

Workers' fight

5p

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PORTUGAL THREAT FROM THE RIGHT

THE INVESTITURE of the Fifth Provisional Government on August 8th lacked the solemnity such occasions are normally expected to have. President Costa Gomes told the assembled ministers and civil servants that the new government was a "temporary" one, whilst Prime Minister Vasco Goncalves made it clear in his speech that the government was determined to stay in office despite the storm of opposition it faced in the north of the country and the growing hostility in the armed forces towards Goncalves and his Communist Party backers.

Apart from the contradictory content of the two speeches, the manner in which they were delivered made it very difficult for the audience to keep a straight face. Costa Gomes read his speech so slowly that jokes were being made to the effect that he was illiterate. Goncalves' performance was the exact opposite. He spoke so fast that nobody could understand him, and when one civil servant shouted, "Vasco, slow down", the hall erupted with laughter.

Blankly

Copcon commander Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho, the third member of the military troika, wasn't to be outdone by the other two. He had refused to participate in the government, and so when it was invested he constantly shuffled between Goncalves and Costa Gomes, staring blankly at the ceiling.

It thus seemed clear from its inception that the Fifth Provisional Government would be more provisional than the previous four. The

by Bas Hardy

Premier was not only unable to include PPD and Socialist Party representatives in it (they had walked out of the previous government in the middle of July), he also failed to bring in certain non-aligned 'technocrats', both civilian and military, who had decided, for various reasons, that it was unwise for them to take part in a government which had such an unrepresentative character. After 20 days of negotiations, all Goncalves could cobble together was a cabinet comprising members of the Portuguese Communist Party, its satellite party MDP, plus a few fellow travellers. If the new government lasts much longer than it took to form, it will be a miracle.

During its very first day in office, the government immediately came under attack from the 'moderates' within the Armed Forces Movement. An "opposition manifesto" produced by Melo Antunes and signed by eight other leading members of the Supreme Revolutionary Council of the Armed Forces Movement roundly denounced the new Goncalves team, declaring that it "lacks credibility and is manifestly incapable of governing". Antunes made a significant condemnation of the "Fascist spirit" of the attempt by radicals to install "bureaucratic dictatorship directed against a uniform and inert mass of citizens".

This last remark is a veiled reference to certain manoeuvres made by PCP members in the army



The Right even came out on the streets in Lisbon to attack supporters of the CP's poorly-backed half day general strike. Six months ago, these rightists were lying very low.

recently which account for the increase in anti-CP feeling amongst the military. The decline in the influence of the CP in the working class (reported in the last *Workers Fight*) has led to corresponding attempts to increase their strength in the armed forces by bureaucratically taking over the commands of certain regiments. The method by which these moves are effected has been termed 'inventona' (a play on 'intentona', the Portuguese word for "coup d'etat") and consists of inventing a right wing plot

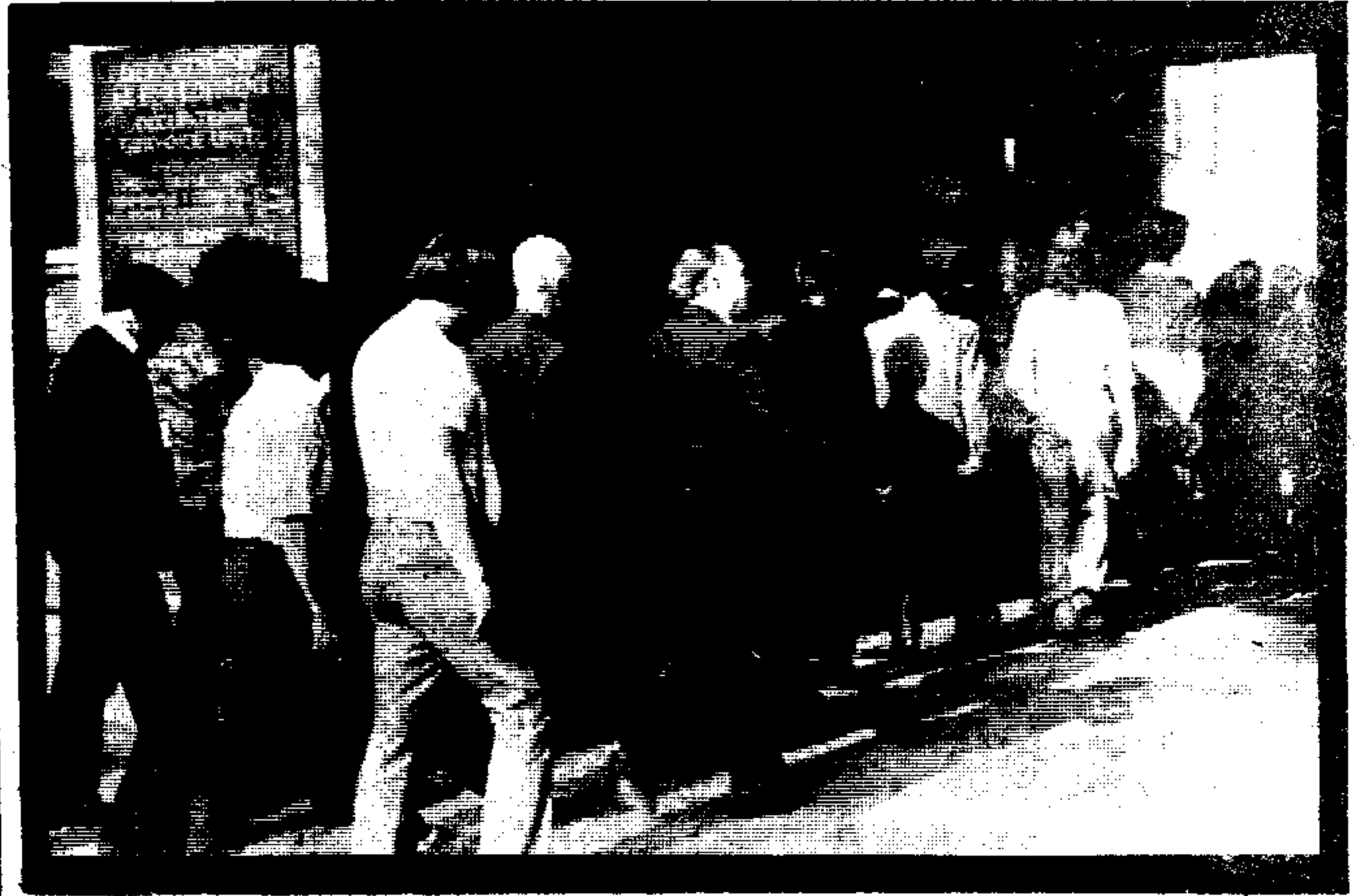
and using this as a pretext for ousting anti-PCP officers and putting party men in their place.

Thrown out

The CP tried this in a big way on July 30th at Amadora, Sunturaem, and other barracks, and the moves should not be dissociated from the formation of the new government. At Amadora, the commander, Jaime Neves, and eight of his officers were

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1,250,334 OUT
OF WORK —



AND TUC MEET TO RUBBER- STAMP WAGE RESTRAINT

THIS YEAR'S T.U.C. conference at Blackpool ought to be a working class council of war. It ought to be a forum for hammering out how the trade union movement can best repel the attacks on its by both the employers and the Labour Government. The Conference ought to make the famous illuminations look dull compared with the fireworks it announces.

A Labour government has just done what no Tory government would ever dare do — announced wage curbs which will mean at least a 15% cut in real living standards over a year if they hold. There is a ferment in the Labour Party, an outcry against the venomous right-wing bosses' stooges of the type of Prentice, such as has not been seen for ten years. Unemployment is over the million mark and expected by everyone to rise to 1½ million soon. It is no socialist 'dogma', but the immediate needs of the working class, that dictates such policies as automatic cost of living increases, with a 'zero threshold', in wages and social benefits; work or full pay; work-sharing with no loss of pay; and opposition to redundancies. Police attacks on picketing are becoming more and more common, as at Cammell Laird.

