



BLACK CHILE'S WARSHIPS

SUPPORT CHILEAN WORKERS

Thousands of socialist militants have died in the heroic resistance to the recent military coup in Chile. Thousands more have filled the jails of the new military dictatorship, awaiting summary 'justice' from military court-martials.

Meanwhile, two Chilean warships are sitting in the Tyneside shipyards of Swan-Hunter. Their presence there is a reminder that it is not only American imperialism that has had a hand in recent Chilean affairs, but British imperialism as well.

The two warships were originally built in Barrow for the Chilean Government. They are now being refitted in Tyneside

Support for the Chilean workers, peasants and socialist militants must be organised throughout the working class movement. All goods moving to or from Chile must be unconditionally blacked, as the Hull dockers are reported to be doing. A movement must be created that can prevent the Tories granting recognition, or continuing any form of aid, to this dictatorship, which has come to power over the bodies of Chilean socialists.

Of particular urgency is the struggle to get work on the two destroyers stopped and to ensure that they are not allowed to return to Chile. Resolutions to this effect should be passed by every working class organisation in the country, and massive protest actions organised to back such resolutions.

The Chilean military may have succeeded in destroying the Popular Unity Government, but the struggle of the Chilean workers and peasants will go on.

They will desperately need the solidarity and support of the international working class movement. We must do our part to ensure that they get this backing.

No Recognition of the Military Regime.

End All Aid to the Military Dictatorship.

Black All Chilean Trade.

Keep the Warships Out of the Hands of the Chilean Butchers.

If police behaviour last weekend is anything to go by, we are likely to see a sharp increase in anti-Irish provocations in Britain in the coming months. As the Chile demonstration was dispersing last Sunday, the police moved in on a crowd of militants who were chanting 'Free, Free, the Belfast Ten'. In the scuffling that followed, four people were arrested, three of them Irish.

As they were being taken into custody the police made remarks such as, 'Bloody Irish bastards, why don't you go home?'. One Irishman was seriously roughed up by the police—he had replied to their jibes by asking what the British Army was doing in Ireland. Jim Kemp, a leading member of the London Joint Sites Committee, was also the target of racist comments. He has black hair and a tanned complexion, and was greeted by a policeman who said, 'Another foreign bastard—why don't you go home?'. Jim is in fact a Scotsman.

The police were obviously prepared for a confrontation. Both the IMG contingent and the Belfast Ten Defence Committee were surrounded by

Irish Militants in Court

plain-clothes members of the Special Patrol Group throughout the entire demonstration.

These events add to the fears already expressed by the Belfast Ten Defence Committee about the impossibility of a fair trial for the Ten in the present situation. Press headlines about 'Sisters of Terror', in reports which run alongside scare stories about bombings, will add to the already massive prejudice against the defendants.

At the same time, the trial of four leading Irish militants is taking place in the Old Bailey, Bowes Egan, John Grey, Michael O'Kane and John

Flavin are charged with conspiracy to cause a breach of the peace during the Anti-Internment League demonstration on 5 February 1972, which took place after the Bloody Sunday massacre in Derry. One year and seven months after the events, with little or no press coverage, the State is trying to victimise these Irishmen, as part of its effort to discourage solidarity in Britain with the struggle in Ireland.

There is only one reply that can be given, and that is to defy the witch-hunt, and to fight within the Labour movement to win support for Irish victims of British 'justice'. And there must be maximum support for the Belfast Ten Defence Committee demonstration. This was originally scheduled for last Sunday, but was postponed because of the Chile demo. It now starts this Sunday, at 2.30p.m. from Charing Cross Embankment, marching to Speakers Corner, where there will be a rally addressed by prominent Republicans and members of the Labour and Socialist movements. Further details from 88 Roslyn Road, London N.15

as part of British Imperialism's programme of 'aid' to the Chilean military. It is not a coincidence that the man named by

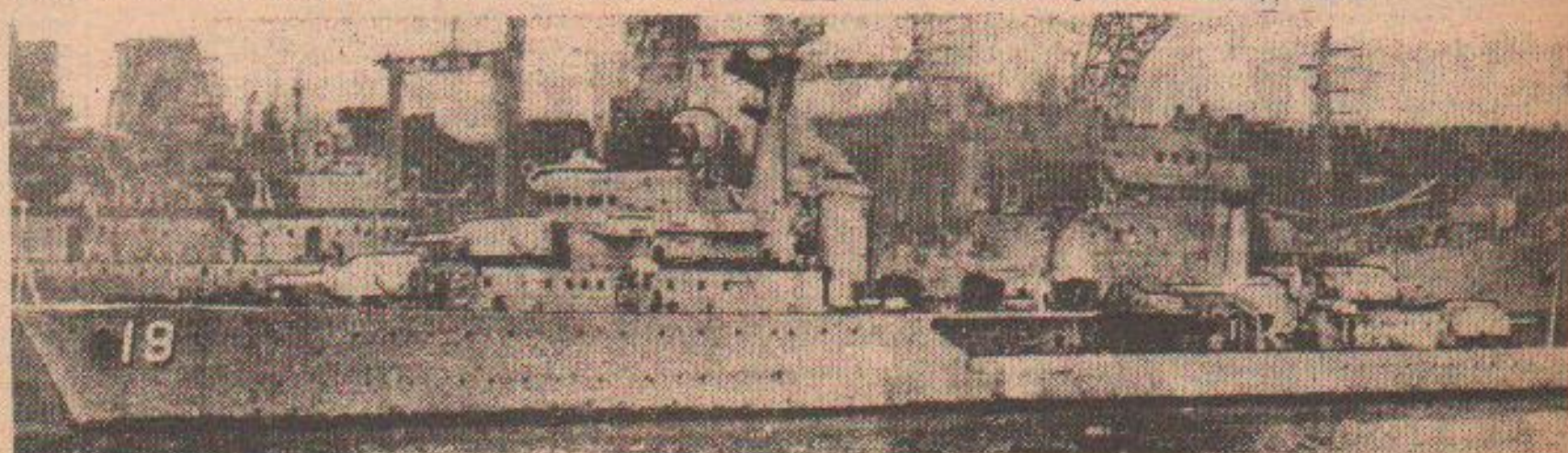
By CHRIS BALFOUR

the new military dictatorship to represent them in Britain should be Rear-Admiral Buzeta, head of Chile's naval mission in this country.

Trade unionists in the Tyneside area have already launched a campaign to stop work on the ships and to try and prevent them being returned to the blood-stained hands of Chile's military bosses.

The Wallsend Labour Party put out such a call last Saturday. On Monday a meeting organised jointly by the Communist Party and the International Marxist Group initiated a campaign on the question, directed at local trade unionists. They have since gained the backing of the South Shields Trades Council for a demonstration in Wallsend this Saturday.

BLACK THIS SHIP — the British-built Chilean destroyer 'Williams', currently being refitted on Tyneside along with her sister ship, 'Riveros'



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Pay Board reports on 'special cases'

When all workers face statutory pay restraint, any union which fights its battles as a 'special case' does so at the expense of the movement as a whole. It undermines in advance the political unity needed by the movement at such times.

The recent Report of the Pay Board on Pay Anomalies makes this point in an ironic and graphic form. It proposes that some of those unions whose leaders in Phase 2 had argued that the arbitrary timing of the Freeze had made them cases for special exemption should at last be nominally compensated at the beginning of Phase 3. But the money is to come from the total available for pay rises under the Phase 3 formula.

The Report is designed to clear up anomalies in cases where settlements are normally fixed in relation to the settlements of other groups. Where the pacesetters settled before the Freeze last November, the groups who follow in their

footsteps were left in the cold. A million and a quarter workers, including civil servants, hospital workers, gasmen and watermen, fall into this category. The Report now allows these differences to be made up. Thus the gasmen will have their wages made up to the rates of power workers; the hospital workers will have their rates made up to those of local council manual workers, receiving 40p a week extra; and the Civil Servants are picked out as a special case deserving 11%.

