

SocialistVoice[★]

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Athletes Go Gold; Olympic Committee Go for Commercialisation, Militarisation and Social Control

Millions have experienced the joy and exhilaration generated by the 2012 Olympic Games as athletes from across the world strove to win medals. The games, which took place in some of the poorest boroughs in the country, saw intensive sponsorship control by a few of the most hated multi-nationals in the world.

The London Olympic Games Act 2006 gave extraordinary powers to the army, police, 48,000 private security forces and the multi-national sponsors, and East London became a militarised zone. Parts of London resembled a high intensity theatre of war: an aircraft carrier in the River Thames, pilot-less drones in the sky, surface to air missiles on residential apartments, 18,000 military personnel and 13 miles of electrified fencing.

And dispersal powers used in the "Olympic Dispersal Zone" resulted in a high number of arrests on the opening day of the Games. Why were

such powers in use? To protect the multi-national sponsors and to expand militarisation of the forces of social control. Fear of the development of a mass movement, which can arise as the austerity measures deepen, is forcing this preparation, and the 2012 Olympics presented an opportunity to test and implement this.

Residents protested against the placing of surface to air missiles in their areas. But all they received was a leaflet telling them that for the duration of the games a team of soldiers and police would be stationed at blocks of flats, which is home to 700.

This massive show of Britain's military might is not new. Troops have been seen on the streets of Britain many times against strikes, for example during the Labour government of 1945 to 1950, the fire fighters strike of 1977 and the miners' strike in 1984/85.

Police powers and excessive force has
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LIFE OF THE IWL-LIT

Learn more about the life of the parties of the International Workers League, of which the ISL is a part.

An international revolutionary youth camp: Trotskyists, youth and workers

A successful youth camp was held jointly by the Portuguese (MAS) and Spanish (CR) sections of the IWL attended by 120 members and sympathisers including members of the IWL from Belgium (LCT), the International Socialist League in Britain and a young Spanish miner.

In an atmosphere of comradeship, Marxist theory was discussed in relation to important questions on capitalism, Stalinism, the oppression of women, religion and alienation.

We discussed Marx's theory wage labour, which reduces the worker to a mere slave of his employer, as they appropriate the workers' labour power. Only through revolution, the collectivisation of the means of production under workers' power, could control of their work and lives be regained in organising the economy to make it serve the people. In this way full employment can be achieved by reducing working hours thus freeing up time for culture and sport, improving working conditions with emphasis on safety and occupational health and focusing resources on health, and education. Revolutionary militancy is a way of constructing that future in the present which overcomes impotence, depression and objectivism into which some workers sink.

A second discussion related to the class struggle in Europe. We discussed over-

production and the crisis of capitalism with the understanding that banking and finance crisis was only the tip of a continuing crisis hitting imperialist countries where the working class are being made to pay. The bourgeoisie is trying to crush the conquests won over many

years by ending public services and labour rights. But workers and youth are resisting by occupying the streets and with mass mobilisations of workers and the public.

Some youth at the camp said that they had never been interested in politics before but following all the events in Europe and across the world felt unable to stay out of politics anymore.

A YOUNG MINER

On the second day of the camp a young miner from Spain joined us. He began his speech nervously and continued emotionally making points on Asturias and its miners' history. Northern Spain depends on mining for survival, so if the mines are closed the miners and the communities would be devastated.

Miners were on strike for two months and were without pay for this period. Support for the miners is extremely important as

they still need funds to support themselves and their families. He related the slogans and chants with tears in his eyes: 'If our children cry, your children will bleed.' He then sang a Spanish miners song and everyone sang in solidarity. A collection of €350 was made for the miners.

The last day commemorated 30 years of existence of the IWL-fi and its history in Europe. The discussion began with the Portuguese Carnation Revolution in 1975, Angola's independence war, the end of Franco in Spain, and the emergence of the Spanish section of the IWL.

We are optimistic and think that the suffering of the millions today is the birth pangs of a better world. We need to organize a Revolutionary International that is a worthy continuation of the Fourth International of Trotsky, and the current IWL-fi is its driving force.

IWL youth camp



IWL-FI'S YOUTH CAMP SAW SOCIALIST YOUTH FROM EUROPE STUDY THE CURRENT CRISIS FROM A MARXIST PERSPECTIVE, AND THEY DISCUSSED HOW TO FIGHT IT.

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already led to many injustices such as the killing of Ian Tomlinson, Mark Duggan, Jean Charles de Menezes and many others, but the police are never found guilty. Such injustices can only increase as methods of control become even more excessive. Today, security issues surrounding the London Olympics have been used to normalise a process of heavy militarisation and is a preparation to control any future resistance.



PROTEST against DOW's sponsoring of the Olympic games. DOW Chemicals is held responsible for a tragic accident in Bhopal, India.

UNHEALTHY SPONSORS

Much of the commentary on the games has highlighted the years on a healthy diet and fitness regimes that athletes undergo in the preparation for the competition. In stark contrast exclusive sponsorship deals were awarded to Coca-Cola and McDonald's who sell high calorie foodstuffs, which have been criticised by doctors and health campaigners.

Another Olympic sponsor, Atos Healthcare, is responsible for taking thousands of sick and disabled people off benefit saying they are fit to work. Disabled People Against Cuts and UK Uncut held protests against Atos during the Paralympic Games.

Dow Chemical's sponsorship is opposed by "Athletes Against Dow Chemical", by the survivors and their communities of the 1984 Union Carbide (now owned by Dow Chemical) gas tragedy in Bhopal, India. More than 25,000 have died and over 500,000 have been affected since the tragedy.

The Vietnam Women's Union, which has an estimated membership of 13 million, and the Vietnam General Confederation of Labour have protested (with 43 other organisations in solidarity with Vietnam) against the Dow Chemical sponsorship because it was one of the main companies manufacturing Agent Orange and Napalm during the Vietnam War. One estimate puts the number of victims at 4.8 million victims of Agent Orange, many of them children. Sebastian Coe, who chairs the

Olympic Organising Committee, opposed the demand saying incorrectly that the US was addressing the problems. The Olympic sponsors literally include a producer of weapons of mass destruction.

