

RED WEEKLY

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ON
PORTUGAL
pages 5-8

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we break for two weeks.

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PORTUGAL: REVOLUTION

MUST WIN!



HOW TO DEFEND LIVING STANDARDS

Working class living standards will fall by 8 to 15 per cent over the next year as a result of the Healey measures. That was the warning brought to last weekend's conference of the Institute of Workers Control in Sheffield by Judith Hart MP, who resigned from the Government last month over the Cabinet reshuffle.

Defence of jobs and living standards are the central tasks facing the workers' movement. But the TUC has aided and abetted Wilson's onslaught, and most of those who oppose the measures are confused about the sorts of demands and methods of struggle necessary to beat the crisis.

The Communist Party, tail-ending the Labour lefts, has yet to propose a single concrete initiative to mobilise extra-parliamentary action against the Healey measures. The International Socialism group has contented itself with calls for more rank and file militancy, without saying around what demands and forms of action this militancy should be mobilised.

On the opposite page *Red Weekly* proposes a programme of action as the basis for a united response to the Government attacks. One of the central demands that we believe the workers' movement must create united action around is the sliding scale of wages and benefits — the automatic and complete protection of all working class incomes against the effects of inflation.

PERNICIOUS

One of the most pernicious ideas being put forward both by the capitalist press and the reformist leaders of the labour movement is that workers must make sacrifices to stop inflation because it hits their fellow

workers, particularly the low paid, harder than any other section of society. By claiming, as Wilson does, that wage-cut plans are really an 'anti-inflation' package, the Labour Government seeks to set low paid and high paid against each other.

VALUABLE

But these manoeuvres can be defeated. Even the experience of threshold agreements, which were far from being a comprehensive sliding scale, showed how automatic increases in wages to compensate for inflation benefited all workers, particularly the low paid.

A survey of 82 major national agreements for low-paid industries in the year 1 March 1974 to 28 February 1975 showed that 62 of the 82 settlements gave workers on a basic rate below £30 a week an increase greater than the 27.5 per cent increase in basic weekly rates estimated for all workers. But leaving aside the threshold agreements only 43 of the 82 settlements would have given an above average increase.

The value of threshold-type arrangements has also been shown by those groups of workers who won threshold deals extending beyond November 1974 — the final date set by the Tories' Phase 3 legislation. Last August 11,000 Kodak workers won a pay increase plus a threshold deal giving 1 per cent rises — payable quarterly — for every 1 per cent rise

in the retail price index. These were worth another 12.5 per cent wage increase at the time when they were consolidated into the basic rate in a recent new agreement.

Eighteen thousand London Tube staff are now one of the few groups of workers whose wages are protected by any sort of agreement against inflation. Recently Tube workers

money gained by many British Rail workers in their recent settlement. What is more the Tube workers have won a new threshold deal — payable quarterly — giving 0.75 per cent for every 1 per cent increase in the Retail Price Index after February 1975. This has already been worth another £3 a week.

No-one would argue that the



Denis Healey at Tolpuddle last weekend—looking for new martyrs to his policies

had £8 threshold payments consolidated into their basic rates — £3.60 more than British Rail staff, whose threshold agreement worth £4.40, ended last November. In fact the extra money gained by Tube workers through continued thresholds was larger than the increase in new

Phase 3 thresholds in themselves were adequate: they only started after the retail price index had already risen seven per cent; they were not calculated on a working class cost of living index; they did not take account of taxation and national insurance contributions; and the money increases given were not equivalent to the rise in prices. About 60p would be necessary to compensate for every one per cent rise in the retail price index.

However, the transformation of the threshold system into a genuine sliding scale of wages taking account of all these factors and extended to all state benefits, grants and pensions would be of great benefit to the whole working class.

Nine times out of ten the fight for a wage increase is in fact a fight

to compensate for the effects of inflation already suffered. The sliding scale would lay the basis for actually campaigning for increases in the real value of wages. Far from demobilising struggles, as the IS group claim, the existence of some form of sliding scale arrangement in Italy and Belgium has acted as a spur both for wages struggles and struggles around other social and political questions.

At the present time in Britain the fight for the sliding scale for all workers' incomes — and the Scottish TUC passed such a resolution at its annual conference this year — would cut across Wilson's propaganda that the relatively better paid are responsible for the misery of the lower paid. It would squarely place the responsibility for inflation where it belongs: on the back of the anarchic capitalist system.

SLIDING SCALE AND WORKERS' CONTROL

The sliding scale would also serve another purpose: by boosting working class consumption it would create more demand in the economy and consequently more jobs. This could produce worse inflation if industry remains in the hands of the capitalist class — who will maintain or increase production only for the purposes of profitability — but far from deterring the workers' movement from fighting for the sliding scale, it should inspire us to fight for control over the productive process itself, instituting a rational planning of production under the control of the workers in place of the dictates of capitalist profitability.

by James Drake



Workers at the Swan Hunter shipyards, Tyneside, are striking for a wage increase above the £6 limit

WORKERS AGAINST WILSON

Despite the confusion sown by the trade union leaderships and the lack of any fight from the Labour 'lefts', some workers are beginning the fight back against Wilson's Tory policies.

- At GEC Stafford 2,500 workers have already been out nearly seven weeks for £10 across the board. In spite of the new Healey plan for £6 a week, we're staying out for the £10, said Bill Hughes, deputy AUEW convenor.

- 500 hourly-paid and white-collar workers at the light engineering Carr Fastner Company in Stapleford and Worksoy walked out within days of the White Paper being published when management only offered them the £6 increase.