NOT AUTOMATIC

These rises are not automatic awards. On the contrary, the union leaders will have to attend the Pay Board to claim the money. The recommendations of the Report therefore represent a carrot designed to attract union leaders along to the Pay Board before the struggle by the working class against Phase 3 gets under way. There is evidence that an inspired leak of the Report to the TUC Congress in Blackpool had some effect in swinging the narrow majority in

favour of individual unions being allowed to attend the Pay Board during Phase 3 where they thought it helpful. Bill Kendall of the CPSA described the Report as a 'basis for negotiation'. The Government will claim this as a tactical victory.

But nobody should be fooled by the Pay Board Report. Hospital workers, for instance, will not be satisfied with a paltry 40p a week extra, which will not be backdated and which comes after the biggest round of price increases since the War. In Liverpool they are already threatening to strike—the rank and file must not allow the union leaders to get away with the argument that accounts have somehow been settled by this manoeuvre.

Far from being 'fair', this Report underlines once again the planned reduction of real wages being organised by the Government. After robbing workers of money under Phases 1 and 2, the Government now proposes to sort out some of the 'anomalies' thus created by robbing other workers under Phase 3. This makes it all the more necessary to smash Phase 3. Otherwise, the trade union movement will simply become entangled in divisive arguments about who can get the most from the Pay Board, rather than uniting in struggle against the whole principle of State regulation of wages.

Dave Bailey

CURRENT



ACCOUNT

Towards equal exploitation?

One result of the economic crisis through which British capitalism is passing is the increasing employment of women relative to men. Since 1967 the number of men workers in the labour force has fallen by more than half a million, while the number of women employed has risen by over 200,000. The reason why capitalists are employing more women is obvious: their labour power is very much cheaper. Average weekly earnings of full-time male workers are still about twice those of women (£36.20 compared with £18.34).

In 1970 the Labour Government passed the Equal Pay Act. If implemented, it would do little to end this differential. All it does is to legislate for equal pay in the same or broadly comparable jobs by 1975. It leaves unaffected those jobs which are done only by women. But even in similar jobs the Act is full of loopholes: capitalists have been busy changing job specifications by inventing new grades for women or men only so as to prevent comparability. The unions can challenge this, but only at the cost of a full-scale work study which can be used also to increase the exploitation of the workforce in general through rationalisation.

But even the extremely limited improvement for some women workers which the Act represents is being progressively sabotaged by Tory Government manoeuvres and by the indifference of union leaders. The Tories refused to implement the provision of the Act that women's rates should be 90 per cent of men's by 1973—which the TUC meekly accepted. In comparable jobs women's rates remain about 84 per cent of men's. Under Phase 2 of the pay laws, women's pay can rise by more than the £1 + 4 per cent formula; but only to close one third of the gap with men's rates. So any firms which had been forced by union pressure to implement the Act more rapidly are now prevented from doing so. Or rather, any faster implementation has to be at the expense of men workers.

In any case, in industries where men workers are badly organised, capitalists are already implementing the Act at their expense by holding male rates constant and raising only women's; or even, as in the case of Retail Cooperatives, by reducing men's rates. Even the 1972 engineering pay agreement, in which women's pay was raised by more than men's, followed a period in which women's rates had fallen seriously behind.

If the trends of the three years since the passing of the Act were maintained, then it would be another nine years before even this very limited notion of equal pay was achieved. In other words, there will have to be an enormous acceleration of women's pay increases if the provisions of the Act are to be met. If, for example, over the next two years, men's rates rise by 20 per cent, women's rates would have to rise by an average of 36 per cent and in some industries by as much as 60 or 70 per cent. Given the critical stage of British capitalism reflected in the Tories' all-out attack on wages through the pay laws, it should be obvious that there is no intention on the part of the capitalist class to give such large increases to women workers.

The Tories therefore must be preparing either to repeal the Act or at the very least to delay its implementation indefinitely. Employers who are going slow on its implementation are evidently confident that they will soon be released from their obligations. It is imperative, therefore, that the labour movement should not only struggle against the increasing use of loopholes in the Act, but should also be prepared to resist its complete sabotage, which the Tories are planning as part of their general attack on the living standards of the working class.

Michael Price

Police Harass Adwest Pickets



No entry for management at the Adwest gates

Workers from Adwest Engineering were harassed by the police and threatened with arrest when they picketed the home of the company chairman last Monday evening.

The picket was intended to drive home to the management the determination of the workers, who have maintained their sit-in strike at the Reading factory since 20 August. They are trying to stop production being shifted to Sunderland, with consequent large-scale redundancies.

The action has already stopped production at Jaguar, and Jensen, while 400 workers at Lansing-Bagnall have been laid off. In addition, the price of the company's shares has fallen by 60p to 225p. Nevertheless the management have made no serious attempt to achieve a settlement, as the following record of the six meetings between the workers and the management shows:

Friday 31 August—a waste of time.

Thursday 6 September—the management presents an 'agreement' demanding an unprecedented degree of job flexibility, refuses to negotiate, and the talks break down.

Friday 7 September—at a meeting between T. Joyner (Vice Chairman, Adwest Group) and Pat Farrelly (AUEW Divisional Organiser), Joyner claims that he wants to come to terms, and frantic efforts are made by the management to convene an early meeting.

Monday 10 September—Joyner goes back on his previous 'informal' offer.

Thursday 13 September—some progress is made, and certain guarantees on job security are conceded.

Friday 14 September—Joyner retracts the commitments made at the previous session.

This 'hard cop/soft cop' technique is intended to disorient the workers, to make them feel isolated and powerless, and ready to accept any-

thing which will release them from this schizoid atmosphere. The management know that a workforce confident of their own power will not accept speed-up and job flexibility proposals, and the strike must therefore be smashed.

But the 'Catch-22' for the Adwest bosses is that the workers have nothing to lose. Rather than go back on the management's terms, most of the workers will go elsewhere for a job.

The militants understand the importance of the issues at stake, and will keep up the fight. In the course of the struggle it has become clear that the motive behind the management's actions is the growing land speculation by companies with factories in the Reading area, where land prices are sky-high. A victory at Adwest will be a sharp blow at this profiteering at the expense of workers' livelihoods.

Pat Robinson

BLACK WORKERS STRIKE IN SLOUGH

The 150 production workers at London Artid Plastics Ltd. in Slough have been on strike for more than two weeks, demanding the reinstatement of a shop steward and four workers, who were suspended by the management.

While the immediate cause of the dispute was the suspension of these workers, underlying it is a long history of racial discrimination practised by management and accepted by most of the white workers. Of the 200 workers in the factory, 50 or so are white—they have the better-paid, less arduous jobs. The lower-paid production jobs are done by Asian and West Indian workers. Some of the Indian and Pakistani women workers, for example, are employed on heavy work like sand-blasting.

In addition, the Factory Acts are being ignored. Each shift works eight hours with no tea breaks, and during the half-hour lunch break production on the line has to be carried on at the usual high rate.

The dispute began when the management demanded a 25% increase in the production targets, and summarily suspended the five Indian and Pakistani workers who found they

By PAUL HUNTER

could not manage the increase. Yet no action had been taken the previous week against a white worker who had failed to achieve more than half of the old targets.

About half of the black workers are in the Transport and General Workers Union, and four T&G shop stewards are leading the strike. However, the convenor, a white woman worker, is crossing the picket line every day, along with the other white workers, some of whom are also T&G members. It is worth noting that in this dispute, for the first time in Slough, the Indian and Pakistani women workers have come out solidly with the men.

The T&G official responsible, a Mr. Willat, told *Red Weekly* that the Union was: 'Unfortunately

unable to make the strike official because the procedure had not been followed.' He told the workers that the strike was: 'Your choice, not ours.' He also claimed that there was no racial discrimination in the factory.

After negotiations last Tuesday the Union officials stated, almost in the same breath, that the management refused to reinstate the five men, and that the Union would not make the strike official.

