC confirmed its support, along with the Confederation of British Industry, for the Chequers agreement. The previous day, however, the *Financial Times* had taken the lid off the wheeling and dealing inside the TUC. It revealed that a private TUC document was circulating amongst senior union leaders suggesting how they should meet the threat posed by the growing rank-and-file opposition to their lick-spitting to Wilson.

The document accepts the fact that there will be 1.4 million unemployed by the middle of this year. It accepts that 'consideration needs to be given on a continuing basis to reducing the rate of inflation', confirming its willingness to be involved this summer and in following years with the 'son of the £6 limit'.

All the TUC requires in return is a commitment that unemployment will be reduced to 600,000 by 1978. This is just bluff. Most commentators accept that unemployment will remain above one million until 1980. The TUC protests at this fact — yet supports the very policies that will make sure that this state of affairs continues. Indeed, its only real complaint is that the Government has not involved the TUC enough in talks such as those at Chequers.

### RECALL THE TUC!

This collaboration must end. The TUC should be flooded with resolutions from the labour movement demanding a recall conference to break with the Government's policies and to prepare a fight to defend jobs, smash the £6 limit and halt the dismantling of public services which the TUC clique dares to perpetrate 'in the interests of its membership'.

The secret document at Chequers also makes it clear that even the most detailed decisions on the future of jobs in Britain are decided not merely at the level of the company but also increasingly at the level of the Government and in the departments of state. Harold Lever's refusal to be questioned by the Commons Public Expenditure Committee on the Chrysler deal is only a tiny part of the veil of secrecy which the Government lowers over its anti-working class policies. As well as the opening of books of individual companies, the demand should be raised throughout the labour movement that all confidential papers of the Civil Service and Cabinet should be open for inspection to all trade union and Labour Party organisations.

## THE FIGHTING FUND NEEDS YOU

We need two things to put *Red Weekly* on an even keel — a big boost in circulation, and regular donations to our Fighting Fund. Only a few branches are responding to these urgent tasks. The comrades in Newport have doubled their paper order to cover the explosive developments in the steel industry; but only Bath and Bristol IMG came up with the Fighting Fund money this week.

Many thanks to those individuals who sent in donations, particularly the £9 from J. Karel. This week the money must be rushed in if it is to be used to improve the paper rather than meet back debts. The address is: Red Weekly Fighting Fund, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

# Defend NHS against consultants

At the end of last year the consultants won the first round in their fight to stop private practice from being separated from the NHS. The Labour Government agreed that pay beds will only be phased out in areas which already have adequate private facilities outside the health service. In other areas, they will remain until such facilities have been built.

Encouraged by this abject capitulation of Wilson and Castle, the consultants are now preparing for the next round.

Over the past two weeks the British Medical Association (BMA) and the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association (HCSA) have been balloting the 12,000 consultants over their recommendation that consultants should resign from the NHS. In the light of their past record, it is extremely likely that the consultants will vote for such mass resignations from the NHS.

At the same time, it is also becoming clear that the consultants have succeeded in another of their aims. Their cynical manipulation of the struggle of junior hospital doctors (JHDs) for improved working hours and pay has duped at least some of them into supporting the consultants' anti-NHS fight. The Junior Hospital Doctors Association (JHDA) has already instructed its members not to work with any doctor who replaces a resigned consultant.

## Inadequate

With the NHS in the worst crisis of its history and facing Healey's even bloodier axe, a further victory for private practice will open the gates to the rapid growth of private medicine and the development of a two-tier health service. The responsibility for this run-down of the NHS lies firmly with the Labour leadership.

The response of the labour movement has so far been very inadequate. The failure to give active support to the justified demands of the JHDs on the clear basis of a fight in defence of the NHS against the £6 limit, and against private practice, is one of the reasons why the consultants have succeeded in drawing the JHDs into a close alliance in their struggle against the NHS.

What is crucial is that health workers and other sections of the labour movement begin to

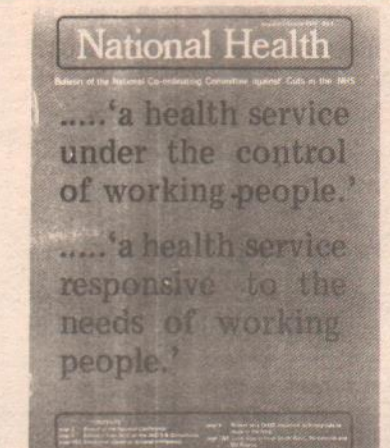
prepare now to fight the consultants' actions — with private practice bans, elected committees to run hospitals should the consultants resign, solidarity strike action in defence of the NHS, etc.

The demonstration called by the National Coordinating Committee Against the Cuts in the NHS and NALGO (date yet to be fixed) can also provide a focus to build a massive campaign to throw back these attacks.

## HEALTH WORKERS SAY 'OPEN THE BOOKS'

Health workers in Greenock, Scotland have been recommended not to cooperate with management in any NHS cuts and to demand the opening of all Health Service books for trade union inspection. This excellent initiative is reported in the latest issue of *Health Services*, newspaper of the Confederation of Health Service Employees. An action committee to run the campaign was set up at a 400-strong rally in Greenock last month, and aims to help form similar committees to defend the NHS right across Scotland.

*Health Services* also reports on the discovery of a secret management document by health service trade unionists in Oxford. The document, if implemented,



Bulletin of NCC, 5p plus p&p from: Dr Paul Stern, 55 Bridge Lane, London NW1.

would hit particularly hard at the health of women and children.

To build a campaign in defence of these vital services the Oxford health workers have now set up a joint trade union action committee, which held its first public meeting — attended by more than 200 people — on 12 January.

The callous cutting of vital services in Oxford is being repeated at the Middlewood Psychiatric Hospital in Sheffield. According to local Labour MP Joan Maynard, a shortage of 240 nurses at the hospital has resulted in patients frequently being sedated so that the staff can cope. The contraction of the NHS will obviously not mean a cut in the profits of the drug monopolies!



Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

More than 150 people picketed a meeting of Camden Council on 14 January to demand that it refuse to implement the Government's cuts

## Demo against education cuts on 27 Feb

The last TUC Congress saw a great deal of noise from the trade union leaders about how they would only accept the Government's pay policy if action was taken to defend jobs, education and the social services in general. That statement now rings as hollow in the education sector as everywhere else.

The real number of unemployed teachers is put at 8,000 by the National Union of Teachers. Young people, being forced back to college because they can't find work, are having their discretionary awards cut. Adult and nursery education are being slashed. Plans are being prepared to put local authority workers on short time or give them the sack outright. Yet the TUC does nothing — except to sabotage any resistance.

The one region of the TUC which, to date, has organised some form of opposition to Government policies on education — the South East Region — was told by the General Council that it could not have a campaign budget in its own name. No money, no campaign.

It has been more or less left to the National Union of Students to launch any campaign at all. The NUS is calling a demonstration against the education cuts for 27 February, and has appealed to the trade unions for support.

But the Broad Left leadership of the NUS has shown itself unprepared to go

beyond such actions to mobilise students for a real fight against the Government's policies in education, in alliance with other unions both inside and outside the education sector.

Although committed by its conference to oppose the Government's pay policy, the NUS, like other Broad Left-led trade unions, has submitted a grants claim of £995 per year that implicitly accepts the Government's pay policy. The timidity with which it mobilised students for the unemployment demonstration on 26 November shows its reluctance really to campaign for concrete links between students and workers in action. This reluctance stems from the Broad Left's refusal to cross swords with the trade union leadership.

## Joint action

Students must seek joint action with working class organisations to fight the Government's attacks. Student unions and trade unions in Bristol jointly pushed back some of the cuts that the Tory Council were proposing — in particular its intention to cut discretionary awards completely. Many colleges are beginning to set up joint student union-trade union committees to launch similar area wide campaigns against the cuts. Such actions begin to draw out the fact that the attacks on education, alongside the attacks on

other social services, are attacks on the whole working class and demand a response which goes beyond just those directly affected by the cuts.

## Sliding scale

Clear policies also need to be developed that express the need for class-wide action — policies like the sliding scale of grants and social security benefits, a sliding scale of social expenditure, and a campaign for a crash programme of public works. As the Vice-Chancellors and other 'top people' make a 'special case' for saving the 'best' parts of education, so we must counter with the case for defending all sectors of education and the other social services, and for a working class solution to the waste and misery caused by capitalist policies in the social services.

The obstacle that the present policies of the TUC represent to such a fight back must be exposed. IMG students will be waging a campaign for a lobby of the TUC headquarters on the day of the demonstration to show the need for the fight to start in a real way against these cuts, and to demand a recall TUC to bring to account the trade union leaders who have openly ignored the interests of even the weakest sections of their membership. Resolutions should be put calling for strike action to make 27 February the beginning of such a united fight back.



The Elisabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in London's Euston Road

## Women's hospital faces the chop

'This hospital is almost unique in that it was founded by a woman for women and is staffed entirely by women, and in addition to affording to poor women and children the opportunity of obtaining medical and surgical treatment by qualified women, the hospital takes a considerable part in promoting the medical education of women.'

These were the words of a Charter granted to the Elisabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in North London in 1929. But the needs of the community and particularly women are no longer considered 'relevant' under Labour's policy of cuts, and the EGA is now faced with extinction.

The EGA is situated opposite the main railway termini in the Euston Road, so that it would be easily accessible to women from all over the country; and the Islington & Camden Area Health Authority, which covers it, now feels 'unable' to provide for a hospital which draws 75 per cent of its patients from outside the area.

Like many other hospitals due for the chop, conditions at the EGA have been rapidly deteriorating. Student nurses were withdrawn from the hospital last year, and it has had to rely on fully trained, mainly agency nurses at very high rates. The maternity ward — situated in Hampstead — has been closed, leaving the hospital with a gynaecological staff but no ward!

The same pattern of events preceded the closure of the Liverpool Road Hospital in Islington last year, another hospital which only serviced women; and is likely to occur again at the National Temperance Hospital in Camden, which contains the abortion and gynaecological wards of University College Hospital.

## 'Unsuitable'

Amongst the 'reasons' put forward for closing the hospital has been the 'recent discovery' by the DHSS that the Euston Road site is unsuitable for a hospital! Unable to substantiate this argument, they fail to mention that the site could be worth a small fortune if sold off to property speculators — could this be a reason why the site is unsuitable?

The Labour Government's cuts in social services are hitting women particularly hard, and the EGA is but one example of this. Little opportunity is open to women to train as doctors. Only 8 per cent of all consultants are women, and the hierarchy of the medical profession is completely dominated by men. But many women patients, for both religious and personal reasons, prefer to be treated by women doctors —

and that choice should be as open to them as it is to men.

The EGA is one of the few remaining hospitals which actually offers that choice. Only when a health service has been established under the control of the working class, which actually meets the needs of the community, will women fully benefit both as patients and as workers.