Token

But what will happen at the TUC? The £6 limit will almost certainly be passed. What is worse, the opposition to the £6 limit promises to be a token opposition, not an active, fighting opposition expressing itself in official support for workplace struggles to break the limit. The one million unemployed will have fine speeches devoted to them, but no practical action. A motion in support of Des Warren will probably be passed — but nothing will be planned in terms of action to free him.

The only possibility of a chink of light comes from the CPSA motion to support the Working Womens Charter and the MPU motion to support free abortion on demand.

In sum, the TUC Congress promises to be a textbook example of how trade union bureaucrats can

reach a comfortable compromise with capitalism while the workers they are supposed to represent are sold down the river.

If the period of Tory rule saw a tremendous rise in militant struggles and resulting discomfort for the trade union officials, the onset of the Labour

In the week before the TUC Congress the right wing got a boost from the 60-40 majority vote of the National Union of Mineworkers to back the £6 limit.

The NUM ballot was in fact an exercise in bluff and trickery on the part of the union leadership. The question on the ballot papers was so phrased as to give the impression that only the most irresponsible 'wreckers' could vote against it: "Are you in favour of the National Executive Committee recommendation that this union supports the efforts of the TUC General Council and the Labour Government to find a cure for inflation?"

The result would have been very different if the question had been posed more accurately: "Are you in favour of wage curbs which will cut real living standards by at least 10 to 15% while prices and unemployment rise unchecked? Are you in favour of the National Executive Committee flouting often-reaffirmed union policy of opposition to any statutory wage restraint?"

The end result, however, despite remarkable figures in Scotland (63% against the NEC) was another sobering demonstration of how effective the bluff and trickery of the top leadership of the labour movement can be, at least in the short term....

Government marks the time when the officials feel themselves masters in their own house, having headed off the militants, needing now only to confirm their own monstrous misleadership. The discomfort will come later, when the rank and file splits the seams of the strait

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Portugal- sizing up the forces

From P 1

thrown out by CP members in the Commando Regiment, who immediately elected themselves into positions of command. The workers' commission, at the nearby Soreframe factory, which is controlled by the CP, sent a telegram to the Premier congratulating the men for forestalling the coup: but the message was sent six hours before it actually happened!

Arrested

The next day, however, 70 officers and NCOs who hadn't been involved in the events denounced the manoeuvre, condemned the fact that they hadn't been consulted, and threatened to resign. A General Assembly of the regiment was held, Neves was reinstated, and the CP members arrested.

It is significant that Copcon, although condemning the Antunes document, has not condemned its content. The heavy handed bureaucratic methods of the CP have not only allowed Antunes to collect 400 signatures from military commanders throughout the country, but it has also produced a situation whereby Copcon, in the person of Saraiva de Carvalho, has been engaging in negotiations with Antunes against Goncalves. Because of the stir that the Antunes manifesto has caused, it is perhaps worthwhile to consider what the document has to offer.

Model

Despite all the talk about "moderation" in the Western press, Antunes does not in fact envisage an immediate transition to parliamentary democracy in Portugal. Although Socialist Party leader Mario Soares was quick to produce a statement attacking Goncalves along similar lines to Antunes, he could not have failed to notice that

Antunes rejected 'socialist capitalism' [sic] on the ground that it was not suitable for Portugal "in the world wide crisis of capitalism". The condemnation of social democracy along with Eastern European Stalinism is matched by a desire to see Portugal adopting a course towards "third world socialism", although this is not clearly defined. The model can in fact be expected to be along the lines of the bureaucratic regimes of Egypt, Iraq, etc., and it is interesting that Antunes makes no reference to 'popular power' as outlined in the July 8th Armed Forces Movement plan "for building a socialist society in Portugal".

Clash

Undoubtedly the Antunes faction has gained in strength and moved the way it has as a consequence of the anti-CP violence in the north. Whole sections of the northern army have been reluctant to defend left wing head-quarters and have indeed even arrested CP members in towns like Famalicao. General Fabiao, the Commander in Chief, and a man in the past very close to Antunes, is definitely pro-NATO, and his presence in the army does represent a danger of a right wing coup and a return to Salazar-style dictatorship.

However, Antunes himself, and others round him, cannot be seen in the same light as Fabiao, though they may well become the unconscious agents of right wing forces. They have a record of struggling for many years against Salazarism, and their pulling back from an out-and-out violent clash with Goncalves is a reflection, firstly of a realisation on their part that such an action will inevitably increase the size and the power of the extreme right, and secondly that their political programme is in reality not very different from that of Goncalves himself.

The fact that Copcon commander Carvalho parleyed with Antunes should serve as a warning to those who place trust in him as a revolutionary left-wing leader. His recent tour round the country's military units with general Fabiao looks like a sizing-up of the combined forces at the command of the two men should a move against Goncalves eventually be made. The fact that Carvalho drew back reflects his worry about his own position and pressure from leftist commanders and units within Copcon.

The system of alliances within the AFM has been difficult to predict because it depends on a delicate balance between three factions — the tepidly pro-SP faction round Antunes, the pro-CP faction round Goncalves, and the 'left' round Carvalho — none of which has a very clearly distinguished programme. Once the equilibrium is ended

Church-led peasants in an assault on the Lisbon regime.

The right has definite disadvantages if a civil war should occur. Copcon, the best equipped part of the army, is likely to oppose them, and the peasantry does not represent the majority of the population. But the initiative has clearly passed into the hands of the right in recent months, and the return of troops and settlers from Angola will reinforce them. The government has been paralysed, unable either to mobilise the working class in force or to crush it, incapable of taking any decisive measures in the economic chaos. The bureaucratic behaviour of the CP has further alienated the peasantry and a part of the working class, and tragic split in the workers' ranks has been reinforced by the demagoguery of Soares.

In this situation, the task of forestalling the triumph of reaction falls on the



Will they be fighting each other?

When the future of all of the present antagonists will be even more uncertain. Thus all the factions seem to be doing is attacking and then placating each other. Pro-CP Northern Region commander Brig. Corvacho is removed from his post over the weekend by Fabiao and then reinstated two days later. Copcon takes over the headquarters of the Fifth Division (the pro-CP propaganda division) in the morning and then withdraws from it in the afternoon. Antunes is removed from the Supreme Revolutionary Council and then Goncalves agrees to his reinstatement.

But although the AFM leaders refuse to engage one another in armed conflict at the moment, this stalemate cannot be regarded as being a permanent one. If right wing violence continues in the north, then sections of the wavering Northern military and police may join the

shoulders of the revolutionary left. Despite the criminal counter-revolutionary actions of the Communist Party, it must be whole-heartedly defended against the right wing mobs. The CP is a part of the labour movement, and the attacks on the CP now threaten to become attacks on the whole labour movement tomorrow.

If Copcon, or the Goncalves government, mobilise to beat down the right wing anti-CP riots, or to repel a rightist coup (as they should do if one tenth of their 'socialist' rhetoric is serious) then revolutionary socialists should fight alongside them. Nevertheless, revolutionaries can offer not the slightest support to the Goncalves government: they should fight to replace it by a government based on democratic, freely elected workers' councils, entirely independent of the military authorities but linked with

rank and file soldiers' councils.

'Popular Assemblies' exist on a small scale as yet: revolutionaries should work to extend them; to bring rank and file soldiers in and thus break up the AFM and the military hierarchy; to arm the workers' committees; and to gain the support of the Popular Assemblies for a clear socialist programme, which would encompass the nationalisation of monopolies such as CUF, and workers' control over industry, together with demands relating to the problems of the peasantry (cancellation of debts, easy credit, etc.)

Energy

Imperialism hopes that an ineffective Lisbon government will accelerate the process of disaffection and disillusionment within the country and thereby gradually wear away the revolutionary drive and energy of the Portuguese working class, creating in a matter of weeks or months conditions for a right-wing restoration. Not only do the chief agencies of imperialism, like the CIA or NATO, hope: there can be little doubt that the CIA, for example, is already active in the country and within the Socialist Party.

Vasco Goncalves has recently compared himself to President Allende of Chile, and declared that he will not leave office alive. But just as the maxim of the French revolution that "He who makes a revolution by halves only ends up by digging his own grave" applied to Allende, so too does it fit Goncalves and the Communist Party which backs him up. By attempting to prevent the working class from going beyond the "stage" of "advanced democracy" (in reality even this stage of parliamentary democratic capitalism is practically ruled out in the desperate economic plight of Portugal) Goncalves and the CP will be digging not only their own graves but also those of hundreds of thousands of Portuguese worker-militants as a logical consequence of their policy.