The T&G officials are resolutely dodging the issue of racism, and hiding behind their procedures to refuse official backing for the strike. The immediate effect of their attitude has been to produce demoralisation amongst the strikers, and its long-term effect could very well be to drive members out of the Union in disillusionment. This dispute underlines the importance of a fight by black workers to force the trade unions to recognise their special problems and to resist the racist influences which affect many white trade union members.

This Saturday, in Liverpool, delegates from all over the country will be meeting to discuss the way forward for the campaign in defence of the Shrewsbury 24. This conference has an important job to do; it must start to organise the biggest push from the working class movement we've seen yet on the question of Shrewsbury.

Engineers, miners, dockers, and many other groups of workers, are now taking up the Shrewsbury campaign. The prospect of their own struggle now looms large. For them, as well as for the rest of the working class movement, certain important questions must be answered.

What does Shrewsbury mean for the ability to picket? How should we organise to prevent any more attacks on this crucial instrument of working class struggle? How does Shrewsbury fit into the general offensive against Phase 3 now building up? And, most importantly, what part can the Shrewsbury campaign play in the struggle against the Tory Government?

IN THE BEGINNING

When the Shrewsbury case first began to break through the ring of silence imposed by the capitalist press, the workers' movement was in

fight against the Tory Government and the talks

MOVING FORWARD

The key to all this was the central defence committee's call for local defence committees in every area. In Sheffield, Edinburgh, London, even places like Brighton and Colchester, defence committees were set up, involving representatives of most of the local labour movement. In these areas, and many others, initiatives were taken to build up interest in Shrewsbury and fight back against the Tories. Trades Councils organised local conferences; delegates were sent on demonstrations; money was collected and rallies were held. At least a small section of the rank and file began to move into action.

These activities, together with the local fight back against the employers' speed-up and attacks on organisation (for example at Chrysler), began to move sections of the working class forward again. A series of victories were won at the trade union conferences held throughout the summer. In ASTMS and the AUEW, for instance, a resolution was passed rejecting an Incomes Policy under any government. Finally Scanlon was forced to withdraw from the talks.

quittal of the 24 will not stop the effective use of police on picket lines, nevertheless the tactical edge will clearly be decided by the defence which can be mounted now. The failure of the trade union leadership to come to the aid of the Shrewsbury workers so far could be a signal for even more extensive intimidation by police on picket lines. We must make the defence of these workers part and parcel of the offensive of the working class around the engineers and miners.

Local defence committees in the areas must convene conferences to spell out plans for mobilising the local working class movement to defend the Shrewsbury 24. We face big new struggles, which are threatened by the growing use of the police. We must not allow the police to break up pickets and arrest militants—even if they are eventually 'let off'. That means that all local bodies of the labour movement must set up defence bodies for pickets in the struggles to come. Special meetings should be held to prepare for local picketing. Arrangements should, and can, be made to protect every local picket. This is the lesson of Shrewsbury. Now, more than ever, we must show the Tory Government that attacks on picketing will meet massive opposition. This implies a massive show

of force in all industries in solidarity with the Shrewsbury 24 when their case opens on 3 October.

COMMUNIST PARTY

These activities extend and strengthen the independence of the working class from the trade union bureaucracy. They depend on increasing activity in the localities. They are not part of a recipe for creating 'ginger groups' in the bureaucracy as the way forward. The Communist Party, however, bases its activity on such a recipe (indeed wrote the cookbook).

At the moment, through their actions in the areas, they are trying to oppose representation from local defence bodies at the Liverpool Conference. All along the line they have opposed the organisation of local actions by the defence committees, and they will continue to do so.

With the rising prospects of class struggle, the bureaucracy is forced more and more to abandon the idea of an easy deal with the Tory Government. Nevertheless it is scared to death by the rise of militant struggles. The possibility of creating a real independence of the rank and file of the working class has not been greater for a long time.

SHREWSBURY: DEFENSIVE TO OFFENSIVE!

confusion. The miners had balloted not to strike, Fords had returned to work, the gasmen had gone back, and so had the hospital workers. There were large protest demonstrations on 1 May. On 2 May everything was back to normal.

Meanwhile the TUC leaders were sitting in No. 10 Downing Street seeing how much they could sell away. It seemed very difficult to prevent the bureaucrats from talking. At the same time the employers and the Tory Government began to test the temperature of the water: victimisation and attacks on factory organisation, combined with an attack on picketing, all within the framework of the TUC-Tory talks, aimed to prepare the ground for dealing with any possible wages explosion to come.

For the working class the only possible way that the talks could be smashed and the fight against the Tory Government restarted was by rank and file workers organising to move ahead, despite their 'leadership'. Who would lead such a fight?

The Communist Party could not risk leading massive actions, like the early ones they pulled off against the Industrial Relations Act. Such actions would shatter the fragile alliance they had built up with Scanlon and Jones—now perched cosily in No. 10! Although verbally it opposed the TUC-Government negotiations, a deathly silence hung over the *Morning Star* when it came to ways of fighting the talks and preparing the fight against the Tories.

AN ISSUE

It was clear with the first small Shrewsbury demonstration on 15 March that there was an issue on which it was essential to resist. But it was also an issue which could unite all workers, and around which they could begin to struggle.

In many ways the charges laid against the 24 building workers for their picketing during the building strike summed up the preparations the ruling class was making. Later that month the Engineering Employers Federation submitted a memorandum to the Government, spelling out the failure of the Industrial Relations Act.

They pointed out that, with the power of the rank and file still not broken, new methods were needed to deal with the working class. They suggested the use of the criminal laws against trade union activity. This was the tactic which the capitalist state had already adopted with the Shrewsbury case. It was obvious that Shrewsbury was designed to prepare the ground on picketing so that struggles like the one the EEF faces now could be smashed.

The significance of Shrewsbury was that workers in every area could be drawn into organisation and activity around the case. This was the only way to win, and, at the same time, could represent a first step towards a united

The significance of the local defence committees and the Shrewsbury campaign was that they built a unity of sections of the workers movement in action. Together with the struggles mentioned above, they brought the rank and file into action despite and against the bureaucrats and held back the Tories' tactical offensive. Because of those independent actions of the rank and file and the victories at the individual union conferences the basis was laid to move into the offensive against Phase 3 and the Tory Government despite the right turn of the TUC.

To show that the rank and file could organise independently of the trade union bureaucracy was to undermine the basis of the talks. It was a warning that the bureaucrats would simply be bypassed if they came out with a sell-out deal. Today the picture has changed to the extent that the miners have submitted a claim for a 42% increase. The engineers have submitted a claim for a £10 increase. Both these claims have two things in common—they drive a railroad through any pay policy (and will have general working class support because of that), and they are the spearhead of a new working class offensive. Both are accompanied by a flurry of rank and file activity.

RANK AND FILE ORGANISE

In Sheffield, for instance, a call has gone out from the shop stewards' quarterly meeting for a national strike. This is combined with the setting up of a strike committee to prepare the ground locally. The conference called by the rank-and-file paper *Engineering Voice* in Birmingham on 9 September, representing a substantial portion of the rank and file of the engineering industry, passed a resolution calling for national strike action.

Among the miners, strike funds have already been set up in many pits. In Kinneil pit workers have been guaranteed solidarity action, in the event of any strike, from a section of the local refinery workers. Many militants in both engineering and the mines are calling for joint actions. Such action would amount to a general strike situation which would make it possible for the working class movement to win a resounding victory and bring down the Tory Government.

All this combines with a growing interest among major sections of the working class movement in some of the discussions taking place inside the Labour Party. This raises the prospect of a combination of mass industrial action with organisation on a more political basis and a search for more long-term solutions to the problems facing the working class.