## Conference

To achieve that goal, a fight must be waged by the working class against all attacks on its living standards, and that fight must include not only the defence, but the extension of the kind of facilities provided by the EGA. As part of the fight against cuts and unemployment, the Working Women's Charter London Conference on 'Women and the Cuts' on 28 February is an important step. If the labour movement is to wage a united campaign against the policies of the Labour Government, women must play an integral part in that struggle.

For more information and delegate forms to the conference, contact: Women and the Cuts Conference, c/o Michele Ryan, 39 Parkholme Road, London E.8. (tel. 249 3072).

Jane Clarke  
Stephanie Ware

## WOMEN AND THE CUTS

c/o Michele Ryan, 39 Parkholme Road, London E.8. Tel. 249 3072.

## LONDON CONFERENCE ON SAT 28 FEBRUARY

Sponsorship and donations are being sought from all labour movement and women's organisations. For further information contact 39 Parkholme Road, London E.8. 01-249-3072.

CONFERENCE CALLED BY THE  
WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER



JIM SILLARS MP

The split between the leadership of the Scottish Labour Party and the mainstream of the Labour bureaucracy is not over how to fight for socialism but on how to save their bureaucratic necks in the face of the rise of the Scottish National Party.

The line of the old leadership of the Labour Party in Scotland was simply to bluff it out. They stuck to this line even after the elections in February and October 1974 boosted the SNP's seats in Parliament from one to seven to eleven. It took the direct intervention of British Labour Party Secretary Ron Hayward at the 1975 Scottish Labour Party Conference to end the openly suicidal course adopted by the hacks of the Scottish Council of the Labour Party.

Despite the machinations of the bureaucracy, however, the Labour vote remained fairly firm in 1974. The domination of the SNP by an astute finance capital clique which supplied the party with a viciously anti-working class economic policy for independence (see the exposure of SNP secret documents in *Red Weekly*, 4 September 1975) was sufficient to scare off most workers. The SNP won eight seats from the Tories and built massive petit-bourgeois support, but it did not break Labour's hold on working class votes.

## 'DISCRIMINATION'

Eighteen months later the situation is very different. The open right-wing policies of the Wilson Government — whose effects are especially vicious in Scotland — have increasingly led sections of Scottish workers to identify them with some form of 'national discrimination'. The SNP believes it can win a massive working class vote, and inflict a 1931-style defeat on Labour.

Confronted with the SNP threat the Labour bureaucrats naturally did not come forward with the only policy capable of defending the working class — the struggle for a socialist solution to the crisis in Scotland. Instead it produced its White Paper on devolution. This was meant as a sop to nationalism. But on that field the SNP holds all the aces — as Scottish miners secretary Bill Maclean commented: 'It gives the SNP a stick to break the back of the Labour Party in Scotland.'

The results of this disastrous policy were seen in the Central Regional Council by-election in the mining town of Bo'ness, where a Labour majority of 300 was turned into a Nationalist majority of 1,500. A leading opinion poll a few days later projected a rise in the SNP's poll to 57 per cent, which would lose Labour at least 17 seats.

Confronted with the threat of a catastrophic electoral defeat, a section of the Labour bureaucracy in Scotland decided to stop following this suicidal path and do what every other bureaucracy does in similar circumstances — make a demagogic 'left' turn. This didn't mean the adoption of class struggle politics — Sillars, for example, is noted for having written a centre-spread article for the *Scottish Daily Express* viciously attacking the 1973 Glasgow firemen's strike — but a turn towards an attempt to combine nationalist demogogy with Bennite economic policies.

## MOTLEY CREW

Around this project a motley collection has assembled — notably John Robertson, MP for Paisley, who is a long time associate of AUEW right-winger John Boyd and who broke Labour Party discipline to act as a House of Commons sponsor of SNP member Margo MacDonald after she had defeated the Labour Party in the Govan by-election. Also prominent are a collection of journalists, including the Scottish correspondent of the *Financial Times* and the gossip columnist of the *Daily Record*.

These people probably calculate that Labour will be annihilated at the next election while Sillars retains his seat, and that they will then be able to dominate a revamped Labour Party which includes a majority of the bureaucracy. Failing this, many of them are quite capable of breaking their links with the workers' movement altogether and joining the SNP. It is this group which dominates the SLP and provided the platform at its founding conference.

The policies which these people are trying to impose on the new organisation are of course reformist, confused, and in some cases reactionary. The membership card of the SLP carries a twofold statement of aims: '(1) The creation of a powerful Scottish Parliament working in full democratic partnership with the rest of the UK and representing Scotland in the EEC. (2) To ensure that the Scottish Parliament is a socialist Parliament applying modern socialist policies in Scotland.'

Sillars' main argument is that the Government has not implemented the Labour Party election manifesto — particularly on devolution, unemployment, and social expenditure cuts. But the SLP's only solution to this is that put forward by Alex Neil, a for-

# The Scottish Labour Party



JOHN ROBERTSON MP

limit, against the destruction of the welfare state and against attempts to settle in advance the powers of an Assembly.'

It is also necessary for the SLP to adopt other crucial policies such as the nationalisation of oil. Here the right approach was shown by a former member of the Communist Party, who said that the chief tasks of the SLP must be to fully implement Clause Four and to oppose bans and proscriptions. This point was also supported by IMG speaker Stewart MacLennan, who pointed out that to work out its policies and break with bureaucratic labourism the SLP had to have the fullest internal democracy.

## FIGHT WILSON

Once the question of programme is decided, then of course the attitude towards the Labour Party falls into place. The most important thing is to begin to organise for a fight against Wilson. Given the choice of organising for a fight but being forced out of the Labour Party, or being in the Labour Party but unable to organise for the struggle, it is much better to form a group and run the risk of being thrown out. But this is true only if there is no other choice. There is no sense in provoking it.

If it is possible to organise openly for a programme of struggle against Wilson and for the interests of the working class in Scotland and Britain, then the support of the mass of workers for the Labour Party means that this is the place to be. Here the manoeuvres of Sillars are having a ruinous effect. On 11 January he stated that the SLP had no plans to field candidates in elections. The following day he said he recognised that he would have to fight the next election as an SLP candidate.

The effect of such behaviour is to convince people that he is a left-wing Prentice. His attitude in refusing to discuss his views with all members of his constituency party can only put people off.

## NO MANOEUVRES

The only way to win over members of the Labour Party is to take a principled position without any hint of manoeuvres. This means saying openly: 'We intend to organise to fight the policies of Wilson on devolution and everything else, which are leading the working class to a crushing defeat. It is necessary to organise to fight now, and it is better even to be thrown out than meekly follow the bureaucracy up the road to disaster. But if we are thrown out that will be the bureaucracy's fault and not ours.'

'We prefer for our organisation to be members of the Labour Party. Whether you agree with our policies or not, you should fight with us for our right to be in the Labour Party. It is the bureaucrats, not us, who are splitting the labour movement. We must campaign in every factory and union against their acts.'

Thousands of Labour Party members will respond to such an appeal. Even if they are thrown out the SLP should still adopt as part of its policy the demand to affiliate to the Labour Party — just as Trotsky advised the ILP to do after it left the Labour Party in the 1930s.

But this is in the future. While remaining within the Labour Party should be a goal of the SLP, the most important question facing it is to get organised and replace its existing confused and reformist programme with one which is really adequate to the needs of the working class. This is the urgent task which today faces the militant supporters of the SLP.

## HEALY AS A BUREAUCRATIC COP

The political degeneration of the Workers Revolutionary Party proceeds apace. It has now come forward as an advocate of utilising suppression by the bureaucracy to settle political arguments in the workers movement. The 17 January issue of *Workers Press* notes the campaign for the formation of the Scottish Labour Party and states: 'The way has been paved for tomorrow's meeting by the official Labour Party machine which is refusing to take any action against the splitters. This has given them a free rein to campaign on their nationalist ticket inside the Labour Party itself.'

A truly magnificent position. It is one thing to oppose the politics of the SLP — anyone in the workers movement is perfectly entitled to do that — but when someone demands that this political fight inside the workers movement be settled by the intervention of the bureaucracy that is something quite different. Perhaps it is yet another of those interesting 'developments of theory' for which the WRP is renowned. On this Healy shows himself to be not merely in alliance with the right — as happened in the Cowley union elections — but now acting as a cop of the bureaucrats.

**NEXT WEEK: Why the WRP slanders Joe Hansen.**

Over 400 people crowded into the founding meeting of the Scottish Labour Party in Glasgow on Sunday. ALAN JONES and JAMES MacALLISTER look at the background to its formation.



SLP will be judged by its attitude in practice to such working class struggles as the Glasgow dustcart drivers' strike. Alan Jones, a former Labour Party research officer, who has stated that the core of the party's policy is to secure wide powers for the proposed Scottish Assembly and control over oil revenues.

Such a line in no way marks off the SLP from the SNP's radical demagoguery: in fact, by suggesting that cuts and unemployment can be solved by controlling the oil resources, they merely reinforce the nationalist mirage of an 'oil-rich independent Scotland'.

But despite this reformism and confusion, the development of a political organisation doesn't depend just on what its leadership wants. Despite all these manoeuvres, the formation of the SLP is potentially a positive development.

Scotland is in a massive economic, social and political crisis. The line of the Labour Party leadership is patently bankrupt, and the present line of bureaucratic threats against the SLP is utterly reactionary and must be strongly condemned in the labour

movement. Under these circumstances, not only bureaucrats seeking to save their necks but also workers seeking a left alternative will join the SLP.

Most of those attending the founding meeting were undoubtedly opponents of Wilson's right-wing policies rather than supporters of 'nationalism' in any reactionary sense. The SLP therefore starts as a current with a left social democratic leadership and a centrist membership ranging from abject reformists to revolutionaries.

The evolution of the SLP after its formation depends not just on Sillars and the course of the class struggle in Scotland. It also depends on the intervention of revolutionary socialists. An IMG statement put out at the conference pointed out that: 'The essential task of this and future meetings of the SLP is to work out concrete proposals for the widest possible unity in action of the labour movement against mass unemployment, against the £6

# Get US and South Africa out of Angola NOW

'Despite Congressional efforts to keep the US out of the Angolan civil war,' the *Christian Science Monitor* reported on January 2, 'the covert American operation is increasing and becoming more organised.'

According to Sean Gervasi of the Centre for National Security Studies in Washington, the US has also sent a naval task force to Angolan waters. Gervasi says that the aircraft carrier *USS Independence*, supported by a guided-missile cruiser and three destroyer escorts, was placed under contingency orders between November 15 and 23 'for a mission in the Angolan conflict'. The *Independence* carries 90 Phantom F-4 jets and was armed after 15 November with 'several hundred tons of napalm, Sidewinder missiles and anti-personnel fragmentation bombs in pods'.

The US Senate voted on 19 December by 54 to 22 to cut off US funds for the Angolan war. President Ford, however, is lobbying to ensure that the Senate vote is reversed by the House of Representatives when Congress reassembles on 20 January. Ford might also use his veto power over the Senate decision. In the meantime, Ford and Kissinger are using funds already voted to finance the United States' involvement in the war.