Helping to create obesity, devastating the lives of the disabled and devastating the environment and the lives of millions, is this in the spirit of the Olympics? Does this echo the desired legacy of these Olympics, healthy futures and healthy populations? MacDonalds, Atos, Dow Chemicals, BP and Coca Cola — these sponsors are responsible for the above



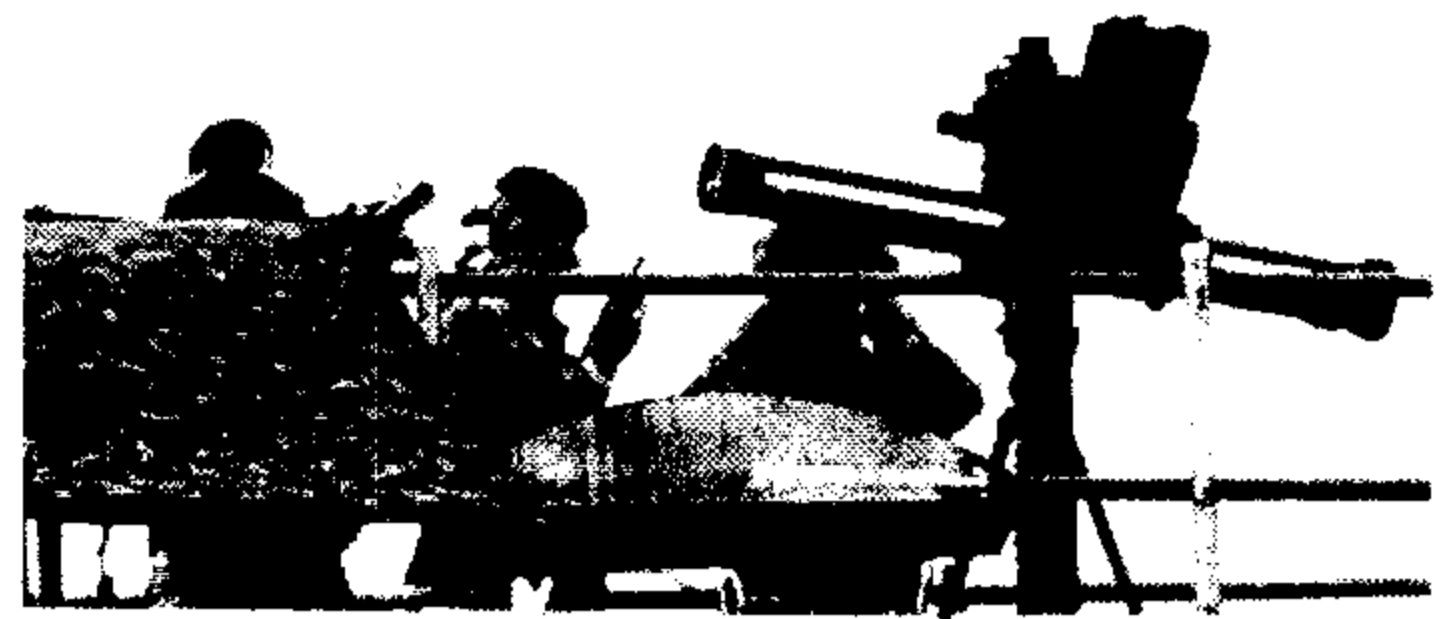
BANKSY'S art shows the true face of the sponsors of the Olympic Games

crimes but it appears the International Olympic Committee operates with their hands tied firmly to the multi-national exploiters and the war mongers of this world.

POVERTY AND CUTS

"Compared to the rest of London, twice as many people in the six boroughs live in the most deprived areas of England. Up to half of all children here live in poverty. The proportion of households who live in temporary accommodation is higher than the London average in four out of the six boroughs, and the proportion of people who are long term unemployed is higher than the London average in five out of the six Olympic boroughs." (CHILD'S PLAY? The antenatal to adolescent health legacy, London Health Observatory, July 2012).

Sports Minister Hugh Robertson has said that sport must take "a major hit" from the austerity policy. This means that: a new generation of school sport facilities, £1 billion from the local authority spend on sport and recreation and free swimming for under-16s will be cut, in contrast £13 billion of public



MISSILES installed amidst residential areas were just a small part of the Olympic 'surprises' for Londoners

money was spent on staging the games.

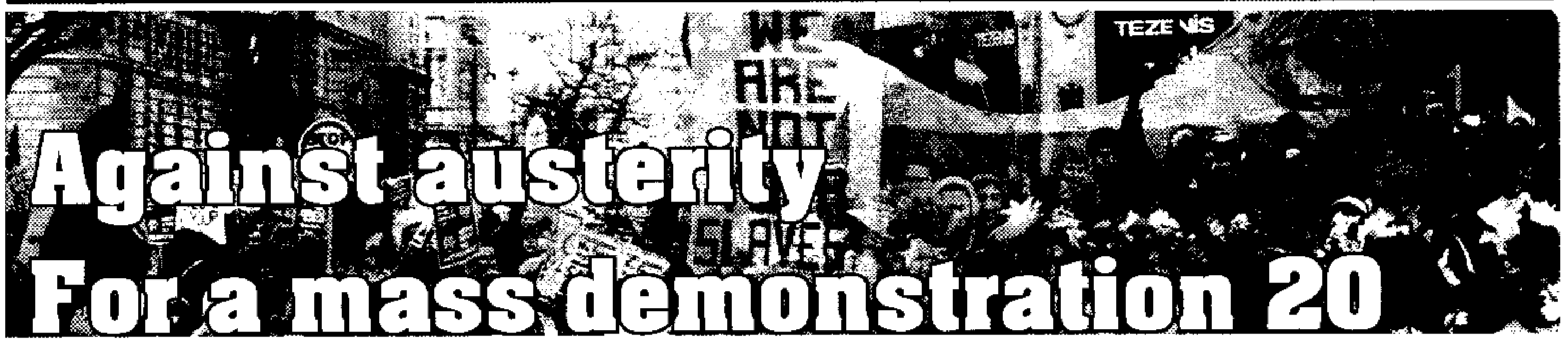
Britain welcomed the world, while in Newham all the foreign newspapers normally available in the libraries were cancelled, to save just £7,000 per annum and until July 2011, Newham funded eight organisations to provide independent advice to people from all sections of the local community, on issues such as housing, benefits, and debt. These have been cut and Newham faces a further £75 million in cuts over the next four years.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP

The 2012 games are the most commercialised ever, providing opportunities for the amassing of many millions by the rich while Britain is going through its longest and deepest recession with a deep level of cuts still to be implemented. The Games are meant to bring the nations of the world together in unity and sport but the economic, political and military agenda of the government utilises every opportunity for its own unscrupulous, greedy and murderous aims.

Trade unions could have used the Olympic Games to raise the issue of campaigns such as the defence of the NHS. The NHS was a prominent symbol of the opening ceremony the Games but with some notable exceptions over wages for transport workers nothing was done.

The government, the army and the police are preparing for what is coming, those in the trade unions and the working class communities also have to prepare. We need to build the biggest working class demonstration on October 20, where we need to defend the NHS and cuts in all services by demanding national mobilisations and a general strike to help defeat of the government's austerity programme and stop rising unemployment on the basis of no cuts, public ownership and public accountability.