DEFEND PICKETING

What, then, is the importance of the defence of the Shrewsbury workers for the coming struggles against the Tory Government? First, we have to remember that while even the ac-



Demonstrators march through Shrewsbury after committal proceedings, 18 May

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What is the line up of the CP on this? Their policy for a whole period has been to try to build an alliance between the leading 'lefts' in the bureaucracy and the rank and file. Such a bridge is becoming more and more difficult to build. The CP must keep activities like those around Shrewsbury well under control, if it is not to throw its relationship with the 'left' bureaucrats out of the window altogether. But it is not possible to lead the working class movement forward and prepare for the big struggles in this way.

If the Liverpool Conference does nothing more than pass a protest resolution and call on the trade union bureaucrats to take up the case of the 24, it will have been a failure. The main task of this conference must be to strengthen the independent activity of the rank and file in defence of the Shrewsbury 24—to develop mass actions, organisation and understanding of the importance of this question, and its relation to the emerging working class offensive against the Tories. That is the only way to win over Shrewsbury, and the only way to prepare for the coming showdown with the Tory Government.

Paul Smith

THE RECENT MILITARY COUP IN CHILE sets two important tasks for the left in Britain - to solidarise with and defend those who are fighting back against this bloody military dictatorship, and to learn from the Chilean catastrophe in order that such a tragedy need never again take place.

The International Marxist Group pledges all its energies to the carrying out of these tasks and **Red Weekly** will treat them as a top priority.

CHILE: THE LESSONS MUST BE LEARNT

The bloody tragedy that has overtaken the Chilean working class offers only one compensation: at least the lessons of this experience can be studied and taken to heart by the workers' movement everywhere, so that such a disaster need never again take place.

The events in Chile have shown that a working class movement that fails to develop its own political institutions, that fails to challenge the ruling class monopoly of violence, that fails to break up and smash the instruments of capitalist rule, remains completely at the mercy of the forces of reaction and can take only the most limited steps in the direction of socialism.

A working class movement which, from the seat of government, calls for the expropriation of one sector of the ruling class after another, yet utterly fails to develop the political and military means necessary to carry these expropriations out, places itself in a death-trap. In such a situation the only alternatives are *permanent revolution* or *military dictatorship*: either the workers' movement resolutely tackles the question of the 'armed bodies of men' controlled by the ruling class, or it will be massacred by them.

Familiar though these lessons may seem, they are now expressed in a way which enables us to see concretely the *alternative* road, the road to victorious workers' power which is, in the end, much less bloody than the 'peaceful road' to military dictatorship.

ELECTION OF ALLENDE

The background to the election of Allende in 1970 was one of rising class struggle and a greatly weakened capitalist order. The victory of the Cuban revolution, the strengthening of revolutionary currents on the Latin American left, the defeats inflicted on US imperialism in Vietnam, all helped to give the workers' movement in Chile a new strength. Above all the

guerrilla campaign of Che Guevara had an immense impact on the political thinking of the masses in Chile, as elsewhere in Latin America. Allende himself was very aware of this factor in the political situation and sought to identify with the Cuban revolution whenever possible.

Allende became President in a country which had already experienced six years of half-hearted reforms under Eduardo Frei's Christian Democrats. Both Frei's nationalisation measures and his agrarian reform programme had aroused mass expectations without satisfying them. They had been carried out entirely within the framework of capitalism and imperialism. Yet at the same time they had helped to spark off bitter social struggles such as the long strike at Puerto Montt in which two dozen workers were shot. There was also a growing movement of land seizures by peasants, especially in the south. Chilean workers and peasants were beginning to demand a fundamental transformation that would go beyond piecemeal reforms.

Partly in response to this, the programme of the Socialist Party took a sharp turn to the Left. It was able to insist, against the wishes of its Communist allies, that the election platform would announce the goal of suppressing capitalism and installing socialism. Since the programme failed to tackle the question of the class character of the state it was not a revolutionary programme - but neither was it a classical 'Popular Front' programme.

WORKERS GOVERNMENT

The election of Allende could have been a great step forward for the Chilean working class. Revolutionary Marxists oppose the myth of the 'peaceful' or 'parliamentary' road to socialism, but that does not mean that we reject the possibility of workers' organisations forming the government within the framework of the capitalist state.

The formation of such a government can power-

fully assist the development of the workers' movement, so long as the central objective of this government is to promote mass mobilisations outside of the framework of parliament and the state machine, to encourage the growth of organs of workers' power, and to prepare the ground for the inevitable showdown with the capitalist state machine.

However, Allende and the Popular Unity coalition, rather than adopting this approach, time and again chose to try and deal with the problems facing them, not through the mobilisation of the masses, but by relying on their eventual executioners - the capitalist police and military.

The first economic measures of Allende improved the material position of the masses, restrained inflation and led to the expropriation of a number of enterprises and the beginnings of a serious land reform. Support for Allende grew, and in the April 1971 elections for Congress the Popular Unity received just over 50% of the vote. This growth of electoral strength, however, was not in any way matched by a growing working class mobilisation. During the 1970 presidential elections, almost 15,000 Popular Unity Committees had been established throughout the country. However these committees were limited almost exclusively to electoral ends. They were created from top down as bodies appointed by, and accountable to, the Party bureaucrats and not directly to the masses. Instead of being used to mobilise mass backing for Government measures, the Popular Unity Committees were put into cold storage to await the next election.

HANGMAN'S NOOSE

By embarking on something approaching an anti-capitalist economic programme without any attempt to back it up through organs of popular power, the Government was putting its head in the hangman's noose.

Inevitably, economic problems beset the

economy, aggravated by the sabotaging operations of both Chilean and international capitalists. Sales of Chilean copper were boycotted in the United States and elsewhere, while the US government insisted on the repayment of immense debts incurred by the previous Frei Government. A Government firmly on the revolutionary path would have been able to repudiate these debts. As it was, rapid inflation began to develop, shortages of spare parts began to appear, foreign reserves dried up and the middle sectors of the population became alienated from a Government that did not seem to have a clear solution.

These strata provided fertile ground for the growth of a rightist counter-attack to the Government, including the development of fascist currents around a group called 'Fatherland and Freedom'. In September 1972 the counter-revolutionary mobilisation against the regime acquired a new strength: there was a strike against the Government by many professionals and by the lorry owners. The lorry owners were both numerous and important, since they were mainly self-employed drivers owning only a single vehicle. The country relied heavily on transport, so this strike seriously damaged the economy and threatened the movement of essential food-stuffs.

Tens of thousands of lorry owners, along with their families, camped outside the capital city of Santiago. The Government sought to deal with this threat through a combination of concessions to the lorry owners and attempts to end the dependence on the lorry owners through the development of the state transport system. To restore the confidence of the ruling class in the 'law-abiding' intentions of the Government, three top-ranking military officers were brought into the cabinet.

This did not stop the lorry owners challenging the Government again when they ran into further difficulties. The Government then sent in the

The following is an excerpt from the speech given by Tariq Ali at last Saturday's IMG public meeting in solidarity with the Chilean workers and peasants.

The first question we have to ask ourselves is the following one: why did American imperialism, in collusion with the Chilean bourgeoisie and the Brazilian military dictatorship, decide to organise the overthrow of the Allende regime?

The Americans are quite prepared to tolerate reformist governments, as long as these governments carry out one essential task: to keep the mass movement down, to inflict constant and consistent defeats on the mass movement. If you study the record of the Peruvian military regime, that is precisely what it has been doing.

The bourgeoisie isn't simply guided by economic interests. It will tolerate the nationalisation of Gulf Oil (with suitable compensation), nationalisation of other industries, as long as the reformist regimes carry out the functions which in the past were carried out by the traditional oligarchies in Latin America.

Imperialist investment in Latin America is changing. American imperialism today is concentrating more and more on manufacturing industry, rather than on raw materials. This is undermining the traditional oligarchies which once dominated Latin America.

