

# POLICE PREPARE IMMIGRANT HUNT

The recently created Illegal Immigration Unit of the police has been very much in the limelight these past few weeks. But are they really knights in shining armour, waging an unending fight against ruthless forces of evil, in the form of the 'immigrant smugglers', as the capitalist press would have us believe?

Their main purpose is to prevent 'illegal' immigrants from entering the country. Their activities do not hit at just the bloodsucking parasites, like those behind the *April Diamond* enterprise. The real victims are the would-be immigrants. They have travelled half-way around the world, invested much of their life savings, and suffered serious hardships, both physical and mental, all in vain.

## DIRTY WORK

The work of the Illegal Immigration Unit can have far reaching effects on the immigrant community. As the *Sunday Times* put it, '... the Illegal Immigration Unit is inexorably building up the information in its search for the organisers that for the first time makes possible a mass round-up and removal of illegal immigrants in Britain.' The unit is rumoured to have at its disposal information gained from two years work checking the names of legally admitted immigrants against those of non-U.K. citizens registered for National Insurance.

The dirty work may be done by others, but there can be little doubt that it will be done. In the words of Chief Inspector William Hughes of the Unit: 'If we come across a person who is in the country in contravention of the law then of course we would inform the police in his area.'

## POLICE PERSECUTION

The upshot has been increased police persecution of immigrants across the country. Indian and Pakistani organisations have been flooded with reports of police harassment in recent weeks. A factory in East London, employing mainly Pakistani workers, is reported to have been raided by the police, who interrogated every single worker.

Usually however, the police are more efficient and know exactly who they are after. A police squad recently descended on the Mars factory in Slough and snatched four immigrant

workers off the shop floor. Similar swoops have been made on factories in Bradford.

In Gravesend it is known that the

By CHRIS BALFOUR

police are employing the services of an informer in the hunt for 'illegal' immigrants. A large proportion of

recent arrests have been made by the Hitchin and Slough police. As these are two areas where the extreme right is very active, serious questions are raised about cooperation between the police and local fascist groups.

Nor is it just a question of cooperation: during one recent raid a policeman jokingly referred to himself as a member of the 'Immigration and Repatriation Squad'. The influence of Powellism seems to extend inside the police force as well.



Four 'illegal' immigrants in the custody of immigration officials

## STATEMENT ON THE LONDON FIRE-BOMBINGS

The International Marxist Group and *Red Weekly* unconditionally support the right of the Irish republican movement to carry on armed actions against British imperialism. We do not hold that, in principle, such armed actions have to be confined to the other side of the Irish Channel.

Those who complain about violence in Britain forget that 'peace' in this country has always been based on violence against others overseas. The British tradition of 'compromise' and social harmony rests upon the barbarities carried out by the British Army in India, Malaya, Cyprus, Aden and Ireland, to name just a few.

Just this Tuesday the coroner in Derry admitted that the shooting down of 13 people by the British Army on Bloody Sunday was an act of 'sheer unadulterated murder.' Only the spokesmen of the capitalist class could place the attempted burning of a few stores on the same plane as this act of wanton brutality.

Armed actions in Britain, and the use of armed activity generally in the course of just struggles, can only be judged from a tactical point of view — i.e. on the basis of whether or not they carry the struggle forward. When, for example, the Quebec Liberation Front kidnapped a cabinet minister in 1971 in pursuance of the just struggle of the Quebec people for national liberation, we criticised this action because it failed to advance concretely the struggle. In Latin America, however, we recognise that the armed actions of groups like the People's Revolutionary Army in Argentina have played an important part in bringing about the downfall of military dictatorship, and have supported them accordingly.

We think that the present bombing campaign in London is mistaken. The armed actions which took place before the downfall of Stormont took the mass struggle forward and produced splits in the ruling class because they were part of an integrated, overall strategy of struggle. The present actions do not appear to be of this character.

We may differ with sections of the Irish republican movement on their tactics, but we will never condemn their struggle.

**SOLIDARITY WITH THE IRA!  
LONG LIVE THE ARMED STRUGGLE AGAINST BRITISH IMPERIALISM!**



Bloody Sunday in Derry: the fighting has stopped but the corpses remain. This is the scene which Derry coroner Major Hubert O'Neill described as 'sheer unadulterated murder' on Tuesday. His courageous statement exposes the whitewash job done by Lord Chief Justice Widgery last year, and shows up the hypocrisy of those who choose to denounce 'IRA terror'. The real terrorists are the British Army, and the struggle in Ireland will go on until they are withdrawn.

This campaign of intimidation comes at a time when big, new working class struggles are on the agenda. Every move to weaken the fighting spirit of any section of workers, or to make the forging of a fighting unity more difficult, must be ferociously resisted.

The entire working class movement must pledge its support for self-defence moves made by the immigrant community and should itself take up the defence of immigrant workers. Any attempt by an employer to use racism or racist laws against black workers should be fought. The police should be denied admission to any workplace for purposes connected with the immigration laws. Industrial action should be taken against any employer who cooperates with the police.

There is a very easy way to stamp out those parasites, the 'immigrant smugglers'. It is not by increasing the police force, nor by cracking down more viciously on their victims, but by ending the racist immigration laws which make their trade possible.

## FIGHTING FUND LOW!

As we feared, the pause in our publishing schedule at the beginning of this month has hampered the flow of money into the *Red Weekly* Fighting Fund. With only one more week to go until the end of the month we have received only £100 — only a third of our target. Last month's success in reaching our goal was a big step forward — but we must repeat this achievement every month. Readers and supporters are asked to make an extra effort to send in as much money as possible in the next week so that we can once again reach our £300 target.

### I.M.G. PUBLIC MEETING

The Invasion of Czechoslovakia — Five years later

Speakers: Robin Blackburn  
Ivan Hartell  
Steve Lynch (G&MWU, personal capacity)

### FIRST SHOWING OF A FILM OF THE INVASION

Friday, 24 August, at 7.30 p.m. in the New Ambassadors Hotel, Upper Woburn Place (5 minutes from Euston Station).

# INQUIRING INTO STC

By DAVE BAILEY

Black machine operators at the Standard Telephone Company (STC) in Southgate, London, are still on strike for the reinstatement of a black trainee setter, suspended by management when white workers refused to continue training him.

STC has a long history of racial tension among its workforce. This latest action by the white setters represents a last ditch stand against the understanding, reached after a strike in 1971, that black machine operators would have equal opportunities along with whites to be trained for skilled grades. The management decision to suspend the black trainee reveals the tacit alliance that exists between a section of skilled workers with the management, against their black fellow workers.

The Race Relations Board is at present conducting an inquiry into STC. But this will not be the first inquiry. The Runnymede Trust produced a report in 1971, at the request of the West Indian Standing Conference. This report was prepared by a black sociologist, Cecil Gutzmore. The report showed that the official management policy of 'complete equality of opportunity' was a fable.

In the words of a white STC employee, 'blacks started at the bottom irrespective of qualifications, background or intelligence'. Seven shops were believed to operate a 'whites only' policy. Four of these shops had no 'skilled entry' regulations, so the excuse of 'skilled workers only' could not conceal the colour bar.

Although blacks are the majority in some shops, they are only employed in unskilled and semi-skilled work, and for many years

no black operatives were trained for skilled positions. Gutzmore interviewed black people who had spent periods of up to 12 years at the plant and who had been regularly refused training. 'Now, few bother to apply' The report concluded: 'As time went on, a shop floor alliance apparently grew up between white operatives and white supervisors to maintain supervisory and skilled positions in white hands. Such informal arrangements flourished.' These arrangements created a situation where white supervisors reserved the best paying and easiest jobs for whites, and where cases of arbitrary dismissal of blacks often took place.

## OPENING ROUNDS

The report also documents the opening rounds of the present struggle. In 1970, management had a vacancy for a trainee setter in the machine shop. A white worker from another shop was given the post, even though black machine operators had applied. This led to a threat of strike action by the black workers.

The white setters struck for an hour in reply. One AUEW steward had his credentials removed by the union for attempting to bar the promotion of the black worker. Finally the black workers succeeded in getting one black accepted for training. A second black trainee, who is at the centre of the dispute today, started training in late 1972.

The Personnel Manager claimed the Gutzmore report was 'based on gossip and on biased information from disgruntled employees'. The Managing Director challenged the Board of Trustees of Runnymede to support the report. (The Board includes figures like Lord Campbell and Lord Seeböhm who have interests in corporations exploiting black labour abroad.)

The Runnymede Trust promised further investigations into STC, but after a discussion between Lord Campbell (a sugar magnate) and STC management the case was closed. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the main effect of the Runnymede investigation was to divert the black workers at STC away from the real struggle against discrimination, despite the good intentions of their researcher.

