

RED WEEKLY

6 JANUARY 1977

No. 181

Price 10p

SUNDAY 9 JANUARY
DEMONSTRATE against the deportations!
Agee and Hosenball must stay!
Out with the CIA!
Repeal the Immigration Act!
 Assemble Embankment tube station, London, 12.45. Move off 1.15 to march to Home Office, Whitehall, and US Embassy, Grosvenor Sq. Then to rally at Speakers Corner. **SPEAKERS: Judith Hart MP, Ken Morgan [NUJ Gen. Sec.], Philip Agee, Jo Richardson MP,** and representatives of CRIA and the Cypriot Defence Committee.

CHINESE MASSES POP THE CORK

A RISE in the Chinese consumption of alcohol is explained by the celebrations at the fall of the 'Gang of Four', according to the official Peking news agency. But according to other reports in recent weeks, the masses have found other uses for all those empty bottles.

Sections of the British press have hysterically blown up reports of anti-government violence into a 'Civil War in China'. The reality is slightly less dramatic, but no less significant.

Most reliable reports indicate riots in Paoting, near Peking, which seem to have spread to the southern provinces, centring particularly on the towns on the main railway network. 'Propaganda groups' of the People's Liberation Army have been drafted into the trouble spots.

PEDDLED

Chinese agency and radio reports have predictably peddled reports of murder and rape by the dissidents. Equally predictably, the 'Gang of Four' have been blamed for the disturbances. And still more predictably, the British press has echoed these sentiments exactly.

After his death, Mao was praised by no less a friend of the working class than Edward Heath as having brought stability to China. The Western press is now concerned to lend its support to Hua Kuo-feng in his efforts to play the same role.

Nothing is more frightening to the bureaucracy and its Western apologists than the prospect of the Chinese masses moving into action. The evidence of recent weeks is that there have been similar disturbances dating from April after the purge of the 'capitalist roader' Teng Hsiao-ping. There are now indications that Teng is to be rehabilitated.

FACTION

It is not clear at present whether these latest demonstrations are tied to any particular faction of the bureaucracy, such as the Chiang Ching group. It is unlikely after their repression of the Cultural Revolution and block on wage rises in 1972 that the 'radicals' have many friends among the masses.

Only two things are certain. The 'radical' faction, which is not genuinely a left alternative to the present ruling group, can provide no leadership for the growing mass movement. Secondly, however confused the present demands of the mass movement, its mere presence is a major threat to the

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

NO PAY POLICY IN '77

DENIS HEALEY'S New Year message was that the Labour Government is 'getting it right'. Obviously the pantomime season lingers. Because for the working people of this country the New Year heralds in a massive leap in the prices of everyday necessities:

Milk has gone up, and Labour's abolition of dairy subsidies means that **butter** and **cheese** will rise by about 4p a pound this month.

Coffee is already soaring. An 8oz jar has risen from about £1.05 six months ago to £1.36 today. **Bread** also continues to rise, and goes up by another 1p this week.

Flour rises by 1p a pound and **beef** prices are expected to rise by 10 per cent in the next couple of months.

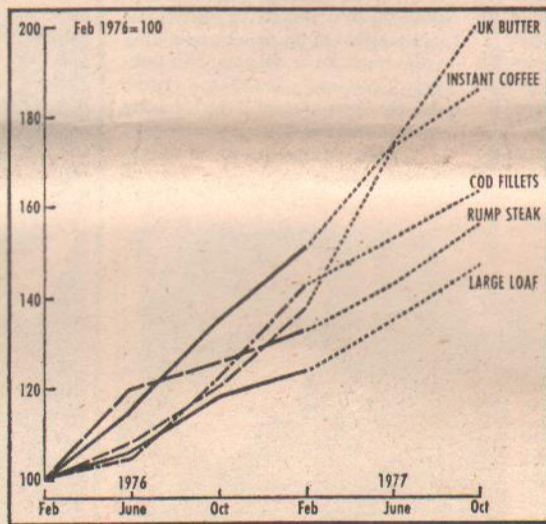
Gas bills will rise by up to 10 per cent in April, thanks to Healey's Budget. Other Budget increases mean that **cigarettes** go up by 4p for 20, **beer** by about 1p a pint, and **whisky** by 31p a bottle.

Rail fares have gone up in London and the South East by 16½ per cent, and by 12½ per cent for local journeys elsewhere.

This comes on top of last year's inflation, which even by official figures was running at 15 per cent. But the rise in basic wage rates was only 12.8 per cent, **before tax**. According to the *Economist*, workers' standard of living may drop by 10 per cent this year if incomes policy continues.

It is this issue of incomes policy which will be a crucial issue for militants in the next few months. The Labour Government does not even pretend there is a 'prices and incomes' policy anymore; food subsidies go, Chancellor Healey himself raises prices at will — only an incomes policy remains.

Working people can answer the attacks of Callaghan, Healey and Co. with an incomes



working people would mean that trade unionists would not be held in thrall to Cabinet deals with trade union bureaucrats.

It is a way forward for the New Year: no pay restrictions, for a sliding scale of wages.

HOW TO GET A KNIGHTHOOD

The Tory press used to call him 'Desperate Dan' McGarvey. The one-time 'left' president of the Amalgamated Society of Boilermakers, Shipwrights, Blacksmiths and Structural Workers used to be the scourge of the establishment. But that was before the infamous Social Contract arrived on the scene, when Desperate Dan followed the lead of other one-time 'lefts' Jones and Scanlon and mellowed.

At his union's annual conference held 1 May an emergency resolution was tabled criticising Healey's cuts in social services. Up leapt Desperate Dan to demand that the motion be withdrawn. It was, he said, 'a vote of no confidence in the Labour Government'.

The motion was duly remitted, and over the next six months Healey wielded his chopping axe time and time again. The likes of Dan McGarvey have given him a blank cheque to cut wages, break up the National Health Service, create mass unemployment and attack education standards.

Now Desperate Dan has been given his reward, and the New Years honours list has elevated him to Sir Daniel McGarvey, Knight of the Realm. Only one problem remains for Sir Daniel. When Her Majesty places the sword on his shoulder and says 'Rise Sir Daniel', he will find it very difficult. For he has been on his knees so long.

policy of their own: one that gives automatic increases in wages as prices rise. Even the extremely restricted threshold payments of the Heath era protected workers' living standards more than this Labour Government has done.

A real sliding scale of wages, strictly tied to rises in rents, food prices, and clothing and monitored by trade unionists, would do much more. Fought for nationally, it would protect the working class as a whole; and control by



Abortion - an international struggle

ROSE KNIGHT, a leading member of the National Abortion Campaign, is an organiser of the International session of the forthcoming National Tribunal on Abortion Rights. Here she explains the purpose of examining the international abortion rights experience at the Tribunal, and the sort of evidence that will be presented.

We have to show that abortion and fertility control are international questions, as well as exposing attacks on the rights of 'foreign' women in Britain.

The way in which women from abroad depend upon the 'liberal nature' of Britain's abortion laws was clearly shown by the Seveso disaster in Italy. Pregnant women were exposed to dioxin gas, which is known to cause foetal deformity.

The Italian Government was forced by the women's movement and by various political organisations to allow these women to have abortions. Special committees were set up to look into each specific case. But abortions were denied to all save 28 of the hundreds of women who applied for them.

Many of those turned down had backstreet abortions. Others were helped by the Centre for Information about Sterilisation and Abortion (CISA). But CISA's own clinics had been closed down in 1974.

Women were forced into seeking abortions in other countries. CISA enabled three of these women to come to Britain. This was just a very prominent example of the fact that if British law is restricted in any way women seeking safe legal abortions in Britain will be hit as well as British women.

Another function of the international session will be to help to show that the campaign for restrictions by the Right to Life people in Britain is just part of an international pattern. It becomes very much easier to understand



tries as Canada and Belgium.

The same thing would happen in Britain if Dr Peter Huntingford was ever convicted, as he has already stated that he has found it necessary to give late abortions because of the tremendous need.

This attack on particular doctors who do abortions is accompanied by an attack on the source of

parental consent for younger women and also put the onus on doctors to save the 'lives' of aborted foetuses. This was another attempt to intimidate doctors. The restrictions envisaged in the reports of the Select Committee have

the same overall effect.

So what emerges clearly is a pattern: first you try to restrict the availability of abortions, secondly you attack those doctors who publicly support abortion rights, thirdly you attack the private sector, and fourthly you introduce a general campaign of intimidation.



Three pregnant women from the Seveso disaster area in Italy arrive in London to get safe legal abortions. Their visit highlighted the fact that if British abortion laws are further restricted it will not only be British women who suffer as a result.

why one half of the Right to Life movement in Britain would appear to be putting very moderate demands, as reflected in the Select Committee reports, if we look at the situation in America after the trial of the black Dr Kenneth Edelin.

In Britain the underlying intention of these modest demands is to break up the 1967 Abortion Act stage by stage. This is exactly what has happened in the USA.

A Supreme Court decision in January 1973 gave women the legal right to abortions up to 24 weeks. A year later Edelin was indicted on charges of manslaughter for an abortion performed in October 1973. The indictment came from the prosecution's charge that as the aborted foetus was 24 weeks old, it was viable in that it could have lived outside the womb.

The Supreme Court decision laid Edelin open to this charge because it said that at 24 weeks foetuses had to be considered as viable. The Right to Life movement picked this question as the basis for their first attack. Edelin was eventually

abortions themselves.

In America there were attempts immediately after the Edelin affair to introduce restrictive bills in separate States. These aimed in particular to stop Medicaid for abortion. This is rather like restricting NHS abortions through the cuts in Britain, forcing women into the private sector. Additional restrictions were intended to limit abortions to 20 weeks and to introduce resuscitation equipment to save the aborted foetus after 20 weeks.

This was the basis for the Select Committee's reports here. The Third Special Report of this body introduced the notion of resuscitation equipment, and the Fourth Report told us that abortion should be restricted to 20 weeks.

Another aspect of the pattern is that in Pennsylvania, in 1974 there was an attempt to stop abortion clinics from advertising, and severe restrictions placed on the availability of abortion. That too is paralleled in Britain, with the Select Committee suggesting tight control on pregnancy testing

In Britain we can learn lessons from what is going on in America. I think the Right to Life movement here will also concentrate on this question of viability. They will try to bring in an amendment that stops abortion after 20 weeks, drawing support from more reactionary sections of the medical profession.

The Tribunal will try to draw out these lessons through inviting Dr Willy Peers from Belgium, Dr Morgentaler from Canada, and Dr Edelin from the States — three doctors who have all campaigned very recently around the question of a woman's right to decide on abortion. We hope that what they have to say will clarify some of the arguments. In addition, displays at the Tribunal will feature information about campaigns on abortion rights, where the women's movement have taken up the issue of why abortion must be a woman's decision.

Just about every women's liberation movement in the world has taken up the right of women to



Photo: LAURENCE SPARHAM (IFL)

CRUNCH NEAR AT E.G.A.

THE SKIRMISHING is over at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital. In the next weeks the Camden & Islington Area Health Authority will take action to close the hospital, which has been under workers occupation since 15 November.

The determination of the EGA workers, under the leadership of their shop stewards, to defend the hospital and fight for the right of women to be treated by women has laid the basis for repulsing the manoeuvres and attacks of the hatchet wielders of the Department of Health and Social Services and the local AHA. By occupying the hospital, the EGA workers have achieved two crucial objectives.

First, they have begun to forge a unity between all sections of health workers in the hospital itself. Most significantly, they have shown to the EGA doctors the real intentions of the NHS administrators — the complete abolition of the EGA as a specialised hospital for women.

The workers have thereby defeated the divide-and-rule tactics of the AHA in trying to split the doctors from the rest of the EGA workers.

Second, the occupation has provided a base to rally active support from London hospital workers and other sections of the labour movement. It is a living example to the rest of the workers movement of how to struggle against the savage cuts of Healey

and Callaghan.

By keeping the EGA open the workers have exposed the lies the AHA and DHSS used as excuses for closing the hospital. They have shown that there is a real and overwhelming demand for the services of such a hospital, and by considering the opening of further clinics for women they are displaying in practice that a hospital run by health workers themselves is one which can meet the needs of patients.

It is the Labour Government and the NHS bureaucrats who restrict and distort the health service fought for by working people.

The EGA struggle is now at a crucial stage. To prepare successfully for the imminent moves of the AHA management, the problems that have arisen (understandably, as this is the first ever hospital occupation) need to be dealt with.

The workers have decided on immediate action to prevent the removal of equipment and patients. Now it is crucial to build the broadest possible solidarity action from the rest of the labour movement in London.

To ensure such solidarity the EGA workers must decisively stamp their control on the running of the hospital. The AHA will now attempt a whole series of manoeuvres to divide the workers, to hinder and obstruct the running of the hospital — for instance, they may well refuse to repair and service equipment, thus cynically endangering the care of the pa-

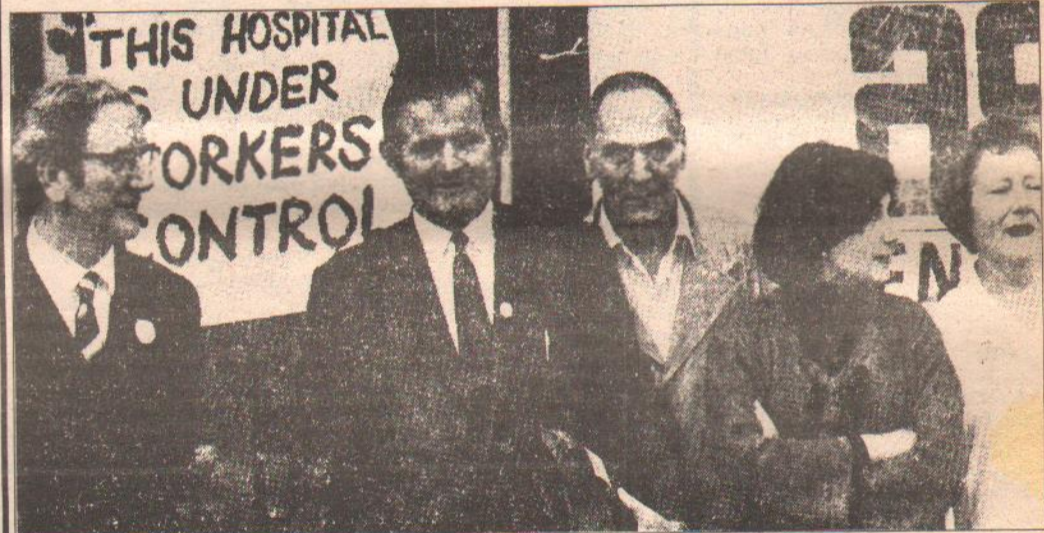
tients dependent on the EGA.

So it is vital to organise and mobilise a greater number of EGA workers to carry out and co-ordinate all the tasks necessary to counter the AHA. The decisions concerning the running of the hospital and the running of the campaign for solidarity should be taken by the mass of workers at regularly convened mass meetings, with the day-to-day affairs delegated to a much broader elected hospital committee than the present shop stewards committee.

In order to involve the EGA workers more fully, shop stewards could consider the reorganisation of the conditions of work at the hospital, which would both improve the workers' and patients' conditions and release the urgently needed forces to organise picketing and the visiting of other hospitals and factories to rally support and enlist the help of the workers movement in carrying out repairs on the equipment and services.

If the EGA is closed, not only is one important hospital lost but the struggle to save all the hospitals threatened with closure will have suffered a severe set-back. Messages of support, requests for speakers, etc. to: Arthur Churchley, EGA Hospital, Euston Road, London NW1 (tel 01-387 2301, ext. 50).

COLIN SMITH



The 24 hour picket outside the EGA hospital. The picket has become a rallying point for local support. That support has to be built up on an all-London basis up to and including strike action.