Impasse

But such a course of events is not inevitable. The vanguard of the Portuguese working class has spontaneously taken a road away from the crippling ideology of the CP. A revolutionary socialist organisation with a clear programme capable of solving the political and social crisis in Portugal can channel this energy in the necessary direction — towards socialist revolution. Only this course of action can resolve the impasse and defeat reaction.

TUC Blackpool '75

From P 1

Jack the Labour and trade union leaders are trying to encase us in.

The whole thing is summed up by the appearance this week of a special so-called "fight inflation" edition of the TUC's Information Broadsheet, which announces "For trade unions the fight against inflation means sticking firmly to the £6 flat rate increase".

Nor will the decision on the £6 ceiling (there is no promise of a £6 flat rate increase and the TUC knows it!) be like the vote last year on the Social Contract. As examples of how servile the trade union leadership can get the debates have a lot in common; as examples of how the capitalist state rests on the backs of the working class through the help of the trade union bureaucracy — particularly when there is a Labour Government — the two discussions have a lot in common. But no sooner was the vote on the Social Contract taken than the guidelines were broken by both official and unofficial action. This time the TUC is determined to police its own initiative, the Labour Government's "anti inflation" policy.

Militant

Moreover, the opposition to the TUC-Government policy by the AUEW and others has not yet resulted in these unions backing their own members' claims against the £6, like at Swan Hunter, still less in aggressive campaigning against the limit.

In other words, the illuminations that will be switched on directly the Congress finishes will be strictly for the employers. For the working class a new dark age will have begun, unless... unless the rank and file of the labour movement rejects the duplicity and the double-talk of the TUC; unless we firmly reject the notion that workers should pay the costs of the capitalist crisis with lower living standards; unless we fight to replace the present right or weak-kneed 'left' trade union leaders with a militant rank and file movement; unless we mobilise LPYs, Constituency Labour Parties, Trades Councils, and Trade Union branches to support all struggles against the £6 limit; unless we stop the retreat!

HANDS OFF PORTUGAL!

- an end to economic boycott
- big business, NATO, CIA hands off Portugal
- Portugal must not become another Chile
- solidarity with the MPLA

demonstrate
saturday
20 september
assemble 2.30pm
Charing X Embankment
march to Speakers Corner

HUGH JENKINS ADDS HIS VOICE TO CALL FOR L.P. DEMOCRACY

TRIBUNE group member and Minister of State for the Hugh Jenkins, has added his name to the rising number of voices demanding greater democracy within the Labour Party. Referring to the Reg Prentice affair, the Minister said, "It is too difficult and not too easy for a party to get rid of its MP". His statement reflects a whole series of movements in Constituency Labour Parties since the humiliation of Prentice. In the same week, for example, a dozen members of the General Management Committee of Cardiff South East, the constituency of James Callaghan, the Foreign Sec-

etary, wrote to the GMC of Newham North East congratulating them on their move.

PUPPET

The importance of Jenkins' statement lies not so much in what it advocates — these proposals appeared in a pamphlet entitled "Party or Puppet" issued during the period of the last Labour Government and are common currency within the party rank and file — as in the breadth of dissent it indicates. In the days leading up to and immediately following the decision in Newham North East, the

press spent a lot of time implying that Prentice's opponents were a wild bunch of come-latelies, infiltrators, and wreckers with absolutely no base in the Labour Party. That description hardly fits Hugh Jenkins.

In his speech he calls for the election of the Cabinet by the Parliamentary Labour Party instead of the present situation where the shadow Cabinet is elected by the PLP but the Cabinet is appointed by the Prime Minister. Only six weeks before the Party Conference Jenkins emphasises, "our need is to make party democracy more effective, to

strengthen the authority of Annual Conference, and to provide a more effective voice for the parties..."

OVER-AWED

Of course all this, Jenkins says, must be made to fit in with parliament and the Constitution — thus giving the right wing a strong argument when they claim that a stronger voice on the part of Annual Conference would conflict with the constitution. But if Jenkins is over-awed by the British Constitution, a good many rank and file Labour Party members are not.
Jack Price.

Ireland: the stage is set for civil war

THE Orange supremacists want blood. That's the message over the last week or so from the statements of war and retaliation from the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, the threat of "NoGo" Loyalist areas, and the latest statement from Glen Barr: "Either we get a solution, or we knock the stuffing out of each other and the winner takes all".

The conciliatory private talks between the United Ulster Unionist Council and the Social Democratic and Labour Party politicians continue. But the Loyalist paramilitary forces are telling the politicians — no deals, no concessions, not even to sections of the Catholics, such as the SDLP, who are willing to aid British strategy in Ireland.

The scene is shifting even more towards the eventual failure of the Convention and to sectarian slaughter. The masses on the streets, especially the Protestants, have the upper hand.

To understand these events we have to look at the whole history of Ireland since partition: the political and economic suppression of the Catholic minority in the Six Counties, and the division of the

Nottingham Sinn Fein tells of Long Kesh tortures

OVER 60 people attended a meeting held by the Nottingham Provisional Sinn Fein on Sunday 17th August.

The speakers were Pat Hickey (UCATT), Seamus McCluskie (Provisional Sinn Fein, Belfast), and Robin Rusher (Birmingham Troops Out Movement).

Pat Hickey urged Labour Party and Trade Union rank and file members to push for action around the Irish question, instead of accepting the reluctance and refusal to discuss Northern Ireland that has existed for the last five years or so. He also warned of the dangers of the techniques of military repression used in Ireland being brought into action in Britain if we allow them to become successful and accepted.

Seamus McCluskie gave an example of the operations of British intervention in Ireland in the death of a personal friend of his. A ruddy-faced young man had emerged white haired after internment in Long Kesh. He had been convicted after being searched and found in possession of a bomb which was planted by British troops. After severe harassment and torture in Long Kesh he was released for hospital treatment, but before his treatment was completed he was dragged from his hospital bed and back to Long Kesh, where he died.

A collection was taken, raising £50 for the Republican movement. Although members of several left groups attended the meeting, one tendency was conspicuous by their absence — the mis-named 'Militant' tendency. One would have thought that a meeting of this nature would have been a fine opportunity to attempt to persuade the Provisionals to drop their struggle for the right of the Irish people to self-determination and instead adopt the 'Militant' cure-all of a Trade Union Defence Force.

Mick Teece

Background analysis by S. CARLYLE

working class, with the Protestants tied by marginal privileges to serving the interests of British imperialism.

Having created the artificial Six County sectarian state, Britain has proved itself unable to deal with the problems. The prevarications, waverings, and blunders of British policy have sharpened the sectarian divide.

To the Protestant working class, 'supremacy' — with its rewards of jobs, votes and houses, and having one over the Catholics — has been more important than the union with Britain. The ruling Orange bosses and landed gentry were, in their turn, protected from militant pressure from the Orange working class.

In the 1960s, the 26 Counties having become more important as a trading partner, Britain tried to start moving towards a gradual de-sectarianisation, with the ultimate aim of a united federal Ireland. The peculiar nature of politics in Northern Ireland proved to be the weak link in British strategy. For 50 years, with a guaranteed Orange majority, there had been little political life in the Six Counties.

The abolition of proportional representation in the '20s was intended to smother divisions in the Orange ranks. In fact, it completely sapped the vitality of Orange political life. Politics became a "gentleman's" pursuit, based on the Orange Order lodges, where the Orange workers gained protection and deferred to their 'betters', who were landlords, squires, and bosses. Lord Brookeborough, prime minister for 20 years, didn't even have a work desk! O'Neill, another gentleman prime minister, buckled as soon as the first pressures showed themselves.

By the mid-'60s, the politicians in charge were inept, unskilled, cut off from the Orange working class. They were feeble and indecisive in carrying out the changes required by British policy. When the Orange backlash filled the political vacuum, they were caught by surprise by the venom of hysterical anti-Catholic racism, expressed by such as Paisley.