The TUC demonstration against austerity on 20 October in London calls for a "future that works". On 6 September the TUC national council was split 16 to 16 over the Prisoner Offices Association (POA) proposal to call a general strike; the union rank and file should now raise this demand in all unions. Fight the union leaderships who voted no for a general strike against this government! That is the way to build a future that works for the working class and its communities.

The POA proposal reflects growing anger against the government and the desire for an alternative. Building the alternative against austerity means involving on the march everyone on the receiving end: unemployed, disabled, public and private sectors workers and the young people.

STRUGGLES BETRAYED

It is time to reflect on what happened to the resistance that emerged from the militant students' movement in 2010, the strike of 30 November 2011, and the explosions against police harassment, racism and unemployment in August 2011. While a number of strikes by construction, rail and civil service workers have continued workers now face the challenge of how to re-build and go further than last November and unite all the union and community struggles as one voice. However that cannot be done without a struggle against the main TUC leadership, the ones who voted to delay the strike action that many workers wanted and the ones who voted against a general strike.

Many activists wanted to know in December 2011 when the next next days of action would be, but trade union leaders like Prentice of Unison managed to stall the development of strike action by holding unnecessary ballots or "consultations".

It is important to build stronger links between the rank and file across unions and between unions and communities with the aim to build strength in the base so that action is decided from below and not curtailed from above. The rank and file also need to unite with the communities who are under the harshest attacks.

Since 2010 increasing connections

between the student and union movement were made, there was strong support on demonstrations and in local actions. Many unions support the student demands of: bring back EMA, end student fees, defend academic freedom, stop privatisation of education. They supported the demonstration and the planned walk outs from schools, colleges and universities. However the NUS is now concentrating on organising a national demonstration on 21 November, but makes no mention of the TUC 20 October demonstration. They are silent on the question of unity in struggle.

It is vital for students to mobilise jointly with the trade unions and to maintain the connections built through struggle. As many students recognised the working class is the force that is capable of leading an alliance that can put an end to the ConDem Government.

THE LABOUR PARTY IS NO ANSWER

Many union leaders think the answer to the Tory's austerity attacks is to return a Labour government to power. But no future Labour government will save the Welfare state. The anti-trade union laws have been in place since the 1980s, Labour developed the PFI's, and laid the foundation for the privatisation of the NHS. Ed Miliband has made it very clear that the cuts will not be reversed under a Labour government.

Only a government prepared to write off the PFI debts can stop the demise of the NHS which must be returned to public finance and control or it will mean the end of the NHS.

The British economy is dominated by crises, the banks and the multi-nationals and it is deteriorating because of the problems of capitalism, over-production, a debt of trillions and a determination to make the smaller nations of the earth bare the brunt of their crisis along with the British working class.

British imperialism is determined to rob oil from the Malvinas and control vast oil and gas reserves as it supports the break up Somalia into a protectorate. Germany and France will be assisted as they push the southern countries of Europe further down into misery and will continue to destroy the welfare state.

Greedy British capitalist muggers were forced to cut corners as with Barclays, who were caught trying to rig financial markets and fined a total of £290 million (27 June). The HSBC knowingly accepted transactions from laundered money (17 July). Barclays, HSBC and the Royal Bank of Scotland have all been subpoenaed in the US because of their manipulation of global interest rates. These rates affect trillions of dollars of outstanding loans and securities and is part of the immense speculative transactions that helped bring about the 2008 crash. Rate fixing in the USA, Britain and Germany is part of the conflict raging around the world with debt rising faster than the world's economic output.

The Labour party have no answer to these fundamental questions of capitalism.

ONLY THE WORKING CLASS

An internationalist and working class solution is the only answer, reform of British capitalism is impossible. Boris Johnson's invited Murdoch to the Olympics with the message Britain is open for business from the thieving, corrupt and shameless. Labour did the same, Blair's government stopped the inquiry into BAE's alleged bribes over the Al-Yamamah arms deal because Saudi Arabia was (and is) one of the few remaining big spenders. The British banks, German's Deutsche Bank, USA's Citigroup, JPMorgan Chase, and UBS were all implicated.

The British government and the Labour party leadership is an integral part of the world wide dictatorship of capital.

The only way out is to take public control and accountability of the banks. Cancel the debt of the smaller nations of Europe and the world! We must support the class struggles in Europe and the world and build the international links with all workers in struggle. The International Socialist League is dedicated to this task, join us if you want to fight for this future. We believe a mass movement can be built and it needs bold demands: no cuts, make the rich pay, nationalise the banks and big businesses, build a general strike.

This is the background to 20 October.



IWL-FI WEB EDITORIAL TEAM

In recent weeks the founder of Wikileaks, Australian Julian Assange, has again occupied the front pages of the world press. Under threat of extradition to Sweden because of allegations of sexual assault, Assange sought protection on June 19 in Ecuador's Embassy in London.

Through Wikileaks Assange published thousands of secret government documents concerning the U.S. armed forces, including diplomatic reports about military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The publication of secret material and, in many cases, the scandalous activity of governments and corporations around the world, drew the anger of imperialism. Since then Assange has fought against an offensive to criminalise him and remove his freedom of speech. In London he was arrested and released on bail.

DIPLOMATIC CONFLICT

The Ecuador government announced through its Foreign Minister, Ricardo Patiño, its decision to grant asylum to Assange which started a huge diplomatic row. Britain in an intransigent stance in defence of imperialist interests, refuses to grant Assange safe passage to go to South America. The British intention

is to extradite him to Sweden, where he would be questioned for alleged sexual harassment and possibly then turned over to U.S. authorities.

The Ecuadorian embassy is thus under a permanent police cordon. The arrogance of imperialism is deep; Britain reached the point of threatening to invade the embassy to arrest Assange - in contradiction to all existing treaties and international law. The impasse continues and now will be debated in the Organisation of American States.

SECRETS OF IMPERIALISM

Cynically, the British authorities say they have the "legal obligation to extradite to Sweden", but it hides the reality that what they cannot tolerate is the threat to their smokescreen of secret diplomacy concealing their alliances with murderous regimes and subordination to the interests of large corporations against people around the world.

The initiative of Wikileaks revealed to the world the hidden filth in the relations between states. Even so-called democracies, such as Britain and the U.S., do not allow any control or publicity over these negotiations. The mask of "freedom" worn by those regimes that pursue and

entrap Assange reveal their hypocrisy over freedom of expression.

SOLIDARITY WITH ASSANGE

Given the outrageous political persecution of the Wikileaks founder it is necessary to organise solidarity from political, democratic, union and student's organizations for Julian Assange and to demand the right of diplomatic asylum and freedom. Reject the imperialist threat of police invasion of the Ecuadorian embassy and its sovereign territory.

This solidarity is more than defending a persecuted activist, international condemnation of Britain should be part of a struggle to end the secret diplomacy and treaties of social control made between states. Secret diplomacy only serves the interests of the rich and powerful and they have no intention to reveal their international relations to the people of their own countries.