ONE YEAR ON FROM THE SDA

FEB 26th

A RALLY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

WITH TWO MONTHS to go to the Rally for Women's Rights, support is growing fast. Last month both the Communist Party and the National Executive of the Society of Civil and Public Servants pledged support for the Rally. Nationally Working Women's Charter groups, trade union branches and other labour movement bodies are building for the Rally through public meetings, conferences, film shows, etc.

In Hammersmith an investigatory committee has been set up to look into the unionisation of women and how they are affected by unemployment. In Hackney an existing committee based on the Trades Council which is investigating abortion facilities is attempting to extend its area of investigation to the work situation of women. Its findings will be presented to both the National Tribunal on Abortion Rights and the Rally.

Contact is being made with members of Trico, the occupied

periences of the fight for women's rights over the last year — a fight which even the national press recognises as a long and bitter one.

According to the latest issue of the Economist magazine, in April 1976 'the average full-time male worker was earning £65.10 a week, the equivalent women £39.40. For non-manual workers, whose basic pay is not normally topped up by overtime and premiums, the difference between men and women is even greater: £81.60 a week for men, £48.80 for women.

These statistics drive home what we know already. The Trico women and all the other women in struggle last year gave us the conclusive test of the equal pay and sex discrimination legislation and the message came out loud and clear — rely on your own struggles and not on the legislation.

To ensure that these experiences are brought together and exchanged amongst women who have been involved in the fight for women's rights throughout the last year, as

Rally, which takes place on 26 February at Alexandra Palace.

★ Get your organisation to support the Rally.

★ Send a donation to the Rally.

★ Organise public meetings in your town, trade union, student union or women's rights group.

★ Set up investigatory committees to monitor the effects of the legislation on women.

★ Get your local NAC group to bring evidence for the Tribunal to the Rally as well.

★ Get your organisation to bring an exhibition or photo display of its activities on women's rights over the last year — book a stall for the day.

★ Book a coach for the day.

★ Come to the next national Planning Meeting on 22 January in Manchester — more details next week.

★ Send reports of your activities to Red Weekly during the build up for the Rally.

If you want more information or literature, contact the Secretary of



IN FOCUS

Unite Rank and File!

IT WAS A MONTH AGO that the *Morning Star* first announced, in a three column inch article, that the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions had called for a conference 'to plan action to oppose public service cuts, unemployment and the social contract'.

After two years the LCDTU has been pulled out of the cupboard because its main sponsors, the Communist Party, have begun to see a little light at the end of their tunnel. After the left trade union bureaucracy, headed by Jones and Scanlon, deserted the defence of working class living standards to support the Government's 'Social Contract', the CP have been trying to persuade Scanlon that he has 'mistaken policies' — but to no avail. Unable to pressurise and cajole the former lefts into any action whatsoever, the LCDTU, which has only ever organised action insofar as it was tolerated by the left bureaucracy, has lain dormant.

CUTS DEMONSTRATION

Now, however, with the emergence of left talkers such as Alan Fisher of NUPE in the public sector unions, the CP find themselves less constrained. Following the 60,000 strong 17 November demonstration against the cuts by the public sector unions, the LCDTU conference is aimed at 'preparing the movement' to keep right behind the 'lefts' on every step they take. Like Fisher, the LCDTU is calling for every effort to 'change this Government's policies before the policies change the Government'. Like the lefts who call for the implementation of TUC policies, the CP put forward import controls as an alternative to the Healey measures. In the same way they will tail 'right behind' the lefts when it comes to action.

And action is the last thing the lefts want. Fisher responded to the Healey mini-Budget by saying that this brought into question the Social Contract — as he did the time before and the time before that. But whilst the Social Contract is only 'in question', he and the other lefts will continue to support it and will limit their action to protests trying to persuade the Government that its policies need changing. Behind the public sector lefts pressurising the Government will stand the LCDTU and the CP, pressurising the lefts.

WAITING FOR LEFTS

Instead of waiting for the lefts to act, the LCDTU should be making the lefts fight and campaigning to organise the rank and file union members to launch that fight without the lefts if necessary. The public sector union leaders have said that they will hold a joint conference in March to discuss the cuts — the LCDTU should organise a mass lobby of the conference demanding that the bureaucrats call a day of national strike action against the cuts. It should take the lead in organising the rank-and-file for that strike action, and be prepared to move ahead with that action irrespective of whether the lefts agree to it or not.

ORGANISE OPPOSITION

The organisation of an opposition fighting for class struggle policies and action against the class collaboration of the Labour Government is now the decisive task. The LCDTU can take the lead in this by calling for a conference one month later, jointly sponsored by the LCDTU, the organisers of the National Assembly on Unemployment held on 27 March last year, and the Right to Work Campaign. This could democratically discuss taking action against the cuts and the Social Contract.

Unfortunately the International Socialists (now Socialist Workers Party), whilst arguing correctly for strike action against the cuts, misunderstand how such an opposition can be built. Ignoring the mass influence of the left bureaucracy, they fail to put forward any line for making the lefts fight. At the same time their line for unity of the Right to Work Campaign with the LCDTU is not posed as **unity for action**, which can only come through a **democratic conference of all the rank and file**, but as a way of exposing the LCDTU — with the call (which they know will be turned down) for a joint co-ordinating committee to be established between the Right to Work Campaign, the LCDTU, and the National Assembly organisers.

BREAK TAIL-ENDING

The LCDTU conference will mean no more in the life of the working class than the three column inches it received in the *Morning Star* unless it breaks from its tail-ending of the lefts. A repeat of previous undemocratic conferences which wait for the lefts to act will inspire no-one and be able to organise nothing. That is why *Red Weekly* asks its supporters to fight for delegation to the LCDTU on the basis of a resolution calling for:

- * The naming of a date for national one-day strike action against the cuts.

- * The building of a mass lobby of any conference called by the public sector unions demanding strike action.

- * The LCDTU to sponsor a democratic conference of the rank-and-file one month later to plan for strike action, and to call for the National Assembly organisers and the Right

What ever happened to the LCDTU?

THE LIAISON COMMITTEE for the Defence of Trade Unions, which came to prominence in the fight to defend the trade unions against the 'In Place of Strife' proposals of the 1966 Labour Government, represented the most significant organisation of the rank-and-file in decades. Today it is living on credit — a shell living off its reputation of former years.

Not since December 1970, when it was the main organiser of a strike of 600,000 against the Industrial Relations Bill, has it organised any major action. Since 1973 the attendance at its conferences has fallen as militants have seen less and less purpose in attending.

ALLIANCE

From conferences like that in June of 1972, when 1,300 delegates were mobilised in just four weeks to discuss the fight against the Industrial Relations Act, attendance has fallen to 500 in October 1973 and only 300 in March 1975.

Indeed, along with the decline in numbers, LCDTU 'conferences' have steadily become more and more like rallies, where the delegates yawn through the day listening to Ken Gill and other 'star' bureaucrats, only to vote for or against a declaration on which there are no amendments or alternatives allowed.

Until the quiet announcement of the LCDTU's forthcoming conference in the *Morning Star*, its lack of activity for two years had led many militants to believe that the LCDTU was not only on its

death bed but that **rigor mortis** had set in.

The usual reason given for this sorry state of affairs is that the situation has changed — that the 'movement' is not ready for action and has to be patiently built. What the Communist Party, the inspirers of the LCDTU, understand by the 'movement' is best expressed in the resolution passed at the CP conference in November 1973:

'Continuation and extension of these trends ("increased readiness by the unions to struggle" and "further left and progressive advances") by the work of Communists and others on the left can make the prospect of a majority of unions with left policies and progressive leaderships a reality in the foreseeable future.

'This must be the aim, and the continuous growth of rank-and-file organisations can facilitate this. Whilst it is necessary to criticise the left trade union leaders when they tend to vacillate or retreat, this must always be done with the aim of preserving and furthering the unity of the left, and isolating the right.'

For the Communist Party the 'movement' constitutes an alliance with the left trade union leaders. When the 'lefts' like Scanlon 'vacillate' by supporting the Social Contract, then the CP makes a constructive criticism to persuade them of their 'mistaken ideas' — or so Bert Ramelson, CP Industrial Organiser, has explained in the *Morning Star*.

What is involved here is not simply avoiding an ultra-left error of not being able to distinguish between the right and the left

bureaucrats — but a policy of teaching **reliance** upon the left leaders, a policy of 'to march with them, always keep in step with them'.

It is this policy which has also led to the decline of the LCDTU. At its January 1974 conference one speaker demanded the ending of the TUC talks with the Tories (who were then preparing to take on the miners with the three-day week, and also keeping the Shrewsbury workers in prison).

DESERTED

Jim Hiles of the CP replied: 'We do not want to antagonise those in leadership who have fraternal relations with the LCDTU', and said that it was 'a long, hard struggle' to reach a position 'where we have the ear' of some of the leaders.

It was this policy of preaching reliance on the lefts which led to the demoralisation of the real mass movement when those lefts deserted the struggle to defend working class interests. Had the CP preached reliance on the self-organisation of the rank-and-file instead, it would also have been in a position to **force** the lefts to fight.

Today, however, the former lefts Scanlon and Jones have deserted to the camp of the Social Contract for all to see. Where previously these lefts would have given the LCDTU a nod and a wink, and then the CP would then feel happy to call for strike action, today even the lefts have capitulated before the TUC without a fight.

Faced with this the CP keeps the LCDTU in train, trying to pressurise the lefts without going so far as to take action which would bring them into conflict with those lefts. Even had the CP not decided to keep the LCDTU dormant for the last two years, a body which limits itself to declarations of good will is hardly likely to inspire confidence or interest — and certainly not to rebuild the genuine mass movement of the rank-and-file.

We should finally mention the other brain child of the CP — the 3,000 strong National Assembly on Unemployment held last March.

The Assembly held great promise — too many promises in fact. A lobby of the emergency TUC, a day of action in May, a lobby of the main TUC — all were promised and none delivered. It seemed that the Assembly was unable of itself to pressurise the lefts into action — and since they didn't want action, none was forthcoming.

One might ask why the Assembly wasn't recalled, and instead the LCDTU is resurrected — perhaps the answer might be that militants would expect too much of the National Assembly on Unemployment and want to know why it took no action? They might after all tend to overestimate the 'readiness of the mass movement' if they thought that another meeting of 3,000 delegates was in store — and that would be ultra-left wouldn't it?

Rich Palser

MEDIA - a battleground against racism

'WE WOULD like you to send us a speaker to discuss how you are handling stories concerning race, and the activities of racists and fascists.'

That's the invitation that has just gone from Bristol Trades Council to local members of the National Union of Journalists — a proposal which sprang from the leaflet and Open Letter being circulated within the labour movement by the Campaign Against Racism in the Media.

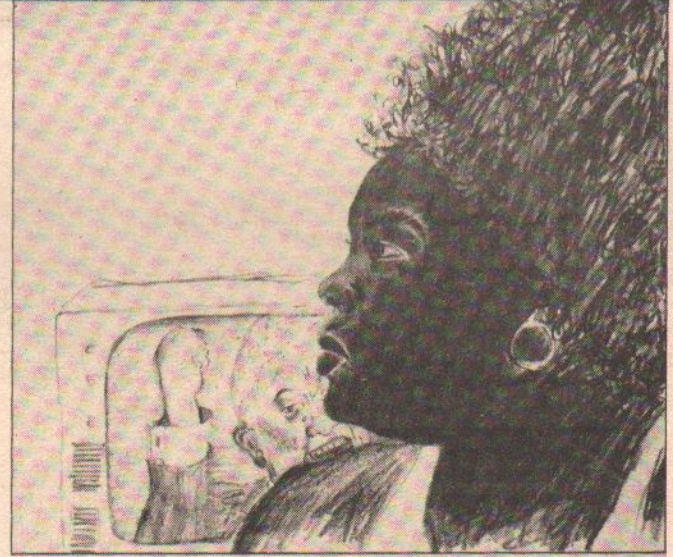
With the squalid role that much of the mass media is playing in boosting racism and providing a platform for fascists, the Open Letter is beginning to win wide support. Among those now endorsing the call for meetings such as the above to be held — and to be followed up by pickets and demonstrations where coverage is racist and the media workers un-

NUJ member and Liberal peer Lord Avebury.

The Thurrock Express NUJ chapel is the first of the union's office bodies to back the call, while support and donations for the campaign have come from a number of NUJ branches, including £50 from the London Radio Branch.

Recent leaks about the BBC's editorial policy make it certain that broadcasting will be a fierce battleground in the fight to prevent racists and fascists freely airing their views. Minutes from a top-level BBC meeting last month reveal that the National Front has now received the green light to regale viewers and listeners with their interesting ideas about how to dispose of black people, etc.

Sir Charles Curran, the retiring director general, informed the meeting that there was no need for special rules for the NF. 'We



said the enlightened Curran (omitting to mention that the left is routinely censored).

His predecessor, Sir Hugh Green, had considered that racism should be opposed. The open house policy for fascists now adopted by the BBC bosses will undoubtedly be enhanced by the Corporation's new director

This makes all the more urgent the call contained in the Open Letter for the fascists to be prevented from making party political broadcasts in the next general election. All *Red Weekly* readers are urged to obtain a copy of the *Open Letter* and raise it in their organisation for endorsement and action. From: *CARM*, 12, Clive

OLD-FASHIONED CHARITY AT RUBERY OWEN

'ASK MY secretary, she tells me I am on the board of 99 companies and chairman of over 80.' The speaker — Sir Alfred Owen, a central figure in the current dispute at the Rubery Owen plant in Darlaston, Staffordshire.

Sir Alfred has not played an active part in the dispute. In fact, he has been dead for nearly two years. But his tradition of 'fair play' — fair play for the bosses — goes in the shape of the latest offer by his son John to pay to charity the £6,000 due to electricians as payment for time lost.

Meanwhile the Rubery management's drive for a no-strike guarantee as the basis for the future existence of the thousand jobs at Darlaston still continues. It may be a family firm, but sentimentality will not hold back Sir Alfred's descendants from implementing their threat, even though the closure of Rubery Owen would turn Darlaston (population 30,000) into Dole Town.



LEN MURRAY - said that the threat of closure 'concentrated the minds' of Rubery Owen trade union representatives. So did he.

The demand for the nationalisation of the whole car and components industry under workers control is an objective for which all militants in the car industry can campaign, as against the project of run-down and speed-up demanded by management.

In 1967 Sir Alfred Owen was successfully able to appeal to workers at the Darlaston gates not to go on unofficial strike. The

strikes this year at the plant show that illusions of this sort have well and truly been knocked on the head.

But the fight for the realisation of an alternative to the Sir Alfreds and Sons of this world will need a much bigger leap, and a fight to build a new leadership on the shop floors of the British motor industry.

STEVE POTTER

OFFENSIVE

In order to remain competitive the plant requires a massive injection of new capital. The bosses, in common with the general feeling amongst the employing class, are not prepared to make such a commitment without forcing the workers in the plant to their knees.

The management offensive started under the banner of the switch from piece rates to fixed rates with notional 'incentive payments'. But a substantial section of the workers at Darlaston succeeded in retaining the piece work basis for their wage, and thus cushioned themselves from the restrictions of the pay policy — a situation which has produced differentials of between £10 and £12 for the same type of work.

The current dispute arises from a claim by electricians for back pay lost when they were laid off in the course of a three week strike by maintenance engineers in November. The electricians say that there was no reason to send them home, as there was plenty of maintenance and installation work to be done.

But their two-week sit-in culminated in the intervention of Len Murray and a meeting at the TUC under conditions of blackmail from the management. As Murray said, the closure threat 'concentrated their minds' — to the extent that the union representatives agreed to take back the charity payment offer.