The Torres regime in Bolivia began this trend. But the minute the Torres regime couldn't contain the mass movement, a military coup was organised by the United States, using the biggest continental ally they have developed in Latin

THE HAND OF IMPERIALISM

America - namely the Brazilian military dictatorship. The military coup of Banzer in Bolivia was carried out largely under Brazilian guidance, with Brazilian encouragement. If the coup had been defeated by the armed resistance of the Bolivian masses, the Brazilians would have intervened.

The Allende reformist experiment in Chile failed not only in the sense in which we Marxists mean it - that it failed to achieve socialism - but it failed also from the point of view of being able to contain the mass movement. That is what the Allende regime was expected to do, and that is why a section of the Chilean bourgeoisie tolerated it for the first year. If you study the balance sheet of the first year of the Allende Government, there were no strikes by the bourgeoisie, no national lock-outs, no strikes by the lorry owners. They looked carefully and tried to smell out which way this regime was moving, and they gave this regime three years to do the job. Well, this regime was unable to do the job.

Here were reflected the pressures on the principal party, the party which had the President of Chile in its ranks - the Socialist Party. This, so far as social-democratic parties go, had adopted fairly left-wing rhetoric. Sections of it had struggled, with arms in hand, alongside the miners against the Frei regime. So, the Allende

Government and Popular Unity as a whole faced a very difficult choice - a choice which every reformist will confront at some stage or other, particularly in a pre-revolutionary period: either you break with the ruling class, and organise and prepare for this break, or you smash the mass movement. You can sit on the fence for a certain time, a few months, a few years at most. But finally history catches up with you.

In the case of the Allende government, history began to catch up with it very quickly. The minute Allende began to nationalise sections of the manufacturing industry in Chile, when factory occupations started to break out towards the end of last year and the beginning of this year, then sections of the American ruling class began to openly prepare for the overthrow of this regime.

Of course, they would have preferred it if this could have been carried out within the framework of Chilean bourgeois democracy. But they were not able to do that, partly because they made a number of serious tactical mistakes, and one of these mistakes was found out.

The great American multi-national corporation, International Telephone and Telegraph (ITT), was caught with its trousers down. The ITT bosses began to caucus with other bosses in Chile, with other American capitalists and with

members of the U.S. State Department, to prepare to overthrow the Allende regime. The ITT organised sabotage.

Allende, of course, nationalised the ITT's interests in Chile, and all this lovely information came out when the ITT appealed to the American ruling class under a law that any American firm expropriated by a foreign government can claim an enormous amount of compensation.

In the hearings on this claim all this information came out about how they had been organising with the State Department, how ITT had contributed half a million dollars to Nixon's election fund, had promised to make four million dollars available to the CIA to organise a few commando raids in Santiago.

So the bourgeoisie, after Allende proved incapable of crushing the mass movement, were determined to overthrow him. And the United States government was, of course, involved in this because it was too serious a decision for the Chilean Army to take on its own.

Chile is the only country in Latin America which has had some sort of bourgeois-democratic tradition over the last four or five decades. When you are trying to prevent armed struggle, when you are trying to crush the mass movement on a Latin American scale, then you have to have some model to put forward. For a whole period Chile has been that model.

The 'Chilean Road' has more than one meaning. The Communist Party and the Socialist Party used it to mean that state power could be taken peacefully. But the ruling class also used the phrase. For them, it meant a bourgeois democratic country, where there was freedom to organise trade unions, political parties, etc. So when the Chilean Army decides, in one mortal blow, to end this tradition, don't imagine they take this decision on their own.

police to break up the strike and to take possession of the lorries. It was this series of events that led directly up to the military coup.

REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

Clearly a workers' government guided by a revolutionary strategy would never have dealt with the crisis in this way. A mobilisation of the masses should have been used to demonstrate the real strength of the Government and to end the lorry owners' strike. If hundreds of thousands of workers had surrounded the lorry owners' encampment there is every likelihood that they could have forced them to abandon the strike. Though the fascist groups were certainly active among the lorry drivers, a proletarian mobilisation would have split the drivers and persuaded a section of them to abandon their conspiracy against the Government. However, instead of mobilising the masses in some such way as this, the Popular Unity Government insisted that the best way to beat the lorry owners' strike was for the workers to stay at work and maintain production.

The decision to invite the military into the cabinet could only help to legitimise military intervention and to prepare the ground for a coup. At every point the Popular Unity sought to do deals with the military top brass and failed to agitate politically among the rank and file of

the army. In the first months of victory the Government was in an excellent position to insist that the rank and file of the armed forces be organised in trade unions which would have provided a counterweight to the authority of the military chiefs. The existence of the still untouched capitalist armed forces was a critical obstacle with which the Popular Unity Government had to deal. However, these forces were in some ways less formidable than they might have been. They numbered some 25,000—fairly small compared with the mass organisations on which the Popular Unity was based, which number their members in hundreds of thousands.

ARM THE MASSES

The central aspect of any revolutionary strategy should have been to arm the mass organisations. Though some elements to the left of the Socialist Party, and in the left wing of Popular Unity, did raise this question, the leadership of the Popular Unity, and above all the Communist Party, completely evaded it.

Workers' and peasants' militias could only have been formed on the basis of careful technical and political preparation. The Communist Party and the right wing of the Socialist Party, rather than continually alerting the masses to the need to establish their own armed force, systemati-

cally fed them with parliamentary illusions, and inhibited them from any independent mobilisation. Political preparation for armed struggle should have been carried out both by propaganda and by developing the beginnings of proletarian power. The technical preparation should have been undertaken with all necessary security by the working class parties themselves.

The slogan 'arm the masses' can be an abstract absurdity if it is left too late—this was something the Sudanese Communists discovered to their cost in 1971, since the masses they armed completely lacked the necessary organisation and training. But in the Chilean case the struggles around the implementation of the Popular Unity programme could have provided many opportunities to carry out the technical and political preparation that was necessary.

The forces of the counter-revolution gave the Popular Unity nearly three years' grace. To have moved against it right in the beginning would have been very difficult. If the Government had been following a revolutionary strategy the military top brass might well have moved sooner, but they would have met a workers' movement which was equipped to do battle. As it was, the three years were wasted and Popular Unity met its decisive test in complete disarray.

Allende's response to the military coup seems to have reflected the contradictions of his whole previous record. He was woken early in the morning with the news of the revolt. He then went to a Government-controlled radio station to urge the workers to remain at work and to appeal to the Army officers to remember their duty to 'the Nation'. With a force of armed police he then occupied the Moneda Palace, where he put up a last desperate resistance to the forces which he had so hopelessly and so disastrously sought to appease. He chose not only to die fighting—an honourable decision—but to die fighting in the symbolic home of Chilean bourgeois constitutionalism, rather than in the working class suburbs where the strength of the Popular Unity lay.

His reported last words were: 'Trust in your leaders, trust in the masses'. At that very moment those workers and peasants who had trusted their traditional leaders were paying a terrible penalty. Those who trusted only their own strength and their own struggles were beginning the task of confronting the dictatorship with armed resistance.

Robin Blackburn

WORKERS ORGANISATIONS FIRST TARGET OF REACTION

We print below a summary of an interview which appeared in a left-wing Chilean magazine on 7 September. It shows how the army was active as a counter-revolutionary force, attempting to crush the organisations of the workers, long before the military coup which finally toppled the Allende government.

The interview is with a Chilean worker, president of the local *cordon* in the small city of Osorno, in Southern Chile. Osorno is located in an agricultural area settled by small farmers, where fascist elements have a strong influence.

The *cordons* were spontaneously created local organisations of workers which cut across industrial and trade union lines. They sprang up in 1972 in response to the first lorry-owners' strike. In the months before the coup, the class struggle became polarised around the political strikes launched by sections of the middle class against the Allende Government, threatening the existence of the Government. These strikes resulted in severe breakdowns in the distribution of basic goods, directly affecting the lives of the workers and peasants. In trying to break these counter-revolutionary strikes, the *cordons*, along with the People's Supply Committees set up by the Government, attempted to organise the distribution of essentials, place controls on stores and warehouses, and prevent the sabotage of production.