Similarly, the unconditional defence of freedom of expression and the press can, in this case, confront the hypocrisy of so-called democratic regimes where bourgeois governments can do anything, including the silencing of anyone who discloses their secrets.

Understanding the plot against Assange:

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DENIED

The UK Crown Prosecution Services deny a Freedom of Information Act request in relation to communications with other "States" regarding potential extradition arrangements for Julian Assange, on the grounds that it may endanger the UK's diplomatic relations with other countries.

AUSTRALIA

In Australia, documents obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request have revealed Julian Assange's extradition to the United States and possible charges of conspiracy and espionage to be the subject of numerous exchanges between Australian and US intelligence.

CLINTON VISITS SWEDEN

Hillary Clinton's visit to Sweden was announced on 23 May 2012, four days after the delivery of the Assange judgment. It was the first visit by a US Secretary of State to Sweden since 1976.

THE UNITED STATES ISSUES A SEALED INDICTMENT FOR ASSANGE

A sealed indictment for Julian Assange was issued by a secret grand jury in Alexandria, Virginia, which was revealed in an email dated 26 January 2011. It is to be activated against Assange in Sweden, Australia or the UK when the US Government gives the order. This was revealed in confidential emails obtained from the US private intelligence firm Stratfor.

Fred Burton, Stratfor's Vice-President for Counterterrorism and Corporate Security, is a former Deputy Chief of the Department of State's (DoS) counterterrorism division for the Diplomatic Security Service (DSS).

His emails also reveal that the US Government employs the same counterterrorism strategy against Julian Assange and WikiLeaks as against Al Qaeda: "Take down the money. Go after his infrastructure. The tools we are using to nail and de-construct Wiki are the same tools used to dismantle and track aQ [Al Qaeda]. Thank Cheney & 43 [former US President George W. Bush]. Big Brother owns his liberal terrorist arse."

Defend the right to march: Fight racism and fascism!

MARGARET MCADAM, ISL

On July 21 a march organised by the Liverpool Irish Patriots Republican Flute Band was surrounded by the North West Infidels and other loyalist and fascist groups who tried to stop the march from going ahead. They attacked the marchers as 'IRA scum' and 'murderers'.

The march was organised under the slogan: Fight Racism and Fascism because of the rise in racism and fascism in Britain today. In addition to the Liverpool Irish community there were trade unionists and activists from Merseyside trades councils, Unite, RMT, PCS, UCU, Unison, Unite Against Fascism, and members of the Asian and Jewish communities.

James Larkin, who later founded the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, was born into grinding poverty in Combermere Street in Toxteth, one

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exposed.

With the masses colliding with its counter revolutionary role, then the road would be opened immediately for the rapid expansion of the real Communist alternative to Stalinism. Now, history did not proceed as mechanically as this. There was more on the ground than there was on our map.

We were, in any case, applying Trotsky's analysis of the nature of Stalinism without his Marxist skill, experience or maturity. The conflict between the Revolutionary strivings of the masses and the Soviet bureaucracy did not reach the climax of the type we expected immediately after the war.

However, and let me underline this, it is this conflict and the other contradictions within Stalinism that have dominated the post-war world. When one considers seriously the world since the end of the war... the crises in the Stalinist movement stand out as a dominating feature.

If not in the way we young Trotskyists of 1944 expected, the fundamental contradictions between the Soviet bureaucracy on the one side and, on the other, the revolutionary origins of the Soviet Union and world Revolutionary

of Liverpool's poorest quarters, in the 1870s. Today, nearly 150 years on, it is recorded as being Britain's most deprived district.

The annual march has always been a family occasion but racists and fascists continue to target Irish people along with Black, Asian and immigrant communities.

The march, heavily policed and controlled away from its normal route along Park Lane, was taken by the police through Princes Park. Later it was revealed that the fascists had leafleted in the area before the march and that they were aware of the route of the march. The march organisers were not. The police posed as defenders of the march yet failed to arrest many of those shouting abusive racist comments to Black and Irish marchers.

The following week in a trades council

movements, have led to a rapid time scale of explosions.

Three years after the war came the Yugoslav - Soviet break in the opposition of Stalin to the extension of the Chinese revolution. In 1953, a mass movement broke out openly against the Stalinist regimes. In June, there was an uprising of East German workers. In July, in the Soviet Union, came the great strike of slave labourers in the Vorkuta camp, where 250,000 down tools.

Three years later were the Polish disturbances and the Hungarian revolution. Only a decade after the crushing of Hungary, there was the revolt in Czechoslovakia. The beginning and then the end of the 70s saw Poland erupt again.

Little over a decade after the end of the war Khrushchev made his speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU. It reflected a great discontent under the surface. It was an attempt to meet fundamental problems with a partial adjustment, to deflect the hostility to bureaucratic role as such, against the 'Stalin cult'.

The speech only helped to stoke up and

meeting that the police told residents of Liverpool 8 community that they did not know the fascists were mobilising. This is difficult to believe because fascists did not hid their plans.

The Irish have not been the only target. Striking public sector workers, Occupy Liverpool protesters, left activists, Unite's Liverpool offices and the left-wing bookshop News from Nowhere have been targeted.

Capitalism is the cause of unemployment and racism and fascism emerges out of capitalism's nooks and crannies. Fascist bands are useful to them as workers begin to increase their resistance to capitalism's decay. An alliance of trade unionists and communities have to fight the fascists together and build the movement against the cuts.



HUNGARY, 1956 - The Soviet Union had to use the army to defeat a massive uprising against the stalinist regime

widen throughout the world the very fires it was meant to dampen down. For us it was as if a black fog had been riven apart. The truth now had to be listened to, the lying slander had to be repudiated. To be sure, only went so far; but he declared that 'honest Communists were slandered, accusations against them were fabricated, and the revolutionary legality was gravely undermined'.

Communist Party members awoke to the shock of Khrushchev revealing 'mass repression' and 'barbaric tortures'." (to be continued)

* Harry Wicks remembering the Copenhagen meeting of Trotsky: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/library/mrc/explorefurther/harrywicks/>



MARTIN RALPH, ISL

The Spanish miners' strike struck a powerful note within the British working class and there was widespread support. After 67 days the strike and mine occupations ended but without any concessions from the government. What happened?

The Spanish government has rescued Bankia, which is Spain's fourth largest bank, with €23.5 billion. As our Spanish party, Corriente Roja, said, "For thieves, tax evaders and defrauders there is absolute tolerance. So far this year alone €163 billion have left the country. Yet for the miners the €200 million Euros needed is 'unaffordable'."