## COLLABORATION

On 6 January, the minister with responsibility for Africa in the British Foreign Office, David Ennals, held discussions with the US assistant secretary of state for African affairs, William Schaufele. Ennals — like the Labour Government as a whole — failed to denounce the US and South African aggression against the Angolan people.

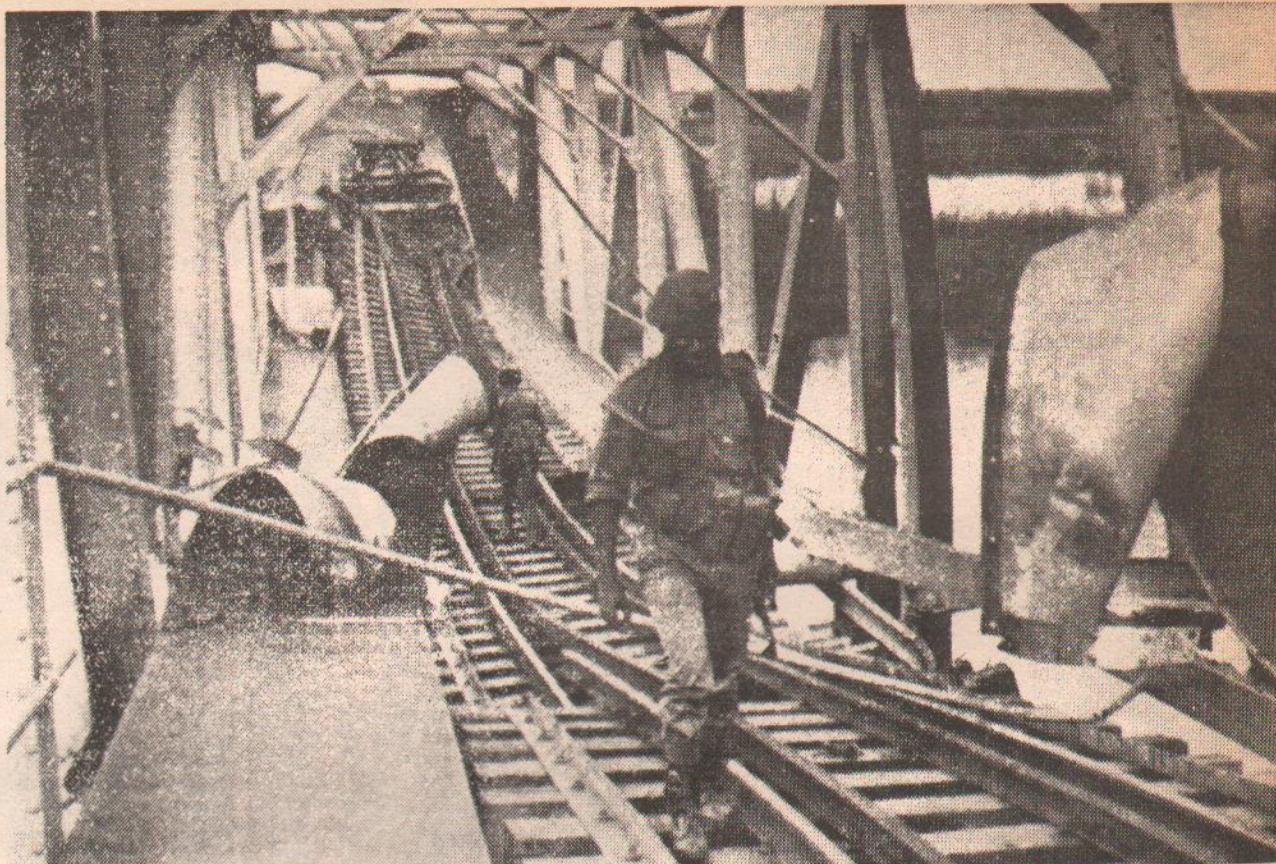
The Labour Government has also done nothing to oppose the South

African invasion of Angola. Of course, this only dovetails with Britain's long record of collaboration with the racist South African regime. British trade with South Africa is massive, British capitalist interests have over £2,000 million of investments there, and the Labour Government one year ago joined the US and France in casting a triple vote in the UN security council against a bid to expel South Africa from the UN.

## COORDINATED

There is mounting evidence that the South African invasion of Angola is being closely coordinated with the US intervention. David Ottoway wrote in the *Guardian* on 7 January that the US originally urged the South African invasion. Gervasi puts the number of South African troops now in Angola at between 4,000 and 6,000. 'There is no doubt', wrote Stanley Uys in the 2 January *Guardian*, 'that behind the scenes South Africa is in close contact with Zambia, Zaire and the US government, and also enjoys, in the same measure, their support for its military presence in Angola'.

Vorster called on 1 January for 'bigger western involvement, not only in the diplomatic but all other fields'. According to the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO), Vorster's aim is not just to overturn the Luanda-based MPLA government but also to annex a 60-km wide stretch of territory running the length of the Namibian border.



UNITA soldier treads wreckage on Benguela railway—the copper export lifeline on which Zambia depends

The US's record as regards African freedom bears little comment. Washington allowed the Salazar dictatorship to use American arms (supplied through NATO) to suppress the Angolan uprising of 1961. 50,000 Africans were killed.



Woman soldier in MPLA's forces

Between 1962 and 1968, the US sent more than 39 million dollars in military aid and 124 million dollars in economic assistance to the Portuguese dictatorship. Hundreds of Portuguese troops received US military training, some at the US counter-insurgency school at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Since 1962, the US representatives in the United Nations abstained on or voted against all major resolutions condemning Portuguese colonialism.

In 1970, the Nixon administration stepped up its support for the Portuguese colonialists. In February of that year, the US government adopted a secret policy (Option 2 proposed in National Security Study Memorandum 39, known as 'Tar Baby') which codified Washington's support for Portuguese colonialism and the white minority regimes in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. The policy was based on the premise that 'the Whites are here to stay and the only way that constructive change can come is through them'.

The policy involved, as NSSM 39 put it, 'a selective relaxation of our stance towards the white regimes,' and (in line with Vorster's later detente manoeuvres) a bid to 'convince the black states ..... that their only hope for a peaceful and prosperous future lies in closer relations with white-dominated states'. Tar Baby's line was to 'maintain public opposition to racial repression but relax political isolation and economic restrictions on the white states'.

In line with this policy, the US

ing at the United Nations, ignored UN sanctions against Rhodesia by allowing Rhodesian chrome imports into the US, and extended a 436 million dollar Export-Import Bank credit loan to Portugal in 1971.

## UNSTUCK

The US' stepped-up aid to Portugal's colonial wars was a losing venture. Tar Baby first came unstuck with the April 1974 overthrow of the Caetano dictatorship and the collapse of direct Portuguese colonial rule in Africa. Jonathan Steele, writing in the *Guardian* on 9 January, noted the dangers that then concerned Washington's policy-makers. 'The prospect emerged of a strong central Angolan government which might well carry the liberation fight farther south to Namibia.'

Whereas the Frelimo regime in Mozambique, Steele pointed out, 'was weakened by close economic ties to South Africa, Angola was rich and remote enough to be able to be more independent, more militant and more hostile to the south'. In Steele's opinion, the US minimum aim was a military stalemate whose effect would be fourfold — to deny the Russians a propaganda victory, dent the reputation of the most internationally respected of the three Angolan liberation movements, restore doubts about the option of violence as a strategy for change in Southern Africa, and once again buy time'.

Calculating that it was better to have three squabbling factions than a political victory for one, the US has sought in Steele's view to ensure a military stalemate on the battle-front and to achieve a diplomatic stalemate in the OAU. Under these conditions, supporters of Angola's independence must rally throughout the world to the defence of Angola's right to self-determination. In Angola, revolutionary socialists, while not giving political support to the MPLA, fight together with the MPLA against the imperialist assault.

Let us examine US imperialism's objectives a little more closely.

## NO CONFIDENCE

First there is evidence that the US may not have confidence in the ability of an MPLA regime to defend its interests — though the MPLA leaders have on many occasions stressed their rejection of socialism and Marxism. Repudiating the Marxist label often falsely pinned on the MPLA leaders by western journalists, Agostinho Neto, the MPLA's president, has said that 'I dislike these classifications. I am not a Communist, I am not a Socialist, I am first of all a patriot'.

But the US knows that many of the MPLA's supporters in the *muçiques* (townships) of Luanda, Angola's largest industrial area and the

support, have radical aspirations. After the downfall of the Caetano regime, the Luanda workers engaged in a powerful wave of strikes, demonstrations and even mini-uprisings, taking them considerably to the left of their leaders.

On 8 March 1975, thousands marched through the streets of Luanda in protest against a 'Mobilisation Law' (voted by the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA ministers in the Transitional Government) which allowed the Government to militarise labour. In May and June the Luanda dockers, who had been placed under military jurisdiction in accordance with the Mobilisation Law, defied the Government and went back on strike, winning pay increases between 33 per cent and 55 per cent.

## SELF-DEFENCE

Thousands of workers armed themselves in the Luanda shantytowns between July and November 1974 after white settler gangs attacked the *muçiques* killing over 200 blacks. The MPLA leaders joined the UNITA and FNLA ministers in the Transitional Government in attempting to disarm the workers (in a decree of 3 February 1975) but again they were unsuccessful.

'We have been accused', MPLA leader Lucio Lara explained last May 'of arming the civilian population. Indeed, part of the population has been armed, but that was done in July 1974 to resist aggression from reactionary whites. These self-defence units have placed themselves since under the MPLA banner, but we do not control them. It is essential to understand that we are not in a position to disarm them'.

As a petit-bourgeois movement with a bourgeois-nationalist programme, the MPLA has more recently stressed its support for foreign investment in the country (granting a loan to DIAMANG) and its opposition to strikes and independent working class action. According to the 23 October *Le Monde* the MPLA also dissolved by decree the self-defence bodies in the Luanda *muçiques*, reorganising them with 'politically conscious elements' in the leadership and under the direct control of the MPLA's military hierarchy. Any armed groups outside the FAPLA (the MPLA army) were declared illegal.

## REPRESSION

Left-wing opposition is being repressed in the MPLA areas. The 21 October *Times of Zambia*, for example, reported that 'the MPLA has arrested six of its leading left-wingers and closed down two leftist publications'. Neto, in an independence address, declared on 10 November that the Peoples Republic of Angola would be a one-party state. The MPLA has refused to call

IF YOU LIKED VIETNAM, YOU'LL LOVE THIS ONE!



PRODUCED AND DIRECTED BY HENRY KISSINGER  
STARRING THE C.I.A. AT A COST OF MILLIONS!

RATED  
TOP SECRET

Constituent Assembly and has widely curtailed democratic rights. It is unclear, however, whether the US has confidence in the ability of the MPLA leaders to police their own rank-and-file supporters and halt the radicalisation process that broke out in the Luanda area after the Lisbon coup.