## OFFICIAL STRIKE

The present strike has been made official by the AUEW, and a promise of sympathetic blacking has come from the STC plant in East Kilbride. But the majority of workers at the Southgate plant continue to cross the picket lines, with the full backing of many stewards (including some AUEW stewards). The Enfield District Committee of the AUEW recently decided against disciplining stewards who fail to respect the picket line.

All members of the AUEW and the ETU (which represents the setters) should demand that their fellow trade unionists support the STC strikers. They should insist upon the removal of credentials from all stewards who cross the picket line, and approach the STC strikers with a view to organising a mass picket of trade unionists outside the factory. This is the way to defeat racism at STC and unify the entire workforce against their real enemy — the bosses.

As Cecil Gutzmore wrote in 1971, '... workers have common problems and only through united action can these problems be solved in the interests of working people. It is the job of the trade union movement to forge this unity and this can only be done by tackling racial discrimination in industry in a principled way, and by waging a campaign against racist ideology.'

# CURRENT ACCOUNT

## Epitaph for the boom

Almost all the world capitalist economies have been recently experiencing a sudden upsurge in the growth of their output and trade. This rapid, short-term, growth was possible only as a follow-up to the preceding two years of economic depression. The years from 1969-1971 saw the most generalised and widespread depression of the post-war period, resulting in a serious under utilisation of existing capitalist productive forces — idle machines and unemployed workers.

Hence it has been possible for production to expand very rapidly over the last 18 months, not on the basis of a new wave of investment and renewed accumulation of capital, but simply by putting existing, unused capital to work and 'mopping up' unemployment. Even this exceptionally rapid growth of output has left unemployment in Britain very high, and has actually been accompanied by a rise in German unemployment over the last year.

## BALLOON DEFLATING

It was inevitable that such a shakily based expansion could not last very long. In the last two weeks a number of official economic reports have shown that the balloon is rapidly deflating.

By far the most important of these is the latest report on the United States gross national product. According to the official statistics this was growing in the first quarter of this year at an annual rate of nearly 9 per cent and had been rising at close to that rate over the previous year as well. Last week's figures show a very dramatic decline for the second quarter of 1973 to an annual rate of about 2½ per cent. This is the lowest quarterly figure since the big recession of the last quarter of 1970. Given the importance of the American economy in the capitalist world (accounting for more than 50 per cent of its total production) such a sudden about turn cannot be long in producing results for other capitalist economies, and for world trade as a whole. It is the effects of this sudden downturn, and not any resolution of the monetary crisis, which has improved the US balance of trade.

## OTHER COUNTRIES

The same movement is already visible in other countries as well. The latest British figures show a slowing down from 6½ per cent growth rate in the first quarter of this year, to less than half that in the second. The type of spending which has most decreased, of course, is consumers expenditure, on which the boom was largely based and which is now sharply curtailed as the wage laws keep down workers' spending power.

## WORLDWIDE INFLATION

In West Germany the signs are less dramatic but point in the same direction. The influential research institute, IFO, in its latest business survey, indicates a sharp turn towards pessimism about the state of the economy. This is largely a response to the Brandt government's recent series of restrictive measures (including higher taxes and higher interest rates) which are designed to curb the menace of inflation.

## CREDIT RESTRICTIONS

Other countries have also tried to attack the worldwide inflation by using traditional measures of credit restrictions. This, along with the world monetary crisis, has pushed interest rates to their highest levels ever in the last few weeks. These high rates of interest are another nail in the coffin of the capitalist boom.

A new recession is building up in a much worse environment for capitalism than the last. Output will be falling (or growing more slowly) and unemployment rising during a period of rapid inflation. This inflation will be due much more to speculation, the monetary crisis and the drive for higher profits, than a rising level of demand. As a result, the social tensions which broke out during the last period of stagnation and inflation will now recur with even greater force.

Michael Price



Photo: Peter Harrap (Report)

## Changing gear at Adwest

A mass meeting of over 400 workers at Adwest Engineering (Reading) voted overwhelmingly on Monday to begin an indefinite day and night sit-in strike at once.

The recommendation was put by Pat Farrelly — divisional organiser of the AUEW — and was supported by workers from all the unions in the factory: the AUEW (including its staff section TASS), and the clerical unions ASTMS and APEX. There was only one vote against.

### NEW SUBSIDIARY

Adwest Engineering has a virtual monopoly of the manufacture of a key component for the luxury end of the car industry — power steering gears. Last December, the management of the Adwest Group (which has a number of subsidiaries in other parts of Britain) announced their intention to set up a new subsidiary, Power Steering Ltd., at Pennywell in Sunderland. This would, they said, undertake all the non-specialist machining work previously done mainly by sub-contractors. They claimed that they simply wanted to bring all this work under the direct control of the Group.

However, in order to 'help get this new subsidiary off the ground', they wanted to move 33 machines from Reading to Sunderland. This was agreed to by the shop stewards committee of the day. (A couple of months later a majority of the shop floor workers signed a petition of no confidence and forced a re-election of the shop stewards committee after it agreed to a speed-up deal. In the elections the entire committee was replaced.)

What the management are now demanding is the right to move another 60 machines up to Pennywell. Needless to say, few workers in the factory place any confidence in management claims that there will be no job loss — especially when they have simultaneously been pursuing a policy of work-study measurements which have dramatically cut piecework earnings.

With a combination of these wage cuts and the prospect of jobs disappearing, many workers began to look for alternative work in the Reading area. This seems to have been what the management was aiming at — a small, demoralised workforce would, they hoped, be

unable to resist a total closure of the plant, which would leave them free to sell the site at a fat profit (the price of land in Reading is abnormally high even by current standards).

### FIGHT BACK

However, their plans were stillborn. With a growing realisation of what was happening, the workers began to organise to fight back. A meeting of all the shop stewards and staff representatives discussed the situation, formed a strike committee, and convened the meeting last Monday. The demands of the sit-in are: (1) immediate pay rises of about £10 (including bonus) to bring them into line with other sections of the car industry and stop workers leaving; (2) that no machinery be moved from Reading — Adwest must not be allowed to finance their expansion at the expense of Reading workers' jobs.

Our information is that Adwest are way behind on their orders, so the strike should begin to bite almost immediately. Messages of support, donations to the strike fund, etc. to: Adwest Strike Committee, c/o AUEW, 121 Oxford Road, Reading, Berks. Pat Robinson

# CRUCIAL STAGE AT LIP

The outcome of the four month old struggle at the Lip watch factory in Besancon in France, where the striking workers were evicted last week by 3,000 armed police, may well be decided in the next ten days or so.

The move by the police, for which the French prime minister, Pierre Messmer, has taken personal responsibility, was timed to make it as difficult as possible for the workers to hit back. Much of French industry simply closes down in August for the holidays, reducing the immediate possibility of sympathetic strike action to a minimum.

The Lip workers are now deprived of the organising base which they had at their disposal when they held the factory. This makes a rapid extension of the struggle to involve other workers a vital condition for the success of their struggle. Despite brave talk about continuing to manufacture and sell watches in new workshops — 'the factory is where the workers are' — the Lip workers seem to realise that such idealistic plans offer no real way forward. Indeed, although they still have a 'war chest' of 60,000 watches in reserve, smuggled out earlier for just such an eventuality, there are even doubts now as to whether there will be enough money to cover all their wages for August.

In this situation, the Government has not been slow to take the initiative. M. Charbonnel, the Minister for Industrial Development, has made it clear that the police will not leave the factory until the Government's redevelopment plan is accepted and work is resumed. The main elements of this plan are: conversion of the different departments at Lip (watch-making, armaments, and machine-tools) into separate companies; creation of a fourth company, probably to make watch-cases; and at least 300 redundancies. There are no guarantees about maintaining previous wage levels; and the Government has been extremely vague about how this redevelopment is to be financed.

The workers have declared that this is unacceptable. They insist that Lip should remain one company, rightly regarding the Government's proposals as an attempt to split the unity of the workforce. They are also demanding firm guarantees that there will be no redundancies and no reductions in wage levels. Moreover, they have rejected renewed suggestions, made by M. Charbonnel and encouraged by the right-wing paper *Le Figaro*, that they should set up a workers' co-operative — 'how can one struggle against the employers if at the same time one becomes an employer oneself?'

But as the strike leaders begin to formulate their own alternative plan to put to the Government, it is clear that the pressure is beginning to tell. Thus, while still insisting that the whole workforce must be kept on, they are now prepared to accept a gradual reduction in the number of jobs through 'voluntary redundancies' and 'natural wastage'. Such a concession, parti-

cularly in a region where several other firms have already made cuts in the workforce, will affect many other workers besides those at Lip.