The government has accelerated the demise of the mining industry by planning to axe its operating aid by 63 per cent on average this year and to cut production by 40 per cent. They say they cannot continue subsidising coal, yet state energy is being run with a deficit of €24 billion this year.

The parallels between Spain and Britain are striking, even though austerity has accelerated in Spain with mass unemployment, hundreds of house evictions daily, hospital charges are now 50 per cent of the cost of the treatment for each visit and more. Make no mistake the British ruling class intends the austerity programme to go in the same way. In Spain the economy is crashing, and it is in Spain where our future can be seen.

One reason solidarity for the miners grew here is the recognition that we are all in the same struggle. The Spanish miners supported the British miners in 1984/85 and they had a glorious history in the struggle against fascism.

SUPPORT GREW

The most visible sign of workers support in Britain came with the visit by Segundo Menendez Collar, a striking Asturian miner and coordinator of the Left Trade Union Current (CSI - La Corriente Sindical de Izquierda) in

Cangas, Narcea, who spoke at the Unite the Resistance conference in June. He spoke very movingly.

In July, Spanish miners' representatives attended the miners Gala from the largest trade union federations in Spain, the UGT and CCOO.

On 21 July a Spanish Miners' Solidarity Committee (SMSC) was formed with the support of the Durham Miners Association, the TUC and the CCOO with the aim of spreading "news and information about the Spanish miners' strike" and raising money to go to the UGT and CCOO. The Left Trade Union Current (CSI) should also gain our support.

But in addition to money, direct connections with miners and workers in different countries have to be built. When Marx said, in the Communist Manifesto, workers of the world should unite, it was meant in the fullest sense to link the most combative sections of workers directly together.

Corriente Roja, our party in Spain reported recently that "...The leaders of CCOO and UGT, the CCOO Secretary General, Javier Lopez, insisted on the position of defeatism when he said: 'We have a fierce opponent, which

is the crisis, provoking a disastrous consequence which is unemployment' and 'the enemy of the unions is not the business owners, but the crisis and the loss of jobs'.

Cándido Mendez from the UGT, in turn, said they are 'willing to face a wage restraint,' which 'would mean accepting that growth is below inflation,' and also that 'effective contracts can become temporary contracts, in exceptional circumstance' and to create a fund capitalization that 'would serve to companies financing part of the layoffs.'

Clearly the CCOO and UGT leadership is similar to the TUC leadership in Britain. They have no demands for a general strike, no demands for nationalisation under the control of the miners and communities, and no plan to defeat the government.

When the march of the miners arrived in Madrid on 11 July, thousands turned out to greet them. Independent unions formed a section of 25,000 people which was led by miners from Cangas de Narcea and Mieres (Asturias) and Sil Matarrosa (El Bierzo), the first one belonging to the Left Union Current (CSI).

In an event in the evening there was
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SUPPORT FOR THE SPANISH MINERS MUST CONTINUE!

The following motion that was supported by Liverpool and Merseyside TUCs and Unite 567 Branch during the strike retains its full force and should be supported by other trade union branches and community organisation.

"We want to show our support to the Spanish miner's just fight. We find it outrageous that the Government uses millions to rescue the bankers, as they recently did with Bankia, while they slash subsidies to the coal industry, not giving a single solution to the workers and dooming the miners' areas to misery. We demand the Government repeals the suspension of coal aid and begins a plan of industrialization in the mining areas to ensure work and a future for miners and their families.

"We hold the Spanish government responsible for the police brutality and for any tragedy that might happen, and we demand an end to the attacks by the Civil Guard, freedom of the miners arrested and the dismissal of all court proceedings brought against them. "

Send messages of support to: apoyoalaluchaminera@gmail.com

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**MINER** at the 'Black March' in Madrid protests against the governments' attacks

a common platform including the independent unions, 15M (a radical movement that has demonstrated in many cities in Spain since May 15 2011) and the occupy movements. It was a resounding success.

"It was a great victory that helps forge a fighting, democratic alternative. Events like this show that alternative unionism can and should play a bigger role in the struggle. The national alternative union meeting called for September 8 should give a qualitative

step forward in promoting the general strike and advance the creation of a class and democratic pole." Corriente Roja.

The Basque union association, the IGC in Galicia, alternative unionism in the Canary Island (led by Cobas) is calling a general strike for September 26 and 27. Pressure is on the CCOO and UGT to do the same.

"The general strike cannot be a mere protest strike without continuity and should be democratically controlled by

the rank and file in general assemblies. It should include, among other issues, the miners' demands to end police repression, withdrawal of the attacks on public employees and the unemployed, the repeal of the labour reform and pensions, the immediate suspension of payment of the debt to the bankers and speculators. And of course out with Rajoy and the troika!" Corriente Roja.

On 9 August the Union of Committees of Base (COBAS) issued the following statement:

"On Monday 6 August five members of the miners Council in Cangas de Narcea were arrested by the Civil Guard. The miners belong to the SOMA-UGT, CCOO and CSI...This persecution is clearly intended to intimidate the miners and take the most determined fighters hostage to break their resistance."

Support for the Spanish miners must continue and we should demand the release of all miners and the dropping of all charges.

Meanwhile in Brazil between 15-23 Augusts, Conlutas (the militant left union federation in Brazil) has organised a tour for the miners' leader Jose Gonzalez Marin from the CSI (Corriente Association of Izquierdas) who works for Hunosa the state mining company in Asturias.

Marikana Miners' Massacre: Nationalise the mines! Punish those who killed the miners

"Expecting us to go back is like an insult. Many of our friends and colleagues are dead, then they expect us to resume work. Never." miner Zachariah Mbewu told South Africa's Mail & Guardian. The strike, which includes 3,000 rock drillers, demanded a wage increases from 4,000 rand (£306) a month to 12,500 rand a month