**URANIUM**

The defence of white rule in Namibia — and the strengthening of Vorster's detente offensive — also ranks high in the policy objectives of Washington and Pretoria. Namibia has vast mineral deposits of both economic and military value to the imperialists. The uranium to be used in South Africa's nuclear programme will be mined from the vast Rossing uranium mine in Namibia (owned by the British multi-national Rio-Tinto Zinc) where production is set to start in July 1976.

Both Ford and Vorster appear to calculate that the MPLA Government (like other bourgeois nationalist regimes such as Congo and Tanzania) would be willing to aid the Namibian freedom fighters. The Frelimo regime in Mozambique, by contrast, is economically dependent on South Africa (unlike Angola) and is now cooperating closely with Pretoria, in particular by participating in the detente manoeuvres over the future of Zimbabwe.

**'GUARANTEES'**

Speaking on 1 January, Vorster indicated that South African withdrawal from Angola is conditional upon guarantees that Angola will not be used as a base for the Namibian freedom fighters. Meanwhile it seems probable that South African backing for UNITA has been given on the understanding that UNITA will place constraints on the Namibian nationalists.

Even before the full-scale South

African invasion, the 2 May issue of *Portuguese Africa*, reporting an interview with Savimbi, noted UNITA's willingness to participate in Vorster's bid for 'dialogue' with black Africa. 'Dr Savimbi said he was in favour of detente and of dialogue as a means of solving problems, and that he did not believe, in the present South African context, that armed liberation wars were necessarily the solution for the problems of Namibia and Zimbabwe'.

The US's third concern is the Soviet Union's success in winning diplomatic gains through its association with a victorious MPLA regime in Angola. This has nothing to do with the Soviet Union breaking from its commitment to the detente, as some observers have suggested. A front-page leading article in *Izvestia* on 6 January said that the USSR's support for the MPLA in no way contradicted 'the policy of detente and lessening tension'.

**DETENTE**

On 16 December, at the end of a two-day conference in Moscow, the foreign ministers of the Warsaw Pact countries issued a communique calling for a continuation of the detente, urging further 'advances along the road found and built jointly by the 33 European countries, the United States and Canada'. Reaffirmation of the detente line (collaboration with world imperialism for the maintenance of class peace on a global scale) is one of the key objectives of the Kremlin at the

forth-coming congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The opportunist nature of Soviet aid for the MPLA is shown by the Kremlin's backing for such dictators as Idi Amin of Uganda. The Soviet bureaucracy knows full well that the MPLA has no intention of carrying through a socialist revolution in Angola.

Soviet military aid to the MPLA, positive in so far as it is needed to defend the Angolan people from the imperialist aggression, is aimed at raising Soviet prestige and winning diplomatic successes in a strategic part of Africa. However the MPLA has every right to accept aid from the Soviet Union in order to defend Angola's independence from imperialist intervention.

The US ruling class has shown itself to be deeply divided over Ford's

Angolan strategy. The Angolan operation threatens, in the view of some capitalist politicians in the US, to upset domestic stability while achieving nothing in Angola itself.

**OPPOSITION**

In voting against funds for the FNLA and UNITA, the US Senate expressed ruling class fears about the depth of anti-war sentiment in the country in the wake of the Vietnam war. Many Democrat and Republican leaders also fear that US involvement in an African country like Angola could spark widespread opposition from the black movement in the US — while undermining the US's prestige and diplomatic position in Africa itself.

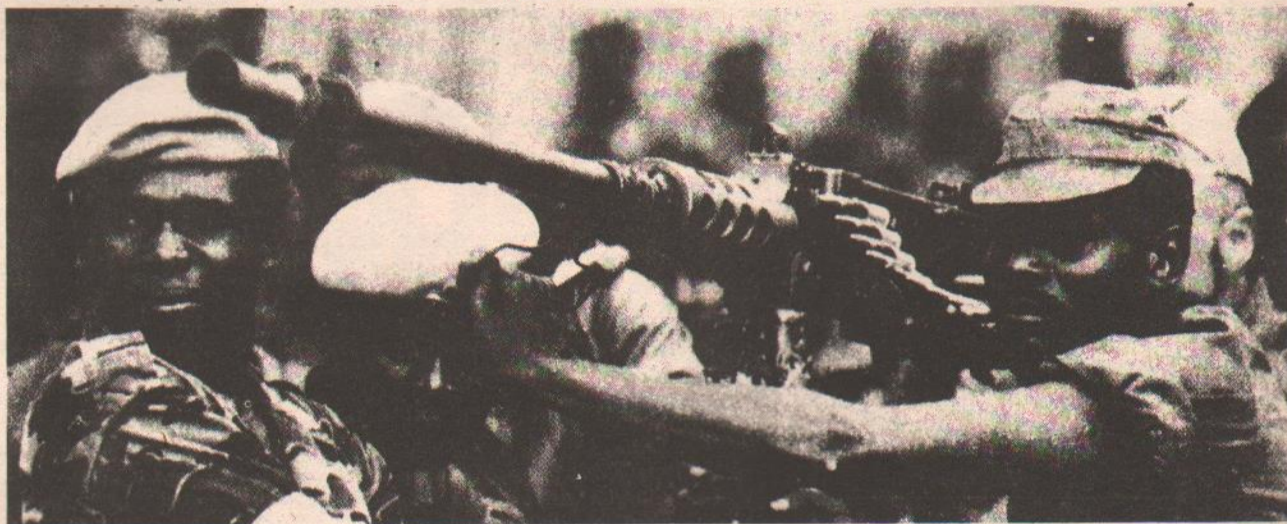
With 23 African Governments now

recognising the People's Republic of Angola set up by the MPLA (and the recent OAU summit in Addis Ababa only narrowly failing to do the same), US imperialism's intervention in the Angolan war runs the risk of back-firing.

Opponents of the US and South African involvement cannot, however, place any reliance on the ruling class 'doves' to get this intervention stopped and Angola's independence safeguarded. Mass mobilisations — demonstrations, pickets and teach-ins — are urgently needed.

The message needs to be loud, massive and clear: Get the US and South Africa out of Angola now, and end all British collaboration with the US and South African war drive.

TONY HODGES



**Recognise the MPLA!**

News continues to come in of massive MPLA military victories in Angola. Foiled in their aims at direct military intervention in Angola, the imperialists are now trying a new tack. Following the US's campaign for 'non-intervention' at the OAU summit, Kissinger is now reported to be cooking up a new deal with the Soviet bureaucracy for them to stop supplying weapons to the MPLA.

The anti-working class hypocrites of the Labour Government, who in 1964-70 applauded every sing-

le step of the American war in Vietnam, and have raised not a murmur about the CIA millions going to the FNLA and UNITA, now add their declarations of support for the great principle of 'non-intervention in the domestic affairs of another country'. They use this also to justify their refusal to recognise the MPLA Government.

The reality of 'non-intervention' is clear. Its affects were tragically visible in the 1930s in the Spanish civil war. It means demanding

that the forces fighting imperialism lose their weapons and supplies while the imperialists manoeuvre to keep their forces armed to the teeth. It is used by the Soviet bureaucracy to justify their sell-outs of those fighting imperialism.

There should be no confusion on the nonsense of 'non-intervention'. Socialists must demand: Full Cuban and Russian military support for the MPLA! Labour recognise the MPLA Government now! RED WEEKLY

**The Civil War in Angola**

[The following statement by the United Secretariat of the Fourth International was issued November 23, 1975.]

The peoples of Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau dealt a serious blow to imperialist domination in Africa by overthrowing Portuguese colonialism. The struggle of the Angolan masses has opened a breach in the reactionary bastion of southern Africa, under the hegemony of the racist regime in Pretoria. The revolutionary rise of the working class in the metropolis prevented the Portuguese bourgeoisie from responding effectively and healing this breach through a successful neocolonialist operation.

Given this situation, and given the prospect of the dynamic of the mobilization of the Angolan masses developing toward objectives that are not simply anti-imperialist but anticapitalist as well—especially in Luanda, where the workers component has significant weight—all the partisans of colonialism, both old and new, and all the defenders of imperialist interests, both North American and European, have blocked together to crush the Angolan revolution and impose the establishment of a reactionary regime through a civil war. The leaderships of the FNLA and UNITA, which defend tribal and regionalist positions and the interests of bourgeois layers in formation, are taking part in this

front with the imperialists, the racists, and the neocolonial regimes in Zaïre and Zambia.

The workers and revolutionary movements of the entire world denounce the counterrevolutionary operation that has been launched in Africa. In the present civil war these movements stand in the camp of the Democratic Republic of Angola proclaimed by the MPLA on November 11. The workers states and all workers organizations must make sure that the Angolan fighters receive political solidarity and material support. A defeat for the forces of the Democratic Republic would be a serious defeat for the revolution in Africa; it would represent a strengthening of imperialism and neocolonialism and would be accompanied by a bloody repression. On the other hand, the victory of the Democratic Republic, since it can be achieved only through a very deep mobilization of the masses, would create favorable conditions for the complete elimination of imperialist domination and for a socialist dynamic of the struggle of the workers and peasants.

The Fourth International chooses the camp of the Angolan Democratic Republic against the holy alliance of imperialists, racists, and indigenous reactionaries. In the civil war the Fourth International stands with the masses who are mobilized to defend the independence that has been won through fifteen years of stubborn struggle, to defend their fundamental interests against all foreign and "national" exploit-

ing classes, for the expropriation of the capitalists and landlords, and for the construction of a new state based on revolutionary democratic committees, direct expressions of the masses.

Such an attitude does not mean that the Fourth International and African revolutionary Marxists give up their criticisms of the leadership of the MPLA, which they consider to be petty-bourgeois nationalist and not proletarian and communist. Alignment in the same camp and commitment to a common struggle are not in contradiction with the battle for political clarification necessary for a victorious outcome of the war and for the construction of a proletarian revolutionary Marxist leadership.

Against the holy alliance of imperialists, South African racists, neocolonialists of Zaïre and Zambia, and the reactionary leaderships of the FNLA and UNITA! Defend the complete independence of Angola! Defend the Democratic Republic proclaimed by the MPLA! Reject any attempt at Balkanization! Immediate withdrawal of all forces of American and European imperialism, of South African racists, and all neocolonial governments!

Organize an international campaign of solidarity! All workers states and all trade-union and political organizations of the proletariat must mobilize on the side of the Angolan fighters by assuring them political solidarity and material support! Boycott the sending of arms to the reactionary bloc of the FNLA and UNITA!





INDIAN PRIME MINISTER INDIRA GANDHI

# Gandhi tightens her grip

The Congress Government of Indira Gandhi has decreed that the general elections due to be held this year will be postponed for a further 12 months. It has also declared its intention to introduce a number of amendments to the Indian constitution which will further restrict opposition following the imposition of the 'state of emergency' on 26 June 1975.

Contrary to the claims of Pravda and the Communist Party of India (CPI) — who argue that by means of the emergency regulations, the progressive bourgeois regime of Indira Gandhi is seeking to carry out the national democratic stage of the revolution — the main thrust of the state of emergency is directed against the working class, the rural poor and left wing critics.