UNIFYING

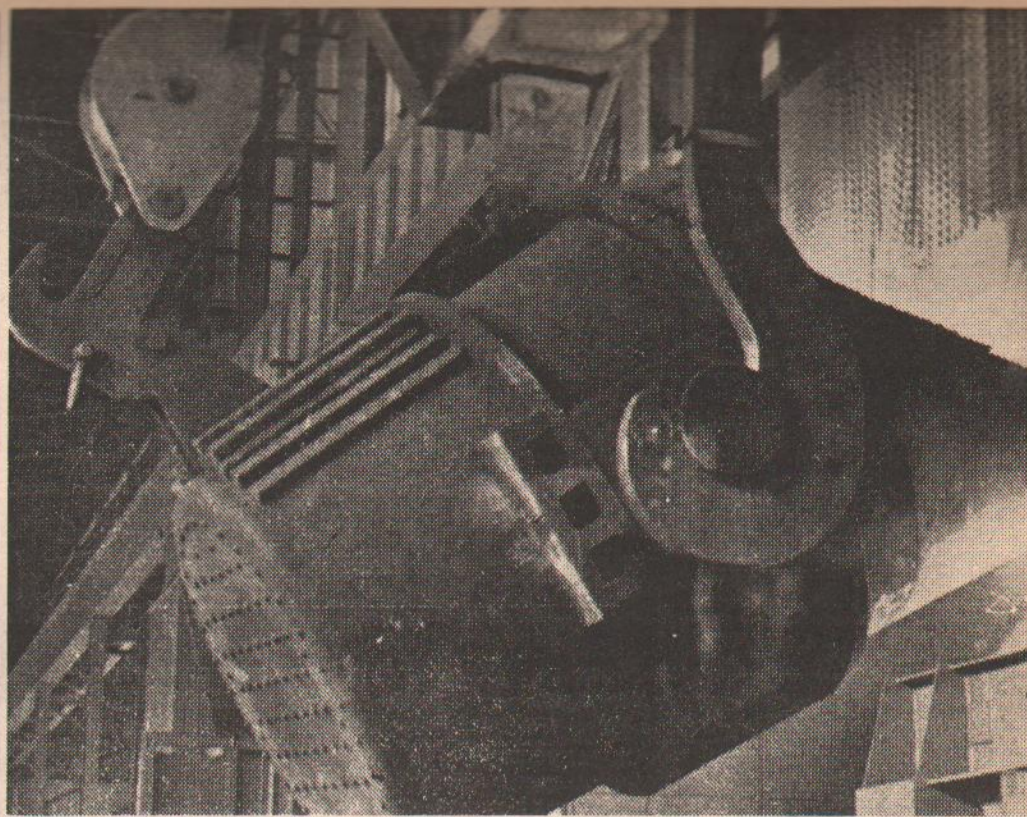
But this is no compensation to the electricians for their militant stance, especially after three weeks on unemployment benefit during the maintenance engineers strike, and two weeks on social security payments during their occupation. On the other hand, the electricians have also refused to give an inch to the demand from Owen for a 'no strikes' guarantee.

The claim by management that the plant only had three trouble-free days in 1976 has to be set against the tendency in the whole of the car and components industry to lay off workers at the drop of a hat in order to put the blame for loss of earnings by the whole work force on small groups of workers resisting attacks on their living standards and conditions.

Nevertheless, the threat of closure cannot be taken lightly. The claim of the electricians for protection against the effects of layoffs could be extended through a campaign for a guaranteed week throughout the motor industry — the basis in itself for the demand of work-sharing without loss of pay, a unifying demand against the management's split tactics and the threat of redundancy.

TAKEOVER

Any takeover by the National Enterprise Board of the Darlaston concern — something for which Rubery Owen have been angling — would involve massive redundancies among workers at



CUTS CAN KILL... SO KILL THE CUTS

MANY workers in heavy industries such as steel and engineering believe that cutbacks in public expenditure do not affect them. Some believe that it is only 'faceless' civil servants whose jobs are at stake.

They have been taken in by the Callaghan/Healey lie machine that jobs need directing back to 'profitable' manufacturing industry, and that cuts are painless to industrial workers. Consider the following story.

In the last six months in GKN's Castle Works in Cardiff three serious accidents have taken place in the Bar/Strip Mill, involving third degree burns from hot metal.

A few weeks ago a 17-year-old youth was burned to death, trapped on a steel coil conveyor.

Despite the severe burns, the lad managed to survive until an ambulance arrived. But it then took 75 minutes for the ambulance to get to the nearest hospital with a burns unit: at Chepstow, some thirty miles up the M4 from Cardiff. The young worker died during the journey.

As well as this death, two other serious accidents have occurred in the Bar/Strip Shop within the last six months. In Cardiff there are 9,000 steelworkers. Cardiff also has the most modern hospital in Wales. But what the hospital does

not have is a burns unit, because plans to start such a unit were shelved in the last round of public expenditure cuts.

So any steelworker involved in an accident with hot metal has to endure a 75 minute journey to get treatment. And now, thanks to the latest round of cuts, the journey will take even longer; because the Healey axe has lighted upon the Chepstow hospital as its next target. Steelworkers in Cardiff will then have to travel to Bristol for treatment.

Whether in hospitals or steelworks, the conclusion is the same: the cuts can kill, so kill the cuts. STEVE VOKES

NALGO: Right wing sell-out on cuts

ON 14 JANUARY the National and Local Government Officers Association will be holding a special conference on cuts and unemployment. Yet after a year in which services and jobs have been attacked as never before, in which NALGO's Emergency Committee has been forced to recognise industrial action in a record number of disputes, and two months after the huge 17 November demonstration against cuts, the left in NALGO has utterly failed to offer the membership alternative socialist policies which can answer the Labour Government's attacks.

The November demonstration, as well as local actions against the cuts, showed the willingness of

large numbers of workers in the public sector to defend the welfare services. But the public service

trade union bureaucrats have worked to confine all such actions to mere protest.

For all the militant speech-making by the likes of Alan Fisher of the National Union of Public Employees, militants have been left without any perspective for further effective action against the cuts which could smash the anti-working class policies of the Social Contract.

The duplicity of the left bureaucrats has been quite striking in NALGO, where for two years running the left-wing 'challenge' to the Social Contract has come in the form of amendments seeking to

make the right wing's acceptance of the Government-TUC deal conditional upon the Government keeping its side of the bargain. But in real life everyone knows that you don't embark on a deal with those whose trustworthiness you doubt in advance.

But despite the failure of the NALGO Action Group to adopt policies which can unite the left around fighting policies, and in spite of the Communist Party's continued alliance with the not-so-left bureaucrats, there is still ample scope for organising a challenge to the Government's policies.

CRITICAL

There are 64 amendments to the NEC's resolution on the agenda of the forthcoming special conference. The majority are in some way critical of the NEC's policy. About 20 amendments flatly reject the view that support for the Social Contract is compatible with opposition to the cuts.

NALGO's Islington Branch is calling for a one day national stoppage, a policy already adopted by the Scottish district. Middlesex Polytechnic branch is calling for a national strike from 1 March, while Hammersmith's call for an escalating national campaign includes industrial action.

But none of these amendments expresses the clear socialist policies needed to replace the Social Contract, although Medway is calling for a £1 billion programme of additional public works.

LEAD

The place where these amendments can be composed and a discussion begun on the necessary alternative socialist policies is at a meeting called by the Scottish District Council at Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London on 13 January at 6.30 pm — the evening before the conference. The most profitable outcome of this meeting would be the provision of a national lead to all militants in the country.

This could be done by delegates



ALAN FISHER - militant speeches.

to all NALGO members. This would allow the building of left unity around fighting policies among the rank and file of the union. Ultimately it is only this strength, not manoeuvring in NALGO's web of committees, which can ensure the defeat of the Government's Tory policies and their backers in NALGO.

JACK LEWIS

Red Weekly is the only socialist paper which has given systematic, detailed and reliable coverage of the struggle in NALGO over the last crisis-ridden year. Next week's eve of conference edition will carry major coverage on the state of the union. Red Weekly

Journalists to strike against pay policy

'LENIN dissolved the elected Constituent Assembly at bayonet point, set up the secret police, burned books, instituted censorship and either imprisoned his political opponents without trial or killed them. Trotsky cooperated in all this and, in addition, called for the militarisation of the labour force and carried out exemplary mass executions in the Red Army.'

You might be forgiven for thinking that this little reactionary lecture in Russian history was lifted from the journal of the National Front or the National Association For Freedom. But no, it appeared in the Christmas edition of the Management Newsletter to the staff of the magazine-publishing company Mercury House, which publishes Hot Car, Car Mechanics and, ironically enough, Personnel Management.

What occasioned this historical outburst? It could be something to do with the fact that by the time you read this the 26 members of the National Union of Journalists at Mercury House will be out on the streets, fighting for their claim of £13-15 (or roughly 25 per cent), higher sick pay, redundancy compensation, and job security. Hysterical red-baiting is only one arrow in the Mercury House management's bow.

As the 4½ per cent pay agreement, like the recent weather, takes a firm and frosty grip on workers' wage-packets, it is important to note and publicise the gradual resistance which is building up in the magazine and book sectors of the publishing industries, starting with Mercury House.

The Magazine and Book branches of the NUJ, constituting almost a fifth of the union, have for some

wages policy last year, in the face of the NUJ executive's abject acceptance of the Government-TUC deal. As 1976 drew to a close, that opposition has begun to crystallise into action.

Eight chapels [the work-place unit of organisation in the print and publishing unions] in the two branches have now submitted or are about to submit annual claims well in excess of the 4½ per cent, most of them aiming for figures in the region of 15 per cent — to come near to the inflation rate at least. The companies concerned include such well-known publishing houses as Penguin Books, Thames & Hudson, and Heinemann.

Mercury House are just first in line — and their claim will still only bring them up to the average for the magazine sector! But they will of course be receiving no strike pay or official backing.

Attempts are therefore under way to build a support committee in the branches which can help to raise badly needed funds and also link with and support the other chapels which will almost certainly be coming out in future months. Militants from the IMG, ICL, Workers League, IS and the journalists' rank-and-file group 'Journalists Charter' are involved.

The courageous lead given by the 26 Mercury House workers must be supported by all those in the industry and outside who wish to smash Labour's incomes policy and roll back the employers' offensive. Messages of support and donations should be sent to: Mercury House Strike Committee, c/o NUJ Magazine Branch, 214 Cross Inn Road, London WC1.



THE WORLD IN 1976

For the world capitalist system, 1976 was a year in which to lick its wounds from the previous years' defeats and use whatever tricks it could to 'hold the line'.

After two years of the gravest world economic crisis since the 1930s, the defeats of imperialism in Vietnam and the former Portuguese colonies in Africa, and the arrival of the revolutionary threat on the doorstep of advanced capitalism with the upheaval in Portugal, capitalism was in deep trouble. Revolutionary developments appeared to be engulfing South-east Asia, southern Africa and the Iberian peninsula. Even the central capitalist democracy of Italy had to be put down on the list of 'uncertain' countries because of the effects the capitalist crisis was having.

On the economic front, 1976 brought some measure of relief for the advanced capitalist countries. The long-awaited 'upturn' began in earnest: industrial production started to move upwards by as much as 10 per cent or more in the principal capitalist countries, although more slowly in crisis-ridden Britain and Italy. The years of depression had relieved the pressure of the mounting prices of raw materials imported from Third World countries, and the major oil exporters, having got the extra slice of the imperialist pie they were after, stabilised their demands. Accordingly there was a temporary easing of the problem of inflation, although the 'upturn' was only achieved at the expense of ensuring a further inflationary boost this year.

AUSTERITY

But the capitalists were not in a position to sit back and bask in the warmth of this short summer: they knew that if they did so the cold winters of another downswing would soon be blowing round them. In every capitalist country the ruling class had to seize upon the upturn to try to gain some permanent shift in the division of the economic cake in their favour.

Austerity measures — wage restrictions and cuts in government spending — were on the order of the day in the name of 'the fight against inflation', while productivity was boosted at the expense of employment until, by autumn, the advanced capitalist countries could boast more than 13 million unemployed. The 'upturn' of world capitalism has thus meant a 'downturn' in the welfare of the working class.

In the Third World countries, economic developments have had a contradictory effect. In countries without oil resources the situation has become increasingly disastrous. The rise in oil prices touched off balance of payments and inflation problems that all the foreign 'aid' schemes

residue: big increases in food prices, which drove the impoverished masses of these countries into still further misery.

The oil exporters, needless to say, did better. But the overwhelming bulk of the benefits flowed into the pockets of the tiny capitalist elite that rules these countries in close cooperation with imperialism. A great portion of the oil revenue flowed back into the imperialist countries in the form of long-term investments held by this class: another major portion went to strengthen the military power of these states, aimed both at warding off threats from less fortunate neighbours and the internal threat of revolt by the oppressed masses.

That small portion that found its way into economic projects followed the laws of capitalist production, and sought to take advantage of the low wage levels which prevail in these countries. Such developments, limited as they are, are strengthening the power of the working

class in these countries — and along with it the need of the capitalist state to put down even more violently any signs of independent working class organisation: a process typified by the bloody dictatorship of the Shah of Iran.

EXPLOSIVE

On the political front, imperialism was able to gain a few important edges. In a number of Asian and Latin American countries reactionary, pro-imperialist regimes were either strengthened or brought into existence to stem the revolutionary tide. Despite its disengagement from active conflict in Indochina, the American military machine continues to grow to all-time heights and retains its capacity for counter-revolutionary intervention. Despite the Watergate scandals and revelations, the imperialist 'dirty tricks' department of the CIA continues its evil work around the globe.

But things are far from secure for

imperialism. In none of the decisive capitalist countries has the working class suffered a real political defeat. On the contrary, the continuing ravages of the capitalist crisis are becoming explosive in what have traditionally been some of the most stable imperialist centres. Even where defeats have been meted out to the working class they have not been accompanied by the sort of physical destruction of the mass movement which followed the Chilean coup.

The crisis of capitalism — on a world scale and in each corner of the globe — remains in full force, and the revolutionary stirrings of the masses have not been extinguished. In short, we are still very much in an era of revolutionary possibilities. Undoubtedly 1977 will bring important developments — especially in areas like southern Africa. But only the conscious struggle of all those who have understood the bankruptcy of capitalism and the need for a new social order can ensure that the 1970s will enter the annals of history as a 'red decade'.





THE COMMON denominator of the economic policies of all the West European countries has been stringent 'austerity' measures aimed at making the working class pay the cost of the continuing crisis.

This has elicited an almost uniformly strong response from the workers movement. In France 100,000 marched against the austerity package of the new Prime Minister, Raymond Barre; in London 60,000 public sector workers demonstrated against yet another round of social expenditure cuts; in Belgium and the Netherlands there has been strong opposition to the government attacks on index-linked pay awards.

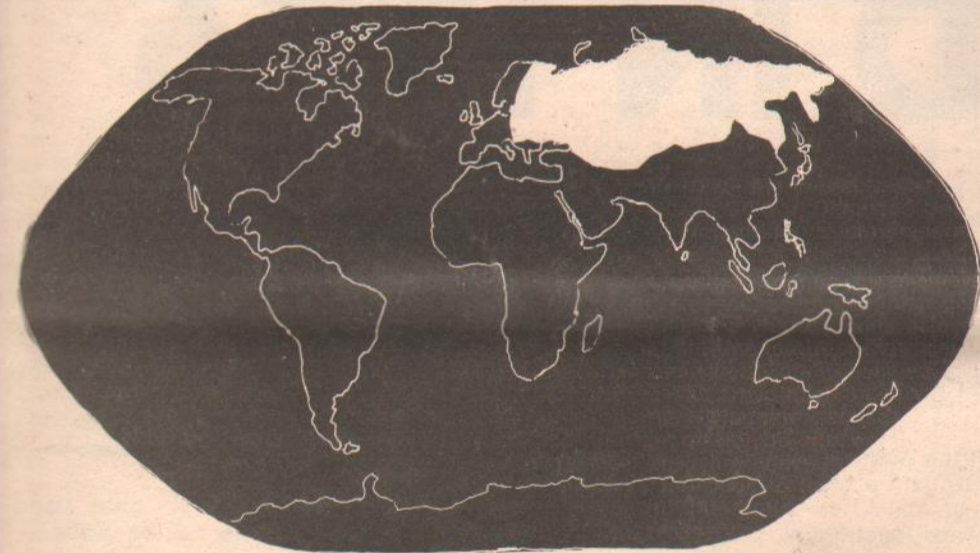
But it is in southern Europe that the level of working class action has continued to be strongest. The economic plan of the Andreotti Government in Italy, designed as a lifebelt to the sinking lira, has encountered a series of semi-spontaneous working class actions since its introduction in October. And in Spain the 12 November national strike signified the intention of the workers to make the Spanish version of the Social Contract unworkable. Despite the limited character of that strike, the mass redundancies envisaged by the Spanish capitalists and Government have proved unenforceable.