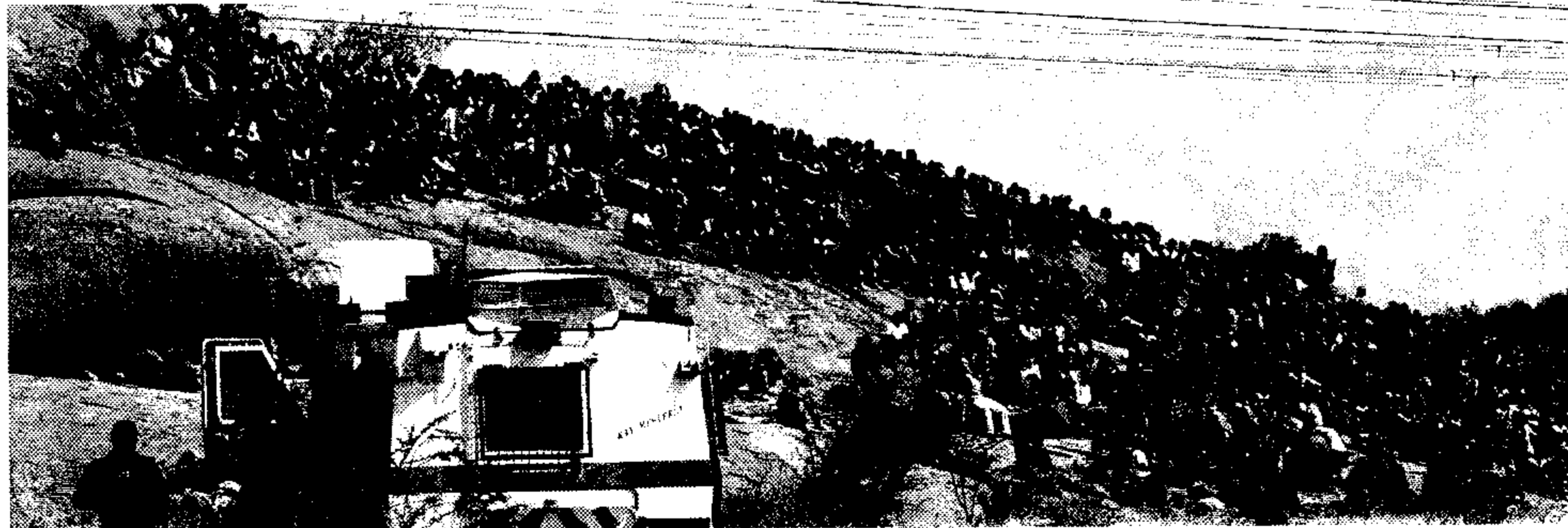
Lonmin, the company that owns the Marikana platinum mine in South Africa, threatened to sack any miner who did not return to work on 20 August, after 34 miners had been killed by the South African police just days before.

The police said that the water cannon, rubber bullets, teargas and stun grenades that they used against the miners had

no effect, so they decided to use live ammunition.

Julius Malema, former leader of the youth wing of the ANC, spoke at a mass meeting of miners after the shootings and demanded the nationalisation of the British mine to huge applause from the crowd.

Lonmin was formed from a British multinational, Lonrho, led by Tiny

**MINERS ON STRIKE** in the Lonmin mine at Marikana are closely watched by the police forces

Rowland, who developed Lonrho's South African holdings during the years of the Apartheid government. In 1999 the company changed and became a platinum metal group in South Africa. It is listed in the FTSE 250 Index.

CLASS COLLABORATION

NUM membership has declined from 66 per cent to 49 per cent at the Lonmin mines and it has lost its negotiating rights. Its secretary, Frans Baleni, is a more strident critic of the nationalisation of mines than many business leaders and has had conflicts with miners for sometime.

Communist parties such as the South African Communist Party and the Morning Star/Communist Party of Britain have tried to shift the blame for the miners' deaths in South Africa onto the AMCU (Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union - a new and developing miners' union) and not the police and the state.

The Morning star said, "National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) secretary general Frans Baleni put the toll at 36 and blamed the unrest on the rival Association of Mineworkers and Communication Union making promises which could never be delivered and, in the process, organising an illegal action which led to the loss of lives" (August 19).

AMCU secretary Jeff Mphahlele said his union did not encourage violence

and was not responsible. "We have been recruiting across the country and have at times been met with resistance. Four of our members were shot at in Marikana, but they never retaliated."

The Morning Star reports criticism of the demand for trebling wages as an extravagant demand and condemned the strike as "illegal action", thus condemning the workers' class struggle in general and in particular the miners.

According to the leader of AMCU Mathunjwa, "This is an infight of the members of NUM with their officials. It's got nothing to do with AMCU...workers on the koppie where the massacre took place were largely disgruntled NUM members who had lost faith in their union representatives."

Why would communist parties and the National Union of Mineworkers say that workers' demands are extravagant? Why do they try to shift blame onto another union for the actions of the police?

There are close ties between the NUM, the SACP, the African National Congress government and often the multinationals. The ANC government is in alliance with the NUM-affiliated national union confederation COSATU. One previous NUM leader, Cyril Ramaphosa, is a ANC heavyweight and



SHOT BY THE POLICE for going on strike, the miners are also under attack by the Stalinists in South Africa and in the UK.

business tycoon, and sits on Lonmin's board.

That is the source of the violence and explosive situations that are now occurring.

NATIONALISATION

The demand for the nationalisation of the mines is gathering mass approval by miners and mining communities. Just as with the Spanish or the Chilean mines, the only way to safeguard miners' wages and conditions is nationalisation, but not for the benefit of the state. Miners and communities who have experienced terrible conditions, with the loss of lives and low wages, have won many times over the right to put the mines under their control for the benefit of themselves and workers everywhere.

British workers should condemn the actions of Lonmin and the police, and support the call for the nationalisation of the mines.

Social warfare in Europe: Struggles rise and criminalisation intensifies

RONAL LEÓN NÚÑEZ, IWL-FI

In Europe we are experiencing social warfare: brutal attacks of the imperialist bourgeoisie against all the historical conquests and rights of the working class and people. The background of this reactionary crusade is the biggest economic crisis of the capitalist system since 1929.

This crisis has no way out unless one of the two primary social classes defeats the other. The Europe of capital, through the troika (IMF, European Central Bank, European Commission) is proving this by pushing forward "adjustment plans" that are destroying all the social conquests that the proletariat with the longest tradition of struggle has won in the last 150 years. The so called European "Welfare State", the pride of world social democracy, is

showing its total failure and is losing ground rapidly in front the economic crisis.

The attacks on rights and standard of living of the working class have led to a popular and sustained resistance, but with an uneven pace and intensity. There are fights against the cuts and the plans of the troika in all countries, even in the central ones of the European Union: Germany and France. These struggles, in many cases, are led by the poor or precarious working class youth and by popular sectors.

But recently we are seeing a crucial element that can change the political landscape: the appearance of the organised working class. Up to now we had seen it more clearly in the wave of general strikes in Greece. Now, the organised working class is emerging strongly in the Spanish State through the eruption of the

impressive struggle of the Asturian miners. The Spanish miners, as a part of the European proletariat, are leading a struggle that not only has a national but also an international impact.

THE COMBINATION OF CUTS AND REPRESSION

As the economic crisis is deepening and the social resistance is rising, the European capitalists and bankers are responding by increasing repression. The tendency is to attack the whole working class. The daily repression practiced until now was primarily against the most exploited sectors, such as neighbourhood raids and police check points against undocumented immigrants.

With nothing to offer in terms of concessions, the ruling class will increase the criminalisation of social struggles.

This means that the labour and popular movement must be prepared to face the worst conditions for struggle.