If it is clear that victory at Lip depends on an extension of the struggle to other sections of the working class, it is equally clear that the potential for this exists. The determination shown by the Lip workers as the struggle developed, the imaginative methods of struggle which they employed, the way in which all major decisions were democratically referred to mass meetings of all the workers — these found a ready response in the working class as a whole.



M. Charbonnel, Minister for Industrial Development

An opinion poll conducted by the weekly paper, *Les Informations*, before the action of the police, showed that two out of every three people interviewed supported the struggle of the Lip workers. The Government's attempts to characterise them as law-breakers found little response — as one group of Paris workers commented, 'the law of tomorrow is decided by the workers in struggle today'.

Considerable doubt arises, however, as to the willingness of the trade union leaders to initiate such action. Even before the Government raised the stakes by sending in the police, sections of the union bureaucracy were counselling moderation, fearful lest the movement might go beyond their control. In particular, the CGT, the Communist Party-led trade union federation, warned that: 'It is not a question of mindlessly copying forms of struggle which, while positive in a given situation, could prove to be not so good, and even detrimental, in other cases'.

In his first statement after the eviction of the strikers, the leader of the CGT, Georges Seguy, was careful to praise the 'restraint and sense of responsibility' of the Lip workers, which he 'trusted would be maintained'. Georges

Marchais, leader of the Communist Party, stressed the need to find a solution 'in the national interest'.

The leaders of the other main union federation, the CFDT, and of the Socialist Party with which it is increasingly allied, were slightly more outspoken. But nothing has been heard of their original pledge to call out all CFDT workers in the public sector if force was used. Their vehement declarations of support, like those of the CGT and the CP, have so far not been accompanied by any *plan of action* to organise the expansion of the struggle.

Otherwise, industrial action has occurred on a purely random basis — miners in Lorraine struck last Friday, for instance, while gas and electricity workers in Loire-Atlantique voted for a one-day stoppage on Monday. Most common have been brief stoppages to coincide with the many demonstrations and public meetings held in solidarity with the Lip workers; a mass rally in Marseilles, for example, was accompanied by strikes in the sugar refineries, on ships in the harbour, and in the banks.

There have also been a number of actions by journalists after police in Besancon seized three



Part of mass rally held in Paris last week in solidarity with the Lip workers

This lack of action by the reformist leaders despite their rhetoric flows directly from their electoralist perspective. A massive campaign of industrial disruption could upset the electoral applecart. So they have been careful to stress that, as M. Etienne Fajon of the CP put it, the 'major lesson' of Lip is that it has shown the correctness of the 'common programme' put forward by the 'Union of the Left' (Communist Party, Socialist Party, and Left Radicals) in the last elections. For them, any kind of mass action must assist their electoral campaign, rather than the other way around.

As a result, the solidarity actions which have so far taken place have tended to be spontaneous and scattered in character. The leaders of the main industrial groupings within the CGT and CFDT have endorsed strike action but left the actual details to their local bodies. The only co-ordinated actions took place on the railways, where there was a one-hour national stoppage between 11 a.m. and midday last Thursday, followed by a large number of local 24-hour stoppages. Among the major centres affected were Toulouse, Dijon, Tarbes, Chalons-sur-Marne, Chambéry, Bordeaux, Limoges, Strasbourg and Grenoble.

journalists last Wednesday, beat them up, and held them for nine hours despite being shown their credentials. There have been two strikes at France's main news agency, Agence France Presse, and on Thursday employees of the State radio and television network were due to hold a one-day stoppage.

But such actions are already beginning to peter out, with no perspective offered for developing them. In the absence of any initiative from the trade union leaders — a situation which is almost certain to continue even after the end of the holiday period — everything will depend on the ability of local militants to take up the necessary tasks of organisation, explanation, co-ordination etc.

Only in this way can the Government be forced to take responsibility for the capitalists it represents, by providing the necessary finance to ensure that no jobs are lost and no wage cuts forced through. Otherwise whole sections of the working class, which have come to identify the struggle as their own, will face demoralisation as the Lip workers are forced to pay the price for the ills of a system in which they have no interests. John Marston

## The Communist League — Building the Defence

### Petition...

Hundreds more people have signed the petition calling on the Pompidou regime to lift the ban on the Communist League (French section of the Fourth International), and demanding the release of Pierre Rousset, a leading member of the former League who has now been in jail for two months.

Recent signatories include two more MPs: Gerry Fitt of the SDLP, MP for West Belfast, and Edward Milne, Labour MP for Blyth. Many local Labour councillors have also signed, particularly in Scotland where Edinburgh councillors responded especially well. In Reading, many leading trade unionists in the AUEW have added their voices to the protests, including:

- R. Calow, District Secretary;
- G. R. Stevens, National Committee Delegate;
- C. W. Dixon and R. Horvath, Convenors;
- F. W. Long, D. White, and A. C. McQue, District Committee Delegates;
- W. S. Huxford, Branch Secretary;
- J. M. Smyth and L. V. T. Amor, Shop Stewards.

### & Conference

In the Autumn, possibly in October, it is hoped to hold a broad-based national conference open to all those individuals and organisations opposed to the ban on the League and the jailing of its militants.

To mobilise effectively for this conference, and to involve the maximum number of people, local defence committees incorporating all those prepared to work on this issue — the local labour movement, left groups, concerned individuals, civil rights organisations, etc. — should be initiated as soon as practicable.

All correspondence, especially signed petition forms, copies of resolutions of support, financial contributions etc. should be sent to: Ad Hoc Committee to Defend the Communist League, c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1. Further copies of the petition form, together with an explanatory pamphlet (outlining the events leading up to the ban, the nature of the laws invoked, a statement by the League, and further background information) may be obtained from the same address.



There has been an international response in defence of the Communist League: picture shows Bala Tampoe, secretary of the LSSP(R), Ceylon section

of the Fourth International, speaking at a public meeting in defence of the Communist League in Colombo last month. Nearly 200 people were present.

Last week's article on the campaign in defence of the Communist League referred to activity in Tyne-side, 'where a local defence committee including representatives from all the major working class organisations has been set up'. It also listed South Shields Trades Union Council as among those organisations which have passed resolutions condemning the ban. This is factually incorrect.

In fact, a local defence committee has been set up on the initiative of South Shields LPYS and Newcastle IMG. Individual sponsors include: Jim Murray, Chairman of Vickers Newcastle Shop Stewards, and Prospective Labour Parliamentary Candidate for the Carlton Division; Malcolm

Campbell, President of South Shields Trades Union Council; and Dianne Nelmes, President of the Student Representative Council, Newcastle University.

The Committee is asking all bodies of the local labour movement to sponsor the Committee, to circulate the petition, and to send delegates or observers to the next business meeting on Tuesday, 13 September, at 8.00 p.m. in the People's Place, Derby Terrace, South Shields. Speakers from the Committee and more information can be obtained from the Secretary: Fiona Berry, 17 Lake Avenue, Marsden, South Shields, Co. Durham.

**On 21 August 1968, armies of five members of the Warsaw Pact invaded Czechoslovakia, occupying the entire country within 24 hours.**

**In this article Marie Kazlavsky looks at the background to the invasion and its impact on the political life of Czechoslovakia over the past five years.**



Soviet Communist Party secretary, Mr Brezhnev (centre) together with Czechoslovak party leader, Gustav Husak (left) and President Svoboda (right) in Prague earlier this year

## SABATA FAMILY - SYMBOL OF REPRESSION

Four of the five members of the Sabata family have been convicted for political offences by the Czechoslovak government. The father, daughter, and younger son are in jail and the eldest son is under a suspended sentence; only the mother has not been arrested and tried.

Dr. Jaroslav Sabata, 45, is a Communist of more than 25 years' standing. A lecturer at Brno University, he was elected secretary of the Brno Regional Committee of the Communist Party in 1968, and subsequently became a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party nationally. At the 14th Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, convened secretly at Vysocany in August 1968, after the Russian invasion, he was elected to the Praesidium (highest executive body) of the Central Committee. Until his expulsion in 1969, he used his position to resist Moscow's attempts to turn Czechoslovak Communists away from the path of reform embarked on in 1968.

Dr. Sabata was arrested after the November 1971 elections, and charged with having prepared and distributed leaflets. One of the real reasons for his arrest appears to have been his authorship of a Marxist discussion document called 'The Little Action Programme'. On August 8, 1972 he was convicted and sentenced to 6½ years in jail.

When called as a witness in other important political trials, Dr. Sabata has consistently rejected allegations against both himself and the defendants. He proclaimed to one court, 'We are humanists. We are Communists in opposition. You are not Communists.'

His daughter, Anna Sabatova, has been arrested at the same time as her father. In August 1972 a Brno court sentenced her to 3½ years imprisonment. This was later reduced to three years by the Prague Supreme Court.