Omens

Faulkner, successor to O'Neill and Chichester-Clark as prime minister, was more unscrupulous and cunning. He had had to fight his way up within Orange politics. He survived longer, but by then, particularly after he introduced internment in 1971, Stormont was crumbling: on the one hand there was the Catholic offensive against the Six County state, on the other the murderous mobilisation of the Protestant masses, in defence of their 'supremacy'.

Last June saw an assertion of their "street power" by the Orange mob. They used a general strike to whip the politicians into line and smash the 'powersharing' Assembly. Today the same reactionary pressure curtails any negotiations or deals which the 'fake rights' like Paisley might be tempted to go for.

The power-sharing Assembly was part of British strategy to find the "middle ground" of politics in Northern Ireland. This first attempt at powersharing lasted from autumn 1973 to June 1974, when it was brought down by the Ulster Workers Council strike. The first omens of collapse had come in January 1974, when hard-



They know the future will be decided on the streets, and not in the Convention

line Loyalists took control of the Unionist Party internally. Faulkner's party was weakened at the constituency base, while remaining in the Assembly a stronghold of pro-British 'moderation', together with the Alliance Party. Sectarian assassinations had been on an upward wave ever since the Sunningdale talks, but even hard-line Unionists, despite all their protestations of abstention, bent with the pressure and took their seats. The Orange political forces were still sorting themselves out.

Britain was trying to win the conditions for its long-term strategy: separating Catholic support from the anti-imperialist resistance, using moderate Unionists to placate Loyalist hard-liners, and bringing about collaboration between the governments of the 26 Counties and of the 6 Counties.

Strike

The Provisionals were politically excluded by the proscribing of their organisation. They continued a military struggle, and the Catholic minority showed its support by large-scale abstention at the polls, which allowed the unrepresentative SDLP to stand as a pro-British mainstay in the Assembly.

Given time (and the opportunity to distribute patronage on a large scale), the Assembly could have consolidated. But it was the miners' strike, and the resulting British general election of February 1974, which led to a major disruption of the Assembly. Eleven out of the 12 MPs returned to Westminster were hard-line Loyalists. The unrepresentative nature of the previously elected Assembly compared to the newly elected MPs was clear for all to see.

The Six County state is by its very nature undemocratic. The Protestant majority see democracy exclusively in Protestant terms. This led to the smashing of the power-sharing Assembly in the Ulster Workers Council strike of June 1974, and since then has led to fresh waves of assassinations and grass roots mobilisations.

Threat

The British Army is still in the paradoxical position of carrying out de-sectarianisation so as to regularise relations within the whole of Ireland, but at the same time fostering divisions with the use of muder squads, counter-insurgency operations, the SAS etc., all to ensure that changes come from above and that the British government keeps some grip on the situation.

The British government's capitulation to the Orange forces in the UWC strike, and the continued recruitment to the Ulster Defence Regiment and the Royal Ulster Constabulary point towards withdrawal, prefaced by 'Ulsterisation' and/or civil war.

Britain's ruling class has neither the nerve nor the energy to smash the 6 County Orange supremacy. The South doesn't want to know. To escape the pressures, Britain set up the present Convention, but this time with the Orange working class calling the odds and limiting the politicians' wheeling and dealing. Sectarian assassinations — which until recently went without retaliation from the IRA — have kept the tension high.

The outcome now is a deadlocked Convention, which doesn't satisfy Catholic demands of power sharing or British imperialism's need for a stable 6 Counties. The prospect of civil war is coming closer.

Since the ceasefire this year, the Provisional IRA have enjoyed relative freedom to regroup, to reorganise, and to move about the North. The terms of the ceasefire, including the release of some internees, have been interpreted by the UVF, Vanguard, and other forces in the Loyalist camp, as sell-outs by the British government to the Republicans — which shows their fear of anything short of Orange supremacy.

In the last six months the Sinn Fein (political wing of the Provisional IRA) has had its proscription lifted, and its leadership have been encouraged to think that they have some position round the parleying table with British imperialism. Moreover, seeing the threat of civil war, the Provisionals want as much time as possible to

re-arm and get ready to defend the Catholic areas and/or to mount another bombing offensive in Britain.

The Orange Loyalists howl at the figure of 339 released internees. But as fast as an internee is released, he runs the risk of being convicted or held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which is now being used while unlimited powers under the Emergency Provisions Act are suspended. As against the 339 released internees, there have been just under 600 charged with offences, even though only in two-thirds of the cases is there enough evidence to convict. Ironically, more convictions for IRA membership have been gained in the South than in the North — 141 as against 20.

Feared

The Convention has been given an extra week's recess while private talks go on between the SDLP and the UUUC. A week ago, signs of some deal possibly being in the air caused another crisis in the streets in Northern Ireland, coupled with the usual annual tensions around the traditional Orange lodge marching season and the fourth anniversary of internment.

Evidently the politicians resorted to private talks because they feared that open proceedings in the Convention would bring violence onto the streets. In fact, this manoeuvre has only succeeded in arousing Loyalist suspicions and tensions all round.

The SDLP and UUUC, deadlocked in discussion, are incapable of doing British imperialism's job for them. The most likely possibility is the failure of the Convention, with the Protestant paramilitary forces coming to the fore and forcing events to a civil war.

Such a civil war would involve enormous casualties, far greater even than the bloodshed so far. The final outcome would probably be a re-drawing of the Border, after intervention by the British Army and the 26 County government. In such an outcome — drawing the sectarian divisions sharper and more bloodily than ever before, and setting back all possibilities of progress in Ireland — British socialists must side unambiguously with the Catholic nationalist population, in their resistance to the Loyalist drive for restored Protestant Ascendancy. Right now we must work to sound the alarm and to prepare the ground by propaganda for relief work in the event of civil war. We must work to explain the justice of the struggle for self-determination for the Irish people as a whole, with 32 Counties as the only possible unit. And we must strive to build up the pressure for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland — for the role of the Army is and has been to maintain the set-up which is now leading so rapidly towards civil war.



Merlyn Rees, Labour's Minister of State for Ireland, still playing for time and talking of extending the Convention beyond its expiry date of November 8th. But even Oliver Napier, leader of the pro-British, 'moderate' Unionist party Alliance, appreciates the terrible logic of the Loyalist paramilitary mobilisation: "The province is on the verge of total breakdown. The Ulster Volunteer Force has said it will revenge IRA murders at the rate of seven to one. For all of us, the present rate of murder could quickly become seventy times seven, and that is a civil war" ('Guardian', 28th August).

ALL Indian newspapers are now censored before publication. Western press correspondents have been excluded from the country. Even private letters coming out of India are now being censored. The showcase of 'Westminster democracy' is now marred not only by millions of people starving alongside great wealth, but by more and more obvious moves towards dictatorship.

Some letters from India published in the August issue of 'Race Today' indicate that the working class movement is one of the main targets of the repression:

"Continuing the brutal repression of industrial worker militants, which began with mass arrests of Indian railway workers on strike, the emergency regulations warn industrial workers: no gate meetings, no agitation, strike or other industrial activity will be permitted. Indira [Gandhi]'s government is in the process of creating a spurious organisation of employers and Congress [ruling party] and CPI (Moscow Communist Party of India) employees' unions who will arbitrate all wage and related disputes. Not surprisingly, the federations of commerce and industry throughout the country have welcomed the emergency, especially with Indira's assurance that industrialists will get raw materials, power and other inputs on a priority basis."



Striking Indian railworkers; they have borne the brunt of Mrs. Gandhi's anti-working class actions

As that excerpt indicates, the emergency regulations did not suddenly drop from a cloudless 'democratic' sky. "The Illustrated Weekly, India's leading liberal magazine, estimated that in the last 25 years the police have opened fire on the people 2800

times, killing 2000 people and injuring 5000".

"Democracy has never really operated in the countryside. There the landed proprietors have traditionally done what they pleased with the poorer sections, and the judicial and police machine has shown itself incapable and unwilling to do anything about it. The most blatant example of this occurred in 1967 in Kilvenmani, a village in Tamil Nadu (a south Indian state). There some landlords got together and burnt alive some forty harijans (untouchables) in their homes, because they were agitating for higher wages. The court released the land-lords on the plea that such an act could not be committed by such prestigious people.