This activity, which often required armed patrols by the workers, showed dramatically that the defence of the Government against the Right could not be carried out without the creation and extension of organs of working class power such as the *cordons*—popular bodies which broke in practice with the capitalist constitution and the laws of private property, acting as the armed representatives of the workers and peasants. The failure of the military and the fascists to crush these developments at the base made it necessary for the army to topple the Allende Government if the counter-revolutionary struggle was to succeed.

After the unsuccessful army coup on 29 June, an offensive by the military against working class organisations in Osorno took place. On 9 July, the regional leader of one of the Popular Unity parties—MAPU—was arrested.

'At about the same time, the military patrols began, and the way in which these patrols behave, inspecting pedestrians for arms, is humiliating and causes active resentment ... owing to the state of need brought about by the strike of the lorry owners, we have to organise the distribution of paraffin, petrol and liquid gas. So we established workers' guards on the stores selling petrol, where the right had infiltrated. This is where the black market in petrol begins, with these same people who are given a quota [by the government distribution agency—DIRINCO] and then sell supplies privately. The CUT [national trade union federation] had called for the formation of workers' guards, but these guards were opposed by the military, who said: either we are in control, or the CUT is in control. And this was when the case of the comrades in the People's Supply Committee came up.'

The People's Supply Committees were set up by the government in every working class suburb, to take on directly the task of controlling food distribution and prices in the face of a rampant black market. In practice, they were mainly composed of working class housewives.

'These particular women were in charge of controlling paraffin and liquid gas being sold in Alro Concha's house. They were under orders from the CUT. And then the officers came, and these comrades were put out at the point of machine guns, by an enormous detachment of troops: all this to deal with women who were completely unarmed! Meanwhile, the reactionaries stood by applauding, as they did in the square on 21 August.'

The confrontation in the square on 21 August was also over the issue of workers' guards, then being organised by the local government distribution agency in response to a government order that the trucks held by the strikers should be forcefully 'requisitioned'. In Osorno, the Mayor had agreed to give the trade unions police support to carry out these requisitions—support they would need, as the strikers had sworn not to give over their vehicles and were armed. The police were supposed to join the trade union detachment in the square. Instead, soldiers arrived.

'The square was surrounded by a company of

soldiers ... The officer at the head of the column gave orders to the infantry, who advanced with bayonets. The column stopped about 20 yards away, and formed up into a line in front of the workers. The workers stood firm. The CUT's chairman talked with the officer, while those of us who were leading went back along the detachment of workers, informing them of the details of what was happening. Then we were told that we had five minutes to disperse.

'Meanwhile, in front of the town hall, they set up three sub-machine guns pointing directly at the workers. Soldiers were running around with boxes of ammunition and walkie-talkies, making connection with another detachment of infantry that was marching into the square from the South ... A group of soldiers stepped out and started advancing towards the crowd.

'There, we in the first ranks opposed this assault with our arms tensed with rage and frustration. The call broke out from the ranks of the workers: "Soldiers, listen! You too will be one of the exploited! Will you shoot against your fathers, against your class brothers?"

'This chant helped to stiffen the workers' determination to stand firm in front of the town hall. The soldiers hit out with the wooden-butts of their guns against the workers. But then they began to lose their nerve (they were little more than children) and started to pass round some ammunition. Suddenly a soldier stepped in, hurled himself against his comrades, and shouted "Beck!" and stopped a massacre.

'Later we heard the Mayor's voice complaining of the way he had been treated when his car was searched for arms. But his voice was lost in the shouts of workers who wanted to do something. "These lice were going to shoot us" many of them were shouting.

'The soldiers then arrested the Mayor along with the local chief of DIRINCO and two carpenters who had been carrying sticks. The Mayor was later released, but not the others.

'As in many parts of the country, in Osorno today, the level of consciousness and organisation of the people is something which most people could not have imagined. These repressive actions have only succeeded in speeding up the formation of other industrial *cordons*, strengthening the workers' committees for defence and vigilance, and pressing forward the task of organising distribution. In summary, this escalation has served to unify and strengthen the workers in this province.'

African revolutionary militants have from the beginning tried to break out of their isolation by establishing links with those countries which have already thrown off the imperialist yoke. As the counter-revolutionary bureaucracy in the Soviet Union has long since sacrificed internationalist aid at the altar of its own interests, it was quite natural that these militants should turn towards 'People's China'. Since the Sino-Soviet split, Chinese policy in this part of the world has had two particular aims: to extend China's diplomatic connections and to edge out Moscow in a whole series of countries. Of course, there would be nothing wrong in this if the Chinese communists were at the same time developing their support for the revolutionary struggles in these countries. For in the long term the only way to defend and develop the Chinese revolution is to develop the revolutionary struggle against the imperialist and capitalist regimes.

But China's foreign policy in the last few years is clear proof that the Chinese leadership sets little value on this elementary principle of any revolutionary internationalist policy. And its policy towards the African continent is particularly significant in this respect.

On 5 October 1971, the 'King of Kings' Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was welcomed to Peking. The *People's Daily* commented as follows: 'Practising a policy of non-alignment, peace and neutrality, the Ethiopian government has opposed imperialist aggression against the Afro-Asian countries, thus making a valuable contribution to the strengthening of Afro-Asian solidarity against imperialism.'

But doesn't the Chinese bureaucracy know (or doesn't it wish to know) that Ethiopia is the

bridgehead in Africa for the Americans, who have given military support to Haile Selassie in his oppression of the Eritrean people? What is more, doesn't Haile Selassie boast about the 'longstanding and cordial relations between Ethiopia and Israel', and doesn't he use Israeli thugs against the revolutionary movements? Only the 'blind' bureaucrats of Peking could talk about a policy of 'peace and neutrality'. In January 1973, it was the turn of President Mobutu of Zaire to be welcomed by Mao. He was praised to the skies in a communique published on 20 January in Peking: 'The two parties are glad to note that the struggle led by the Afro-Asian countries and peoples against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, for the achievement and maintenance of national independence, is reaching new heights ... the two parties agreed to declare that China and Zaire intend to work, together with the other countries of the Third World, to combat the outrageous expansionist policies of the big powers.' (*Peking News*, 29 January 1973).

Mobutu's murky past is well-known—his role in the assassination of Lumumba, for instance, was exposed by a United Nations commission of inquiry. But it is in his relations with the Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) that he has most recently distinguished himself.

Last year President Mobutu, along with other leaders of African neo-colonial regimes, was pressing for a fusion agreement between the FNLA of Roberto Holden (a movement which only exists in exile, and which has some very dubious supporters) and the MPLA led by Agostino Neto. Through this operation Mobutu prompted by several of the Western powers, launched an offensive to make the MPLA abandon its revolutionary strategy. This 'political' offensive depended on a plot to assassinate the MPLA leaders, a plot which was only recently

uncovered (see *Africanist*, 20 August 1973). Mobutu, who at the same time is strengthening his economic ties with Portuguese imperialism, has also launched an enormous propaganda campaign to depict Neto and the MPLA as the 'only obstacles on the road to the liberation of Angola'. It is clear what kind of 'independence' Mobutu is struggling for, with the blessing of the Chinese bureaucracy.

Finally, the most recent of Peking's 'African guests', President Ahidjo of Cameroun, had no

Ahidjo came to prominence in a bloody struggle against the Union of Cameroun Peoples (UPC).

In 1959 and 1960 he arranged the assassination of two of its leaders, Ruben Njoye and Felix Moumié. In January 1971, he ordered the execution of Ernest Ouandie, one of the principal leaders of the heroic struggle of the UPC.

To get an idea of what the people of Cameroun think of Peking's new ally, it is enough to quote Ouandie's last message before his death: 'We

Part 4 The Chinese in Africa Anna Libera

AFRICA IN STRUGGLE

reason to envy his predecessors. The *People's Daily* (25 March 1973) had this to say: 'We are convinced that this visit will not only strengthen the relations of friendship and cooperation established between Cameroun and China on the basis of the five principles of peaceful co-existence, but will also contribute to the cause of the anti-imperialist solidarity of the Afro-Asian people. We wish every success to President Ahidjo.'