The youngest son, Jan Sabata, aged 20, was also arrested during the 1971 elections, along with other young people distributing leaflets. He received a jail sentence of 2½ years in July, 1972.

The eldest son, Vaclav, was arrested shortly after his younger brother. He was sentenced to 2 years in jail, despite the Prosecutor's recommendation that a suspended sentence would be adequate, but in October of last year the Prague Supreme Court replaced his imprisonment with a suspended sentence. Vaclav, a university graduate, was a hotel stoker before his arrest and now works as an asphalt layer.

Earlier this year Mrs. Sabatova made a public appeal to socialists, and to the Communist and workers' parties, around the world to aid in her fight to free her family. The Sabata family symbolise the fate of many Czechoslovak socialists who have been jailed by the regime set up after the Russian invasion. Among them are Dr. Milan Hubl (6½ years), student leader Jiri Muller (5½ years), Dr. Jan Tesar (6 years), Dr. Milan Silhan (5 years), Antonin Rusek (5 years), Dr. Zdenek Prikryl (4 years) and Vlastimila Tesarova (4 years).

For that reason, Mrs. Sabatova's appeal is being taken up in Britain by the Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists. Lawrence Daly, Secretary of the National Union of Miners, is Chairman of the Committee and its members include Monty Johnstone, Tamara Deutscher, Benedict Birnberg, Marion Sling, Quintin Hoare, Robin Blackburn, Dennis Ogden and Ralph Miliband.

As a first step, the Committee is organising a post card campaign in support of the Sabatas. Two postcards have been prepared, one addressed to Dr. Husak (First Secretary of the Czechoslovak Communist Party), and the other to the Czechoslovak Ambassador in London. The postcards bear the message 'Free the Sabata family and all socialists imprisoned in Czechoslovakia' in both English and Czech.

All who value the cause of socialism should participate in this urgent defence of Czechoslovak socialists. More information about the work of the Committee can be obtained from: Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists, 32 Belitha Villas, London, N.1.

# CZECHOSLOVAKIA THE STRUGGLE

If no news is good news, then things would appear to be going well in Czechoslovakia these days.

It is difficult to find even a mention of events in that country in the British press. Perhaps it is again business as usual, perhaps life has returned to 'normal'? That, at least, is the impression which both the present government of Gustav Husak and his companions in arms in Moscow would like to present to the world.

Was the invasion, then, just an unfortunate interruption, a discordant note in 25 years of harmonious development towards socialism in Czechoslovakia? Such an impression might possibly have carried the day on this, the fifth anniversary of the invasion, but for one most regrettable leakage that reached the newspapers last week. In spite of the greatest security precautions, news escaped that the libraries of Czechoslovakia are being purged of anything that could rekindle the spirit of anti-bureaucratic struggle, the fight for socialist democracy in that country. The work begun with the biggest military operation by the Soviet army since the Second World War has still not been completed.

### POLITICAL CREDENTIALS

On 21 August, 1968, the armies of the Soviet Union, East Germany, Poland, Hungary and Bulgaria invaded Czechoslovakia. Six hundred thousand troops in all. Within 24 hours, this enormous force had occupied all the main centres of the country. The military experts of NATO expressed real admiration for the skill and speed of the operation and the secrecy with which such great forces had been mobilised.

The only aspect of the operation which bore the marks of improvisation was the matter of the political credentials of the invaders. An attempt was made to repeat the Hungarian tactic and present to the world a letter of invitation from the leaders of the Czechoslovak Communist Party. This failed. The Communist Party remained united and the tiny clique of collaborators had to be discarded by

the Russian leadership itself.

Instead the Russian leaders raised the bogey of counter-revolution as the political basis for the invasion. Twenty years after the overthrow of capitalism in Czechoslovakia, Brezhnev was trying to persuade the world that an army of 600,000 was required to invade the country in order to prevent the counter-revolution! And the task of that invading army was to confront and repress a united resistance movement by the Czech and Slovak people. What kind of 'socialist' development over a period of twenty years could have led to such a confrontation?

### WORSENING CRISIS

From the early 1960s, Czechoslovak society was marked by a profound and steadily worsening political and economic crisis. Already in 1963, an estimated 57% of total machinery in the Republic was worn out; it was not rare, especially in the field of consumer goods, for the machinery in use to be 60 to 80 years old. Economic growth and productivity of labour were disastrously low. The bureaucratic system of planning and plant management led to the piling up of unsaleable goods that satisfied no real need of the masses, but only the abstract production targets communicated from above.

The economic crisis was produced by, and in turn called for, methods of bureaucratic repression which have been the traditional Stalinist answer to rising social discontent. By 1967, however, repressive measures simply brought the crisis to explosion point. Following the victory of oppositional elements at the Fourth Congress of Czechoslovak writers in June 1967, the government reacted with expulsions from the party, banning of the writers' journal, *Literarni Listy*, etc. Far from destroying the opposition, these measures merely succeeded in carrying the crisis on to the level of the regime itself.

On 5 January, 1968, the Central Committee of the Czechoslovak Communist Party voted to instal Alexander Dubcek as Party Secretary in place of Novotny. This marked the entrance of the 'Reformers' on to the centre of the political stage. The forces they were representing then began to appear in a more definite way: a coalition of a powerful section of the party bureaucracy, the new technocratic and managerial strata, and the intellectuals. For the first time, the party press began to publish realistic assessments of the state of the economy

**Russian invasion met with a militant response but demoralisation gradually set in as the lack of decisive leadership became evident**



# AKIA — FOR SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY

and to reveal the depths of the crisis produced by the Novotny regime. The main lines of its strategy were soon drawn together in the Action Programme of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which was published in April.

## NOT A CLEAN BREAK

The Action Programme was by no means a clean break from the previous positions of the party. In its lack of any perspective for world revolution, the programme remained in the same framework of immediate state interests that has characterised the policy of the East European regimes since the Stalin era. At the same time, the programme was quite blind to the fundamental conflict between the capitalist world economy and the planned economies of East Europe. On the contrary, it seemed to look forward with enthusiasm to the growing integration of the Czechoslovak economy into the world capitalist market; indeed, it saw this as the main means for solving the crisis of the Czechoslovak economy.

Similarly, the only alternative to the bureaucratically centralised plan was posed as the gradual re-introduction of market forces, presented in some of the writings of the reformers of this period as having a basically more rational character than planning! In their talk of 'progressive forms of international collaboration' with imperialist countries and in their theory of a 'socialist' (!) market, the Czechoslovak party leaders were, of course, merely giving voice to a trend that has greatly increased throughout Eastern Europe since 1968. The latest 'forms of collaboration' between the Soviet bureaucracy and US imperialism point up the total cynicism of the Brezhnev clique in their attacks on Dubcek for deserting the socialist cause.

There is no doubt, however, that the Action Programme did contain one new and striking feature — its loosening of the grip on the channels of political communication. The primary concern of the technocratic forces was to replace economic management by the central bureaucracy with a market structure giving much greater responsibility for economic decisions to plant management. This move by the technocrats required a fight for freedom of discussion and personal accountability within the bodies of the party and state apparatuses themselves. At the same time, the reformers had to confront a still powerfully entrenched layer resisting this technocratic programme. To

defeat this layer they had to enlist popular support for their struggle: hence the move to dismantle press censorship, bureaucratic control of the arts and the restoration of rights of freedom of association, etc. In these proposals, the Action Programme makes a break with the traditional methods used by the bureaucracy in Eastern Europe to preserve its rule.

To be sure, by April 1968, the working class masses of Czechoslovakia had not yet appeared as an already active force which had to be won to the Action Programme. It was this absence of a genuine mass movement which gave the programme its unreal character, its air of being suspended above the real political forces which were going to burst into open conflict a few short months later.

## POLITICAL REVOLUTION

The political rights granted by the Dubcekites represented a great opening for the Czechoslovak working class. They made possible, for the first time since 1968, the re-entry of the masses on to the political arena — the opening up of a struggle for genuine socialist democracy. The whole post-war history of the workers' states shows clearly, however, the extreme fragility of reforms granted from above without the creation of a direct state apparatus of the working masses to guarantee, institutionalise, and greatly extend these basic measures.

The years of fragmentation and impotence under Novotny made the working class rightly suspicious of the new party leadership. After the appearance of the Action Programme, a new danger grew — the changes seemed so sweeping that the problems of the masses seemed capable of solution by the bureaucratic self-reform. It was only gradually that the newly-emerging revolutionary vanguard began to gain the necessary self-confidence.

Of tremendous importance were such bold independent initiatives as the action of the Brno students in organising a 'March for Vietnam.' Similarly, the police repression of the Polish students' movement in March evoked a wave of sympathy with the latter in Czechoslovakia. Particularly active were the small groups of revolutionary militants, such as the Club of the Revolutionary Left and the group around Petr Uhl that later formed the Revolutionary Socialist Party. Increasingly, these militants saw that the struggle for socialist democracy could not but come into sharp conflict with the interests of the bureaucratic reformers. They also grasped the indivisi-

bility of the world socialist revolution as against the national-centredness, which was one of the great weaknesses of the Czechoslovak Spring.