For example, in theory it is illegal to initiate strikes or lock-outs. In practice it is only the strikes which have been banned.

Exploiting the emergency regulations, the Government has also decreed that annual bonus payments

made to workers should be halved — from eight per cent to four per cent. While strikers and trade union 'agitators' who oppose these measures are arrested and detained without trial, the capitalists continue to sack workers and declare lock-outs.

Two militants of the Fourth International from Kanpur, Raj Narain Singh and Jabanath, were arrested on 4 October and are still being held in custody. Like most other worker militants, they are being held under Defence of India Regulation (DIR) 36/43, which means that they were 'attempting to overthrow

the Government'. The real reason for their detention, however, was their attempts, along with other workers at the J.K. Jute Mill, to express their opposition to the arbitrary reduction of the bonus payments.

## NO TRIAL

Most of the right-wing activists who were arrested after the emergency have been released. Many of them were held in custody for only a few days. In contrast, the 50,000 prisoners who have been held in custody since 1966/67 are still being held without trial.

Their ranks are being constantly swollen by worker militants desperate-

ly struggling to prevent wage cuts. Even the pro-Government CPI has been forced to admit that 30,000 workers have so far been jailed under the emergency. According to the 11 January issue of its journal *New Age*, 16,000 were arrested on a single day, 6 January, when the trade unions organised a national hunger strike to coincide with the opening of the new parliamentary session.

## EXECUTIONS

The Indira regime is also attempting to use the state of emergency to execute poor peasants and 'Untouchable' leaders like Boomiah and Gowd. The latter, although sentenced to death long ago, have escaped this fate through widespread public protest. Such executions would be welcomed by the capitalist farmers, who could step up their attempts to exploit and repress the rural poor and evict them unlawfully from their land.

The situation is welcomed by the bourgeoisie both at home and abroad, because the implementation of anti-working class measures requires a long period of 'political stability'. Nevertheless, all is not well for the Indian ruling class. For instance the price stability they have boasted about so much is coming to an end; and the much heralded '20 point programme' has failed to alleviate the acute problems of poverty, unemployment and misery of the Indian masses.

Above all, the failure of the Stalinist and Maoist parties to provide

any lead in the situation has stimulated a deep re-evaluation of political strategy and tactics. Today, hundreds of militants are beginning to accept the basic ideas of Trotskyism — of the permanent revolution.

Militants in India are compelled to struggle under very difficult circumstances. Political detainees are often held in detention without trial for months and years. In these circumstances it is essential for revolutionaries in other parts of the world to organise solidarity actions with these militants.

In Britain, it is particularly important to expose the complicity of the British Labour Party leaders, who have just given £100 million to prop up the Indira regime. Contrast this with Callaghan's statement about 'not giving aid to dictatorial regimes' in relation to the Goncalves Government in Portugal. Full support must be given to all actions which break the ring of silence so carefully cultivated around the facts of the situation in India today.

Rana Roy

## DEMONSTRATE IN SOLIDARITY WITH INDIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS

Join the Campaign for the Release of Indian Political Prisoners (CRIPP) contingent in the demo on Sunday 25 Jan — assemble 1pm Speakers Corner

—release all political prisoners  
—end the prison killings  
—halt the torture of prisoners and detainees.

\*demo organised by Alliance Against Dictatorship in India

CRIPP address: 22 Boundary Road, London NW8 (328 2332).



The Government ordered a news black-out on the Bihar mining disaster, in which 372 men were killed

# -WHAT'S ON-

**WEEKEND SEMINAR** organised jointly by Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation. 24/25 Jan at Essex University, Colchester. Sat 11am: 'What is Socialist Democracy'—day-long discussion opened by Prof John Seville. Sun 11am: 'Socialism, Detente and the British Labour Movement'—discussion until 4pm opened by Stan Newens MP. Social on Sat evening, limited free accommodation. Advance registration (£1) and requests for accommodation to: Marian Sling, 49a Tabley Rd, London N7.

**LEBANON**—behind the civil war (speaker K.M. Jafaar). London Socialist Forum, Tues 27 Jan, 7.30 at Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq (Holborn tube).

**ANGOLA** Solidarity Committee national Day of Action—Wed 4 Feb. Mass leafletting campaign to combat media distortion. Order leaflets now from ASC, c/o 30 Romilly Road, London N4 (phone 01-369 4545 or 01-734 9541).

**AD HOC COMMITTEE** to mobilise for 25 Jan demo in solidarity with Indian political prisoners meets every Friday at 7pm at 22 Boundary Road, London NW8.

**MOTOR INDUSTRY**—Institute for Workers Control conference, Sat 31 Jan, starts 10.15am at AUEW House, Smallbrook Ringway, Birmingham.

**BREAK ALL LINKS** with Chile! Demonstration, Sat 24 Jan, assemble Victoria Square, 11.30am. Speakers include Tom Litterick MP, Joan Jara, Wendy Tyndall. Organised by Birmingham CSC.

**VIVA PORTUGALI** Bristol FI Soc presents 90 minutes of revolutionary cinema, Fri 23 Jan, 7.30, MRI, University Union, Queens Road.

**MANCHESTER** Angola Solidarity Committee campaign. 27 Jan: 12.45, film and speaker at Salford University Union; 7.30 public meeting with Labour MP etc at W. Indian Centre, Carmoor Rd—followed by social till 1am (late bar). 29 Jan: 12.45, film and speaker, Manchester Polytechnic; 8pm, film 'Angola' and speaker, Stockport UNA, Central United Reform Church, Millbrook St (behind AUEW).

**SOCIALIST ACTION** is a new revolutionary socialist paper produced by the League for Socialist Action with the aim of taking up issues of importance in the labour, black, students and women's liberation movements. International events, particularly coverage of national liberation struggles as in Ireland today, will be an essential aspect of the paper. Subscription rate: 6 issues £1, 12 issues £2—contact Dave MacLeod, 1 Pretoria Rd, London SW16.

**REVOLUTIONARY Communist Group:** 'Troops Out Now—a vital part of a socialist programme'. Public meeting to mobilise for Troops Out Now contingent on Bloody Sunday demo. The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Rd (Warren St tube), 7.30pm, Fri 23 January.

**NAC** National Planning Meeting, Sat 31 Jan, Aston University, Birmingham. Perspectives, 3 April demo and regional co-ordination to be discussed. New ALRA Bill to be presented.

# ARGENTINA: decisive hour approaches

Recent events in Argentina highlighted a year of increasingly violent class conflict and brought nearer the hour of reckoning both for Argentine capitalism and for the working class.

On the one hand, there was an aborted mini-coup from 18–22 December when the most reactionary section of the airforce seized a few bases and called for a take-over by the armed forces. The movement failed partly because the armed forces were not united on a coup at this time, and the army commander Videla was holding the different factions of the army in check, waiting for a more auspicious moment to strike. But secondly, the move failed in the face of a General Strike called by the CGT trade union federation, which mobilised the might of the Argentine working class.

The military organisations of the ERP (People's Revolutionary Army) and the Montoneros (armed left wing of Peronism) judged that the time was ripe for a massive action, and on 23 December launched an attack on a barracks at Monte Chingolo, near Buenos Aires. Taking part were a total of 1,000 guerrillas, including those involved in numerous diversionary actions, such as the taking of the bridges which separate that suburb from the capital. This action ended with the airforce strafing the barracks — over 130 guerrillas were killed according to official sources, and 40 according to the ERP.

## Mini-Vietnam

There was a further armed action on 27 December, involving smaller forces, but sufficient to indicate that the guerrillas were not smashed. At the same time a mini-Vietnam is being played out in the hills of Tucuman province, where for over a year the ERP has operated a guerrilla unit with the support of the local sugar-cane workers.

The background to this situation is what makes the present conflicts so explosive. On the economic front, the official figure for the rate of inflation in 1975 is 335 per cent! The regime is approaching a high state of decomposition — the most recent scandal involved government officials, generals and the President herself in the smuggling of cocaine to Paraguay.

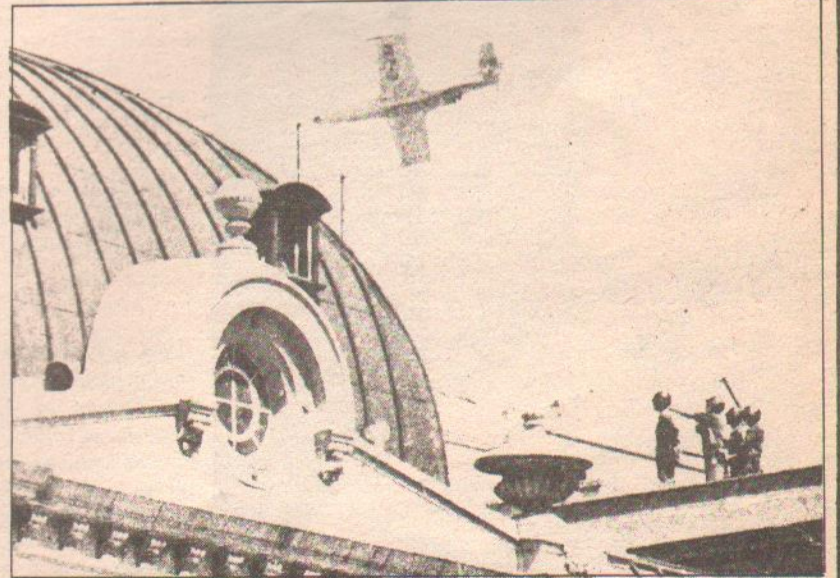
The Peronist movement is now in total disarray, with the dissident 'Authentic Peronist Party' being banned after

the recent events. This closes off the remaining possibility of co-opting the Peronist working class base into the official 'democratic' party structure.

The crucial element in the present situation is a militant workers' movement which has headed big upsurges since the semi-insurrectionary Cordobazo of 1969. Most notable last year was the general strike movement in June–July, which thwarted the implementation of an austerity plan which would have unloaded the crisis onto the working class. In the month of December there were a total of two million workers in conflict, including workers of the

working class movement. To be effective this would have to unite the class and promote the development of bodies of workers self-defence, which are increasingly being formed in the heat of the struggle, such as in last year's Villa Constitucion strike wave.

A sympathising organisation of the Fourth International in Argentina, the PST (Socialist Workers Party), has been growing fast on the basis of providing a militant class orientation against the dominant Peronist ideology in the working class. The recent murders of its militants show how essential it is to stress the question of armed self-defence.



Rebel airforce plane buzzes presidential palace in Buenos Aires

public sector, the railways, the metal workers, workers in the meat industry, etc.

The workers' movement has not been intimidated by recent moves such as the use of troops to put down a miners strike and the widespread arrests and torture of trade union militants. It has also continued its struggle against the grip of the Peronist trade union bureaucracy. In recent months this conflict has intensified with the resistance of the militant SMATA metal workers union to government attempts to merge it with OUM, the official reactionary metal union led by Isabel Peron's favourite trade union supporter, the notorious Lorenzo Miguel.