A stooge of French colonialism since the beginning of 'the liberation struggle in Cameroun,

we have learnt much during these nine long years of armed struggle. We have been betrayed by some, abandoned by others, but never by our own people. Whatever fate awaits us, our people will carry on their just struggle until the regime which has been imposed on them to protect the interests of imperialism and colonialism is swept out of our country for ever.'

It is clear, therefore, that the interests of the struggling peoples of Africa have nothing whatsoever in common with those of the Chinese bureaucracy. (*La Breche*)

Lip SOLIDARITY MARCH

The negotiations over the future of the Lip watch-making factory in Besancon in eastern France seem now to be on the point of breaking down. The factory was seized last month by 3,000 armed police after striking workers had occupied it since June in their fight against redundancies.

Only a fortnight ago the French press was full of stories about a 'breakthrough' in the negotiations. Every effort was made to give the impression that the struggle was as good as over, and that the working class could settle down again to business as usual.

RALLY SABOTAGED

This impression was reinforced by the reformist trade union leaders of the Communist Party-led CGT and Socialist Party-inclined CFDT federations. They have all along stressed the

importance of a negotiated solution, while playing down the need to mobilise the entire working class to ensure a favourable outcome in what has become a central test of strength between the government and the working class movement. As a result a solidarity rally in Paris on 7 September which coincided with the news of this 'breakthrough' was openly sabotaged by the union leaders, who turned it into a relatively small meeting on the outskirts of Paris, lasting less than an hour.

However the 'breakthrough' was short-lived indeed. Based on reports of a possible agreement on the vexed question of reorganisation (whether or not Lip would be split up into several companies), it left out the question of redundancies as well as the problem of rights previously won. And at the next round of negotiations, on 11 September, the Government's negotiator M. Giraud revealed that no less than 334 redundancies were still envisaged under this new scheme.

Faced with continual manoeuvres of this kind, the Lip workers are now throwing all their

energies into the national 'march on Besancon' planned for 29 September. As one of their leaders, Charles Piaget, commented in an interview in *Le Monde* on Tuesday, 'What will be decisive will be the extent of the solidarity movement mobilised in France'. By providing a central focus for the organisation of solidarity activity, the march could prove to be a turning point in the struggle.

MAYOR APPEALS

However the reformist leaders are continuing to minimise the importance of such a mobilisation. The Communist Party newspaper, *L'Humanite*, has been referring to it as a 'regional demonstration', while the Socialist Party mayor of Besancon has actually appealed to the Lip workers to call the march off.

This last, as Piaget pointed out, shows the inadequacy of the electoral approach of the CP and SP with their 'common programme'—what good is election to office if one is pre-



What are a few redundancies to the Government's negotiator?

pared to bow to pressure from the State apparatus? The solution lies in the independent mobilisation of the working class, which for French militants now means organisation everywhere for a massive response on 29 September.

The restless legions of the New Israeli Order have committed another premeditated act of aggression, this time against Syria.

The Zionist sky-lords claim this time to have shot down 13 Syrian jet fighters for the loss of one Israeli aircraft. The incident was probably designed as a warning to President Assad of Syria not to make the much-vaunted 'reopening of the eastern front' a reality.

Last week's air clash followed closely on the Israeli hijacking of an Iraqi plane on which

George Habash, the leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, was believed to be travelling. The brazen hypocrisy of the Zionist regime, which has been filling the world with its cries for stiffer measures against 'terror', is now getting too much even for Washington; Israel's chief ally. Haunted by the spectre of the oil crisis, the desire of sections of the American ruling class to move towards some kind of peace settlement is increasingly being frustrated by the 'irresponsible' activities of its client-state. In these circumstances, pressure on the Zionists

The long arm of Zionism

may be expected to increase after the Israeli general election in the autumn.

At the same time, public awareness of the murderous activities of Israeli agents in Western Europe is slowly increasing. Zionist assassination squads have been busy for a year liquidating prominent Palestinian militants with, until recently, total impunity. But the expulsion last month of an Israeli diplomat from Norway indicates the concern of the ruling classes of Europe over the extension of the Middle East war into the heartlands of the West, with the attendant dangers of an Irish-type development.

IMPOTENT GESTURES

The Arab rulers, meanwhile, have been forced to throw up a smokescreen of militant noises and impotent gestures with the aim of appeasing their own peoples and stepping up pressure on

the U.S. to curb Israel's ambitions. The charade in Cairo last week, where President Sadat of Egypt and President Assad of Syria welcomed back into the fold King Hussein of Jordan, previously denounced by them as a blood-stained butcher, fulfilled exactly this purpose.

Presided over by Saudi Arabia, which now dominates the Arab world, the Arab oligarchies and their younger officer brothers are now coming together to find a peaceful solution to the conflict with Israel. No one should be fooled by harmless chatter about 'the eastern front'; that large numbers of Palestinians have no such illusions was shown in the recent commando attack on the Saudi embassy in Paris, even if politically the action was a lamentable fiasco.

The Palestinians, devoid of perspectives, remain angry and bitter; it is impossible not to foresee further sporadic terrorist actions of this kind. Such futile tactics are far from being the other side of the Israeli coin. More than ever, it is a crucial task to combat the conventional liberal wisdom which cannot, or will not, differentiate between the victim and the executioner. Real solidarity with the oppressed Palestinians involves not moral sermonising, but redoubled struggle against Zionism, its imperialist protectors, and its bedfellow, Arab reaction.

The smokescreeners: Hussein, Sadat, and Assad in Cairo



Engineering workers lobby talks



Last Friday, some 600 rank-and-file engineering workers turned out to lobby the opening of negotiations between the AUEW and the Engineering Employer's Federation over this year's national engineering claim.

While the turn-out for the lobby was rather small, it did represent a good cross-section of areas and major plants.

A report-back meeting organised by the rank-and-file paper *Engineering*

Voice, was told that the employers would be meeting this week to discuss the claim for a £10 rise in basic rates, a 35 hour work week, 4 weeks paid holiday, and equal pay for women. Their reply to the claim is expected within a month.

Unfortunately the organisers of the report-back meeting did not use the opportunity to reaffirm the pledge of the recent *Engineering Voice* conference to work for a national strike in the event of a rejection of the claim. Instead a vague resolution was adopted reaffirming support for the full claim and rejecting 'outside interference' in the negotiations (by which they presumably meant any attempt by the Tory government to impose wage restraint).

There is, however, nothing 'outside' about the interference of the Tories — they are just as much a part of the ruling, capitalist class of this country as is the Engineering Employers Federation. And the fact remains that any big wage claim will have to be fought for not only against individual employers or groups of employers, but against the Tory Government as well. That is why no opportunity should be lost to prepare the engineering workers — and the entire

working class movement — for the big fight ahead.

One positive feature of the meeting was the call for a really mass demonstration when the employers make their reply to the claim. The immediate task for militants in the engineering industry must be to use this occasion for a massive display of the determination of the engineers to fight for the full claim. It should be the first major step in the campaign to prepare for a national strike.

Special Shop Stewards quarterlies should be held across the country to prepare for this lobby, and a National Lobby Committee of delegates from the quarterlies should be set up to coordinate plans on a national scale.

It is also important that district levies are organised immediately so that the funds are available for the effective organisation of activities like the lobby, and the beginnings are made on a fund for the conduct of the national strike.

The employers are already organising. The working class movement cannot afford to delay its preparations for the coming battles any longer.

RED NOTES

Representatives of several black organisations picketed the Trinidad High Commission in London last week, protesting the increasing repression in Trinidad. At least 10 young people have been shot by police. They have included Beverly Jones (sister of Anthea Jones, one of the Mangrove Nine) who was shot in custody by the police, and Douglas Gregg, a member of the New Beginning Movement, shot while putting up a poster in Tunapuna. Several others are in solitary confinement and have suffered police torture.