This is especially true in a situation of increasing social polarisation, where, in addition to the traditional mechanisms of repression of the bourgeois State, we are seeing a relative strengthening of the far right with the appearance of openly fascist groups. A recent example is the appearance of Golden Dawn in Greece, who has started attacking immigrants with its violent squads but whose real objective is to launch an offensive on the whole workers' movement and its organizations.

In the Spanish State, the Rajoy government is pushing forward very harsh adjustment plans in order to reduce a deficit of more than €90,000 million. These plans are linked to a labour law reform that will eliminate fundamental rights of the workers (in terms of striking, employment protection, collective bargaining etc). The neoliberal government of the Partido Popular (PP) knows that this reactionary package will only produce more strikes and social struggles. The new wave of cuts and austerity plans has already affected millions of workers, and they won't sit back and let the attacks continue. The question that is really worrying Rajoy and the troika is how to defeat the popular resistance.

As a first measure, we are seeing that direct repression of the struggles intensifies: the miners were attacked with clubs, rubber bullets and tear gas, the students in Valencia who were fighting against cuts to public education received the same treatment. During that struggle of the high school students, the police charged brutally, injuring among others elderly people and women.

But the troika's guardians need something more than direct repression, they need to deepen pre-emptive surveillance and the judicial net that can strangle resistance. In this direction, the Spanish government created the Department for National Security (DNS) as a surveillance arm of the State, based on the one that George W. Bush created after the attack on the Twin Towers. In the US it is known as the Department of Homeland Security and it was created in 2002 with the mission of "protecting the American soil from terrorist attacks". Its task is to carry on internal intelligence activities without any legal guarantees or restrictions.

This new Spanish institution will be composed by more than 100 members of the old sub-secretaries of security. According to the official bulletin of the Spanish State, the tasks of the DNS include

"analyzing situations that involve or could result in a threat to national security" and "designing government actions that could include declaring a 'state of emergency'."

This new directive of the Moncloa (the President's Office) will be accompanied by a reform of the Penal Code that can even punish, among other things, mobilisations called from the internet and will dictate jail sentences for "passive resistance" in the streets against the police, a peaceful method used very often by the "Indignados" movement.

After the last general strike in Barcelona last April, the Minister of the Interior Jorge Fernández Díaz announced that the new Penal Code will consider calls for any protest that is "violent" or "violates public order" through the internet or any social network as a "crime belonging to a criminal organization".

By "violent demonstration" the government means any demonstration that does not have prior authorisation or whose participants do not disperse when ordered by the police. The minister Fernández justified this change claiming that the country is experiencing a "spiral of violence" coming from "anti-system groups" that use "urban guerilla tactics."

Even clearer was the Catalan Government's Minister of the Interior of the, Felip Puig, who said, "We want to reform the law so people will be more afraid of the system" according to the Argentine newspaper Clarín.

THE BRITISH LION SHOWS ITS CLAWS TOO

In the UK, the liberal-conservative government of David Cameron, after wasting thousands of millions of Euros to save the banks, launched the most brutal attack to social rights in the history of the country: public health care, student scholarships, public transportation, university fees etc.

These attacks led to the first popular reactions. In August 2011, after the murder of a 29-year-old black man by the police in Tottenham (London), a round of riots and violent protests spread throughout the city and the country reaching Manchester, Nottingham, Birmingham, Liverpool and other cities. On 30 November 2011, huge demonstrations of 30,000 in London, 20,000 in Manchester and 15,000 in Liverpool marked the day when 2 million public sector workers went on strike. Even though it was a public sector strike in defence of retirement plans, it had huge support from the youth, who are seeing their situation worsen with rising



WORKING CLASS fights back against the attacks all over Europe

unemployment and lack of prospects for the future. The strike last November was a clear message of the working class against the intentions of the government to make the workers pay for the crisis.

It is important to note that this struggle managed to overcome the draconian anti-labour law that was imposed by Thatcher on the British working class, which forbids voting for a strike in general assemblies. Instead, it instituted a convoluted consulting mechanism, where all workers vote when isolated at home through the post. The whole process is totally controlled by the union leadership and overseen by the government.

As if this law wasn't enough, Cameron established new measures to combat protests, including tripling the number of policemen on the streets, and ordered "exemplary punishment" of activists that use the social networks to mobilise in order to increase the control of the social tools.

DEMOCRACY OF THE RICH IS EXPOSED

The popular and working class movement needs to not only defend its economic conquests, but also fight for democratic rights that are now under attack by the servile governments of the troika.

The criminalisation of social movements is a tool of the ruling class to prevent the development of struggles, be it through direct repression or through "legal" mechanisms of the capitalist State. We cannot forget that the bourgeoisie imprisons, tortures and kills in the name of the law.

The Bonapartist measures that are deepening in Europe are only the beginning. European capital and banks will show even more clearly their true reactionary and undemocratic face, as the struggle and the organisation of the working class advances.

The reaction of the rich in Europe against social struggles proves that under capitalism even the most sophisticated "bourgeois democracy" is only a dictatorship of capital against the poor.

Turkish Prime Minister sees abortion as murder: Abortion is a right!

CANAN SAGAR, ISL

Outrage by the citizens of Turkey and also from other European countries greeted Recep Tayyip Erdogan's, Turkish Prime Minister, anti-choice statement that 'every abortion is an Uludere'. He was referring to the massacre of 34 civilians last December by the Turkish air force in the village of Roboski in Uludere which was covered in issue 7 of Socialist Voice.

The Prime Minister continued the attack on women's rights on TV, "During a meeting with the United States I used an expression, and I'm using it again.... I see abortion as a murder, and say to those who oppose this explanation, the media...who always question Uludere, that 'every abortion is an Uludere'."

The real murderer is the Prime Minister because he makes a law which that will

push people into illegal abortions which will put their lives under risks! The government is seeking to reduce the number of Caesarean births and abortions by limiting still further the 10 week period for legal abortions within 10 weeks.

Thousands of women protested in front of Taksim Galatasaray College demanding 'Abortion is a right, Uludere is a massacre.' Women have condemned the conservative Prime Minister as a misogynist and have called on the women of Turkey to own their body and identity.

Women are demanding that the government should be providing free, healthy, protective abortion laws instead of destroying women's rights. However, the AKP government, who are well known for their religious conservative ways, are making increasing attacks on human rights for the people of Turkey.

It was stated in the UK Independent reported that June 3, thousands demonstrated in Istanbul and "Women of all ages held aloft banners with slogans including "My body, my choice", as they marched to the city's Kadikoy Square."

The Turkish Minister of Religious Affairs has said that 'A mother does not have the right to end lives, she is only a carrier.' He was reinforcing the Prime Minister's position and went on to say that Islam says no to abortion! He also said that after the law becomes active there should also be doctors who will make any decision on special circumstances and furthermore that the clergy should be there to ensure the correct decisions is made.

The fight to oppose this law and the fight to expose the Roboski killers is continuing.