The key question in resolving this crisis is that of the leadership of the

It is also imperative to call for the immediate release of all class war prisoners, including those from militarist organisations like the ERP. These are the policies necessary for a successful outcome to the present impasse.

In Britain we must be aware that the recent struggles have resulted in a massive wave of arrests, so that the jails of the 'popular government' of Isabel Peron are rapidly filling up. The Argentine ambassador in Britain, Anchorena, has been a keen supporter of the right-wing gangs which are terrorising the workers' movement, and has used his position to smuggle guns to his private fascist army. We should demand his expulsion by the Labour Government as part of launching a campaign of solidarity whose first priority should be the freeing of political prisoners.

Juan Sosa





Paisley—will 'stymie any attempt to discuss power-sharing'

The decision of the British Government to recall the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention was neither unexpected nor met with any great display of interest in the Six Counties.

No-one here really understands the great hopes apparently placed by the Labour Government in this second phase talking-shop. Any optimism amongst the so-called 'moderate' parties (Alliance, Faulkner's Unionist Party of Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Labour Party) that a reconvened Convention will lead to any change of policies is fast evaporating. And in the hard-line Loyalist camp, discussion is more and more turning to talk of 'negotiated independence'.

One such Convention member, George Allport, made it clear in the Sunday News (18 January) that Loyalist politicians were fed up with being treated as 'small boys being told by Westminster what they can or cannot do'. Allport went on to declare that 'an independent Ulster governed by its own people would instil pride in its inhabitants'. Little imagination is required to know what methods would be employed to bring about such an attitude.

It is not only the 'men of destiny' who are now calling for a

negotiated independence. Following the announcement of the Convention recall, Ulster television screened a discussion programme chaired by industrialist Sir Frederick Catherwood which presented the case for an independent Ulster from an economic viewpoint. It concluded that 'finance is no barrier to independence'.

### New tone

The pronouncements of the Labour Government have also taken on a new tone. Rees's statement at Westminster dropped the controversial phrase 'power-sharing' and replaced it with words like 'partnership' and 'participation'.

Also gone was the British Government's previous insistence that minority seats at Cabinet level would have to be written into a new constitution. Instead the British Government merely expressed the hope that the Convention parties might reach a temporary agreement on coalition.

Anxious as the Social Democratic and Labour Party are to secure their future (Convention salaries are expected to dry up within the next six months), the Catholic population are not quite ready to buy any nonsense about voluntary coalition. The

# 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES



JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast



memory of the debacle of the power-sharing Executive and the Ulster Workers Council strike in the spring of 1974 is still too fresh.

The response of the United Ulster Unionist Council would seem to clinch the failure of the Convention. Loyalist leader Ian Paisley explained its position in the following terms: 'We will not boycott the Convention. You don't boycott something you control. But we will use our majority to stymie any attempt to discuss power-sharing with the Republicans.'

However, it is not only Republicans and marxists who understand that the future of British rule in the North of Ireland will be decided outside, not inside, the Convention. The major obstacle to Britain's plans remains the resistance of the anti-imperialist population. And it is to breaking this resistance that British policy is primarily directed at the present time.

The build up given by Wilson to South Armagh — his description of it as an 'exceptional area requiring exceptional measures' — is only a foretaste of what the nationalist

population throughout the Six Counties can expect as the year passes.

For the first time, the British Government has been able to announce publicly that the SAS is being employed here — they have been here unofficially since at least 1971. At the same time the SAS have been introduced in a sympathetic light to the British working class — the assassins have become 'peace-keepers'. The way is being prepared for more general open use of the SAS in the Six Counties and, when occasion requires, in Britain itself.

## Ireland and the British labour movement

The right of Ireland to national freedom is merely the basic democratic right of all oppressed peoples to determine their own destiny free from all outside interference and control. It means the right to control their own economy, decide on their own political system and relations with other countries, and the right to develop their own national culture.

This can only be decided by the Irish people as a whole — the Northern statelet was from the start a British creation artificially imposed on Ireland precisely to block the movement for Irish freedom.

Any working class party worth its salt would have no hesitation in actively championing the right of Ireland to self-determination. It is the first and elementary test of international labour solidarity and working class independence from the British imperialist system. The Labour Party, however, has chosen instead to serve the interests of the imperialist oppressors. Just as the Government places the burden of the capitalist crisis on the backs of the British workers, so also it has systematically trampled on Ireland's democratic right to self-determination.



dead, but it is their role today which strengthens and gives confidence to the Loyalist terror squads. This flows logically from the Wilson Government's commitment to the Six County state, and the longer the army remains in Ireland the greater the threat will be of massive pogroms against the oppressed minority. This is the real danger which exists in Ireland, compared to which the Whitecross killings would be chicken-feed.

The proposal for a 'Bill of Rights' legislated by Westminster is equally grotesque in its subservience to imperialist aims and traditions. The last thing the bureaucrats of the TUC and the Communist Party want to see is the Irish people themselves breaking the shackles of British domination and taking their destiny into their own hands.

### 'BRITISH'

Their solution to the problem' is in the same mould as that of every true blue Tory — it is typically 'British'. It will be the British Parliament which enacts this 'Bill of Rights', not the Irish people themselves. And since it is British legislation, who better to enforce it than the British army.

Our answer to these fake working class leaders is the same answer which the socialist movement, inspired by Marx and Lenin, has always given to those who fall in behind the oppressor nation: the British ruling class has no right to enact legislation 'for' Ireland and its army has no right to be there one minute longer, either inside or outside the barracks.

Despite disagreements over other issues, we hope every worker will join with us in this demand by building and participating on the 1 February demonstration organised by the Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee as the first step on the road to mobilising a truly mass movement for the immediate withdrawal of all British troops from Ireland.

### TROOPS

It is true that some of the reformists, like the supporters of *Tribune* and the Communist Party, on paper give token recognition to Irish self-determination. But none of them have championed this right in practice by demanding the immediate withdrawal of the troops. The alternatives they advance to the Wilson Government share one basic thing in common — both say that British imperialism and its army can play or be made to play a progressive role in Ireland.

The Tribunites, for example, argue that the army should stay in Ireland to protect the minority and repress the Loyalist extremists. During the Loyalist general strike of 1974 they called for the full might of the army to be used to break

the strike. The conclusions they drew in the editorial of the 31 May *Tribune* was that 'the Government must stick to its guns' and that 'British troops must remain, whatever the cost'.

The idea that the army can be a progressive force and that the Irish people as a whole are unable to themselves repel Loyalist reaction is the same as that used by Wilson in 1969 when the troops were first sent in. It is being invoked again today to justify further repression.

Furthermore, while there may be occasional tactical conflicts between the Labour Government and the Loyalist coalition, these are basically only disagreements amongst thieves over an agreed perspective of keeping the minor-

ity and Ireland as a whole subjected to British rule. Experience itself shows that on all decisive questions where a threat to imperialist rule occurs the army and the Loyalists are united in one camp.

The position of Labour MPs like Joan Maynard and Maureen Colquhoun, and of the Communist Party, all of whom call for a 'declaration of intent' and a 'Bill of Rights', are also wrong. These positions offer no real challenge to imperialist interests because they leave it up to the British Government to say when and under what conditions it is ready to withdraw from Ireland.

In effect the Labour Government itself has already 'declared its intent' to withdraw from Ireland — once it has crushed

the minority and stabilised imperialist rule, that is. To put strings or conditions on Irish freedom is not only inexcusable in principle, it also presupposes that the army is in fact playing a useful role on behalf of the Irish people.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The army was originally sent in, as James Callaghan himself has since admitted, to stabilise imperialist rule against the upsurge of the oppressed Catholics. In addition, the whole experience of the last six years testifies to the brutalising conditions and dangers for the Catholics as a result of the military occupation.

Not only has the army contributed to the existing 'bloodbath' of 1,000 civilian

# Defend Leftist Prisoners

The first of three commissions of enquiry sent to Portugal by the Russell Committee for Portugal returned last week. Headed by Tom Litterick, Labour MP for Birmingham (Selly Oak), it attempted to investigate the conditions of the 1,300 political prisoners in Portugal.

Here lay its first problem. This 1,300 can be broken down into slightly less than 1,200 from the period prior to 25 November 1975, while the remainder are civilian and military leftists allegedly involved in the so-called 'coup'. There is a world of difference between the two categories. The 1,200 are either collaborators of Salazar and Caetano, agents provocateurs and members of the hated PIDE secret police, or else rightists involved in the abortive Spínola coup on 11 March. What interest has the working class in their release?

## No 'traitors'

It is the case of the 100 and more leftists with which the labour movement should be concerned. They may have made political mistakes — this can be discussed — but they are neither 'traitors' nor 'counter-revolutionaries'. One small story is sufficient to illustrate that. The very army officer who opened the prison gates after 25 April 1974, Captain Contreiras, now finds himself locked behind them.

The situation of the leftist prisoners is worse than that of the Salazarists still held. They are held in solitary confinement. They have no visits. Only some of them have seen lawyers. The commission of enquiry could not establish with what these people were charged, nor the identity of the person who signed the arrest warrants.

While this goes on, an increasing number of the Salazarists are being released. In the past few months more than a hundred have been set free. Only last week General Schulz, a minister under Salazar, was released.

## Whitewash

When asked about the attitude of the Socialist Party towards the political prisoners, Litterick commented that he found their negative attitude 'very depressing'. He told of how the Socialist mayor of Oporto had whitewashed the shooting of four unarmed demonstrators outside the prison by the Republican Guard. The Mayor, who claims to be a Socialist, reckoned the four must have been shot by the crowd and anyway there were foreign elements involved!

The imprisonment of leftist members of the armed forces who had openly

sided with the working class is part of the attack the Sixth Provisional Government has launched against the gains of the working class and peasantry in order to reimpose capitalist discipline in both the barracks and the factories and farms.

A campaign in their defence is of the utmost urgency in both Portugal and Britain. This will be one of the tasks facing the conference called for 13 March by the Solidarity Campaign with the Portuguese Working Class. Details from: SCPWC, 12 Little Newport Street, London WC2.

'Fighting for Workers Power' is a 20 minute film on Portugal produced by the Newsreal Collective. It deals particularly with the role played by the worker-controlled newspaper *Republica* in bringing together the struggles of workers and agricultural labourers. A copy of the film can be hired for meetings etc. from the IMG, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (01-278 9526).



Litterick and fellow commission member Francois Leclerc gave a press conference on their return to denounce detention of leftists

I agree with most of your criticisms of the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP). But the Fourth International's organisation in Portugal, the Internationalist Communist League (LCI), also signed the Manifesto of the Revolutionary United Front (FUR) calling for armed insurrection, and it supported the 25 November rising on that basis — as Chris Harman showed in his reply to you. It is not much good being wise only after the event.

DAVE LANNING, Ipswich.