"More recently, in Maharashtra (the Western State), a village headman forcibly extracted the eyes of two harijans after they had demanded that the headman's son marry the daughter of one of the brothers since he had got her pregnant. That village headman too remains untouched. Such instances are innumerable.

Burnt down

"In West Bengal state the Communist Party of India (Marxist) [a more left wing split-off from the CPI] was forced out of legally acquired offices by the rigging of elections in that state. The rigging was a violent affair. State Reserve Police went in and threatened voters to vote for Congress or face the consequences."

But that is not to say that the emergency regulations did not make an important difference: "There is no doubt that the Congress would have lost the next election even if the divided opposition could not provide a viable alternative at an early stage.... Particularly taking into account

THE GAG, THE GUN, AND MRS. GANDHI



the vastness of the country, the freedom of the press was an important and perhaps the only fully democratic right left in the country. The big newspapers have of course always been guarded in their criticism of the government, but other journals belonging to the political parties, and some independent ones, have attempted to carry on the task of a free press. Also even in the big new newspapers some space was always available for dissent, even strong dissent at points.

"The crackdown on the press began well over a year ago.... Beyond a point attempts at exposure had become dangerous business. In Orissa, an Eastern Indian state, a journalist with opposition sympathies was mysteriously run over by a car in an empty street and killed. In Bihar a journalist who reported the killing of harijans by Special Reserve Police was promptly arrested for being a Naxalite [Maoist] sympathiser. A journalist in Calcutta who gave some news about the programme of the newly united Communist Party of India (Marxist Leninist) was arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act. In Delhi, an editor with independent views was explicitly asked to quit. In Bihar a dissenting newspaper's offices were burnt down with official sanction while in Calcutta a dissenting newspaper's offices were attacked by Congress Party hoodlums.

"Now even that trickle of dissent is over. The state has become so dictatorial that it cannot even tolerate mild protest. One editor wrote condemning the censorship, saying he would accept censorship of news, but not of opinion. He was hauled up and threatened. Those who came out with blank spaces in the news coverage and in the editorial columns were seriously warned. One editor who decided to write in his columns about Uganda's Idi Amin, castigating him for being a dictator, was also hauled up by the authorities....

"Sources in the government and close to Mrs Gandhi declare that this state of affairs has come to stay. Parliament is to be dissolved, right wing action to be taken against strikes and unionised workers."

Open organisation and expression of opposition to Gandhi's measures has of course been suppressed, so it is difficult to gauge its extent and nature. The official Moscow-line Communist Party, the CPI, has given its full support to Gandhi; but one of the letters to 'Race Today' indicate that some opposition is brewing. "Though the papers have not been able to report any incidents, we have private reports that 400 people have been killed in Bihar. There have been strikes and bandhs in Gujerat and a widespread clampdown on the cadres and activities of the CPI(M) in Kerala...."

DROP ALL CHARGES AGAINST THE BWNIC 16

JOHN LLOYD, a member of the 'Defend the 16' Campaign, explains the need to support the 16

14, 15, 16 the number continues to rise of those facing prosecution for alleged breaches of the Conspiracy Laws and the Incitement to Disaffection Act. All are supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, and maximum sentences of life imprisonment face some of the defendants if found guilty.

The Incitement to Disaffection Act in essence is a warning by the British ruling class, and says "Keep away from our army". This warning is disguised in weighty legal phraseology, which, however, remains faintly comic. "If any person maliciously and advisedly endeavours to seduce any member of Her Majesty's forces from his duty or allegiance to Her Majesty he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act". Distribution of possession of a leaflet entitled 'Some Information for Discontented Soldiers', in the opinion of the Public Prosecutor, contravenes this Act.

MUTINIES

The leaflet is addressed to discontented soldiers and gives information to them on various ways of leaving the army, some legal and others illegal. There is plenty of evidence to suggest that widespread discontent exists among Her Majesty's forces. A huge decline in the number of soldiers re-enlisting, the large number who have gone 'absent without leave', and the mutinies, bear witness to this. The cause of disaffection? That has something to do with the six year old war now being fought in the six counties of Northern Ireland.

Brigadier Frank Kitson, whose counter insurgency methods have contributed considerably to this disaffection, is not only chief advisor to the ruling class on military tactics, but also has something to say about legal tactics. Kitson, an experienced expert in repression, has the backing of those sections of the ruling class who would welcome a 'strong state' solution to the problems that assail British capitalism in its present malaise. The Brigadier recommends that the legal system should become 'just another weapon in the government's arsenal'.

With the introduction of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, the political use of the Conspiracy Law, and the Incitement to Disaffection Act, we see that his advice is being taken up. These

activists arrested after distributing leaflets giving soldiers information on ways of leaving the army.

measures as well other assaults on civil liberties, indicate a move towards the 'strong state' solution. The danger to the labour movement inherent in this situation cannot be ignored, and must be resisted. All attempts by the ruling class to disarm and weaken the working class by the erosion of civil liberties must be countered at all costs.

It is for this reason if no other that the Campaign to defend the BWNIC defendants should be supported. It is in the interests of the labour movement to demand that all charges against them be dropped.

The defence campaign's Labour Movement committee has planned a programme of events aimed at winning support in the Labour Movement. On Monday 15th September, at the Conway Hall in London, a large rally will take place. Speakers representing a wide section of the labour movement, including Lawrence Daly, Joan Maynard, and Ricky Tomlinson, will be on the platform.

Obviously support must be gained from all sections of the labour movement, so an open letter has been produced for this purpose. The open letter spells out how the Incitement to Disaffection Act infringes civil liberties, and states that it can be used against workers during a strike when the army is used to break the strike.

It is extremely important that wide support is given to the campaign in general, and that the rally on 15th September and the open letter are successful in mobilising the Labour Movement.

The ruling class is taking this case very seriously, and will do all that it can to score points in its favour. If it is successful it will gain in confidence and will take further strong measures. At this time, when its agents are again prepared to play the 'Orange card' as a way of maintaining its rule in Ireland, ways will be sought to intimidate, demoralise, and quell opposition to its strategy. To support the BWNIC defendants is to mobilise against the strategy of the ruling class. However, to achieve a total defeat for the ruling class strategy in Ireland, we must mobilise forces that will secure a withdrawal of the British army from Ireland. Such a defeat would not only strike a blow for self determination for Ireland, but would alter the balance of forces in Britain in favour of the working class.

JOHN LLOYD

RUC blocks prisoners' parole

"THIS, along with other evidence obtained by us, has proved beyond a shadow of doubt that Lord Donaldson of the Northern Ireland Office has rejected compassionate parole solely on the advice of the R.U.C.", according to a statement issued on 20th August by the sentenced Republican prisoners at Long Kesh. They quote one particular case.

Two weeks ago, a prisoner here was informed that his mother was seriously ill in hospital, and so he applied for compassionate parole in the normal way to enable him to visit here. He received no

acknowledgement of his application and no response, either positive or negative, was forthcoming.

However, approaches were made to his wife outside to probe what his reaction would be to an 'escorted visit' (being brought to and from the hospital under military and RUC escort). This has been firmly rejected by the doctor in charge as being a threat to his mother's health and totally counter productive. The RUC maintained their stance that it would be an escorted visit or nothing.

This case is typical. In the past,

Army peddles 'soldier hero' fable

THE secretary of the Northern Ireland ambulance branch of the National Union of Public Employees, Sidney Spence, has rejected a British Army statement about injured soldiers fighting off "terrorist" attacks as untrue.

The Army story was featured in the 'Sunday Mirror' of 17th August, full of praise for the

'soldier hero'. A crowd, so the 'Mirror' said, had attacked an ambulance carrying two soldiers injured by a bomb blast. The doors of the ambulance were opened and two men armed with rifles were standing outside. "But the NCO shot both of them and the ambulance drove off".

According to Mr Spence, "The

ambulance was not stopped, the back doors of the vehicle were not opened, and there was nobody pointing guns". But for the Fleet Street press, so it appears, 'reality' in Northern Ireland is made up of whatever fairy tales about the heroism of British troops that the Army cares to tell them.