In general, then, the objective pre-conditions very rapidly developed in Czechoslovakia for a victorious political revolution which would sweep away the bureaucratic monopoly of power and instal a regime of democratic workers' power. But the inexperience and subjective weakness of the workers' movement were only beginning to be overcome when the Russians moved in.

From the removal of Novotny until the publication of the Action Programme in April, the Soviet press remained very cautious in its assessment of developments in Czechoslovakia. The projected technocratic reforms, for instance, represented a major extension of reforms operating in the Soviet Union itself, and were seen by the technocratic wing of the Soviet bureaucracy as a test for their future wider application. From April onwards, however, the dynamic of events appeared more and more clearly to be directed against the domination exerted by the Kremlin over the workers' states of Eastern Europe.

Of course, the only way in which the bureaucracy can justify its material privileges and monopoly of power is precisely by denying its existence as a social caste, precisely by identifying its political dictatorship with the dictatorship of the proletariat. Thus, when its positions are threatened, the only ideological recourse open to it is to brand its socialist opponents as anti-socialist, counter-revolutionary elements.

The most serious charges made against the Czechoslovak Communist Party concerned its alleged tolerance of anti-socialist forces plotting a counter-revolutionary coup. The press and TV revelations of the anti-working class mass terror of the 1950s under Russian direction were held up as 'proof' that the media had been infiltrated by anti-communist agents! The formation of clubs such as the Club 231 of former political prisoners was held up as 'proof' of the existence of counter-revolutionary centres. What these professional forgers and slanderers could not produce was any evidence that anti-communist (as opposed to anti-bureaucratic) forces of even minimal impact were at work. But, perhaps the greatest slander of all was to suggest that the Czechoslovak working class would sit by and watch itself being robbed of the historical conquests of the 1948 revolution.

No, the spectre that was haunting the Soviet bureaucracy in August 1968 was not that of counter-revolution, but the spectre of workers' power. The impact of the Czechoslovak Spring on the other workers' states and, in particular, the Soviet Ukraine raised the spectre of a new rise of the working class in the Soviet Union itself. It was to smash this threat that the advance-guard of the invasion force swept into Prague, kidnapped the party and state leaders at gun-point, and flew them off to a Ukrainian prison. And it was for this 'heroic act of proletarian internationalism' that the Kremlin bureaucracy then demanded the support of the international working class.

## INTERNATIONAL REACTION

This was not slow in coming from the tiny Communist parties isolated from the masses. For those Communist parties with any real working class support, however, approval of the invasion would have condemned them to a massive decline in influence. Moreover, many parties were already deeply committed to support of Dubcek. Only three months earlier in France, the Western CP leaderships had shown clearly the terror with which they regarded genuine revolutionary mass mobilisations. The 'reform movement' of the Czechoslovak bureaucracy appeared to them as a model of gradual socialist development in which the party apparatus would remain in overall control. They refused to admit that the really explosive contradiction lay between the working masses of Czechoslovakia and the ruling bureaucracy of the Soviet Union.

It was these illusions in the smooth completion of the technocratic reforms without any mass upsurge that were so rudely shaken by the entry of the five Warsaw Pact armies. The dominant reaction was one of bewilderment



that such an action could take place. The statement of the Executive Committee of the CPGB spoke of the military intervention as a 'tragic error' that 'cannot be justified'; nor, it might have added, could it be explained with the categories at the disposal of the CPGB. Even Monty Johnstone, who, in his pamphlet on Czechoslovakia, attacks with some fervour the policies of the Soviet leadership, is reduced to talking about the mis-information reaching Moscow.

It soon became clear that the Czechoslovak leaders were prepared to engage in far-reaching compromises with their captors rather than place themselves at the head of the popular resistance to the occupation. Already, in early August, as the Soviet propaganda offensive was mounting, they had betrayed a peculiar 'naivety' in their expectations that 'truth would prevail' once the real facts of the situation became known throughout Eastern Europe. Once the masses had taken up the struggle with tremendous ingenuity against the occupation forces, the political role of the Dubcekites became clear for all to see — a centre bloc moving backwards and forwards between the two major contending forces, the working class and the Soviet bureaucracy. It was this lack of a decisive leadership which led over the coming months to a growing demoralisation within the mass movement. In turn, this enforced impotence of the masses prepared the ground for the pushing aside of Dubcek and his replacement the following spring by the servile opportunist — Gustav Husak.

After more than four years of Husak-style 'normalisation,' there is, at least, no longer any ambiguity. Whilst the relation of forces is not favourable to the unleashing of a new mass terror, the tactic of widespread purges in the party and dismissals from jobs, combined with the selective trials of socialist and communist oppositionists, has succeeded for the moment in giving an appearance of stability to the bureaucratic regime in Prague. Of course, the active revolutionary forces in Czechoslovakia are now much smaller, but also much clearer. They have lost their illusions in the gradual reform of the party apparatus. Of particular importance was the manifesto of the Revolutionary Socialist Party, drawn up in 1969 and widely distributed abroad. This remains an historical gain for the international revolution in its clear definition of the tasks facing the revolutionary vanguard.

The struggle for socialist democracy can no longer be posed simply in terms of Czechoslovakia; the 'internationalist' military intervention puts on the agenda ever more urgently an international fight to overthrow the bureaucratic caste that rules Europe today. It is only in this way that the interests of the workers' states and the world revolution can be effectively secured against imperialism. The cause of world communism can only be undermined by continued silence and half-truths, spoken in the name of international unity. Only by calling things by their name will it be possible to achieve international unity in the struggle against imperialism.



# SOCIAL DEMOCRACY AND CAPITALIST CRISIS / Part 2

## New struggles & new alliances

Until the mid 1960s the opposition to the rightward shifting policies of the main working class parties in Europe came from *inside* these organisations. In Britain this was represented first by the Bevanite left of the 1950s, and then by the left-wing currents formed around the question of unilateral nuclear disarmament and within the Young Socialists.

From the mid '60s onwards this situation began to change. First a mass youth and student movement grew up which could mobilise tens of thousands on issues such as the Vietnam war. Then, from 1968 onwards, there was a mass upsurge of the working class against the integrationist 'negotiated incomes policies' of the mid 1960s.

In many countries this upsurge was directed against the policies of Social Democrats. In Britain there were the strikes against the Labour Party's anti-union laws (*In Place of Strife*) in 1969. In Germany and Sweden major 'wildcat' strikes took place in the same year. In 1969-70 enormous strikes, involving fifteen million workers, broke out in Italy when the socialists were in the government. In 1973 a general strike erupted in Denmark. In France in May 1968, although the Socialists and the Communists were not in the government, the general strike and factory occupations clearly developed against the wishes of these two parties. *In other words, the years since 1968 have seen the biggest strike wave in Europe since the early 1920s (and in the case of France and Italy the biggest strikes ever seen at any time in any country) taking place either outside, or directly against the organisational control of the mass parties of the working class.*

Despite great weaknesses, these massive social upsurges have been showing an increasing ability to organise themselves outside the bureaucratic apparatuses of the traditional mass parties. In France in 1968 the absence of elected strike and factory committees allowed the French Communist Party to call off the strike wave without organised resistance. Since then

however the election of strike and factory committees has been seen on an increasing scale. In the spring 1973 upsurge of school students in France, the whole struggle, involving over half a million, was organised through democratically elected and regionally federated committees. The authority of these committees was so great that the French Communist Party was forced to negotiate officially with them. Similarly, in the strikes of immigrant workers in May 1973, the union leaders were forced to accept that representatives designated by the workers should participate in the negotiations with management.

### TWO CHOICES

Faced with an upsurge beginning outside their organised control, the forces within the mass organisations of the working class were faced with the choice of either attempting to stamp out the struggles or co-operating with those forces involved in them. For the genuinely left forces at the base of these parties, of course, this presented no problems. They were for co-operation.

In Britain, sections of the left-wing of the Labour Party participated first in the Vietnam Solidarity Committee marches and then supported the mass strikes well before any shift occurred in the party leadership. Thousands of Labour Party members must have taken part in the strikes against *In Place of Strife*, thousands more would have supported the one-day strikes in support of UCS, against the Industrial Relations Act and the May Day strike this year. Big difficulties, however, faced the *leaderships* of the mass working class organisations.