Comrade Lanning apparently doesn't read the publications of the Fourth International and the IMG, or he would know that the Fourth International pointed out the danger of the line of organisations such as the PRP well before the events of 25 November. We refer him to *Inprecor*, 9 October, for a criticism of the 'ultra-leftism that is translated into adventurism by the PRP-BR'; *Red Weekly*, 20 November, on the PRP's 'idiotic and extremely dangerous campaign for an armed insurrection'; etc.

It is true that the LCI signed the Manifesto of the FUR. But while the Manifesto contained some wrong and dangerous positions — which we criticised in *Red Weekly*, 23 October — it said nothing at all about armed insurrection.

In any case the LCI consistently opposed the 'insurrectionist' line — as one of its leaders explained in an interview in *Red Weekly*, 27 Novem-

ber. As for comrade Harman's 'proof' that the LCI was on an insurrectionist line on 25-26 November, it is simply nonsense.

The LCI certainly called for a

mobilisation of the workers — but correctly against the Government's attacks and repressive actions, and not for insurrection or civil war. On the contrary, it clearly warned ag-

ainst adventurist attempts. We print below the whole text of the leaflet put out by the LCI on 26 November in order to settle this question.



## PORTUGAL FORUM



### FOR A GENERAL MOBILISATION OF THE WORKERS AGAINST THE OFFENSIVE OF REACTION

Comrades, the present situation is serious. The vital thing is that the workers make a firm, immediate and massive reply. The ruling class and its officers are trying to smash the comrade paratroopers' struggle. And this is because they have refused to carry on being used by the reactionary officers as they were on 11 March and in the attack on Radio Renascença, and have decided to come over and join the side of the toiling masses for good.

The ruling class is attacking — as in Rio Maior — the advance of the agrarian reform, it is trying to break up the united stand by soldier militants, and has proclaimed a State of Siege in a desperate effort to prevent the mobilisation of the masses and to stop the press and radio giving a voice to the organs of workers and popular power. All this is aimed at stabilising a class-collaborationist government which is already irredeemably condemned by the mobilisation of the metal workers, the construction workers, and the general mass of workers.

To retreat would mean a defeat for the workers. The reactionary forces are mobilised and will take advantage of any mad adventures in order to intensify their attacks on the proletariat and its organisations and struggles.

But we mustn't fight the bourgeoisie on the ground they have chosen themselves. Isolated acts, efforts to make the revolution without the support of the masses could only lead to a disaster.

It's vital that the workers concentrate their forces and prepare a mobilisation that can force a retreat on the bourgeoisie, on Jaime Neves, Pires Veloso and Morais de Silva. It's vital to move resolutely towards a general strike. It's urgent that all the

workers demand from the Provisional Secretariat of the workers' commissions and Intersindical the launching of a general strike against the declaration of a State of Siege, for the purging of reactionaries from the barracks, against the nomination of Vasco Lourenço as commander of the Lisbon Military Region, for workers' control over the media and against the Sixth Government of class collaboration. It's vital and urgent to make mass actions and demonstrations together with the united left forces from the military and the media.

It's vital and urgent to press forward with the centralisation and organisation of self-defence and the arming of the organs of workers and popular power.

- For a General Strike. For demonstrations with the united left forces in the military and the media.
- We must organise meetings of the organs of workers and popular power and particularly with the soldiers and workers' commissions in order to establish workers' control of the media.
- We must centralise the workers' commissions and neighbourhood commissions and organise their self-defence and arming.
- Forward to the proletarian and socialist revolution.
- All out for the demonstration called by the coordinating committee of soldiers and sailors commissions on Thursday.

Executive Committee, LCI 26 November 1975.

# Stalinism betrays - Official

In a move which underlines both the increasingly open move away from Marxism of the Stalinist parties and the deep rifts developing between the Western European Communist parties and Moscow, George Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party, has now formally rejected the concept of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat'.

Marchais said: 'We are in 1976. The Communist Party is not immobile. It is not dogmatic and knows how to adapt itself to the conditions of its time. Today the word "dictatorship" no longer corresponds to what we want. It has an intolerable meaning which is contrary to our aspirations and views.'

ponds to what we want. It has an intolerable meaning which is contrary to our aspirations and views.'

But the French Stalinists are not objecting to the word 'dictatorship' because of its associations with totalitarian rule. They are rejecting in theory what they abandoned in practice many years ago — the smashing of the bourgeois state and its replacement by a workers state. They are rejecting the replacement of the class dictatorship of the minority in society — the bourgeoisie — by the class dictatorship of the majority — the working class.

The statement is in absolute conformity with a joint communiqué recently issued by the French and Italian Communist Parties. This document replaces the notion of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' with the following strategy: 'The working class and the popular masses can, through struggle, ..... win new gains and open the way to new social and democratic progress'.

The words may be unfamiliar, but the ideas grow ever more close to those of the Labour Party in this country.

The international ruling class are licking their lips in anticipation of the final conversion of the Western European CPs to social democracy. *The Economist* magazine drools: 'With suitable encouragement, they could cross the dividing line that separates them from being left social

democrats. That would indeed be the prize of the century'.

What is that dividing line? It is certainly not that the bourgeoisie maintains absurd illusions that the French Communist Party is a revolutionary party. Furthermore, on an international scale, both social democrats and Stalinists will capitulate to the interests of the bourgeoisie.

Both will betray the fundamental int-

**'But from this capitalist democracy ..... forward development does not proceed simply, directly and smoothly towards "greater and greater democracy" as the liberal professors and petit bourgeois opportunists would have us believe. No, forward development, i.e. towards communism, proceeds through the dictatorship of the proletariat, and cannot do otherwise, for the resistance of the capitalist exploiters cannot be broken by anyone else or in any other way'.**

LENIN — *State and Revolution*

erests of the working class — for the seizure of power on an international scale. But they act in response to different pressures.

The Communist Parties internationally reflect the pressure of the imperialist bourgeoisie not directly but through the policies of the Soviet bureaucracy. They will not make a revolution, but they can act against the interests of 'their' ruling class.

This is why the bourgeoisie looks forward to their conversion to social democracy, why it distrusts the Stalinist parties, why the CIA pumps money into the SP



in Portugal; because the Stalinist parties represent the interests of a bureaucracy based on a different class system, not because these parties are any less counter-revolutionary than their social democratic cousins.

The future will see still deeper rifts between the Communist Parties of Western Europe and that of the USSR. However, one thing can be said straight away. The twists and turns of these parties are a direct result of the tremendous pressures being generated by the working class internationally.

This pressure manifests itself through the victory of the Indochinese revolution, the tearing open of the contradictions in Africa by the struggle of the MPLA in Angola, and the beginning of the Western European revolution with the events in Spain and Portugal. That pressure throws up the only solution possible: the building of a truly internationalist party of the working class — the building of the Fourth International.

STEVE POTTER



# FINISH OFF FRANCOISM!

Interview with a member of LCR-ETA(VI) — a Spanish sympathising organisation of the Fourth International



Francoist bureaucrats in the Cortes (phony parliament) have already protested against 'liberalisation'

**Q** The coming to power of Juan Carlos has obviously opened up a new situation in Spain. Can you outline the major political factors involved?

**A** The prime objective for big capital is to get a direct say in the country's affairs by breaking gradually with a system whereby one man, Franco, and his clique held all the reins of power. This is what is meant by the policy of 'reforming the dictatorship'. But already these projects have come up against several obstacles.

Firstly, this 'reform of the dictatorship' can only be carried through on the basis of the present institutions, which are dominated by a Francoist bureaucracy opposed to all reforms.

Furthermore, this 'reform' presupposes the legitimisation of the present set-up in the eyes of the masses, which would mean establishing a social base and therefore a series of significant concessions on social questions. However, the Spanish social and economic structures aren't cohesive or strong enough to survive such a policy — the more so, as we are now seeing a new rise in the mass movement which is systematically going beyond all the projects of the regime.

**Q** Can you specify the particular characteristics of this new stage in the rise of the mass movement?

**A** The new political situation has undoubtedly emphasised all the factors radicalising the masses. But it is the fight for amnesty, for the freeing of all the political prisoners, which is crystallising the mobilisation of the masses. From the petitions of the administrative councils of Pontevedra to the demonstration of 30,000 outside Carabanchel, it is the first time that at the same time and on the same demand — amnesty — entire professions, neighbourhoods, towns and villages have taken part in such a political campaign.

In Madrid and Barcelona, the fight for amnesty has often been pursued alongside struggles for economic demands, and around the negotiations for the collective contracts. In Euskadi (the Basque country), the campaign for amnesty has been tied in directly with demands for the dissolution of the special police bodies, the purging of the State apparatus and the factory administrations, the elimination of the Francoist bureaucrats, etc.

Everywhere these mobilisations have shown that far from being taken in by Fraga Iribarne, the masses fully realise the limitations of the *indulto* (pardon) — only 500 political prisoners out of 6,000 released — and the need to struggle for total amnesty.

**Q** Has the exclusion of the Communist Party from the political solution put forward by the bourgeoisie altered its position in any way?

**A** This situation has induced in it a greater activism — but it hasn't altered its general orientation of class collaboration. Since the death of Franco all the CP's activity has been based on its intention of showing the bourgeoisie that there can be no viable political solution without the CP, that no peaceful transition is possible without the CP.

The CP is well aware of the danger that it could be marginalised in the face of the manoeuvres by Fraga Iribarne, the main bourgeois parties, and the Socialist Party (PSOE). So it has redoubled its activities and initiatives: CP secretary Carillo even declares that the time has passed for days for amnesty or economic demands — every day must surpass in intensity all the days previously organised. But this demagoguery cannot cover up for the opportunist policy of the CP, seen in its refusal to make a joint appeal for a general strike on 11 December.

**Q** There seems to be something of a debate inside the CP on the trade union question. What are the different positions?

**A** The opposing currents on this question reflect — in a very distorted way — the recent history of the Spanish workers' movement.

After the last elections in the CNS (state-run trade union), where the CUD (united and democratic candidatures) won an enormous success, capturing 80 per cent of the positions (*los enlaces* — roughly equivalent to shop stewards), the CP prioritised this arena to the point of abandoning the workers commissions.

To that, Camacho and Sartorius (another old worker militant) — defending their interests as leaders of the workers commissions — have responded very sharply, explaining that no trade union can be developed outside the workers commissions; and that the present orientation, prioritising *los enlaces*, can only in their view lead to the liquidation of the workers commissions.

Carillo has now taken a middle position in this battle. In a recent issue of *Nuestra Bandera* (CP review), after defining the workers commissions as a socio-political movement embracing the 'legal structures — *los enlaces*, the CUD — and illegal structures', Carillo went on to explain that it was necessary to combine work in the workers commissions and *los enlaces* without prioritising one structure or the other. But he concluded by judging that the time was inopportune to call for a constituent trade union congress, doubtless preferring to jockey for position in manoeuvres and negotiations at the top.

**Q** Finally, can you outline the central axes of the policy put forward by the LCR-ETA (VI)?

**A** The present political situation means that at the centre of all struggles and demonstrations must be put forward slogans, demands and initiatives which pose the dismantling of the Francoist institutions.