GYNAECOLOGIST EXPOSES MOTHER'S LIES

READERS of the June issue of 'Mother' magazine, a periodical aimed mainly at young housewives, were treated to an article written by Joan Williams giving the 'facts' about abortion. These 'facts' produced a totally misleading description of abortion and abortion methods, using emotive phrases and stressing the rights of the 'unborn child'. When a woman has an abortion, the article said, "she is not simply exercising her rights over her own body — she is exercising her will and power over a body that does not belong to her".

The article gave a lurid picture of the "baby" being "scopped out

completely" and "torn to shreds": "it does not take much imagination to envisage the agony he could endure while his mother is anaesthetised". It uses these "facts" to argue for restricting the availability of abortion.

The article appeared just at the time when the National Abortion Campaign was preparing for a demonstration against the James White Bill, which seeks to make it more difficult to get abortions legally. NAC supporters felt that a reply to "Mother" magazine was necessary to counter the arguments put forward by Ms Williams and to allow the readers of "Mother" to see the true medical

facts.

Dr Peter Huntingford, a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology in the University of London at St Bartholomews Hospital and the London Hospital Medical Colleges, has written a reply, which has been vetoed by the editor of "Mother", and from which we reprint extracts.

LET US examine some of the *Facts* that Joan Williams presented as evidence in support of her views to the reader of 'Mother'. She states that at 20 weeks a fetus could survive if born. There is no evidence that a fetus born at 20 weeks can survive (Report of the Lane Committee on the Working of the Abortion Act, 1974). Live for a few hours independent of its mother, yes maybe; but survive, no. To survive means to remain alive, to live on (Oxford English Dictionary). The World Health Organisation, taking account of advances in medical knowledge, revised their definitions of fetal death to allow for the greater possibility of extremely immature babies surviving premature delivery if they are given special care, by dividing them into early (up to 20 weeks), intermediate (20 to 28 weeks) and late (after 28 weeks) fetal deaths. Even so WHO has not suggested that survival as early as 20 - 24 weeks is possible (WHO Public Health Paper, no. 42, 1972).

The description of abortion methods is introduced by a statement that "... people who clamour for even more liberal abortion laws have never seen, let alone performed the ghastly procedure". This is certainly true; but neither has Joan Williams performed an abortion, whereas many of the people she condemns have themselves had an unwanted pregnancy

and have had an abortion. Such an experience would in my opinion give these women a more correct perspective of the abortion situation than the lurid pictures that Joan Williams deliberately invites the imagination of her readers to create for themselves..... In twenty years of gynaecological practice I have not come across a single example of behaviour in connection with abortions that comes anywhere near to justifying the description of "simply dropping the baby into a bucket". Joan Williams withholds the knowledge that she must have that with very few exceptions (amongst which anaesthetic drugs are not included) all drugs given to the mother cross the placenta to affect the baby in a similar manner. This alone should have made her hesitate before she endowed the immature central nervous system of an early fetus with the same capacity of awareness as a full-term newborn child or even an adult. She might also take some responsibility for the agony of mind that she may have created for some women who have had, or are contemplating, abortion.....

Back street

The *Facts* that Joan Williams presents that are the most difficult of all to swallow without protest are "... abortion is not safer than pregnancy and childbirth, as its sometimes believed. A late abortion is far more dangerous, in fact. Twice as many women die from early abortion than from childbirth". What is the source of these statements that are directly contrary to the facts as reported by the Registrar General?.....

The article goes on to confuse the abortion issue still more by stating that "therapeutic abortion is not necessarily a safeguard against back street practitioners. Experience has shown that when abortion becomes a legal proced-

ure, illegal abortion rates do not diminish and can rise". What experience has shown this? Of course, therapeutic abortion does not necessarily safeguard against illegal abortionists, that can only be done by depriving them of the demand for their services by making legal abortion freely and readily available to those who need it.... Neither legislation (Romania provides an example) nor religion (every single Roman Catholic country) have persuaded women seeking abortion that they are wrong to do so. In Britain the number of deaths from all abortions fell from 52 in 1965 to 12 in 1973 (8 of these were due to spontaneous or illegal abortion). Admissions by the London Emergency Bed Service for abortion numbered 5,731 in 1965 but only 1,941 in 1974. Prosecutions for illegal abortion fell from 314 in 1967 to only 36 in 1973. These are facts, which do suggest that the Abortion Act is really working to protect women from the illegal abortionist.

Guilt and grief that follow abortion are natural and inevitable to a measured degree. This itself should be enough to tell us that no woman undergoes abortion for mere convenience or frivolous reasons. But, in my experience natural remorse following abortion is often much exaggerated because women are forced to bear the guilt and censure of others like Joan Williams who are associated with them at the time.

Abortion carried out legally, especially early in pregnancy is safe. Those women who feel that they should not continue with an unwanted pregnancy should have no hesitation in seeking the assistance they need. It is your body, and it should be your right to choose. Neither Joan Williams should persuade you, nor should the Law make you accept the more dangerous alternative of continuing with an unwanted pregnancy.

Truth hurts the 'fact finding' tour

REPORTS have been published from the 'fact finding' mission which the Greater London Association of Trades Councils sent to Belfast in July.

The official report of the majority spends considerable space refuting the argument for the immediate withdrawal of troops, and explaining why Mike Knowles, Rosemary Sales, and Gerry McMorrow — who have produced a minority report — were expelled from the delegation. The demand for the immediate withdrawal of troops is described as "dividing the movement in Northern Ireland" (as it wasn't already), "ignoring sectarian division" (which directly contradicts the first point), and "posing considerable difficulties for the trade union movement". The Army is criticised as "not being a proper [sic] peace-keeping force" and the old cure-all of a Bill of Rights is trotted out at every available opportunity.

It is not surprising that the majority of the delegation should have come to this conclusion as they made sure they did not see anyone who disagreed with this view. The report of the expelled minority says: "We noticed a great discrepancy in the views expressed on the question of the troops between the majority of those we met on the earlier — 'conducted tour' — part of the visit and the majority of those that we met on the later — 'free' — part of the visit".

Because the minority talked to organisations that were representative in the Catholic community — such as Sinn Fein, Turf Lodge Tenants Association, and the Andersonstown News — they were expelled from the delegation. The majority report gives a long explanation of this which is shown in the minority report to consist of evasions and clouding of the issues.

REFUSED

For example, the pretext on which representatives of various organisations, including Sinn Fein, were refused permission to address the delegation, was that the delegation could meet no-one unless it had been agreed beforehand in London. Yet the majority met both Loyalist shop stewards and members of the Official Republican movement without this having been decided beforehand. Eventually five members who remained officially on the delegation did go to see Sinn Fein — thus undermining their own arguments — but Sinn Fein refused to meet them as they had been refused permission to speak to the delegation as a whole.

The delegation was in fact set up as an attempt to give support to Communist Party policy on Ireland (that the British government should legislate a Bill of Rights for

Northern Ireland). The chairman of the GLATC at one stage introduced the delegation as having come to Belfast in order to formulate a policy which would be adopted by the London trade union movement. The idea was to present an image of the Northern Ireland labour movement opposing the immediate withdrawal of troops and supporting a Bill of Rights, so that they could use it to argue against those in the labour movement in London supporting the immediate withdrawal of troops.

The three minority delegates face disciplinary action from the GLATC. They were called to the Executive Committee, which had acted against them in their absence. It is unclear if they will be able to defend themselves before the complete report back meeting. This meeting was originally to have been open to delegates of all trade union bodies, but now — obviously out of fear that the CP line will be questioned — it has



Mike Knowles

been restricted to delegates from Trades Councils. The three minority delegates have not been officially notified of or invited to the report-back meeting (to be held at 2pm on Sunday 13th September at Unity House, Euston Rd, London NW1); nor were they sent a copy of the official report.

Despite invitations from Trades Councils and from the Troops Out Movement, members of the majority have refused to debate with or speak on the same platform as the three expelled members. It is only too clear that they are scared of being confronted with the facts about how the delegation was rigged. On Monday 1st September, at 7.45 pm, at Unity House, the Troops Out Movement is holding a meeting at which the three minority delegates will speak. From this meeting the drive will be stepped up to gain support, especially in terms of resolutions to the GLATC from Trades Councils and Trade Union branches in the London area supporting Mike Knowles, Rosemary Sales, and Gerry McMorrow. **BRUCE ROBINSON** The minority report can be obtained from M. Davis, 18 Lordship Park, London N16.