This slow but steady advance in independent working class action, particularly in the south of the continent, has been one of the factors in worsening the crisis of the bourgeois political parties. In Italy, after

the gains of the Communist Party in the June elections, the Christian Democracy finds itself torn between a traditional and a technocratic wing. In West Germany, similarly, the alliance of the Christian Democrats (the CDU) and the Bavarian CSU has cracked under the strains of its unexpected electoral defeat. A large section of the French Gaullist establishment, led by former Prime Minister Chirac, has distanced itself from the ailing Giscard Government, while in Britain the Tories are heading for electoral victory only by default.

SPAIN

Again, it is Spain where this crisis is most developed. The result of the recent referendum is probably only a temporary breathing space for the bourgeoisie's project of an orderly transition to a 'strong' democratic state on the West German model. The legalisation of political parties has a twofold intention. First it creates that semblance of democracy which will help to facilitate entry into the EEC. Secondly, and more importantly, it is designed to allow the formation of parties which can substitute for the role long played by the Bonapartist dictatorship of Franco. But no political current has yet emerged which can act as the clear leader of the Spanish ruling class.



THE DRAMATIC new factor in the European political situation in 1976 has been the rise of the struggle against the bureaucracy in the workers states.

In the Soviet Union itself, the Brezhnev bureaucracy still appears in a powerful position. Despite the failure to resolve any of the central problems which led to Krushchev's downfall in 1964, the strengthening of the party apparatus, the halt of 'de-Stalinisation' and the repression of the opposition has served to maintain the stability of the regime. Not least, the continued passivity of the working class removes the central threat to the interests of the bureaucracy. But 'Brezhnevism' is coming to an end, partly through the ageing of the present leadership but more importantly as a result of the growing economic problems and the international crisis of Stalinism.

It is in Poland that this international crisis has had its most striking effects. The bureaucracy repeated its attempts of 1970 to impose massive price rises on the Polish working class. Again in 1976 the workers used mass strike action and demonstrations to force a freeze on prices.

This was portrayed by the Polish leadership and Stalinism internationally as a victory for

the 'democratic' mechanisms of Polish socialism. In fact the harsh repression faced by workers since June indicates that this struggle began to challenge the bureaucracy at its very roots. The new element in the struggle has been the unity between the working class and intellectual opposition in the fight against repression. It is clear that the struggle is far from over.

CRITICISE

The Polish events have had a global impact. Detente signals the increased readiness of the imperialist powers to support the Moscow bureaucracy in its fight against internal working class opposition. Within West European Stalinism, paeans to Polish democracy alternate with a half-hearted demagogic support for the rights of certain opposition currents within the workers states.

The effects of this readiness on the part of the Western European CPs to criticise the internal policies of the Stalinist bureaucracies has already had an effect in East Germany. The expulsion of the anti-bureaucratic poet Wolf Biermann has provoked a new wave of intellec-

Nowhere, however, is this bourgeois political crisis as acute as the crisis of proletarian leadership. 1976 has seen disasters for the social democratic parties, above all in Sweden, where they lost office after 40 years as a direct result of their right-wing policies.

Even where social democracy has had its greatest apparent success, in Britain, it has no bright future. Far from being the 'natural party of government', the working class has demonstrated in the recent by-elections that it will not retain a Labour Government which continues to act as the policeman of the ruling class economic measures. Moreover, the 'Peace People' have not proved a credible instrument for solving the ruling class crisis in Ireland, despite their lionisation by social democrats all over Europe.

STALINISM

For all this, the leaders of the Socialist International can look back on 1976 with a certain feeling of satisfaction. In Portugal the Socialist Party has presided over a counter-revolution which is regarded with admiration by the capitalists of Europe. In France the 'left' face of Mitterrand continues to win ground from the CP. Even the pathetic PSOE in Spain, emulating the antics of Soares' party, has made some gains thanks to the thousands of pounds poured in by the European social democrats (the British Labour Party among them).

The crisis of leadership has been most apparent in the Stalinist parties. The Berlin summit in July consummated the turn of the Western CPs to 'Eurocommunism'. This represents no fundamental break with the interests of the Moscow bureaucracy, which continues to be the main justification for the existence of the CPs separate from the social democratic parties. Far from constituting a distinct national line, Eurocommunism is a uniform tactic of the CPs. But it does represent a further stage in the international crisis of Stalinism under the dual pressures of social democracy and the rise of the workers vanguard in recent years.

In Italy the process of open collaboration with the bourgeoisie is most advanced. The austerity measures only got through parliament because of the abstention of the CP deputies. This is mirrored in France, where the CP prefers waiting for the elections to active opposition to the austerity plan. In Spain the entire strategy of the CP remains subordinated to its alliance with the 'progressive bourgeoisie' grouped in the Democratic Coordination. Any left face is little more than pique at the obstinate refusal of the Government to legalise the party.

This does not mean, however, that the CPs have lost their hold over significant sections of the working class. Even in Italy, where the brazen treachery of the Stalinists over the Andreotti plan has met with considerable rank-and-file opposition, the dominance of the Stalinists is not yet seriously threatened.

The same is largely true in Spain. The death of the old dictator Franco initiated a series of struggles aimed to give his regime the final push into oblivion. But it has proved more resilient than even its most optimistic champions can have hoped. Combining harsh repression with a modicum of democratic rhetoric, the second government of Juan Carlos still retains a certain margin of manoeuvre.

But the first wave of opposition has not died down. A crucial impact was made by the massacre of five workers in the Vitoria general strike in March. This was not simply another horror story. The Vitoria strike embodied some of the most advanced forms of organisation and self-defence seen in recent years, and these have since been imitated and improved on in a series of strikes in the Basque country. Already hundreds of thousands of workers have had experience of workers councils which foreshadow the future organisation of the Iberian Socialist Republics.

Part and parcel of this process has been the phenomenal growth of the forces of the Fourth International in the Spanish state. Since its fusion with ETA (VI Assembly) in 1973, the LCR has multiplied its membership by six, with a sizeable implantation in the working class (particularly in the Basque country) and significant leadership positions in the Workers Commissions. The LC, another sympathising organisation of the FI, has grown more modestly but not without important success, particularly in its industrial stronghold of Barcelona.

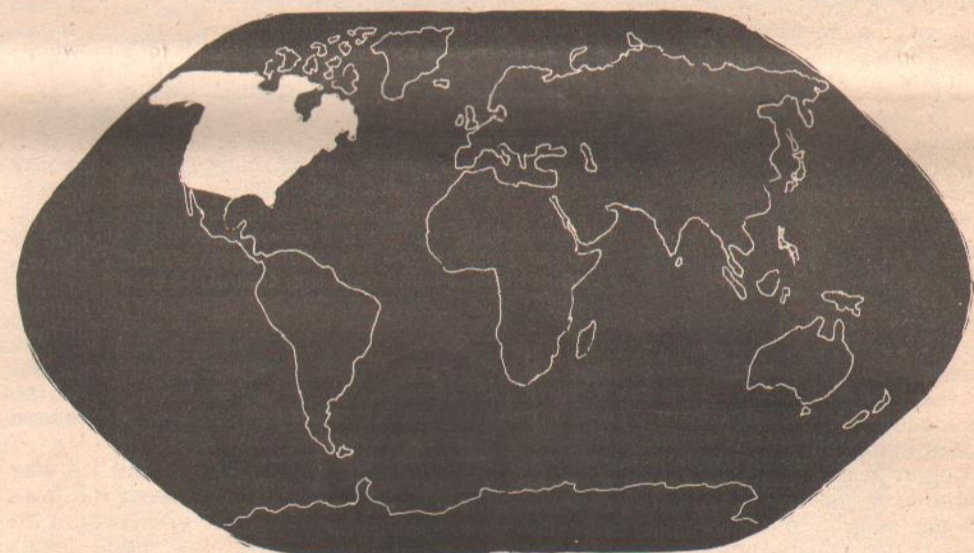
BASQUE

The Spanish revolution still faces crucial problems, not least the increasing uneven development of the working class in the Basque country compared with the other areas of the Spanish state. The task of revolutionaries is to turn this unevenness to the advantage of the workers movement, by using the exemplary struggles of the Basque workers to forge a leadership capable of smashing the dictatorship and taking the working class beyond the reformist schemas of the Stalinists to the formation of the first workers state in Western Europe. That is the very real possibility which offers itself to the Fourth International and the workers movement in capitalist Europe.

tual opposition, accompanied by the first stirrings of the workers movement. It is ironic that the stimulus for people like Biermann, left critics of the bureaucracy, has come from Eurocommunism. It is no coincidence that the European Stalinist summit this year was held in East Berlin.

The Fourth International places no trust in

the essentially right-wing critique made by the Eurocommunists. But this does represent a growing contradiction within the Stalinist movement which can be exploited to the benefit of the revolutionary opposition in the workers states, fighting for a political revolution to overthrow the bureaucracy and build a regime of workers democracy.



THE LONG slumber of the North American working class did not end in 1976. The most striking event in American politics was the long and insignificant US presidential campaign. Long because that is the way they seem to like these things. Insignificant because, despite the phenomenal rise of backwoods millionaire Jimmy Carter, there were no issues at stake in the contest.

The campaign centred on trivia — Ford's blunder on Eastern Europe and Carter's indiscreet *Playboy* interview. Where it mattered — foreign policy, workers' living standards, women's and black rights — there was no detectable difference between the two candidates. Usually there is a certain clash of interests between sections of the US ruling class, but not this year. In an election where half the voters abstained, the only apparent reason for Carter's success was his

ability to capture the votes of the working class and minority groups, mainly through the good offices of the labour bureaucracy, which mounted a massive campaign on behalf of the Carter-Mondale ticket.

The high abstention shows the disillusionment of many Americans with the capitalist two-party set-up. Another indication is the impact of the campaign run by the Socialist Workers Party, American sympathisers of the Fourth International, especially among many of the racial minority groups. Following the success of the SWP's lawsuit against years of hounding by the FBI, all the other left tendencies were forced to define their attitudes towards the election in terms of the SWP campaign. The gains of 1976 were relatively small, but there is little doubt that in 1980, after four years of a Carter administration, there will be further advances on the road to building an



International solidarity action saved two Irish anarchists, Noel and Marie Murray, from hanging in Dublin. The only evidence heard in their trial for the shooting of a policeman was confessions extracted under torture. It was a great victory to save their lives, but now Marie Murray faces a retrial with the same evidence.



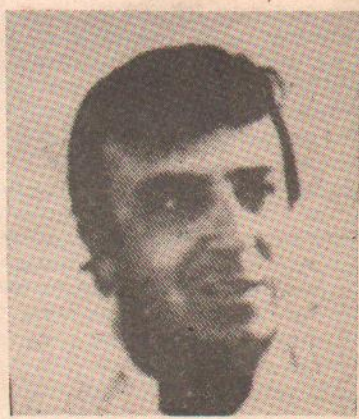
The Italian elections in June registered further advances for the Communist Party (PCI) and its further degeneration into the politics of class collaboration. The aspirations of the Italian workers awakened by the PCI's electoral success have been dampened by the fact that it is only the PCI which maintains the Christ-



In November, 154 Basque militants of the LCR-ETA (VI) [Spanish sympathising section of the Fourth International] were arrested in the course of an assembly in a monastery. But the Government had not counted on the response of the Basque working class. Within a week all our comrades were released as a direct



The decision of the Polish Government to implement 40 per cent price rises on consumer goods was met with a massive opposition which forced it to drop the increases a day later. At Radom and Ursus there were demonstrations and attacks on Communist Party offices. In Szczecin and Gdansk, as in 1970, work-



An international campaign has been mounted in defence of Jose Paez (pictured above) and Arturo Apaza, militants of the PST, the Argentinian section of the Fourth International, imprisoned by the dictatorship. Paez is a trade union leader held in Cordoba jail, daily under the threat of illegal execution. Apaza is a



independent working class party.

North America's other important election was in Quebec, where the nationalist Parti Quebecois swept into power against the ruling Liberal Party. The PQ is a bankrupt party, a capitalist party with nothing to offer the working class. But its victory represented the result of a long development of the Quebec workers movement to defend its living standards and win the

right to self-determination.

The PQ Government will do nothing to advance either of those ends, but it is likely that the electoral victory will be a stimulus to independent working class activity, and that before too long these bourgeois nationalists will stand exposed for what they are. We can expect great steps forward in the fight for self-determination and an independent workers party in the coming year.



IN ASIA the main concern of imperialism has been to contain the effects of the Indochinese revolution. A key move was the military coup in Thailand in September, which unleashed a violent campaign of repression against the rising student and popular movement.

This fits in with an overall imperialist strategy of relying on harsh dictatorship and bloody anti-communist terror campaigns, such as are waged in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and South Korea. But in all of these countries internal opposition is mounting, fuelled by growing economic difficulties. Many of them face growing anti-imperialist guerilla forces; indeed, one result of the Thai coup was a considerable stepping-up of guerilla activity.

The pro-imperialist Government of Indira Gandhi responded to the devastating effects of the imperialist crisis in India by establishing an outright dictatorship and terrorising all forms of opposition. While physical repression has not assumed a mass scope, the betrayal of the pro-Moscow Stalinists — who support the Gandhi dictatorship — and bankruptcy of the pro-Peking Stalinist forces have allowed imperialism to impose a serious defeat on the suffering Indian masses.

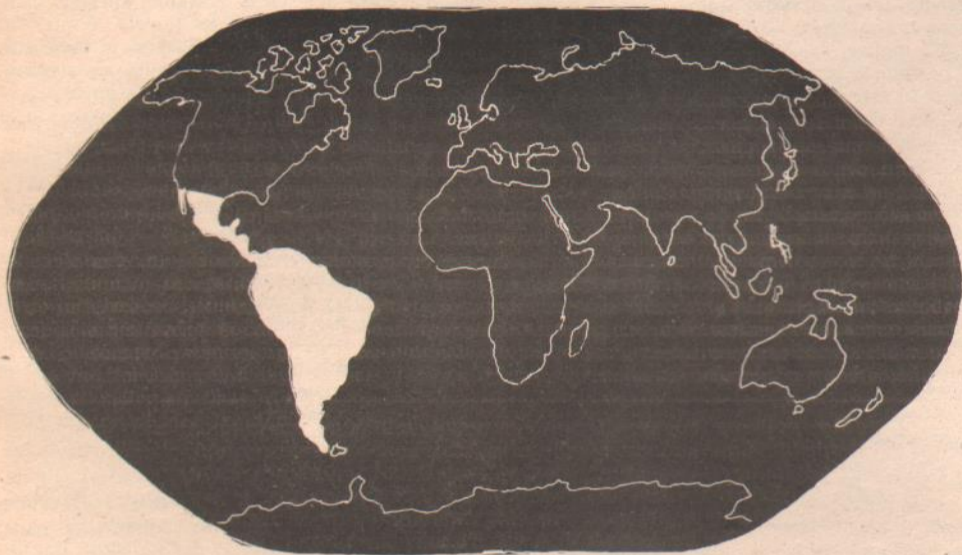
However, a few miles across the water in Ceylon the workers movement, which suffered a similar defeat with the State of Emergency declared in 1971, has started to re-emerge. The launching of a one-day general strike against government repression of the student movement, largely initiated by the Trotskyist-led Ceylon Mercantile Union (CMU), once again

serves to show that such defeats can be rapidly overcome — especially if a clear revolutionary leadership is present.