Messages of protest to the Prime Minister, Whitehall, Port of Spain; copies to Trinidad Express, Independence Square, Port of Spain.

A new rise in working class struggle has opened in Trinidad. Striking sugar workers recently created workers committees which refused to allow the bureaucrats of the state-controlled unions to negotiate instead of the committees. The thousands of unemployed youth provide mass support for the revolutionary left, and a new armed group, the National Union of Freedom Fighters, has carried out successful bank raids. The Trinidadian Army itself is unreliable, following the 1970 general strike in which soldiers' committees were formed. Now the police, newly trained and armed by the U.S., are carrying out the repression, in preparation, the left believe, for a new State of Emergency.

HISTORY WORKSHOP IN LONDON

Old Theatre, London School of Economics, W.C.2.

Sat-Sun, 20-21 October

'IDEOLOGY, FAMILY, WORK, HOME'

Papers include Catherine Hall 'History of the Housewife', Tim Mason 'Women in Nazi Germany', Anna Davin 'Shop Girls and Clerks in 19th Century London'.

Admission tickets (limited to 500) £1 from Sarah and Sid Wills, 49 Elder Ave., London N.8.

CONFERENCE PLANNED TO DEFEND COMMUNIST LEAGUE

The following letter is being circulated to potential sponsors of a broad-based conference in defence of the French Communist League. All correspondence to: Ad Hoc Committee to Defend the Communist League, c/o 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

Dear Friend,

On June 28th as a result of a counter-demonstration sponsored by the Ligue Communiste (French Section of the Fourth International) against a rally held by the neo-fascist Ordre Nouveau, the French Council of Ministers outlawed the Ligue and warrants were issued for the arrest of its leaders including Alain Krivine, its general secretary.

The 'anti-wrecker' law under which the actions were taken gives the regime the right to arrest leaders of organisations for 'crimes' they are not even alleged to have committed. This law introduced the notion of collective guilt into the French legal system so that if a group sponsors or calls for a demonstration at which any violence is done — whether provoked or unprovoked, committed by agents provocateurs or unaffiliated demonstrators, whether offensive or defensive in character — any leader of the sponsoring organisations can be sent to jail for up to five years, even if that leader was not even present at the demonstration, let alone responsible for any violence.

This ban on the French Trotskyists is a blow against the entire left and labour movement in France. By beginning with what appears to him to be an isolated sector President Pompidou hopes to dampen the growing militancy of the entire workers and students movements. If he can get away with it in the case of the Ligue Communiste he will proceed with similar moves against other sectors.

Thus the most diverse organisations and personalities — including the Communist and Socialist Parties, the CGT (General Confederation of Labour) and CPDT (French Democratic Confederation of Labour), the National Union of Secondary School Teachers, artistic and literary figures — have issued declarations denouncing the ban despite, in some cases, deep political differences with the Ligue Communiste.

In a broader context the outlawing of the Ligue Communiste is another ominous step in the encroachment on civil and democratic liberties taking place on an international scale. On the continent the banning of Ernest Mandel by the French, Swiss and West German Governments, in Britain the anti-trade union and retrospective legislation on immigration. All the Governments of Europe will be carefully watching the actions of Pompidou to see what lessons can be learnt.

Clearly we in Britain need to respond to the appeal of the Ligue Communiste and the French Labour Movement to protest on as wide a scale as possible to let the Pompidou regime know that its arbitrary actions do not escape notice internationally.

The sponsors of this letter propose a conference possibly in October/November open to all those who wish to oppose this gross infringement of the most basic political right, that of forming political parties. We would like to see the conference lead to the establishment of a broad based committee to defend the Ligue Communiste.

To facilitate the broadest possible participation in the work of the conference we propose, (a) to get organisations and individuals to sponsor the conference and committee, and (b) to establish a preparatory ad-hoc committee of all sponsors and sponsoring organisations to organise the conference and other necessary activities such as information distribution.

We would urge you to sponsor the conference and take part in the preparatory committee. Please let us know if you are prepared to do this.

Heath's strategy for Ireland

The political squall which blew up around Heath's remarks about the integration of Northern Ireland into Britain, earlier this week, was the first indication of the lines on which the coming crisis for British policy in Ireland will develop.

The slender hope that the Northern Ireland Assembly will eventually work, is all that holds back this crisis. If the Assembly collapses the British ruling class will have to choose between the main alternative strategies: disengagement or integration.

The Labour Party response to Heath implies a strategy of British disengagement from the North, with a consequent reliance on the Southern bourgeoisie to fill the vacuum. Integration means the rejection of any

Southern role in the North of Ireland, and will break up the alliance between the British and the Southern bourgeoisie. The Coalition government in Dublin knows well that it cannot accept integration — such a course would be electoral suicide, especially since Fianna Fail is waiting in the wings ready to bring out its republican demagoguery to get back into office.

The 'integrationist' strategy is inseparable from an all out military effort to smash the resistance in the catholic ghettos, and with only Ian Paisley and Enoch Powell enthusiastic about it, such a course would present some major problems for the Tories.

However the implications of the other strategy could be even more

dangerous. It could only succeed if the Southern bourgeoisie is capable of containing the situation in the North. If it were to fail, the present crisis in the North would lead to an all-Ireland confrontation and might threaten not only Britain's grip on the North, but the continued British domination of Ireland as a whole.

This episode has confirmed the importance of the work to build a movement to demand the withdrawal of British Troops from Ireland. Once the present squall blows into a storm it is precisely that demand which will best open up the crack in Labour-Tory 'bi-partisanship', and build a movement that can help to destroy British Imperialism in Ireland.

Bob Purdie

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WHAT'S ON

IMG RED FORUM: Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday at 8.00 p.m. in the General Pictorial pub, Caledonian Road (5 mins Kings X tube).

'FREE IRISH POLITICAL PRISONERS': Bristol IMG public meeting, Thursday 27 September, at 7.30 p.m. in the Old England pub. Speaker from Co. Kerry: P. Deane. Comm 1194.

MANCHESTER RED CIRCLE: Every Thursday from 11 October at 'The Ancoats', Great Ancoats Street. First speaker: Bob Sutcliffe on 'Imperialism'.

FIFE SOCIALIST FORUM: Tony Southall speaks on South Africa, Wednesday 26 September, at 7.30 p.m. in the Labour Party Rooms, 44 Victoria Road, Kirkcaldy.

FRELIMO DAY 1973: Meeting, Friday 28 September. Speaker from FRELIMO: Joaquim Chissano. Film on liberation struggle in Mozambique. 7.30 p.m., Unity House, Euston Road. Sponsors: Africa Liberation Committee and Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guine. Information: 734 9541.

'THE ENGINEERS PAY CLAIM and the fight against the Tory Government': Edinburgh IMG public meeting, Sunday 23 September, 7.30 p.m. in the Trade Union Centre, Picardy Place (top of Leith Walk). Speaker: Ron Thompson (AUEW).

NEWCASTLE IMG RED FORUM: Wednesday, 28 September — 'The Fight against Plesk 3 and the Tories', 8.00 p.m., Bridge House, Newcastle.

MERSEYSIDE IMG DISCUSSION GROUP: A series of introductory discussions organised by Merseyside IMG on the politics of the Fourth International. Starts Monday, 8 October. For details, phone John, 051-638 8081, or write to MDG, 52 Cullen Street, Liverpool 8.

PHOENIX CLUB: First series of meetings on Ireland and the EEC (27 September); Orangeism (11 October); Ireland and the Permanent Revolution (25 October); Ireland and the British Left (8 November); Revolutionary perspectives for Ireland (27 November). Thursdays at the General Pictorial, Caledonian Road, at 8.00 p.m. Further information from Workers Fight, 98 Giffard Street, London N.1.

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