ZANU soldier tells of Zambian role in Zimbabwe struggle

by Ed Conduit

After the breakdown of the Victoria Falls Bridge Constitutional Conference on 26th August, South African premier Vorster and President Kaunda of Zambia were still working hard for a settlement.

Ian Smith, Prime Minister of Rhodesia — responding, no doubt, to the pressure from his white racist supporters, whose privileges will be threatened by the most timid moves towards majority rule — has pulled out of the talks and says he will consult instead with his black stooges, the tribal chiefs. But Vorster and the South African ruling class, taking a wider view of the situation after the collapse of Portuguese rule in Angola and Mozambique, is set on the course of 'detente' with black Africa. These detente policies have met with considerable response from black bourgeois politicians: the Organisation of African Unity (the association of black African governments) is privately prepared to admit South Africa as a member state, and Zambia has joined South Africa in trying to get a peaceful settlement between the Rhodesian settlers and the Zimbabwe guerrillas.

The white supremacist regime in Rhodesia (the African name for the country is Zimbabwe) is, they believe, fated: but a policy of negotiations may ensure an outcome like Malawi, dominated by a proimperialist black bourgeoisie, presenting no threat to the £600 to £800 million imperialist investment in Rhodesia, and favouring economic relations with the South African apartheid state — instead of a radical nationalist regime emerging from armed struggle.

The latest possibility being aired is an agreement between Smith and Joshua Nkomo (who represents ZAPU, the right wing of the African National Council umbrella organisation), leaving the more militant black nationalists in the lurch.

The difficult situation of the Zimbabwe nationalists, faced on the one hand by die-hard white

supremacists of Rhodesia, on the other by the Vorster-OAU united front, was explained at a meeting of the Zimbabwe Solidarity Committee in London on 17th July. Ndabaningi Sithole had been billed to speak, but was occupied with diplomatic work in black African regimes. The support of the OAU for detente with South Africa has meant the stopping of supplies to guerrillas in Zimbabwe, with the result that they are very short of ammunition. While Sithole attempted to restore the life-line to the guerrillas of the Zimbabwe African National Union, his place in London was taken by a ZANU soldier, Malinde, who had spent 10 years in Smith's jails.

BANNED

Malinde described ZANU's origins. For many years they had pursued constitutional policies, lobbies of the UN and OAU, peaceful marches etc. Despite many rebuffs they continued this strategy till many demonstrators were killed calling for a constitutional conference and the National Democratic Party was banned.

Thereafter the Zimbabwe African People's Union was formed, but this split with the foundation of ZANU in August 1963 on a programme of armed struggle. The African National Council is a long-established reformist party (concentrating on desegregating seats and other small reforms). Under pressure from Kaunda, ZANU came together with this body and ZAPU and FROLIZI under the umbrella title of the ANC. Malinde claimed that the diplomatic work of ZANU in the ANC was a cover while their real energies went into the armed struggle.

Material support from Zambia is crucial for ZANU. Rhodesia is landlocked, so all munitions must come either through Zambia,

Mozambique, or South African-dominated Namibia and Botswana. Furthermore there are no liberated areas for training. Malinde described ZANU's relations with Zambia as like "Husband and wife, who quarrel sometimes", despite mounting conflict: 1402 ZANU members were put under restriction and 54 imprisoned recently. Herbert Chitepo was murdered in Zambia, and some ZANU members have been poisoned. The reluctance to criticise the Zambian government is clearly influenced by ZANU's need for a base there.

ZANU talks vaguely about 'socialism', but its policy is black nationalist with a lacing of social reforms, and in no sense a working class socialist policy. In response to questions about ZANU's political programme, Malinde said he was a soldier not a politician, and that was how it should be. (This notion is of course a recipe for the guerrilla fighters to be sold out by black petty bourgeois politicians at the head of their movement). Asked about classes in Zimbabwe, he said ZANU would "not allow classes to exist". Asked about newspapers in a liberated Zimbabwe, he said the state would own the newspapers, and they would reflect the opinion of the people.

The Zimbabwe Solidarity Committee (31 Braydon Rd, London N16) is asking for material support for ZANU. Money is needed in dollars or pounds: medicines, binoculars, transistor radios, and water bowls are needed by the guerrillas, and watches would enable peasants to get inside before 6pm and avoid being shot during the curfew hours.

The ZSC is dominated by Maoist ideas, which also figure in a vague abstract way in ZANU. However, despite this and despite the deficiencies of ZANU, socialists in Britain should support ZANU against the racist Smith regime, where one quarter of a million whites keep six million Africans in poverty and without political power.

Chrysler's participation plan WORKERS SOFTENED UP BY THE 'SOFT TOUCH' FIRM

ON TUESDAY 26th August, a mass meeting at Chrysler, Stoke (Coventry), backed the stewards' recommendation to continue talks on Chrysler's plans for worker 'participation'. Only Chrysler Linwood, in Scotland, have

yet to make a decision on continuing talks before the Chrysler combine committee meets on the weekend of the 30th/31st. All the other sites have decided to continue talks.

The company have offered all 26,000 workers

£50 bonus if they continue talks, and another £50 if all details of the negotiations are tied up by December 31st. What they are trying to sell with these bribes is an attempt to break the power of the unions at rank and file level in Chrysler. There are

two key points in Chrysler's scheme. Firstly, a no-strike clause, and compulsory arbitration on all disputes. Secondly, national negotiations to replace plant bargaining.

The stewards' policy is still against compulsory arbitration and national negotiations, and some are attempting to put over the agreement with Chrysler as a clever manoeuvre. Just to continue talks, they say, commits us to nothing, and if Chrysler are willing to give us £50 we should take it.

In reality, however, the fact that the stewards' committee have reversed their previous unanimous stand against the 'participation' scheme, and the fact a workforce known for militancy like Chrysler Coventry can even consider talks on such a scheme, reflect a long-term softening up job by Chrysler management. At the present moment they are aided by the demoralisation caused by the preaching of the TUC and the Labour Government that workers must pay for the current crisis of capitalism. Thus, the sort of questions asked at the mass meeting were, "will the £50 be tax-free?"

The management 'Industrial Relations Department' has been hard at work for some years. Back in 1970 the students' occupation at Warwick university brought to light files giving evidence of management-organised spying on militant workers. In the 'shoddy work' dispute of 1973, scab lorry drivers were organised to break the picket line by driving through walls in the middle of the night. Since then no union has defeated Chrysler.

The Chrysler Industrial Relations Department, again, were behind the breaking of the Coventry tool room agreement in 1972, which set back the trade union movement throughout Coventry. Chrysler's toolroom is now

one of the lowest-paid tool-rooms in the city.

After the recent electricians' dispute, Chrysler hired the Stratford Hilton hotel for a 'celebration' for all those who had scabbed on the strike. Such junketings — and not on a small scale — are a regular feature of Chrysler's operations. They spent £3 million on one binge in Malta for all their European dealers, to launch the 'Avenger' model.

Ken Gill, leader of the white collar union TASS and a member of the Communist Party, has described Chrysler as 'the easiest firm in the country to screw money out of'. He's probably right, from the point of view of the trade union officials who attend Chrysler's receptions and other events: but not from the point of view of the workers who have seen their relative wage rates pushed right down.

SIGNAL

Several prominent shop stewards at Chrysler's Coventry are already turning up for work in suits, and one has been known to start talking about "our employees". Ray Wild, until recently AUEW senior convenor at Stoke, has just taken up a management job as manager of the Sickness and Benevolent Fund.

Those who think they are playing clever by accepting the £50 bonus are simply closing their eyes to this obvious process of softening-up. Unless Linwood does stand out against the participation proposals, and unless that stand becomes a signal for the combine committee to start transforming itself into a leadership as hard and determined as, and with international links as good as, the Chrysler bosses, Chrysler workers will be delivering themselves into a very difficult trap.