The crises of political leadership in Western Europe are reflected in Japan. The Lockheed scandal, implicating the highest figures in Japanese political life, has had a massive impact on the bourgeois parties. The ruling LDP lost votes and changed leaders, and an alternative bourgeois 'Clean Government' party made considerable gains in the recent elections. The social democratic and Stalinist opposition, however, once again showed themselves incapable of taking advantage of this crisis of the capitalist parties and actually lost ground in the elections.

In Australia, after the fall of the Whitlam Government in 1975, there was a year of bitter struggles to maintain working class living standards against the attacks on wages and services by the Fraser Government. The struggle against the reduction of the Medibank facilities and the Fairfax print strike show the willingness of Australian workers to take militant action as well as the continued betrayal by the Labour and trade union leadership.

The political bankruptcy of Maoism throughout Asia is itself a reflection of the political crisis of the Chinese state, which has consistently ploughed an ever-rightward course in its foreign policy, culminating in its support of counter-revolution in Angola. The death of Mao has touched off a big internal struggle in which no real alternative has yet emerged, but which has further disoriented the adulators of Chinese Stalinism around the world.



IN 1976 the brutal military dictatorships of Brazil, Bolivia, Chile and Uruguay were joined by Argentina, where imperialism was faced with one of the most powerful and long-standing working class movements on the continent. The Argentinian defeat is a serious one, and with it hopes of a rapid recovery in Latin America from the defeats of Bolivia and Chile are severely damaged.

The Argentinian military, in conjunction with right-wing terror squads, have dealt out bloody repression to the working class vanguard — but they have not dared to extend their repression to the working masses as a whole on the Chilean model. The possibilities of recovery of the mass movement from anything short of such total repression was shown in Bolivia, where, despite the bloody coup of Banzer in 1971 and the repression that followed it, important struggles have taken place among the students, miners, and groups of industrial workers.

MOVEMENT

One by-product of the defeat in Argentina has been the breaking up of the class collaborationist ideology and movement that has served as an historical dead-end for the Argentinian working class — Peronism. The possibility of a resurgence among the Argentinian workers within the next few years still remains very real, and with the Peronist obstacle removed, it could rapidly assume a revolutionary scope.

In several less important countries struggles by a newly-emerging working class have been evident. This is especially true of Colombia, Mexico and the countries of Central America, in all of which the forces of Trotskyism are playing an important part in the creation of a new workers movement.

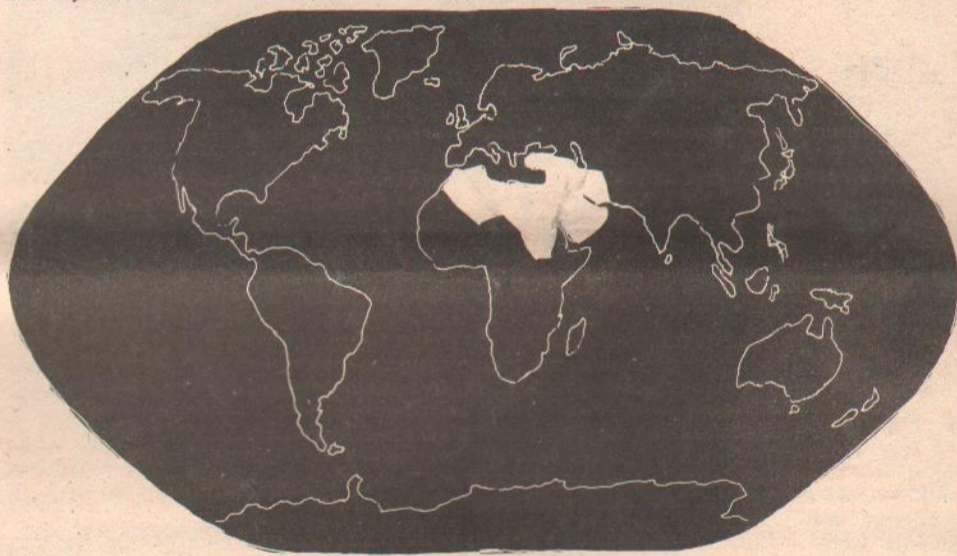
In the Caribbean the crisis of imperialism has forced Jamaica and Guyana to adopt a more critical stance towards the traditional mechan-

isms of imperialist exploitation, and to resort to limited mass mobilisations against them. But even these restrained moves have frightened the national bourgeoisies of these countries and imperialism, laying the seeds for a growing confrontation between the mass movement and the forces of reaction. The victory of the Peoples National Party in the Jamaican elections, despite a campaign of scare mongering and violence by the right, has shown the determination of the masses to better their lot at the expense of imperialism.

But to go forward they must go beyond the middle class politicians like Manley and Burnham of Guyana and their half-hearted reformist



policies. A crucial factor will be the attitude of the Cuban leadership, which enjoys immense prestige in these countries. The Caribbean revolution — and particularly that of Jamaica — will be a crucial test for the Cuban leadership. If they fail to strengthen the revolutionary struggle in the Caribbean they will have clearly passed into the Stalinist camp; but if they assist a revolutionary victory then the isolation of the Cuban revolution could be rapidly ended and a Caribbean socialist federation created, which in turn would lay the basis for the emergence of a new revolutionary force on the American continent.



1976 WAS a year of serious defeat for the mass movement in the Middle East. The project of the Arab bourgeoisies, begun but not completed in Jordan in 1970, was the elimination of the Palestinian resistance as a force within the internal politics of the Arab states. The chosen terrain for this confrontation was Lebanon.

The emasculation of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation in Lebanon was not a task which could be completed by the Lebanese rightists unaided. The beginning of the year was a period of military gains for the PLO and the leftist forces. The decisive factor was the Syrian invasion, ostensibly as a peace-keeping force, to break the Palestinians. The military strength of the Syrians was overwhelming, but the crucial element in the defeat was the line of the PLO leadership.

The PLO, dominated by Fatah, maintained its strategy of an alliance with the Arab bourgeoisies against Israel and 'non-interference' in the affairs of the Arab states. But it was precisely this which left it incapable of mobilising the allies who could have been

decisive in defeating the plans of the Arab bourgeoisie — the mass movement in the Arab countries.

The Syrian invasion also threw the Stalinists into crisis. The Lebanese CP was forced to seek support from the Italian and French CPs against the intervention, while their Syrian comrades supported the role played by the Assad regime and Moscow studiously avoided taking any position at all. In sharp contrast, the forces of the Fourth International in Lebanon and the entire Arab world, though still small, had an impact by their principled refusal to acquiesce in the Syrian invasion and their fight for a class programme against all the Arab ruling classes.

The situation in Lebanon is now one of severe repression and defensive struggles on the part of the masses. This defeat can only be reversed on the basis of a strategy which involves the Arab masses in struggle in support of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people and against their own bourgeoisies.



The Shah of Iran's empire of repression has continued its murderous work in 1976. But in June an occupation of the SAVAK headquarters in Geneva exposed the activities of the Iranian secret police in Europe. There are reckoned to be 100,000 political prisoners in Iran itself. Now with the collaboration of the CIA and the Western European governments, SAVAK is casting its net wider to clamp



The use of Afrikaans as the official language in black schools was the spark which set alight the Soweto township. But what this signalled was the black working class coming into action against the vicious apartheid South African regime. According to official figures 172 Africans were killed in the townships in four days in June alone. But the struggle of the black working class and youth



The death of Mao Tse-tung has been followed by vicious inter-bureaucratic wrangles involving the denigration of the 'Gang of Four' and now violence on the streets of China. But increasingly the Chinese masses are losing their faith in any section of the bureaucracy.



Under the auspices of the Syrian invaders, numerous crimes have been committed against the Palestinian and Lebanese masses. Decisive was the battle for the Tel al Zaatar refugee camp last summer. The camp was besieged and bombarded for fifty-two days, with no water, food or medicine. Despite the heroism of the defenders, the camp fell to the Phalangists with a



Under the 'Kissinger plan' for southern Africa black and white leaders are sitting around a table in Geneva discussing the transition to neo-colonial rule in Zimbabwe. The reality in Zimbabwe is far different. While the conference was in progress, Rhodesian troops invaded Mozambique to massacre the inhabitants of Zimbabwean camps.



THE AFRICAN continent is potentially one of the most crucial for imperialism in the coming decade. It is an area that still offers great scope for further penetration of imperialist capital; where the national bourgeoisie is traditionally weakest; the economic and political hold of imperialism strongest; and where the struggles of the masses have been historically most successfully contained by neo-colonialism.

Yet it is on the African continent that imperialism has had its most unsuccessful year in 1976. There have

always been two weak links in the imperialist stranglehold on Africa, cracks that were not filled in by the neo-colonial set-up that was erected after the last war: the survival of colonialism in the Portuguese territories, and the white racist regimes of southern Africa. In the short term each of these was a strong point of support for the imperialist system; but in the long term they threatened to blow up in the face of the imperialist masters. 1975 and 1976 were the years of the explosion.



The victories of the anti-imperialist forces in Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique were a foregone conclusion once the coup in Lisbon had undermined the capacity of the Portuguese army to wage an effective colonial war. The only debate was over the terms of the settlement.

But in Angola imperialism had much greater hopes of keeping a tight rein, playing on the divisions in the liberation movements and the existence of groupings with clear neo-colonialist sympathies, backed by reactionary black states like Zaire or white racist South Africa.

But in the event imperialism and its supporters lost out, with the victory of the MPLA in the civil war. This victory was in large measure due to the support given to the MPLA by the workers states, particularly the Cuban military back-up, which in turn was made possible by the widespread support for the MPLA amongst a series of black African states, influenced both by their own opportunist motives and the pressure of mass sympathy for the Angolan people's struggle.

The victory of the MPLA was thus a victory for the anti-imperialist movement across the continent, and a sign of how deep opposition to imperialism in Africa is, despite the failure of the MPLA leadership (and their counterparts in FRELIMO and the PAIGC) to propose a clear alternative to neo-colonial dependency.

ZIMBABWE

The victories in the former Portuguese colonies were a big boost to the popular movement across the continent, especially in white racist southern Africa. The strengthening and radicalisation of the guerilla movement in Zimbabwe, now aided by a cooperative FRELIMO regime in Mozambique, brought this outpost of white racism to the edge of the precipice. In an attempt to save as much as possible of imperialist interests, both the racist South African Republic and US imperialism in the guise of Henry Kissinger set out to negotiate a solution which would dump white racism in Zimbabwe but replace it with a servile, black neo-colonialism, and underwrite continued white racist rule in South Africa.

But this ploy broke apart on the twin rocks of the intransigence of the Rhodesian racists and the upsurge of the African masses. The Smith regime was not prepared to give enough ground to make a sell-out by the black neo-colonialists acceptable to a black population inspired by the victories of armed struggle and their own growing strength. To top it all, the efforts of South Africa to pose as an 'honest broker' fell apart when the long-suffering South African masses themselves went into struggle, first in Soweto and then across the country, and the Vorster regime had to appear publicly with black blood dripping from its lily-white hands. Then in Namibia the South Africans had to appear as the ruthless oppressors of a popular struggle for liberation.

No solution has emerged to the intractable problem of southern Africa, despite the efforts of the



neo-colonialists and imperialism — now led principally by British imperialism, which is prepared to 'assume its responsibilities' in order to engineer a sell-out of the black masses.

Nor is there any long term solution which can avoid deepening the political crisis of imperialism in Africa. Any concessions to the black masses in Zimbabwe will touch off a powerful mass movement whose demands will deepen the anti-imperialist struggle and stimulate the determined fight of the black workers of South Africa against apartheid. This in turn will bring onto the stage the most powerful working class in the most economically developed country of Africa, destroying the imperialist dream of using it as a springboard for the more thoroughgoing exploitation of the continent, and opening up the possibility of a real alternative to imperialism and neo-colonialism — a united socialist Africa.

It is this perspective which is already casting its shadow over the African continent, far more powerful in the long run than all the imperialists' delaying tactics in Geneva, their manoeuvres with repressive regimes like those of Zaire and Kenya, and the bloody repression being unleashed at their urging by the Ethiopian military dictatorship against the powerful Ethiopian mass movement and the Eritrean liberation struggle.

The struggle in southern Africa is rapidly becoming a political touchstone across the continent — separating the neo-colonialists, open and disguised, from those seeking to defeat imperialism; drawing a dividing line between those who have a strategy for a victory won by the African masses themselves, and those who still retain illusions that someone else will do the job. It can make the African continent into the crucial front for world imperialism in the mid-1970s that Indochina was for the preceding decade. It must equally become the focus of solidarity by the international workers movement.

CONCLUSION

1976 did not see a decisive swing towards one side or the other in the international class struggle. For the workers movement it was mainly a period of consolidation and slow, painstaking advance. Even the rout of imperialism in Angola was not able to bring about a decisive change. In Europe the most important developments were in Spain, where, nevertheless, the gains have been slow and won at a painful cost.

But this long retrenchment on both sides of the class divide is a good education for the workers movement. It is in this arena that revolutionaries are first able to challenge the hold of the various reformist parties over the mass movement and forge a leadership which can play a decisive role in a revolutionary upsurge.

SUPPORT

It is in this context that we must assess the progress made by the Fourth International in the past year. The most important gains have come in the Spanish state, within a steady rise of the mass movement and the increased readiness of more politically advanced workers to break with the reformist schemas of the Communist Party. This clearly creates very favourable conditions for the intervention of revolutionaries.

Our Spanish comrades have shown themselves to be equal to this task. By advancing a consistent strategy of a working class united front with the reformist parties, calling on them to break their alliance with the 'liberal' bourgeoisie, the Fourth International is creating the preconditions for breaking the mass of the working class from the practices of reformism as the revolutionary situation unfolds.

For revolutionaries the fight for unity within the workers movement is as much a principle in the struggle for the socialist revolution as the intransigent fight against class collaboration which accompanies it. The clear and principled position of the comrades of the LCR and LC has already won them many gains, both from the ranks of the Stalinists and from the vacillating Mao-centrist organisations.

The struggle of the Fourth International for international solidarity action and the building of an international revolutionary organisation falls within the same framework. Solidarity on a world scale is the best education which the workers movement can gain. 1976 has shown, and 1977 will show again, that the development of the world revolution is not an even process. But this very unevenness, the massive gap between the level of struggle in different parts of the globe, can be turned to our advantage.

The sharpest example of this came in the

reflected in those countries such as Germany and Hungary where the working class attempted to seize power. In southern Europe it initiated a series of mass upsurges, while promoting the development of independent working class organisations in countries such as Britain.

1977, the 60th anniversary of the Russian Revolution, may not see quite such dramatic developments; but the tasks of international solidarity will be no less pressing. It is still the Iberian peninsula which offers the greatest prospects for the first socialist revolution in Western Europe. Despite the set-back in Portugal and the slow tempo of events in Spain, one of the central tasks of the coming year will continue to be the building of active support for the workers of Iberia. This in itself is one of the most important schools for the

revolution in capitalist Europe as a whole.

It is on the basis of an international solidarity campaign in defence of the PST, the Argentinian section of the Fourth International, that the Colombian Trotskyists have made such great advances in the regroupment of the revolutionary left under the banner of the Fourth International.

The evolution of a pre-revolutionary period in the imperialist heartlands of Western Europe has been the decisive new element in the world class struggle in recent years. The beginnings of a challenge to the rule of the bureaucracy in the workers states of Eastern Europe has added new dimensions to the struggle for workers democracy on the Eastern European continent as a whole.