Turkey: Kurdish oppression on the rise

BERGUZAR ERDOGAN, ISL

Since the attack in December 2011 on the Roboski village in the Kurdish area of Turkey where 34 civilians were killed (see issue 7 of Socialist Voice) no proper investigation has taken place and the government has imposed a ban on media reporting of the massacre. They have refused the demands of the families for a proper investigation and their excuse is that the more the issue is discussed the more PKK (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan-Kurdistan Workers' Party) can take advantage from the situation. But who is taking advantage of the situation?

On his way to Pakistan the Turkish Prime Minister gave his longest explanation on the massacre, "I heard of the operation immediately, I don't have direct connections with the attack, overall responsibility is with the general commander. Our armed forces have genuinely done their duty. There could be a mistake, we have explained this mistake, made an apology, but some people are exploiting the situation, if its compensation then it will be paid, more than formal compensation has

been paid." Essentially he is saying that we killed people by mistake, we have apologised, paid a lot of compensation, so now what else is there to do!

WRITING IS TERRORISM FOR TURKISH GOVERNMENT

However the government is capable of arresting many people without any evidence or proof. One example is Cihan Kirmizigul. Cihan was a student at Galatasaray University, studying industrial engineering. In 2010 he was detained on the grounds that he threw a Molotov cocktail in Istanbul and that he is a member of the PKK.

There was no evidence and the only 'proof' the police had was a secret witness who said that the perpetrator was wearing a posu (a scarf also known as a keffiyeh). Cihan was at a bus stop wearing a posu that day. He was detained for 25 months before being tried and then sentenced to 11 years and 3 months.

Another example is Muge Tuzcuoglu, a respected anthropologist and a writer, who has been arrested. She originates from the Black Sea but moved to Diyarbakir after the murder of Ugur

Kaymaz, a twelve-year-old, by the police on November 21, 2005. She wrote a book about the children who resist and throw stones, Ben Bir Tasim 'I'm a stone.'

She was arrested under the Anti-Terror Law, on grounds that she attended training workshops organized by the BDP (Baris ve Demokrasi Partisi-Peace and Democracy Party) and her presence at two public demonstrations in support of Kurdish rights allegedly link her to the PKK.

These examples are unfortunately not exceptions. According to the Minister of Justice Ergin, as of January 31, 2,824 students are being held in Turkish prisons and there are many intellectuals and journalists who are imprisoned for expressing their views in opposition to the government.

These arrests have aroused a wave of protests throughout the country as well as in the US, France, Germany, Great Britain, Switzerland, Italy and Greece.

We call on the student and trade union movement in Britain support these protests, release all these prisoners!



Bill Hunter's Archives

30 years since the founding of the IWL

BILL HUNTER

Bill Hunter, 92 years of age, 73 for Trotskyism

New comrades and contacts have asked about the history of Bill Hunter. We are publishing a short account of his struggle in the workers and Trotskyist movement, which will be continued in the next issue.

It is also to celebrate the 30 years of the International Workers League founded in 1982. Bill with a number of others made the decision to join the IWL in 1988, forming the ISL and he was on the International Executive Committee of the IWL in the early 1990s.

Significantly for today, Bill's first meeting with Trotskyists was during a struggle against the British Communist Party and Stalinism. Even though the Soviet Union no longer exists some Communist Parties retain influence and their methods and policies can be traced to the Stalinism of the past, as in South Africa, the southern countries of Europe and in Britain. We publish at a time when in the workers' movement are still heard ideas that at least the Soviet Union was 'socialist'. However that obscures what the Soviet Union was.

In his autobiography Bill recalls attending a meeting of the Left Book Club, which was used as a front of the Communist Party, early in 1939. During the meeting Harry Wicks (one of the founders of the British Trotskyist movement, who shared a platform with Trotsky at his last public speech in Copenhagen in 1932*) opposed what the Communist Party said and after the meeting Bill talked to him and this began his 73 years in the Trotskyist movement.

Bill was already active in the working class before becoming a Trotskyist. He says in the autobiography, "I remember an enormous meeting in a street which went up the hill near Clapham Junction. Sir Oswald Mosley [the British fascist leader] was trying to speak and was prevented by the crowd shouting: 'Rats, rats, we've got to get rid of the rats!' The jingle was taken from an advertisement for rat

poison which was broadcast from Radio Luxembourg..."

He also started reading Marxist literature including the "History of the Russian Revolution", which was given to him by his sisters as a Christmas present. He joined the Wicks-Dewar group which had been formed by those expelled from the British Communist Party in 1932 which was known as the Balham group, and in 1941 they joined the Independent Labour Party.

In 1944 he joined the Revolutionary Communist Party. The rest of this article is taken from the Workers Press, October 1986.

"I was moved primarily by the fusion of the two Trotskyist groups - the Workers International League and the Revolutionary Socialist League - out of which the RCP was formed, and by the arrests of four Trotskyist leaders. They were charged with conspiracy and furthering a strike.

The Communist Parties were openly opposing workers' struggles, colonial struggles and revolution. They had accepted money from the state in India and become a recruiting agency for British imperialism.

In my own case, they had conducted a campaign - and failed miserably - to take away my credentials as convener of the

Chrysler factory in Kew, on the basis that I had a 'policy of opposing the war and supporting strikes'.

The British CP opposed the campaign in defence of four Trotskyists who were arrested and tried in 1944, a campaign which gained wide support in the Labour movement. The four were accused of conspiracy under the Trades Dispute Act of 1927 and of furthering an illegal strike.

The Trades Dispute Act had been passed as a punitive measure after the general strike in view of the opposition of the Labour movement to this act, the CP declared that the government should not have used the Trades Dispute Act but that there was enough other legislation which could have been used.

That Stalinism was counterrevolutionary was something that was clearly before us. Its policies were clearly dictated by the interests of the Soviet bureaucracy in its agreements with the Western imperialist powers. In 1945 they openly declared that, in Britain, in the interests of the Yorkshire agreement, a Labour government should invite Churchill and Eden into the Cabinet.

I felt, with other Trotskyists at the time, that the movements of proletarian revolution and colonial revolt, which were dominating the world at the end of the war, could only intensify their collision with Stalinism and it would be completely

(continues on page 6)



Lifelong Apprenticeship - Life and Times of a Revolutionary

by Bill Hunter

These pages are crowded with thumbnail sketches of Trotskyist and working class fighters of the period before, during and after the second world war.

Lifelong Apprentice shows Hunter's part in the international struggles of the Fourth International against capitalism and Stalinism, and includes an inside account of the Trotskyists' response to the 1956-57 crisis in the Communist Party. It ends with the launching of the Socialist Labour League in 1959.

Price £8 including P&P ISL, c/o News from Nowhere, 96 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4HY