Those who were first to feel the pressure from the base were the trade union leaders. More immediately forced to take a position on the mass struggle than the Parliamentary leaders, the trade union bureaucrats either had to turn to the left or, if they refused, suffer defeats and be replaced with new 'left' bureaucrats. In France, for example, the once Catholic based union federation, the CFDT, began to move sharply to the left. In Italy the union leader-

ships were forced to launch the huge strikes of 1969 — although the actual development of the struggle went far further than they wished. In Britain the old openly reactionary duo of Deakin and Carron in the TGWU and the AUEW were replaced by the 'left' duo of Jack Jones and Hugh Scanlon. Of course these new leaderships had enormous limitations and were not in any sense capable of dealing with the problems of the class struggle, but they did represent an important shift. This trend has continued, until now even the 'lefts' are under pressure from *their* left — the forcing of Scanlon to withdraw from the TUC-government talks being just one example of this.

Internationally the left bureaucrats are feeling this pressure. At the recent congress of the Italian metal workers' union the union leadership was more than usually honest. It stated openly that if they did not take up an 'intransigent and leftist' stance, forces to the left of the Communist Party would take over the union. These fears were brought to a head at the recent election of union delegates at the enormous Fiat plant in Turin, the largest single factory in Europe, where a majority of the delegates elected supported political organisations to the left of the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. At the recent congress of the CFDT, the second biggest union federation in France, resolutions put forward by the Trotskyists of the now banned Communist League gained 15-20% of the vote.

### BIG DANGERS

Making concessions to forces to their left obviously carries big dangers for the bureaucrats. The dynamic of the struggles which such concessions launch may get completely out of their control. For this reason, the political leaders preferred initially to try and crush the forces to their left.

The classic case was the French Communist Party (PCF). After the May 1968 General Strike, sparked off by student demonstrations and strengthened by the May 13th joint demonstration of the Communist Party and the students, the PCF vowed never again to engage in common actions with 'leftists.' It systematically attempted to root out their influence, denouncing them as 'student rabble' and 'government agents.' After a series of defeats of this line, its policy finally collapsed when a young Maoist worker, Pierre Overney, was shot dead by the private police force of the Renault company. The PCF condemned the left rather than the police for the killing, and urged people not to support the demonstration against the shooting. Yet 200,000 people ignored the call of the PCF and joined the demonstration. Scared of losing control of the situation, and of being outflanked on the left by the Socialist Party, which had, for its own reasons, supported the demonstration, the PCF turned to a new policy of 'tactical' relations with forces to its left. It was forced to negotiate with the strike committees at the time of the student upsurges of this spring and has protested against the banning of the Communist League. (Although, of course, it makes its tactical turns in its own Stalinist manner — it refused to allow the Communist League to speak at the meeting called to protest against the ban!) Although it still tries to stamp out movements to its left, in practice

the CP is increasingly being forced to make concessions to them.

If the immensely well organised PCF could not stamp out the movements to its left, then the chances of any other party doing so, in particular the weakly organised Social Democratic parties, are negligible. Furthermore, as was discussed in the first article in this series, the ruling class's current strategy of direct confrontation with the working class closes for the social democratic leaders the option of coming to power with the support of any section of the capitalist class. The Social Democratic leaders, if they continued their policy of *open* alliance with the bourgeoisie, would be in danger of being crushed between the rising struggle on the one hand and the move to a 'strong state' on the other. The reality and acuteness of this danger was brought home in the 1969 Presidential elections in France, when the Socialist Party, running on an openly right-wing ticket, obtained a tiny 5% of the vote — the smallest percentage it had ever obtained in its history.

### NEW ALLIANCES

In this crisis of perspective for the Social Democratic parties, of course, some sections of the leadership (the Jenkins of this world) are for continued alliance with the capitalist class — indeed they want to move still further to the right to somehow try to get back capitalist support. Eventually these elements may break with the mass working class organisations altogether. Other sections have always been against the open seeking of support in the ruling class and were for collaboration with the left forces. Up to the end of the '60s, and particularly when in government, the top leadership of the Social Democratic parties (Wilson and his European equivalents) had decisively sided with the right. In the new situation they begin to allow the left to present the 'image' to the party and even to engage themselves in left rhetoric — Wedgwood Benn marching with the UCS workers, Wilson condemning Caetano's visit, etc. Of course any *real* break with the bourgeoisie is avoided — Wilson threatened to veto the nationalisation proposals of the Labour Party executive, Mitterrand of the French Socialist Party will allow no tinkering with France's commitments to NATO — but a definite change in the basis of Social Democracy's political appeal takes place.

In an organisational form this move shows itself in two ways. Firstly in an alliance with the Communist Parties. Secondly in some joint actions with the 'independent' left, including often the revolutionaries. This shift in the alliances of the Social Democratic parties from parties of the ruling class — Liberals, Conservatives, etc. — to the Communist Party has gone furthest so far in France where the Socialist Party and the PCF put forward a common programme and stood as the 'Union of the Left' in the elections.

A similar shift has also begun in Italy. Here the Socialist Party has since 1969 been shifting back to collaboration with the CP at a local level, and has officially proposed a policy of 'more advanced equilibrium' i.e. accepting CP support and collaboration. While the party is participating in the latest Centre-Left government, the left-wing has strenuously opposed this move.

Part of demonstration after shooting of Pierre Overney



**NEXT WEEK: open letter to Eric Heffer on 'Unity of the Left' in reply to his articles in 'Tribune'**

In Britain, with a far smaller CP, and with the Labour Party being able to form a government by itself, this shift is not so pronounced. Nevertheless, at the base, collaboration between the Communist Party and Labour Party members is increasing, made easier by the TUC's recent ruling ending the ban on the Communist Party in the Trades Councils. To the extent that the Labour Party takes an increasingly left position on industrial struggles more unofficial collaboration can be expected — Wedgwood Benn marching arm in arm with Jimmy Reid is just the beginning.

Joint activity with the 'independent', and in particular the revolutionary, left is very dangerous for the Social Democratic parties. Nevertheless, even this is developing to some extent — particularly in countries such as France where the SP and CP are in a contest to see who can put on the most left face. Thus, for example, when the Communist League was banned in France, Mitterrand was careful to be photographed shaking hands with one of its former leading members — Alain Krivine. In Britain Eric Heffer's articles on 'Unity of the Left' in *Tribune* are an indication of things to come.

Alan Jones

Towards the end of 1972 the most serious attack yet faced by the Rhodesian regime was launched in the Mavuradonha mountains in north-east Zimbabwe by members of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

In comparison to the commando-type operations mounted in the period 1965 to 1968 this was an extremely well prepared incursion. It reflected the beginning of the evolution of the struggle from one merely inspired by nationalism to one based on the principles of scientific socialism.

#### JUMPING-OFF POINT

In 1971 the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) turned its attention to the Tete province, in which Cabora Bassa, a dam being built by the Portuguese with considerable help from South African, American, British and other European companies, is situated. By early 1972, FRELIMO controlled enough of the province, which has a common border with the north-east of Zimbabwe, to provide a valuable jumping-off point for ZANU operations. With FRELIMO's assistance, ZANU was able to gain the support of the Shona People, who live on both sides of the border in that area. By late 1972, there was a steady flow of arms and explosives from Zambia, via Mozambique, to dumps in the Mavuradonha mountains.

Armed actions began in late December with an attack on a farm north of the town of Centenary. At the same time an African Trading Post was razed. A day later a second farm was attacked and other buildings were burnt down.

The aim of this technique is clear. Isolated farms are very weak and they have been further weakened by a recent drought. The attack on African workers' facilities is calculated to force essential migrant labour (a good deal of it from Mozambique) out of one of the regime's most important agricultural areas, thus crippling the

most stubborn European farmers and severely damaging the local economy. Extensive use of land mines has greatly handicapped Rhodesian communications and has resulted in a large number of casualties among the security forces.

#### BORDER CLOSED

The Rhodesian Government obviously thought that things were getting out of hand when the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) guerrillas also began operations, in the Victoria Falls area. After the mining in January of a South African Police truck, which killed two of the occupants and injured the rest, Smith decided a few days later to close the border with Zambia. The border would remain closed, he announced 'until satisfactory assurances are obtained from the Zambian Government that they will no longer permit terrorists to operate against Rhodesia from their territory'.

South Africa and Portugal, however, opposed the move vigorously, and although guerrilla attacks continued unabated the Rhodesian government soon declared that the necessary assurances had been forthcoming. It re-opened its side of the border on 3 February, but as South Africa and Portugal had feared, Zambia kept its side closed and elected to find alternative trade routes.

Since February of this year there have been numerous incidents in the north-east. The Smith government has responded with increasingly repressive measures — revealing their inability to 'deal' with the guerrillas as they have done in the past. The regime has tried to seal off the north-east, and all known leaders in the area have been purged. Some 200 people have been arrested, and a system of collective fines on the local population has been instituted. There has also been the indiscriminate shooting of villagers both in Rhodesia and across the border in Mozambique.