DAVE SPENCER: 27-8-75

Mass picket halts police scab-herding

ON WEDNESDAY morning, a mass picket successfully frightened Wimpeys off from trying to send in 80 scabs to a new shipyard and modernisation site at the Cammell Laird shipyard, Birkenhead. The picket had been called by building workers who are demanding the right to work on the site.

The building workers had been employed by the original contractors on the site, Peter Lind - Simon Build. In January Peter Lind - Simon Build were "sacked" by Cammell Laird for not carrying out the contract with 'due diligence'. Immediately, the workers occupied the site demanding to keep their jobs whoever the contractor. This sit-in continued for five months.

In June, Cammell Laird gave the contract to Wimpeys for an extra £1 million. Wimpeys have, however, consistently refused to employ all the original workers. At one stage, they offered to take on 30 of the remaining 80, and in this they had the support of UCATT and T&GWU local officials. The

workers rejected the offer.

Wimpeys and Cammell Laird bosses have mounted a consistent campaign to try and defeat these workers by isolating them. They have told lies about supposed vandalism and about pickets spending their time in the pub, and have accused the workers of causing redundancies among Wimpeys own men.

Strong-arm

The workers have resisted these attacks, as they resisted Wimpeys attempt to get on the site in early July, by calling a mass picket for the site and closing down Cammell Laird for one day. During the first three weeks of this month Wimpeys tried to get through three more times, but were defeated each time.

On the 21st, however, two coachloads of scabs drove in after police had first smashed their way through the picket line. The pro-boss strong-arm tactics of the police were also used the following morning.

Over those two days, eleven pickets were arrested. They are on charges of breach of the peace, obstruction, being disorderly, and assault. They have been remanded on bail until October 7th. Bail is £100, with the condition that they do not go within half a mile of Cammell Laird's shipyard!

Wednesday's mass picket was called as a direct response to these violent attacks. The call was backed by Liverpool Trades Council. Wimpeys, despite talk of using helicopters and ships to get their scabs in, didn't attempt to break the picket line on that day.

But their express determination to break the strike still stands. The fight continues to get all workers on the job again. What is at stake is a crucial fight against redundancies, and a defence of the right to picket. All trade unionists and socialists must be prepared to answer any future calls for mass pickets and other forms of solidarity action.

JOHN BLOXAM

5,000 shipbuilding workers strike against wage cut

5000 outfitters at five Swan Hunter shipyards on the Tyne have been on strike for nearly two months now in the major challenge so far to the Government's £6 limit.

The boilermakers received £8.30 in June. The outfitting workers were offered £3.50 but refused it, demanding parity. Outfitters at Haverton and HM, on the Tees, who

accepted the £3.50, have since had it taken back by the Department of Employment because they had already had an increase in January. They have gone on a work to rule in protest as from 28th August.

In addition to UCATT and EEPTU, the other union involved is the AUEW, which says it opposes the £6 limit. Local

union officials have called for an inquiry into Swan Hunter, but very little has been done to publicise or win support for the dispute. Rank and file militants must cut through this blanket of silence and give support to those in the front line of the fight against the Government's wage-cutting policy.

LOL DUFFY: 27-8-75

MEETINGS

London Workers Fight readers' meeting: "THE COLLAPSE OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL AND THE TASKS OF WORKERS' FIGHT". Speaker: Sean Matgamna. 7.30pm, Sunday 21st September, at the 'George', Liverpool Road, N1.

Rochdale Workers Fight readers' meeting: Bas Hardy (Bermondsey LPYS) on "Where is Portugal going?". 7.30pm, Monday September 8th, at the Labour Party Committee Rooms, 14 Smith Street Rochdale.

Minority report from the Greater London Association of Trades Councils delegation to Belfast: Mike

Knowles, Rosemary Sales, and Gerry McMorrow will be speaking at 7.45pm on Monday 1st September, at Unity House, Euston Rd, London NW1. The majority of the delegation have been invited to send speakers. Organised by the Troops Out Movement.

The majority report is available from J. Dromey, 13 Plympton Rd, London NW6.

Norwood Labour Party Young Socialists: Debate on Ireland. Speakers from the 'Chartist', 'Militant', and 'Workers Fight'. 7.30pm, Thursday 4th September, at 264 Rosendale Rd, London

MOBILISE AGAINST THE NATIONAL FRONT! Hackney Trades Council is calling a counter

demonstration against the NF's planned march against "black muggers". Assemble in Victoria Park Square (near Bethnal Green underground station), 1pm, Saturday 6th September.

Defend the 16! Rally in support of the 16 people arrested for distributing leaflets to soldiers giving information on how to leave the army. Speakers include Lawrence Daly and Joan Maynard. 7.45pm at the Conway Hall.

PAMPHLETS

Available from 98 Gifford Street, London N1 0DF. Please include 5p to cover post & packing.

"For a Rank and File Movement" — Why a Rank & File Movement, 'A Programme for the Rank & File', 'Lessons we have to

learn', and 'Leading from behind'. 10p.

Articles on Women's Liberation — Equal Pay, Abortion, the Family, the Working Women's Charter, Wages for Housework, etc. 15p.

Racialism and the Working Class. A series of articles

exposing the 'reasonable sounding' arguments that back up racist ideas. 10p.

James Connolly and Ireland's Struggle for Freedom. The background to the situation in Ireland, the missed chances of the past, and the way forward now. 10p.

NUJ strike gets vital support

250 journalists, members of the National Union of Journalists, are approaching their 12th week on the streets after being locked out by the management of the Birmingham Post and Mail newspaper group. Although agreement in principle has now been reached on a £6 pay increase as from January 1st, 1976, pickets are still on and negotiations are continuing over manning and over pay for the 12-week lockout period.

Back in September last year, negotiations began for a house agreement on pay. In May they finally received a £1 per week offer which management itself described as "bloody paltry". The patience of the Chapel [NUJ office branch] gave out. They began to hold lightning disruptive meetings in work time.

When they voted to defy management threats of dismissal if the meetings continued, they found themselves on the streets, and in a very weak position.

They have been mounting 24-hour pickets for nearly three months, and yet the Post and Mail have continued to publish, and management claim that circulation is "holding up".

The Chapel is paying for the backwardness of the union. NUI policy has been not to fight for 100% membership, and to allow editors to scab on their members in dispute.

They have no way of preventing senior editorial staff, including the editor and some members of the NUJ's rival, the Institute of Journalists, producing the Post and Mail while they stand outside the gates.

The Chapel's own history is one of passivity. Now the passivity of the Union nationally has stabbed them in the back.

At the national Special Delegate Meeting of the NUJ in July, it was decided to hold a series of one day stoppages in solidarity with Birmingham. The first of these was called for August 7th, and then called off because the National Executive Committee 'felt a solution was in sight'.

On August 8th, ten NUJ pickets were arrested by plain clothes police, and charged with obstruction and disturbing the peace!

The strike call has not been renewed.

The NEC has allocated £1000 per week to help the Birmingham members in dispute, and has urged chapels, as instructed by the SDM, to send money. In a fortnight, the 28,000 members of the union had contributed the derisory sum of £1,200 to assist their brothers and sisters in dispute.

Although printworkers in other unions continued to cross the picket line, in the end it has been support from other trade unions which forced concessions out of the bosses. T&GWU drivers from the Post and Mail's usual contractors refused to cross the picket line to deliver newsprint, and NATSOPA printworkers refused to handle newsprint from other contractors.

In addition Birmingham's Labour council withdrew press facilities from the Post and Mail, and Transport House had said it would refuse the Post and Mail press credentials for this year's Labour Party conference.

Permanent Revolution 3

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Communism and Philistinism: the two souls of the Comintern

(An obituary article on JP Cannon and RP Dutt)

Editorial: The Left and the Common Market

IS and the Common Market (A document of the struggle of WF inside IS)

Bukharin on the Economics of the Transition Period

Polemical

Chile: drawing out the lessons? A letter and a reply



exposing the 'reasonable sounding' arguments that back up racist ideas. 10p.

Articles on Women's Liberation — Equal Pay, Abortion, the Family, the Working Women's Charter, Wages for Housework, etc. 15p.

Racialism and the Working Class. A series of articles