These take on all the more importance for revolutionary marxists in that the political forms of the Spanish bourgeois State have since the civil war coincided with the Francoist dictatorship; thus all the battles for the release of the political prisoners, the dissolution of the special police bodies, the purging of the army, police and administration etc. have a political and social dynamic which undermines the very foundations of the bourgeois State.

These demands, taken up by ever increasing sections of the masses, tie in directly with struggles to win democratic freedoms: the right to strike, to meet, to demonstrate freedom of the press, the right to vote. Faced with the manoeuvres of the bourgeoisie, faced with the fraudulent projects to restructure the Cortes, the only framework for exercising these liberties can be a Constituent Assembly, elected by universal suffrage.

In the same way, in Euskadi, Catalonia, Valencia and Galicia, only the election by

universal suffrage of a National Assembly exercising the right to self-determination can meet the aspirations of these peoples.

However, here and now — without waiting for the summoning of this or that body — we think that only the mobilisation of the masses can secure such achievements. That is why we call everywhere for the strengthening of the workers commissions, for their unification, for the unity of all the workers' organisations for a constituent trade union assembly; for the generalisation of workers' assemblies, of committees elected and recallable in the factories; and finally for a struggle to satisfy all the workers' economic demands, which can only be met by a workers' government.

The working class of Euskadi has already shown the way to achieve these objectives with its three tremendous general strikes: the weapon of the general strike, of the united front of the workers' organisations in a central strike committee.

Strengthened by these experiences, by the Euskadi strikes, we call for the unity of all the workers' organisations — and in particular those of the revolutionary left — for these organisations to break with all parties or organs of class collaboration, to respond to the aspirations of the masses in Spain, Euskadi, Catalonia, Valencia and Galicia, so that we can finish for ever with the Francoist dictatorship.

# £15,000

To meet our target of £15,000 by end of February, we need to raise £9,240.62.

The money raised so far has gone towards taking the first steps to a 16-page *Red Weekly*. Your donations have enabled us to make changes in our editorial staff and buy a new IBM composer. The next big step is for a further expansion of editorial staff and a major sales drive.

But we still need more finance for this and other steps to build a 16-page weekly and regularly produce our theoretical journal *International*. With costs rising rapidly this becomes an even more urgent task.

We appeal to all our readers and sympathisers — in order to build the Fourth International in Britain and its newspaper *Red Weekly*, we need your money now. Please send all donations to: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (cheques made payable to 'The Week').

Area	So far rec'd	50%	Target
SCOTLAND	467	£££	2,000
N. EAST	197.07	££££££££££££££	250
YORKS	255.40	££££	1,000
LANCS	159.20	£££	1,000
W. MIDLANDS	111.36	££	1,000
E. MIDLANDS	20.00	£	250
WALES	10.00	£	250
E. ANGLIA	7.00	£	250
LONDON	488.35	££££££	1,500
S. EAST	66.00	£	1,000
S. WEST	58.00	££	500
OTHER	3,920	££££££££££	6,000

Riot police move into action against demonstrators in Madrid's main street



# RED WEEKLY

## LEBANON: Civil war hots up

The resignation of prime minister Rashid Karami on Sunday marked a further polarisation in the civil war in Lebanon. But only by breaking clearly with the politics of the traditional Moslem leaders like Karami will the forces of the left be able to chart a clear path to victory. Below we interview a member of a Trotskyist group which is taking part in the fighting.

● Can you describe the changing character of the fighting in Lebanon over the recent period?

At first the fighting would be mostly sniping along the borderlines of contiguous towns or neighbourhood and community areas, which would be controlled by the forces of the left or of the reactionary Phalangist Kataeb.

More recently the fighting has substantially changed its character as a result of the increase in the intensity of the battles and the spread of the conflict to new areas.

Because of this the whole military situation took on a much more fluid character. The fighting became very fierce, casualties were high, and hand-to-hand struggles over individual buildings and positions were going on. The left won important battles in the latest rounds of fighting.

However, as soon as we would succeed in say occupying an abandoned building, the Phalangists would manoeuvre a ceasefire, which the reformist wings of the left leadership — including the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Saïqa — would immediately embrace. Thus they sometimes forced the cadres who had achieved their victory at great cost to give up positions of great strategic value.

The Lebanese left on the other hand is deeply divided into different organisations with major political differences between them. There are major political divisions between the Communist Party and the Progressive Socialist Party of Jumblat on the one hand, and the numerous Arab nationalist parties on the other, with finally the organisations of the revolutionary left.

These divisions make it very hard for central political or military decisions to be taken and implemented. Furthermore, the dominant reformist formations do not have political demands that can advance the struggle of the masses. They have based their politics on support of the traditional Moslem leaderships (like Karami), who have never had any history of being sympathetic either to the left or to the Palestinian resistance movement, and who also have not been participating in the fighting.

The situation is therefore very fluid, and which way it develops will depend on the ability of the revolutionary left to polarise a good proportion of the mass movement around it on the basis of a total refusal to subordinate our military successes to the reactionary interests of the Moslem or nationalist bourgeoisie.



● How are the comrades of the Fourth International in the Revolutionary Communist Group taking part in the fighting?

At the beginning we had few arms and we concentrated our efforts on assisting some of the larger groups that had arms. We helped in the defence of the barricades. Not only did we lack weapons, but also we lacked a centre of operations from which to conduct our activity.

However, we soon overcame these obstacles and acquired a self-sufficiency in arms. We took over an abandoned school in the Shiah area, which improved our political and military intervention. Then we took over the responsibility for defending an important position on the front line of the battle. Most of the actual fighting would take place at night.

During the day and evenings the comrades would conduct political discussions, educational, hold cadre schools and rest. Apart from our regular publications we managed despite the intense activity to produce a pamphlet on the Lebanese situation.

In addition to this centre which I have been describing we had a similar set-up in another area. It should be pointed out that our women comrades in particular played an exemplary role, not only in actual fighting, but also in intelligence gathering, reconnaissance activities, and especially in smuggling arms through the lines of the reactionary forces. It was through their efforts that the group as a whole managed to arm itself.

● How does the situation look today, and what are the prospects for a ceasefire?

Numerically, and leaving aside the Lebanese army, the relationship of forces is favourable to the left — including the Palestinian resistance movement. The army is itself deeply divided between a thoroughly reactionary Christian-dominated officer corps, and the soldiers who are predominantly Moslem Shia. For example, the attempt to use the army in Tripoli resulted in a split of the armed forces, with more than half of the men, the tanks and the armoured cars coming over to the side of the nationalist groups which were controlling Tripoli.

However, the right is very well organised. It is generally better equipped and its leadership is much more homogenous because there are only two or three groups involved and they have few political differences between them.

# STOP THE VISIT OF FRANCO'S BUTCHER



Spanish Foreign Minister Areilza

A direct challenge has been issued to the entire labour and socialist movement in this country by the Spanish dictatorship and the Wilson Government. Jesus Maria de Areilza, Count of Motrico and Foreign Minister of the dictatorship, is planning to pay an official visit to this country next month. This is part of a European-wide jaunt designed to drum up support for the dictatorship from the governments of capitalist Europe.

Areilza is a veteran Francoist. When the fascist forces captured the key Basque city of Bilbao in 1937, Areilza was hand-picked to run the city for Franco. From 1938 to 1940, a time when tens of thousands of workers were being murdered in cold-blood, Areilza was Franco's Minister of Industry. After the war he represented the dictatorship in key overseas positions — serving as ambassador to Argentina and then the USA at times when these countries were playing a central role in saving the Franco regime from international isolation.

His planned visit comes as the Spanish working class is reaching out to wipe away the remnants of this bloody dictatorship and take into its own hands the means of determining its future. Areilza is a leading figure in the gang of cut-throats who are trying to rob the Spanish workers of this opportunity, backed up by the European capitalist class and their agents in the workers movement like Schmidt in Germany and Wilson in Britain.

## DEMOS

The British left must organise to force the Labour Government to cancel this visit. If it goes ahead, we must ensure that mass demonstrations dog the footsteps of this Francoist butcher wherever he dares to show his face.

The Action Group Against Repression in Spain (AGARIS) is calling a meeting of all solidarity committees, political organisations, labour movement bodies and concerned individuals to discuss the organisation of a united campaign in the London area against the Areilza visit.

It will take place on Monday, 26 January at 7.30 p.m. in the Board Room, St. Bride's Foundation Institute, Bride Lane, EC4 (just off Fleet Street).

The International Marxist Group has written to all the major organisations and newspapers of the left suggesting a preliminary meeting to discuss the organisation of a united campaign against the Areilza visit.

The IMG is also supporting the labour movement delegate conference against repression in Spain called by 19 members of the TUC General Council. The Conference is on 14 February from 10 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. at Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London NW1. Credentials (50p) are obtainable from Solidarity with the Workers of Spain, National Union of Mineworkers, 222 Euston Road, London NW1.

DEMAND the reinstatement of Cartaxo and Ribeiro, the two Portuguese journalists sacked by the BBC. PICKET their final appeal, Tuesday 27 Jan from 12.45 to 2 p.m. at Broadcasting House, Portland Place, W1.

Organised by the Media Support Group of Portuguese Solidarity Campaign.



The Iberian Airlines office in Regent Street is being picketed every Saturday, 11am-1pm

## Mass challenge to Spanish regime

The Spanish Government is again resorting to slave-labour methods in an attempt to break the powerful strike wave that is sweeping the country. Last week the postal workers were drafted into the army in order to break their strike. On Monday the same treatment was meted out to 200,000 railway workers, who must now wear red 'M' armbands, are subject to military-style discipline, and can be court-martialled for refusing to obey orders.

The Government is threatening to do the same with the Madrid underground workers, whose strike earlier this month touched off the present upheaval, and who may strike again after the breakdown of their negotiations.

Only these brutal methods — coupled with the repression of demonstrations and the systematic arrest of anyone attempting to develop the current struggles into a fight for political demands (there have been more than 200 such arrests in the past week) — have prevented the current upsurge from turning into an all-out fight for the overthrow of the dictatorship and the establishment of basic democratic freedoms for the Spanish working class.

But even this level of repression has not stopped the strike wave from growing, and the mushrooming of demonstrations over political demands. Some 200,000 workers have been involved so far in strikes in the engineering and construction industries, the railways, banks, post offices and the telephone system. While some have gone back to work — often after winning important economic demands — others, like the Asturian miners, are just coming out, and there is no sign of the struggle subsiding.

At the same time mass demonstrations for directly political demands continue to grow despite police attacks. This week some 8,000 joined such a demonstration in Barcelona, 5,000 in the northern city of Pamplona, and up to 25,000 in Valencia.

The regime was facing an even sharper challenge on Tuesday when a mass demonstration had been called outside Government offices by the opposition organisations, led by the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. Once again it seems that Valencia may be in the forefront, for here a general strike was called for the same day.



NAME.....	SUBSCRIPTION RATES
ADDRESS.....	DOMESTIC: £6 per year
	£3 for six months
	FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail
	£12 per year airmail

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.