#### PREPARATORY WORK

Careful preparatory work has now led to a qua-

litative change in guerrilla activity. In the past, particularly in the Zambesi valley, the regime's internal intelligence service was able to rely on the local inhabitants for information about 'foreigners'. This enabled the security forces to mop up the insurgents fairly rapidly.

In the north-east, however, the reverse is true. Because the people had been adequately politicised beforehand they actively assist the guerrillas. Secondly, there is considerable liaison bet-

pursued by the Smith regime, indeed its very existence, are very far from being an anachronism. On the contrary, they have the very definite purpose of protecting the interests of both foreign imperialism and the indigenous capitalist class. It is therefore not surprising that the liberal gesture of economic sanctions has proved to be a mere empty token, as shown when the United States lifted the boycott on Rhodesian chrome 'for defence purposes'.

## Part 3 Zimbabwe

Tim Cornell

# AFRICA IN STRUGGLE

between ZANU and FRELIMO, while ZANU and ZAPU have set up a Joint Military Command. Thus military actions are now co-ordinated, and many more of the security forces are tied down. This has severely limited the flexibility of the regime's counter-insurgency measures. The general recession of the capitalist world has combined with the economic and political instability of much of black Africa to make the capitalists increasingly selective in their field of investment. This has led to a greater concentration in Southern Africa. The increasingly repressive measures being

The only road to liberation lies through the mobilisation of the African masses. But for the guerrilla operations to be successful, there had to be a change from the 'commando' methods of the 1960s to activities which would win support from the local inhabitants. This in turn necessitated increasing liaison between the Zimbabwe groups and other forces such as FRELIMO fighting the same enemy — imperialism. The series of 'incidents' in the Centenary area this year show clearly that this is the way forward for the struggle of the Zimbabwe liberation groups.

## Chile

# Allende digs his own grave

Chile's lorry owners are now around the negotiating table with Allende's government after a month-long boycott which has wreaked havoc with an ailing economy.

But Allende's attempts at a 'solution' have dug the grave of the Popular Unity government elected three years ago. At every test he has retreated before the demands of the right wing, and every concession has only given the counter-revolutionaries a taste for more blood.

#### CHRONIC SHORTAGES

The lorry owners' federation — which controls 90% of goods transportation in Chile — is on 'strike' for higher tariffs, the removal of controls imposed after the October 1972 boycott, and guarantees against the threat of nationalisation which sparked off the earlier action. Half of industry is reduced to producing at less than a fifth of capacity, and the urban population faces chronic food shortages.

The Christian Democrats and the fascists have used the crisis to demand that more powers be given to the military: and Allende's only actions have been to pave the way for this. After two weeks General Prats, the Army commander-in-chief, and other armed forces leaders were brought into the key government posts. Far from appeasing the right, this has been a signal for the preparation of an all-out military coup.

The lorry owners announced that they would stay out, and concentrated all their lorries in encampments (though a partial requisitioning by the army last week was not resisted). The Popular Unity transport union leader Balboa has been assassinated, and fascist sabotage continues. The National Party openly calls for a military takeover of all government departments, while the Air Force General first appointed as Transport Minister, Cesar Ruiz, has resigned because he was not given powers to bring in more military personnel to carry out the job.

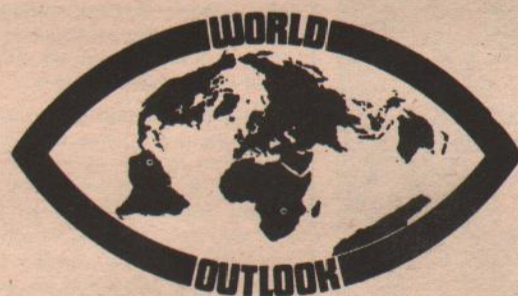
Prior to this, Allende had already sacked the Popular Unity junior Minister, Faivovich, after

the lorry owners claimed that he still intended to carry out nationalisation measures. Other demands have also been conceded in order to bring the lorry owners to the negotiating table.

#### CONNIVING

Allende — unswervingly supported only by the Chilean Communist Party — is conniving in a military take-over. On 29 June, thousands of Chilean workers took to the streets ready to defend the Popular Unity government against the threat of a fascist-backed military coup. Since then their leaders have been closeted with the same army which has been invading and searching the factories they occupied at that time.

While the government refused to act against the right-wing saboteurs, Altamirano, general



secretary of Allende's Socialist Party, was sent out to tell the workers of the militant Santiago industrial belt that they must 'make sacrifices' and 'exercise restraint' on the wages front. Allende's radio and TV broadcasts have talked of the country being plunged into civil war and denounced the right-wing terrorism of the 'Patria y Libertad' group. He has exhorted Chilean workers only to trust the Popular Unity leaders — and of course the army. In the name of 'not provoking the fascists' he has now jailed sailors who tried to mutiny against counter-revolutionary officers, arrested leaders of the left-wing MAPU, and threatened the forcible suppression of violence 'from the left' as well as the right.

#### NO LEAD

Allende and the Communist Party are giving the right wing every chance to mobilise. By refusing to give the working class any lead, they deliberately confuse class relations and ferment the divisions in the working class which the Christian Democrats rely on to gain the support, for example, of the copper miners, who are determined to press their wage demands.

The Chilean bourgeoisie and the imperialists have been preparing for three years for the crisis in the working class to reach the point where they could openly take the offensive. Now Allende and the Stalinists are acting as midwives in this process. Jane Frazer

## LETTER

# South Africa

I am glad to see that Red Weekly has started the series 'Africa in Struggle'. This is an area which deserves more attention from Marxists, most 'analysis' being reduced at present to lists of facts.

However, I have a serious criticism of John Sutton's article on South Africa (*Red Weekly* 13). This article implies that there are serious differences in the South African ruling classes as to the strategy for their continued rule. Comrade Sutton suggests that Vorster 'has chosen to balance between industrial liberalisation and armed repression'. In other words he is balancing between the (contradictory) interests of the white 'workers', farmers, etc. and the international monopolists.

Despite the superficial correctness of this view, it can constitute a dangerous concession to bourgeois reformism. The 'concerned' liberal capitalist (a la *Guardian*) will seize on this point to argue that apartheid is not in the interests of international capitalism. The restrictions on number of skilled workers (job reservation) and the limited home market (starvation wages) are a brake on economic growth. Therefore increased investment by the corporations will force the gradual abolition of apartheid.

However, despite the very real differences over aspects of apartheid, the above argument hides the real coincidence of interests amongst the ruling classes in South Africa. The Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa, backed by white 'workers', farmers, poor whites etc., by advocating greater division between the races. They extended and deepened the system of migratory labour for blacks, and gave privileges to whites. Yet in the same period (from 1948 to the early '60s) the South African economy was rapidly expanding.

The reason for this is that the migratory labour system, the nub of apartheid, completely atomised and fragmented the African working class, making it almost impossible for them to defend their interests. This meant that the international monopolies, which were reaping the benefits of low wage bills, were expanding (and diversifying) rapidly precisely in a period of increased racism, apartheid, repression etc. This is in total contradiction to the views of our 'concerned' capitalist cited above. In fact capitalists in South Africa cannot attack apartheid, for racism, migratory labour, etc. are an integral part of the 'totality of social relations' which constitute South African capitalism.

The present difficulties of South African capitalists do indeed include the problem of increasing the size of the home market, numbers of skilled workers, etc. However they cannot do this at the expense of losing their social base, the white 'workers'. Also an even greater problem looms on the horizon — the recent strike wave has shown that the African workers are recovering from the defeats of the early '60s. The real opponents of apartheid and capitalism are entering the

arena once more and the expected life span of South Africa is diminishing rapidly.

Yours in Struggle, Bob Cleaver

JOHN SUTTON replies: I agree with comrade Cleaver's letter. I did not wish to imply that increased investment would bring down apartheid. My point is that South African capitalism is faced with enormous contradictions. As comrade Cleaver says, these can only be solved under socialism, and only the strength of the black working class can destroy capitalism and the racist system of apartheid on which it depends.

## IRAN Demonstration marks coup anniversary

Red Weekly Reporter

A hundred and fifty people took part in a demonstration in London last Sunday, as part of an international campaign on the 20th anniversary of the CIA-led coup which put the Shah of Iran back in power in 1953.

Speakers from the Iranian Students Society Confederation, which organised the demonstration and also a large meeting two days earlier, emphasised that the coup had taken place in order to instal a regime which would safeguard the interests of imperialism and suppress the national liberation movement in Iran. These tasks had been carried out with a vengeance.