1976 has also seen the explosion of the anti-imperialist struggle in southern Africa. It is likely that this will continue to be the central arena of the class struggle in the coming year. This, above all, requires the greatest solidarity

from workers the world over. By one of the ironies of the uneven development of the world revolution, southern-Africa, which has seen the largest upsurge in the past year, is also the most underdeveloped in terms of revolutionary leadership. Building international solidarity with the people of southern Africa is a part of the fight to build a revolutionary leadership which can undertake the battle for a united socialist Africa.

Political clairvoyancy is as foolish as any other variety. The tasks of revolutionaries in the coming year are not dictated by predictions of what will happen in this or that country, but by an overall appraisal of the world struggle for socialism. 1976 has shown us that the crucial arenas for this struggle will continue to be southern Africa and southern Europe. The test of the internationalism of the left in 1977 will be its ability to advance solidarity and the building of a revolutionary leadership in every continent.



Like Mao — and Brezhnev — Tito of Yugoslavia will not last for ever. His death is likely to open up the contradictions of the 'self-managed' economy. The bourgeoisie was not too happy about Brezhnev's visit to Belgrade in

imprecor

international press correspondence

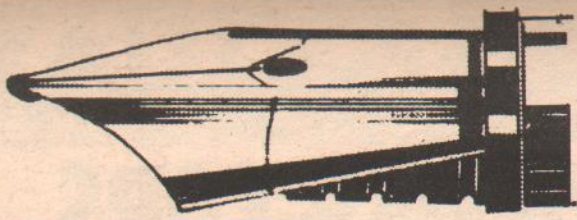
fortnightly, no.64, 9 December 1976

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LETTERS

Red Weekly has received a number of letters on the national question in Scotland and the attitude socialists should take to the devolution proposals of the Labour Government.

We will be publishing these in future issues, but we also invite further correspondence on this topic, particularly that addressed to the points made in Neil Williamson's 'In Focus' article in our 9 December issue.

A forthcoming article in our Battle of Ideas monthly supplement will deal with the national question in Scotland in depth. In addition the IMG will be publishing its position shortly after the conclusion of the discussion on its leading bodies.

Send letters to: 'Devolution Debate', Red Weekly, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

More backing needed for squatters

The left-wing revolutionary groups, including the IMG, have given almost no active support nor priority to the issue of squatting.

This is particularly shameful in the present economic and political climate. Squatters are being used as scapegoats for both the 'Housing Crisis' and the introduction of a Criminal Trespass Bill. Both situations are attacks on the whole working class, but if they are to be repelled then the left must take up the question of squatting.

Revolutionary groups profess support for working class struggles, particularly those involving direct action e.g. factory occupations, work-ins (EGA). Also students fighting drastic education cuts are supported when they occupy colleges.

Squatting is the occupation of houses, fighting for the right of decent housing for all and against the housing cuts. Squatters are those people the left already supposedly supports — workers, unemployed and students.

As a tactic, squatting action (e.g. barricades and self-defence groups against eviction) has been shown to be effective. If occupations are a more advanced form of struggle then they should be developed and extended as a means of politicising people. Presumably a revolutionary situation will involve expropriation of property?

If squatting or land/property take-overs occur abroad (e.g. Mexico, Portugal) then these struggles are hailed as great revolutionary steps by workers and peasants against an oppressive...

imperialist-dominated... capitalist system. I wonder why squatting by the dispossessed (homeless) members of the working class in capitalist Britain is not seen in similarly glorified terms.

The area of squatting seems to be uncomfortably close to many members' own experiences. Rather than using this experience and developing their own potential base, 'revolutionaries' seem to prefer to concentrate their energies on directing and advising other people on how to stick their necks out.

If priorities are decided on the basis of 'objective analysis', are attempts to raise the question of Portugal, Spain, etc. the really vital, key issues confronting the working class? Is squatting so peripheral and insignificant to the 'masses' that these struggles are worthy of almost no priority? Furthermore, perhaps a relatively small group like the IMG should consider intervening in areas where its strength might have a significant impact.

I would not accept attempts by the IMG to defend its position by pointing to a few Red Weekly articles and their one member who is very involved in squatting activities — and he is given inadequate support by the IMG organisation.

In my view mere lip service in support of squatting is not sufficient. Because of its implications for the whole working class, the issue of squatting must be taken up by the revolutionary left and raised within the labour movement. — EMMA TAIT

'Left' joins witch-hunt

This letter, which was also sent to the rest of the left press, has already appeared in Tribune of 24 December.

In 1952, Michael Foot, then editor of Tribune, greeted the appearance of the Trotskyist weekly Socialist Outlook with the following remarks: 'I don't agree with many of the things that you say in Socialist Outlook but, in accordance with the good socialist tradition which some socialists seem to have forgotten, I will certainly fight for your right to say them.' It seems that not only has Foot himself forgotten his own advice but leading Tribune supporters in Southampton have as well.

Over four months ago we applied to join the Labour Party. Our respective ward branches approved our applications and we started to attend ward and Young Socialist meetings as members of the party.

Then, at the end of November, we received a letter from the local agent informing us that a 'query has arisen over your application' and asking us to appear before the executive committee. There we were asked about our activities in support of the socialist newspaper Red Weekly. These consisted of speaking on a Red Weekly platform, sitting behind a bookstall at the local university, and selling Red Weekly. These activities were held to be proof of support [not membership] of another political organisation. On these grounds, many members of the National Executive Committee of the party, such as those who

appear on Morning Star platforms, would today be outside the party with us.

Those leading the witch-hunt against us were not the right wing of the party but the 'left', in particular Alan Whitehead, prospective parliamentary candidate for the New Forest and a supporter of Tribune and the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy.

Although our membership was approved by the EC, the GMC the following week voted first to suspend our membership for six months, then it passed a second resolution to refuse membership altogether. Again leading Tribune supporters supported both motions.

It is clear that we have been witch-hunted out of the party because of the political positions we hold and not because of the alleged support we have given another political organisation. We have opposed the present policies of the Labour Government and put forward a socialist programme which bases itself on the defence of the working class. Opposition from the 'right' we expected, but not from the so-called 'left'.

It leads us to believe that either the local Tribune group has been taken over by the Social Democratic Alliance or that the Tribune supporters are so lacking in confidence in their policies that they are afraid of democratic debate within the party. — MIKE TUCKER, STEVE FERIS (Southampton).

The British Box-Office Massacre

JUDGING from last year's cinema successes (in the midst of a declining industry in general, it should be added), one could be forgiven for thinking that a film about a gun-toting, devil-possessed rapist who bites people's legs off underwater must be the ideal movie for the coming year.

Certainly the crisis-ridden year of 1976 carved out two or three reactionary themes in the cinema which connected very closely with mass hopes, fears, confused solutions and repressed desires, and thus made money. In times of crisis the film industry has never been averse to plumbing the depths or crawling on its belly to make a fast buck. Its general course in the

present crisis is no exception.

The first theme which has emerged in the past year is gratuitous, graphic and individual violence, often linked to rape or sexual repression — the classic examples have been *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, *Death Weekend* and to a lesser extent the more 'artfully' produced (and marketed) *Taxi Driver*.

Such films have been dubbed 'exploitation movies' by the film-world itself, and that is an apt description. They do exploit in a direct manner all the fears, confusion and loathing which lurk in people's consciousness, particularly at times of uncertainty.

The *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*

and *Death Weekend* both resurrect for example the 'woman in jeopardy' theme of Hollywood in the '40s, but sets it in a modern, explicit and doubly hateful context. Their function has been to reassure the insecure masculine psyche through parading the previously covert threat of rape.

away and at best passive and inactive. In such a context individual, violent and at root reactionary solutions to the problems of late capitalism will continue to be the norm.

The third theme, started by the previous year's boomer, *The Exorcist*, and continued in 1976 by



Greek fascists break up a New Years Eve party in the *The Travelling Players*.

The influence of feminism and the women's movement in the cinema has not been to create space for itself, but largely to produce woman-hating reaction on the part of Hollywood's directors. The use of rape, divorced of analysis or a feminist perspective, has been a particularly nasty feature of the recent crop.

A second and related theme has been that of the vigilante, the 'lone avenger' — following on *Death Wish* in 1975, we have had *Lipstick*, *Trackdown*, *Vigilante Force*, *Breaking Point*, *Taxi Driver* and many others. Of these only *Lipstick* tried to put the violence in any social context and to transcend the purely sensational.

But the vigilante theme should come as no surprise to those with some knowledge of American social history. In the USA, more than anywhere, individual solutions are still proffered as ideal — collective social answers are regarded as anathema. So the individual solution of the gun, to rid society of its rapidly growing mountain of social problems, is being increasingly offered in the cinema.

The Omen, is that of the occult and the 'supernatural'. The tendency to turn to the 'supernatural' or 'dark forces' (beliefs which are themselves remnants of feudal and pre-feudal ideology) recurs at times of economic crisis.

It is a general feature now in Britain and the USA, particularly amongst the youth, and the cinema has not been slow to latch on to its appeal. However it is interesting to note that six times as much was spent on promoting *The Omen* as on producing it!

But despite the dark clouds of reactionary gloom which seemed to dominate the cinema in 1976, there were glimmers of hope and optimism for a richer, revolutionary cinema. Unfortunately the best of these are unlikely to pack them in nightly at your local ABC or Odeon.

But one film worthy of mention did have a mass release — Milos Forman's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Despite its undertone of sexism and the identification of the principal female figure with repression and authority, it dealt in a refreshingly progressive way with the subject of mental 'illness' and

DID YOU KNOW

that the real significance of Lenin's struggle 'was always asking "What is to be done?" Lenin wanted to organise small groups of professional revolutionaries under very strict discipline, who would obey one man only, Lenin himself. He called these "soviets"....'

You didn't? You can't have been reading the *Oxford Children's Reference Library* volume on 'Russia and her Neighbours', found recently by a reader on the shelves of a primary school in Walsall.

There must be many more examples lying around on school bookshelves of how the ruling class distort our history and ideas. Have a look and send in any you find.

WHAT'S ON

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and *Srani-Dal-Biplab* (Fourth International paper) contact: Bengali, c/o Internationalen, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

JUST OUT: 'Women & Revolution' 13 (Fall 1976). Articles on Gay Liberation, Soviet Art before Stalin, 'Socialist Feminism', women as scapegoats for unemployment, and more. 35p from iSt-B, BCM Box 4272, London WC1.

MANCHESTER Agee/Hosenball Defence Committee meeting with Red Ladder Theatre Group in their new show, 'Anybody Sweating?'. Speakers: Philip Agee, Mike Bower (NUJ), Frank Allau MP. Saturday 8 Jan, 7pm, Manchester Poly Students Union, Cavendish St, All Saints, Manchester. Admission 60p.

BELFAST STORY: A new novel by Malachi O'Doherty. Vivid description of life in Belfast today. 40p from Erdesun Publications, 10 Greenhaugh Rd, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear.

WOMEN'S Free Arts Alliance Survival Benefit: '4 In Concert For The WFAA'. Peggy Seeger, Terri Quaye, Jo-Anne Kelly, Frankie Armstrong. Thurs 13 Jan: concert 7.30-9.30 (£1.25), dance/disco 10 onwards (75p—package ticket £1.65). Wine, food, bookstall, visual arts exhibition. At: The Little Theatre, Upper St Martins Lane (Leic Sq tube).

OUT NOW: December issue of *Workers Power* 3 with articles on the Labour Government and the Crisis, the Split in the I-CL, Ireland, China, Portugal. Available from WP, 1A Camberwell Grove, SE5.

LEICESTER National Abortion Campaign would like to hear from any women who have been unable to obtain abortions on the NHS in Leicester who would be prepared to give evidence to the National Tribunal. All contributions will remain anonymous. Please contact: 35 Keythorpe St, Leicester.

ABORTION RIGHTS Under Attack: S.W. London NAC and Wandsworth & Merton CHC public meeting, Weds 19 Jan, 7.30pm, Clapham Manor Baths (off Clapham High St). Speakers, film and singers.

MANCHESTER Red Weekly Discussion Group: Tues 17 Jan, 7.15pm, 'The National Question'. In the Red Weekly Centre, 14 Piccadilly, Manchester 1.

'HANDS OFF IRELAND' special labour movement bulletin calling for immediate withdrawal of troops. Articles include 'Political Status', 'Lessons of TQM'. Only 10c + 10c postage from



The meaning of Bukovsky's release

'Bukovsky releases Corvalan!' or perhaps 'Bukovsky and Corvalan help each other out of political prisons' — this was the kind of Christmas message sent by Moscow to the labour movement in the capitalist world. It would have been difficult to imagine a more unwelcome gesture for Georges Marchais of the French Communist Party and his colleagues in other Communist Parties in Western Europe.

And to add an extra insult, those working class militants who had campaigned vigorously against the brutal repression in Chile and for the release of political prisoners like Corvalan could imagine the kind of celebrations being held by the Chilean junta for General Pinochet's considerable diplomatic victory. For once revolutionary Marxists must wholeheartedly agree with a phrase from Marchais: it was a 'lamentable exchange'.

WELCOME

If we forget for a moment the form of release of these two political prisoners, we must of course welcome the fact that both have escaped further years in jail. Corvalan is well-known among working class militants as the leader of the Chilean CP and the reasons for his imprisonment are also well understood.

Vladimir Bukovsky's extraordinarily courageous struggle for the interests of the working people of the Soviet Union is much less well known. A young physicist at Moscow University in the early 1960s, Bukovsky first attracted attention in 1963 when he was sentenced to one year in a psychiatric hospital for possessing a book by the Yugoslav dissident and former Communist Party leader Djilas.

After his release, Bukovsky participated in demonstrations against the trial of Sinyavsky and Daniel in 1966. This was the first major trial of dissidents in Moscow in the 1960s, and it was the first occasion when a number of Western CPs — including the British, French and Spanish parties — protested against repression in the USSR.

LABOUR

Once again sent to a psychiatric institution, Bukovsky won another brief interlude outside jail after protests from the West. In 1967 he was once more arrested and this time sentenced to three years corrective labour.

Between 1970 and 1972 he embarked upon a very dangerous project, which has done more than anything else to bring to light the continuing brutality of the Soviet regime in its drive to crush those who attempt to struggle for democratic rights in the USSR: he compiled a detailed dossier on the use of psychiatric prisons as a means for breaking the wills of the most intransigent fighters for civil rights.

For compiling this document and smuggling it out to the West, Bukovsky was sentenced to seven years imprisonment and five years exile in 1972. Together with the psychiatrist Gluzman, who was jailed for protesting against the criminal imprisoning of the great Marxist oppositionist Major General Pyotr Grigorenko in a psychiatric prison, Bukovsky wrote a manual of advice for dissidents subject to psychiatric repression. For this he was sent to the notorious Vladimir prison, where he

remained until his recent release.

ADMISSION

Grigorenko has pointed out that Moscow's release of Bukovsky and its decision to send him into foreign exile amounts to an admission that Bukovsky was indeed a political prisoner.

So the question arises: why did the Soviet leadership decide to arrange the swap in so blatant a way?

There are two possible explanations. The first is that the Soviet bureaucracy failed to foresee the kind of impact its cynical deal would have in the labour movements of the capitalist world. In other words, they inadvertently allowed the kind of horse-trading that is habitual for behind-the-scenes discussions between Moscow and the capitalist world to spill over into public view.

But this explanation is not the most likely one. In the first place, a number of East European CPs had already denounced the Chilean proposal to swap Corvalan for Bukovsky. Only two months before, the East German CP had attacked the offer as 'outright impudence'. This suggests a good understanding of the meaning of accepting the Chilean deal.

HIGHEST

In the second place, decisions of this kind would be taken at the very highest levels in the USSR, and the Soviet politburo would be unlikely to make such a crass mistake.

This leaves a second explanation of the deal: the Soviet leadership deliberately wanted to embarrass the Western CPs, particularly the French leadership, warning them in a supremely cynical manner to stop imagining that every move they make on behalf of Soviet dissidents will bring them political capital at home.