Thus the oil industry (nationalised under the previous government of Dr Mossadegh) has been de-nationalised, and 1,000 troops are assisting the British to suppress the liberation struggle in Oman — which threatens imperialist oil interests in the Arab Gulf. Half of the annual budget goes on arms, to back up such 'policing of the Gulf' and to maintain the repression of the Iranian working class and its allies. There are no free trade unions or student unions. The prisons contain the most barbaric torture chambers in the world, and during the last two years alone the regime has carried out 120 public executions of militants and patriots.

This oppression, the speakers stressed, can only be smashed by the mobilisation of the Iranian working class, students and other oppressed sectors on a clear political basis; coupled with international solidarity. This last was unfortunately lacking last weekend, in Britain at least: a number of British socialist groups supported the meeting, but on the demonstration the British left was conspicuous for its absence. This is serious, not just because of the need to organise solidarity in Britain, but because without support from British groups Iranian students are particularly vulnerable to police intimidation and threats of deportation, etc.

# CAMBODIA - 'THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM'

**RED NOTES**

As US bombers returned to their bases after the 15 August halt to the Cambodian bombing, Robert Thompson, advisor to the Nixon government on counter-revolutionary warfare, expressed his faith in the ability of the puppet Lon Nol regime to hold its own for at least six months.

Nixon himself didn't seem to be so sure, however. He promptly announced that he would seek authority from Congress to resume air raids over Cambodia if North Vietnam were to mount an offensive 'which jeopardises the stability in Indochina'. The liberation forces in Indochina have always based their tactics on a close watch of developments inside the US. Not since the 1968 crisis of the Johnson administration have divisions inside the American ruling class been so deep. The present period thus offers excellent opportunities for decisive military and po-

litical initiatives, especially in Cambodia.

The current tactics of the Cambodian liberation forces (the FUNK) seem fairly clear. An immediate offensive to capture the capital of Phnom Penh would have imposed a heavy burden on the liberation forces, who have already undergone great hardship. It would also have endangered the civilian population of the city (because of the possibility of the puppet troops resorting to mass bombing in desperation), and reunited the various factions around Lon Nol who are rapidly falling out with one another.

The liberation forces have therefore adopted a different course. Their immediate aim is to re-establish their lines of communication and provide rest and new equipment for their front line troops. At the same time this gives them an opportunity to carry out systematic propaganda a-

mong the peasants and townspeople of the liberated areas, in preparation for the final seizure of power.

They have already begun to carry out mopping up operations against several provincial capitals. Most importantly, they can cut the capital's main supply routes, in particular the road to the port of Kompong Som. This will draw the enemy out of the city and on to the more favourable terrain of the countryside, where they will be cut to pieces. This will speed up both the demoralisation of the puppet army and the political decomposition of the Lon Nol regime.

The dangers presently facing the liberation forces all come from outside, with the exception of the weather. There is always the possibility of an invasion from South Vietnam but such a move would be a very risky gamble on the part of the Saigon government.

Nixon might attempt to resume

direct bombing, as he has threatened, but such a move would be very difficult politically. A more serious threat is some form of arm-twisting from either Moscow or Peking. Moscow has very little influence with the Cambodian liberation forces, and still maintains diplomatic relations with the Lon Nol regime, but they might try and exert pressure via the North Vietnamese. Pressure from Peking is already a fact, which is why Sihanouk was forced to make a public call for international military aid two months ago.

However the most immediate danger seems to be the possibility that the monsoon will arrive before the Lon Nol regime has finally fallen. The overall balance of forces is undeniably favourable to the national liberation forces, and everything points to the correctness of Sihanouk's description of the present period as 'the lull before the storm.'

John Watts

Workers at Laing's Cryfield building site at Warwick University took a major step towards eradicating all lump and non-union labour when management agreed on Tuesday to reinstate a labourer who had been sacked for carrying out a site resolution blacking non-union labour.

Thirty workers, members of the construction union UCATT, had been on strike for nine days before management capitulated. UCATT representatives also secured immediate negotiations to end the employment of lump and sub-contracted labour on all Laing's sites.

The Cryfield victory was brought about firstly through solidarity strikes at other Laing's sites (notably at Sutton Coldfield and Warley), and also through efficient co-ordination of action with the other unionised sites (both Gleeson's) at Warwick University. A joint shop stewards committee was recently set up, which organised such actions as a mass picket by Gleeson's men at the Laing's site. Local union officials also contributed to the success of the strike by rapidly making it official.

## Conference to defend Shrewsbury 24

At a meeting on Wednesday night, the Liverpool Trades Council decided to convene a national conference of trade unionists to build support for the 24 North Wales building workers who face trial in Shrewsbury this autumn for picketing activities.

The conference will be held on Saturday, 22 September, in Liverpool. Delegates will be welcome from all trade union bodies - trades councils, shop stewards committees, and local Shrewsbury defence committees.

Bill Jones of the Defence Committee speaking at a meeting in London's Conway Hall last Friday, organised by the Joint Sites Committee to rally support for the Shrewsbury 24. In the chair is London building worker Lou Lewis.

The Trades Council also decided to call a Merseyside conference to plan local solidarity actions in support of the Shrewsbury 24. This will take place on Wednesday, 29 August, at 7.30 p.m. in the AUEW building, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

The trial of six of the 24 defendants, all charged under the conspiracy laws, will open in Shrewsbury on 3 October.

The Liverpool Trades Council decision represents an important step forward

for the movement in defence of the Shrewsbury 24, and the September conference will be an important opportunity to work out a plan of action to defeat the state offensive against trade union pickets.

It is important that all local Shrewsbury defence committees, and as many other trade union bodies across the country as possible are represented there.

Further details and credentials can be obtained from: Simon Fraser, Secretary, Liverpool Trades Council, 33 Hatton Gardens, Liverpool L3 2AA. tel. 051-236 1778.

## STATEMENT FROM GERY LAWLESS

Recent press reports on the London bombings have contained statements ascribed to IMG militant, Gery Lawless. These reports have created some confusion. We print the following statement by comrade Lawless in order to make perfectly clear what were his activities during these events.

An article appearing in the *Workers' Press* of 22 August by Editor Alex Mitchell, contains a number of serious insinuations, damaging to the reputation of any socialist.

These are that the only evidence that the fire-bombings in London were operations of the Provisional IRA, was the statement that I received from the Irish Republican Publicity Bureau, and that the authenticity of this statement was doubtful.

The article further alleged that the above would be used as an excuse for a police round-up of Irish Republicans in Britain.

The real situation is as follows:

At 2.55 p.m. on Sunday, 19 August, I received a statement from the IRPB stating that the Provisional IRA accepted responsibility for a number of fire-bombings in London's West End.

Being satisfied that this statement came from the Provisional Republican movement, I next checked the claims contained within that statement.

This I did, as would any journalist, by ringing the Press Office at New Scotland Yard. This course of action was also necessary to safeguard myself against a possible charge of being 'an accessory after the fact.' The long-drawn out saga then began; with the Yard's Press Office attempting to play down the story so as to protect the multi-million pound turn-

over of London's West End in the midst of a major summer shopping spree.

On Radio London on Monday, I challenged the authorities to explain why they still denied the political significance of the bombings.

At 5.00 p.m. that evening, Scotland Yard contacted me to state that they wished to interview me. Mr. Mitchell should be aware that the actual choice before me when faced with a 'request' of this nature was either to go with my solicitor under his protection or to be hauled in without this protection and held incommunicado for several hours.

I told them that I had received the statement, the contents of that statement, and I described my attempts to get from the Police Press Office a statement as to whether there had been any fire-bombs found in London.

At no time did I give the police any information which could identify sources other than that contained in the statement from the IRPB.

Mr. Mitchell in his article makes the further outrageous claim that I 'identified' the voice on the phone which gave me the IRPB statement. Mr. Mitchell should produce the source of this alleged statement.

The last important factual point to be dealt with is this. Was the statement from the IRPB genuine? According to the *Irish Press* of 22 August, the authenticity of the statement is now confirmed.



Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

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## WHAT'S ON

**THE JOKE'S OVER:** A report on 'the social needs of homosexuals,' published by Gayprints and Rat Studies. 'An important contribution to gay liberation' (Writing on the Wall). Price 20p (inc. p & p) from Gayprints Dept. RW, Box GP, 197 King's Cross Road, London, W.C.1.

**TARIQ ALI:** Would anyone who saw Tariq Ali being arrested outside Buckingham Palace during the protest against Dr Caetano's visit on Tuesday, 17 July, please phone Brian at 534 1628 (working hours only).

**CENTRAL LONDON AIL FORUM:** Gery Lawless on 'The Littlejohn Affair', Friday 24 August, 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London N.1.

**IMG RED FORUM:** Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road, London N.1.

**BIRMINGHAM IMG STUDY CLASSES:** Introductory series of lectures on the politics of the IMG. Every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m. at the Wellington pub, Bristol Road.