The swap came shortly after the French CP had taken a vigorous stand on behalf of a number of important political prisoners, including Jiri Muller, Bukovsky and Gluzman. The French CP's call for Muller's release had thrown the Czech regime into confusion — it reacted first with new threats against the 'terrorist criminal' Muller, and then swung round and released him along with Sabata, Hubl, and Rusek. The East German regime was similarly under pressure after its expulsion of Wolf Biermann and house arrest of Robert Havemann.

INSULT

In these conditions the Soviet action involved a direct insult to the Western CPs, with the implied message: we will make deals of this kind as a sign of our refusal to care what campaigns you attempt to organise against us; furthermore, we don't care how much your political standing in France is weakened as a result.

Moscow was deliberately confronting the French Communist Party leadership by linking together the Chilean junta's campaign for the release of Bukovsky with that of the Western CPs.

This explanation of the Soviet action is the most likely one. But if it was intended to show Moscow's indifference to campaigns by the labour movement in the West for the release of Soviet political prisoners, the Soviet gesture is unconvincing.

growing movement in the defence of Soviet political prisoners is creating serious political problems in Eastern Europe. Following an obviously Soviet-inspired Bulgarian denunciation of the Western CPs for anti-Sovietism, the Hungarian Party boss, Kadar, publicly dissociated himself from such a characterisation.

In short, the Bukovsky swap is a further step in the complex crisis of European Stalinism which is destined to become more acute throughout 1977. It is a further symptom of the growing inter-play of the crisis in the capitalist West and the crisis in the bureaucratised workers states of Eastern Europe.

Red Weekly has consistently campaigned against all attempts to repress democratic rights in Eastern Europe and the USSR. It has also been in the forefront of Chilean solidarity activities. We can only hope that the fates of those two former political prisoners, now political exiles, will help to bring home the realities of world politics at the start of 1977.

OLIVER MacDONALD

SPANISH COPS PUT THEIR FOOT IN IT?

THE SPANISH dictatorship has been forced to release its most embarrassing political prisoner. After being held for eight days, Santiago Carrillo, general secretary of the Communist Party [PCE], was let out of the prison hospital of Carabanchel on bail.

From the Government's point of view, the strongest reason for his release was the strength of the defence campaign which was launched immediately after his arrest, culminating in a mass demonstration in Madrid which was brutally attacked by the police. But it also seems likely that the Government itself never planned Carrillo's arrest.

He first appeared publicly at a press conference on 10 December, but it took the police a fortnight to 'find' him. It is far more likely that the arrest was never authorised by the Government, but an initiative taken independently by the police. It may not be coincidental that the arrest was quickly followed by a reshuffle of hard-line security chiefs.

ANALYSIS

Carrillo's analysis of his release is largely correct. 'The Communist Party has not yet been made legal by my release', he said, 'but at the same time you cannot say that it is illegal.' The Interior Ministry has made it clear that it will tolerate PCE activity, but only through front organisations.

But Carrillo is also over the moon about the possibilities of legalisation of the PCE. Rather than seeing the release of himself and seven of his comrades as a victory for the entire left which mobilised in their defence, he only regards it as a new attitude on the part of the Government.

There is no doubt that the Government will want to legalise the PCE sooner or later; but it also wants to boost the support of the PSOE, the social democrats, at the expense of the PCE and the far left prior to the elections later this year. Carrillo has used his release as an opportunity to state the PCE's commitment to participation in these fake elections, in an attempt to reassert the position of his party as the major reformist organisation.

While Carrillo's release was a victory, he has nevertheless used it to obscure some basic political issues. The need to fight for the release of all political prisoners was highlighted by the struggles last weekend in the Basque country. Mass demonstrations



SANTIAGO CARRILLO

demanding a total amnesty and fought off the attacks of the Civil Guard and Armed Police. In Eibar a number of demonstrators were wounded on New Year's Eve. At Algorta, near Bilbao, workers threw up barricades in the streets on Sunday against police attacks.

These workers are showing in practice what Carrillo has not even understood in theory. The dictatorship of Franco lives on. Among the preconditions for participation in any elections must be the release of all political prisoners and the legalisation of all the organisations of the workers movement.

Juan Aguirre

NEED FOR CHILE SOLIDARITY GREATER THAN EVER

WHEN LUIS MUNOZ arrived at the notorious DINA interrogation centre of Villa Grimaldi in Chile in December 1974, he was given the number 676. When he was transferred on 1 March 1975, the number of prisoners there was up to 1,050. By collating information in the several jails and concentration camps he was to pass through in the following 18 months, he was able to figure out that less than a hundred of the new detainees had subsequently reappeared, bringing to over 2,000 the number of 'disappeared' prisoners since the coup.

The verb 'disappear' has taken on a markedly active meaning during the past months as the junta has been preparing lists of prisoners for release in a renewed attempt to ingratiate itself with international capital, and in particular the incoming administration of Jimmy Carter. Figures provided by the Catholic 'Vicaria de Solidaridad' show that the number of 'disappearances' in proportion to arrests has risen from 5 per cent in January 1976 to 18 per cent in April, to 56 per cent (June), 38 per cent (July), and 57 per cent (August).

After the massive and indiscriminate repression of the first year, the junta has learnt the value of 'disappearing' evidence from its colleagues across the border in Argentina.

The DINA secret police have been built up into the central pillar of the junta's rule.

HAILED

Munoz and another Mirista and former prisoner, Cristian Van Jurich, heard from the junta-appointed President of the Supreme Court, Jose Maria Eyzaguirre, how he had been hauled up in front of the DINA chief Contreras in Pinochet's office.

While Eyzaguirre was threatened, and warned to lay off the DINA, 'Pinochet merely nodded his assent to everything that was said. It was Contreras, who seemed to be in charge', they were told.

They also believe that when elements inside the junta were

demanding that the DINA's excesses be curbed, the DINA pressured Pinochet by threatening members of his family and carrying out a wave of killings, including that of the Spanish UN employee and CP sympathiser Carmelo Soria.

TERROR

Reciprocal 'national security' agreements with neighbouring dictatorships have institutionalised DINA-type terror throughout the southern cone of Latin America. The case of the Bolivian miners' leaders, now doing forced labour in southern Chile, has been the subject of an official protest from the British NUM executive. A delegation led by Lawrence Daly told the Bolivian ambassador that Bolivian goods would be blacked if action to repatriate them was not forthcoming.

The catalogue of this co-ordinated savagery, bent on the extermination of the vanguard of the Latin American working class is endless. The practice of fitting the names of 'disappeared' Chilean prisoners to corpses in Argentina is symptomatic and shows the urgent need to fight for and generalise actions of the type suggested by the NUM throughout the labour movement.

The concentration camps of Chile had to be closed down (although not permanently) not merely because of international solidarity action. The intransigent struggle of the prisoners inside the camps made their retention untenable. They turned them into



Chilean political prisoners are released from Tres Alamos.

organising centres for action that reached into the working class neighbourhoods, what remained of the independent trade union organisations, and

even the armed forces themselves. It would be shameful if militants in Britain were not to act on such an example.

David Gardner

PUBLIC MEETING

- * For Workers Democracy
- * Against the Frame-ups and Slanders of the Workers Revolutionary Party

Hear

ERNEST MANDEL
GEORGE NOVACK
PIERRE LAMBERT
MICHEL PABLO
TIM WOHLFORTH

Chairperson **TARIQ ALI**

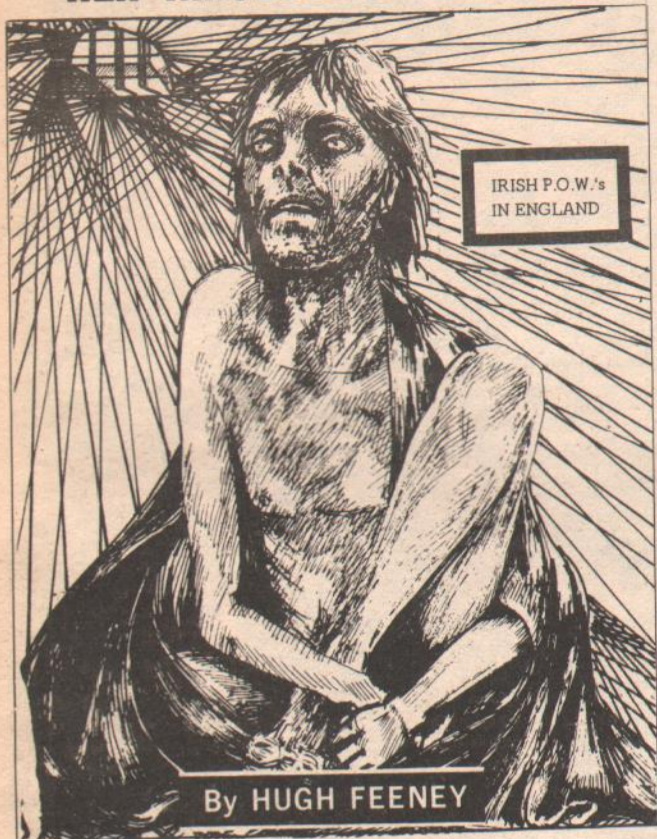
FRIDAY 14th JANUARY
FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE
EUSTON ROAD LONDON NW1
(opposite Euston Station)

7pm (doors open 6.30pm) admission 50p.



In the care of...

HER MAJESTY'S PRISONS



IRISH P.O.W.'s
IN ENGLAND

By HUGH FEENEY

John Magee looks at a new pamphlet by Hugh Feeney, published by the Belfast Republican Press Centre [price 30p].

SOME months ago fourteen prison warders were tried in Birmingham on 94 charges of brutality against Irish Republican prisoners. It came as little surprise to Irish militants that despite convincing evidence all the warders were acquitted and walked free from the court.

It is rather too much to expect that an English jury would penalise English prison officials for assaulting people who are daily depicted in the press and on television as sub-human monsters, Irish savages. One question left

unanswered at the trial, however, was the identity of the attackers who did inflict the injuries which even the court had to admit had been sustained by the prisoners.

This new pamphlet provides the answer to the above question. It has been written by an Irish Republican who is presently imprisoned in Long Kesh but who previously spent many months in English prisons.

Hugh Feeney, one of the 'Belfast Ten', himself suffered in English prisons. He has written a chronicle of the experiences of Irish Republican prisoners in jails

in England and Scotland. As well as Hugh's own experiences, the pamphlet draws on accounts by other prisoners, accounts which because of prison censorship had to be smuggled out.

It is a record of brutality and humiliation meted out by warders, officials and prison doctors. It demonstrates beyond doubt that Republican prisoners are totally defenceless, without rights or means of redress.

RULINGS

The pamphlet describes how prison conditions flagrantly contravene the rulings of the Strasbourg Court of Human Rights; reveals the existence of Sensory Deprivation Units in British prisons, including Wakefield in Yorkshire and Wormwood Scrubs in London; tells of prisoners who required psychiatric treatment after being confined in these units.

Irish Republican prisoners are refused rights of association with other prisoners, a regulation which is only broken when warders wish to incite attacks on Irish prisoners by fellow inmates. Hugh tells of the depressing isolation which is the Republican's lot:

'Between the darkenses you sweep out your cell, 'slop-out' and collect your drinking water. Every exercise you carry out slowly for they all represent a devouring of time. Even urinating in the po in the far corner of the cell is doing something to devour time.'

Every minute of this isolation drags out like an hour and every hour of the day is spent in a tiny cramped cell, except for the miserable half-hour's exercise generously permitted by the Home Secretary.

PRISONERS

There are now about 140 Republican prisoners held in these conditions in English and Scottish prisons. There has been very little protest from British socialists about their treatment. Mass protest is needed, and with the publication of this pamphlet ignorance can no longer be accepted as an excuse.

As Hugh Feeney points out, while the British occupation of Ireland continues there will be Republican prisoners in British prisons. All socialists should commit themselves to their defence, and just as important commit themselves to getting British imperialism out of Ireland.

JOHN MAGEE

Amnesty spotlight torture in Iran

Iran: Briefing, produced by Amnesty International, is a pamphlet much narrower in scope than **Iran: the Shah's Empire of Repression**, by the Committee Against Repression in Iran, which we reviewed last month. Amnesty International are particularly concerned with:

- (a) arbitrary of suspected political opponents who are held incommunicado for long periods before being charged or tried;
- (b) the use of torture;
- (c) lack of legal safeguards and unsatisfactory trial procedures;
- (d) executions and unofficial deaths.

Iran voted for the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which forbids the use of torture, in 1948, and the Shah spoke in support of it in 1968. Iran has also ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which is a treaty binding upon the parties to it.

This gives individuals all sorts of rights (e.g. innocent until proven guilty, including protection from torture. Article 131 of the

Iranian Penal Code also expressly prohibits torture.

However, in the words of the Amnesty pamphlet, 'all the information received by A.I. over the past decade confirms that torture does invariably occur during the period between arrest and trial. All observers to trials since 1965 have reported allegations of torture which have been made by defendants and have expressed their own conviction that prisoners are tortured for the purpose of obtaining confessions.'

WHIPPING

'Alleged methods of torture include whipping and beating, electric shocks, the extraction of nails and teeth, boiling water pumped into the rectum, heavy weights hung on the testicles, tying the prisoner to a metal table heated to white heat, inserting a broken bottle into the anus, and rape.'

This torture is carried out under the directions of the notorious SAVAK secret police, who are responsible for investigating all alleged 'political' crimes. Suspects have no access to lawyers, and there is no time limit for the investigation or detention of suspects.

All political trials are held before military tribunals. Ten days before the trial, the prisoner is allowed to 'choose' a defence counsel — from a short list of retired military officers who need not be learned in law. The court is composed of four serving officers and in contravention of the law there is no jury.

The defence is not allowed to introduce evidence (other than the testimony of the defendant) or witnesses, or even to cross-examine witnesses. The prosecution can and does use the SAVAK report on its own as evidence. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that 'A.I. knows no case of a defendant being acquitted.'

DEATH

The military Court of Appeal may worsen the sentence by increasing it or even imposing the death sentence. 'Appeals to the Shah for clemency sometimes result in the reduction of death sentences to life imprisonment. However, in January 1976, only one of ten people sentenced to death who appealed to the Shah had his sentence commuted.' Executions usually take place within days of conviction.

Many political prisoners are tortured to death, for instance: 'Nine deaths which were announced in April 1975 of political prisoners who had been in prison since 1968 and were allegedly "shot while trying to escape" may have been due to torture. The official account of the deaths contained discrepancies and the families were never allowed to have the bodies for burial.'

Since the beginning of 1972 well over 300 executions of people tried by military tribunals have taken place. 'In the first nine months of 1976, report Amnesty, '22 executions of political prisoners were announced by the Iranian authorities.'

In addition to being executed or tortured to death, political activists 'are killed in the streets or during police raids, while "resisting arrest". In the period January to October 1976, 69 such deaths were reported by the Iranian media, which quoted official statements.'

DETENTION

The pamphlet also describes how 'prisoners are very often kept in detention long after their sentences have expired. A.I. has been informed that one section of Qasr prison in Teheran is kept aside for people whose sentences have expired, but who have not been released.'

As for the 'lucky' few who are released, most of them 'are kept under surveillance and suffer constant harassment from SAVAK, which extends to the treatment of their families. They are unable to obtain employment without the permission of SAVAK and this



Amnesty International's exposure of the situation in Iran is thoroughgoing and effective. But its deliberate intention of remaining 'neutral' and limiting the scope of its concerns to a narrow range of issues means that it is unable to explain why these things occur and how they can be stopped.

Nevertheless, this pamphlet can be a valuable tool for activists fighting to build a mass campaign against repression in Iran and for the liberation of that country. It costs 40p (plus 20p for handling and postage) and is available from the International Secretariat, 53 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8SP.

ROBIN BLACK-DOUGLAS

IMG NOTES

IMG Student School scheduled for 8/9 January has been postponed until further notice due to venue difficulties and Agee/Hosenball demo

IMG Student Commission will meet Saturday 15 January, 10.30am, National Centre.

National IMG Teachers Fraction for members. Sunday 9 January, 11 am. Details of venue from National Centre.

IMG Engineering Secretariat, Sunday 9 January, 1pm, Birmingham.

IMG Trade Union Cadre School for IMG comrades designated to attend by their fraction. Agenda includes: the Minority Movement; the National Left Wing Movement; organising the left in the unions, 1965-75; Labourism, industrial unionism and social democracy; the industrial strategy of the CP; a class struggle left wing — other parties and today. Saturday/Sunday 22/23 January, London.

IMG National Transport Fraction for all comrades working in transport unions. Sunday 30 January, London.

National Engineering Fraction, Saturday 5 February, Birmingham.

IMG Public Services Fraction, 6 February.

Trade Union Commission, Saturday 12 February, 11 am, at National Centre.

IMG Members in the ASTMS or the AUT, in higher education, please contact M. Holbrook, Dept. of Sociology, University of Durham, New Elvet, Elvet Riverside, Durham DH1 3JT. This is urgent.

IMG National Working Women's Charter Campaign Fraction, 8 January, London. All branches to send representatives.

IMG National Abortion Campaign Fraction, 9 January, London. All branches to send representatives.

IMG Members wishing to get kits on 'History of First Three Internationals' Debates and Practice on Women's Oppression', please order through your branch organiser. Cost 90p excluding pamphlets. Limited numbers now being re-printed.

National Fund Raiser wanted by IMG. A really challenging job for someone with flair and organising ability. The IMG has no rich backers and relies on raising funds to finance its campaigns, etc. The National Fund Raiser will also play an important role in projecting the public face of the IMG. Details from and applications to: Jo-Ann Lewis,

Peruvian workers denounce murder of Trotskyist

In our 16 December issue we reported the death under police interrogation of a young Peruvian Trotskyist, Fernando Lozano. The response of the labour movement in Peru to this murder was immediate, as the following statement indicates.

THE UNDERSIGNED ORGANISATIONS LET IT BE KNOWN AS FOLLOWS:

1. We denounce the murder of the ex-student of the Catholic University, comrade Fernando Lozano, which occurred following the 'interrogation' to which he was subjected by the State Security police on Saturday 27 November, only hours after being arrested. We demand the investigation and clarification of the facts of the case, whatever their consequences, and exemplary punishment for those responsible for this crime.

2. We support the hunger strike which has been started by the trade union leaders and militants of the popular movement imprisoned in the Public Jail of Callao, the prison of Lurigancho, in Chibote, Trujillo, etc., demanding among other things punishment of those responsible for the death of comrade Lozano, an end to the repression inside the jails, and for the liberation of all those who have been imprisoned for professing ideas identified with the cause of the people.

3. We demand freedom for the political prisoners: members of the national executive of the fishermen's union and comrades from the various fishing ports up and down the coast, leaders of the miners of Central Peru and their legal advisor Dr Camilo Valqui, comrades Montes and Lazarte [respectively President and Vice-President of the Federation of Peruvian Students], L. Mejia [President of the Students Union] and other students of the Engineering University, comrades Diestra, Rodriguez and about 40 others from the steel complex of Chimbote or the Regional Union Federation of Chimbote, Dr Jose Ona [legal advisor of the Catholic University]

workers, and so on. We demand likewise the repatriation of comrades Sanchez, Armacanqui, Barreda and others, and an end to the tortures and persecution.

4. We call on the Peruvian people as a whole to repel these attacks, since they represent a flagrant violation of human rights, and we reject any attempt by the Government, and in particular by the Ministry of the Interior, to intimidate those of us who have made a part of our daily struggle the demands:

- For the re-establishment of democratic freedoms, against the State of Emergency
- Defence of job security
- Defence of popular living standards
- Support for the just struggle of the fishermen.

5. We solidarise with the position of the students of the Catholic University regarding the death of comrade Lozano, and we call for support for the protest actions that they organise.

SIGNED

Greater Lima Trade Union Struggle Committee
Federation of Building Materials Workers
Greater Lima Teachers Union
National Executive, Confederation of Peruvian Peasants [CCP]
National Fishermen's Union
Federation of Insurance Workers
Federation of Industrial Communities of the Textile Industry

Federation of Workers in Commerce
Association of Employees of the Airport Authority
Union of Customs Workers
Manual Workers Union 'Eternit'
Manual Workers Union 'Invicta'
Textile Workers Union 'Hilos Cadena'
Manual Workers Union FAM

National Confederation of Workers [Catholic workers central organisation]
Chimbote Steel Complex, manual workers
Chimbote Steel Complex, white collar
Union of 'Pirelli' Workers



PAMPHLET available from CARI, Box 4, Rising Free, 142 Drummond Street, London NW1. Single copies are 30p [plus 10p postage and packing]. Bulk, 20p.

POSTER for the defence of Iranian political prisoners [3 colours, A2]. Single copies 30p [plus 6½p postage]. 10 or more copies, 20p each. From: Red Books [Iranian Poster], 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.



Available from: RED BOOKS, 182 Pentonville Rd., LONDON N1. Price 20p.

Britain's 'special envoy' Ivor Richard, the chairman of the Geneva conference, is flitting around Africa canvassing support for a British presence in the transitional regime in Zimbabwe. By the time the talks were adjourned in December he had gained the support of the black nationalist delegations.

A central theme of the campaign of solidarity with the people of southern Africa must be the demand that Labour rejects a neo-colonial solution and recognises independence on the basis of one person, one vote now. Below MATHIAS MURUNGU reviews the events of the Geneva conference so far.

The Geneva conference has adjourned until mid-January. The only concrete outcome after several weeks of haggling, jettling to and fro, press conferences, posturings, charges and counter-charges is a date for majority self-government — 1 March 1978.

The Anglo-American settlement proposals (the Kissinger Plan) for a constitutional solution to the Rhodesian crisis have brought to the conference four black nationalist delegations and one from the Smith regime. But the conference has deadlocked over the issue of status and structure of the interim authority that is to determine the transition towards an 'independent' Zimbabwe.

Kissinger's priority is to outflank and crush the guerilla struggle. The struggle's success and its radicalising effects, its over-spill into South Africa and neighbouring black states, is posing serious threats to imperialism's interests in southern Africa as a whole.

white majority and exclusive power of veto, and also the maintenance in white hands of the key ministries of defence and internal security.

If some 'moderate' black nationalist alliance can be found to accept this it will be promoted into the 'independent' government, with the liberation movement being dealt a major defeat. This would ensure settler privilege and a stable infrastructure in a neo-colonial Zimbabwe.

If this strategy fails, Smith can

appeal to Vorster and America, point out black 'stubbornness', and ask for support in his war against the liberation movement.

Thus far all the black delegations have rejected Smith's manoeuvres. But unlike Smith, most have called for a British presence of one kind or another based on its 'historic decolonising mission', and for effective black control in the transitional period.

The Patriotic Front of Nkomo and Mugabe calls for a black-dominated council of ministers and a British governor. The Muzorewa delegation talks of immediate elections and a united guerilla peace-keeping force, but offers no concrete plans. All black delegation leaders make claims of a base within the guerilla movement; claims strongly disputed within the movement.

From this disparate, demagogic, petty-bourgeois leadership, Britain

and the USA hope to forge the pliable policemen for a neo-colonial Zimbabwe. The release of all political prisoners and no Rhodesian delegation in its own right have disappeared from the black delegates' pre-conditions.

Smith's ferocious pre-emptive blitzkrieg against guerilla bases in Mozambique produced a lame response. In all the vagueness, the socialist rhetoric and demagogy, the black delegates have produced no clear programme towards genuine independence and liberation.

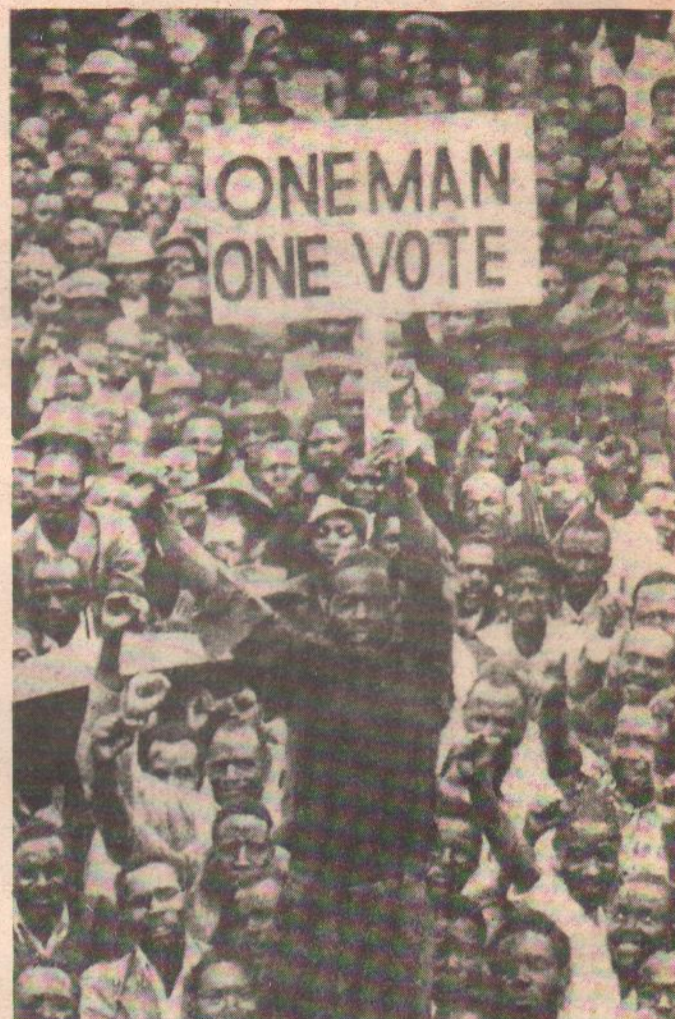
OUTCOME

The neo-colonial experiences elsewhere in Africa, where the exploitation of workers and peasants goes hand-in-hand with settler privileges and international capitalist interests, are the threatened outcome for Zimbabwe from the reconvened conference. If the deadlock is not broken, further attacks on the liberation movement can be expected.

Most recently the reactionary tribal leadership has made its move. Two puppet appointees to the Smith regime, having been outflanked by the nationalist and guerilla movements, have now formed their own party and are demanding delegate status at the reconvened conference. This grouping poses an ideal axis for the implementation of the Kissinger plan, and is a considerable threat to the liberation struggle.

But that liberation struggle will continue, and a concerted defence of that anti-imperialist campaign remains the crucial task.

No to neo-colonialism!
Towards a socialist Zimbabwe!



We agree with the sentiment — but women must have the vote as well.

ACTIVE

With Vorster's active collaboration, Kissinger has coerced Smith into a surrender to African nationalist demands for majority rule 'within two years'. Kissinger has counterposed diplomatic strategy towards neo-colonial 'order' to the chaos of settler military confrontation. The lessons of Angola have not been lost on Kissinger and Vorster.

Smith's strategy is two-pronged. He is sticking rigidly to the so-called 'five principles', which include a two-tier interim government with a higher one having a



European court spurns Agee appeal

PHILIP AGEE is due to appear before an advisory panel to the Home Secretary on 11 January to protest his threatened deportation along with Mark Hosenball.

This body is hardly independent, since at least two of its three members have had long and close connections with British Intelligence. Should they by some miracle recommend leniency, Home Secretary Merlyn Rees is perfectly at liberty to ignore their advice.

It was against this unjust legal procedure as well as the violation of his democratic rights that Agee was appealing when he went to the European Commission on Human Rights — only to discover that he had found an even more unjust procedure when the Commission broke its own convention to give any petitioner 'an open and fair hearing'. It refused even to listen to Agee's case, ruling it out on a point of procedure!

These events confirm the

determination of the British Government to shield the CIA from exposure in this country, and vindicate the correctness of the tactics of the Agee-Hosenball Defence Campaign, which has made use of every platform — both legal and political — available to it, while firmly basing the whole campaign on the perspective of mass action and labour movement support.

It also heightens the need for every militant possible to come out onto the streets on Sunday 9 January to join their voices in the call to 'Stop the Deportations!'



MARK HOSENBALL

The recent elections in the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius dealt a crushing blow to the ruling Labour Party/Moslem Action Committee [CAM], which won only 28 of the 70 seats in Parliament. In an unprecedented result, the leftist Mouvement Militant Mauricien [MMM] won a total of 34 seats with 41 per cent of the votes.

The MMM has waged a consistent struggle against the ethnic divisions which have been the basis of political life on the island for many years, dividing the mass of Mauritians into the Hindu, Muslim and Creole communities. It has fought for the slogan, 'the class struggle must replace the struggle of the races', and has been able to win a substantial response from the workers in the docks and plantations.

Its programme however consists of a 'stages' theory: a parliamentary strategy to introduce measures which are 'sufficiently radical to put Mauritian society on the ideal path'. To achieve this, the MMM calls for an alliance of 'the working class, the petty and middle bourgeoisie', while emphasising the 'necessity for the working class to remain at the head of this alliance.'

The programme includes a series of demands for nationalisation of five major factories, land reforms, strict control of the sugar industry and diversification of agriculture. On foreign policy it envisages a Mauritius that is 'non-aligned', though it maintains a strong position against the present relationship of Mauritius with South Africa and Iran.

This electoral victory is a small step; but already the bourgeois parties, the Labour Party/CAM and the Parti Mauricien Social-Démocrate [PMSD — a right-wing party with strong South African ties] have formed a coalition which provides them with a majority of two in Parliament. It seems likely that the Government will attempt to revert to the brutal repression that it used after the formation of the previous alliance with the PMSD and the CAM in 1969.

It remains to be seen whether in this situation the MMM will understand the need to base itself upon actions outside Parliament or whether, as would seem more likely, it will continue to argue within the confines of a Parliament where its minority is assured.

JULIUS KARANJA

£15,000 must be raised by May '77 THE CHOICE IS YOURS

SANTA DIDN'T FORGET US! In response to our appeal for a big boost for our £15,000 May 1977 target fund drive, the money has started to flood in.

Our special thanks have to go first and foremost to those North London supporters who collected £150 at their Christmas Day dinner in response to the Queen's Speech. North London came up trumps again with £17 collected on New Year's Eve at a party. Other seasonal gifts included £100 from a Glasgow

healthworker and £5 from a Brighton reader.

Our bankers order scheme is also beginning to pay off. With a mere 28 [six of these from Brighton] so far, over £450 will accrue to our Fund Drive between now and the May closing date. But this vitally important way of building our finances up to and beyond May has not yet found much response from our readers in the big cities: London, Manchester and Birmingham. Every reader with a bank account should consider filling one out today!

TARIQ ALI HELD IN PAKISTAN

As we go to press, news has come that Tariq Ali, a member of the Red Weekly editorial board, has been restrained from leaving Pakistan by the Bhutto regime.

It is believed that the ban is intended to prevent Tariq from any

possible visit to India. However Tariq was due to return to Britain this week after a short personal visit to Pakistan.

Bhutto's treatment of dissidence within Pakistan at least parallels that of Gandhi in India. When

tribesmen of the Dir tribe clashed with rangers last September in timber forests which the Government had appropriated, Mr Bhutto is reported to have told his Chief of Staff: 'Crush them' (*Guardian*, 17 November 1976).

Two tank divisions moved into the forests and the air force strafed a number of villages for ten days. According to conservative reports, about 600 men, women and children were killed.

Bhutto's detention of Tariq can only further highlight the repressive character of the Pakistan regime.

• One person who would presumably add her voice to the protests about this harassment of Tariq is Bhutto's daughter Benazir Bhutto. Last month she wrote to him in her capacity as President of the Oxford Union, asking him to speak in a debate in the new year. She looked forward to a reply 'at



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