- 1,500 Bristol and Avonmouth dockers are taking guerrilla industrial action in pursuit of a £10 a week cost of living

claim. Sanctions have also been imposed by 2,300 Southampton dockers for more than a month in pursuit of a 'substantial' cost of living claim.

- On Tyneside a veritable strike wave is taking place. Fifteen thousand workers have been on strike or laid off in struggles for claims well over the proposed £6 limit.

- At Swan Hunter shipyards 5,000 ancillary workers, members of several unions, are engaged in joint action for the first time in pursuit of a claim in line with the recent boilermakers' settlement of £8.30.

- 4,000 manual workers at C A Parson's Heaton plant are holding out for their full claim of £10 across the board.

workers at their South Shields and Sunderland plants in retaliation against strike action by clerical workers, members of APEX, who have rejected a revised offer of £6 to £7.50.

From 1 August these workers will be confronting not only their own employers but the Government as well. The establishment of broad based action committees to unite the struggles would strengthen the fight for the individual claims and show how to defeat Healey's measures.

- If Tyneside shows the way, the clothing workers' pay negotiations show what the low paid can expect from the £6 limit. The National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers are claiming the £6 for their 120,000 members. They've been offered just £3.60.

HOW THE SLIDING SCALE WORKS

The threshold system of cost-of-living increases, as we point out above, by no means gives such a comprehensive protection of wages against inflation as would a sliding scale. The following calculations, based on an extension of thresholds after November 1974 shows the value of the sliding scale system.

In October 1973 the Retail Price Index stood at 185.4. For the purpose of threshold trigger points this was taken as 100. Of course the first 7 per cent rise in the RPI was not paid for, and the threshold payment of 40p was one per cent of a wage of £40 — well below average industrial earnings.

A year later the new RPI stood at 113.2. If we take this as a base point for calculating the increase in the cost of living in a similar way to the threshold 'trigger' system we get:

	Retail Price Index	% average increase over October 1974	Trigger Points Monthly	Cumulative
October 1974	113.2	—	—	—
November 1974	115.2	1.8%	2	2
December 1974	116.9	3.3%	1	3
January 1975	119.9	5.9%	3	6
February 1975	121.9	7.7%	2	8
March 1975	124.3	9.8%	2	10
April 1975	129.1	14.0%	4	14
May 1975	134.5	18.8%	5	19
June 1975	137.1	21.1%	2	21

To give complete protection against inflation to a wage of £40 a threshold of 60p (not 40p) would be needed for each trigger point. For the period since October 1974 this would mean a threshold payment of 21 times 60p = £12.60 just to keep pace with the cost of living up to the end of June. On £50 a week, which is nearer to the average wage, a total threshold payment of 21 times 75p = £15.75 would have been needed.

Without this type of sliding scale arrangement, most workers have at best been



Mick Gosling writes on 'the Prentice affair'

PRENTICE OUT!

It will be little short of a miracle, and a real victory for the working class, if Newham North-East Labour Party succeeds on 23 July in ditching right wing Labour MP Reg Prentice as its candidate at the next election.

On top of a scurrilous press campaign, 180 Labour MPs — including 13 Cabinet ministers and some members of the so-called 'left-wing' Tribune group — have called on the Constituency Labour Party to drop the sacking moves. These contemptible hypocrites, who applaud Wilson's draconian wage-cutting measures which threaten to wreck the labour movement, claim that dropping Prentice would prove 'extremely damaging to the labour movement'.

As if sacking a man who has joined with Heath on pro-Common Market platforms, called for coalition government, implemented and extended Tory education cuts, and slandered the jailed Shrewsbury pickets and the Clay Cross Councilors, could do anything but strengthen the labour movement.

Corruption

The Labour MPs attacking the Newham party members are the same people who were silent when Alderman Andrew Cunningham, a member of the Labour Party National Executive Committee and a full time official with the General & Municipal Workers Union, was being jailed for his part in the Poulson corruption case. Nor did they lift a finger to defend Eddie Milne, then Labour MP for Blyth, when he was sacked by his constituency party for demanding an enquiry into corruption throughout the North East Labour Party. But then Milne was a 'left', fighting for democracy in the workers' movement, not making a fast buck out of building fiddles.

While the right in the Labour Par-

Biggest evening sale in the world

Evening News

LONDON: THURSDAY JULY 17 1975

CLOSE THE HEAVENLY VANISH

The man behind the Prentice storm

KELLY 'A CURSE ON SOCIETY'

TONY KELLY

ty is on the offensive, spearheaded by the Social Democratic Alliance and backed by every section of the capitalist press, the 'lefts' — who include East London MPs Ian Mikardo and Jo Richardson — have said nothing in support of the members of Newham North East Labour Party who are trying to establish a basic working class principle that their elected representatives should be responsible to and recallable by them. Nor have they campaigned to defend Arthur Scargill, who stands to be censured for a 'breach of parliamentary privilege' for demanding that Labour MPs who wish to be sponsored by the miners should tol-

low miners' policy, i.e. for challenging the right of MPs to do just what they like once they reach Westminster.

These incidents are not isolated. At a time of growing economic and political crisis the demand by the rank and file of the working class organisations that their leaders represent their interests and be accountable to them will increase. Such moves, while not turning these organisations into weapons to achieve socialism, could seriously undermine their usefulness to the capitalist class as a means by which to contain the class struggle. This is why the Prentice case and Scargill's comments have aroused such fear and such a hysterical reaction in capitalist circles.

Dissolved

Along with the supporters of the Social Democratic Alliance, they would dearly like to see a return to the days when the National Executive would simply have closed down a Constituency Labour Party if a vote of no confidence was passed in a MP. When the General Management Committee of the Liverpool Exchange CLP passed a vote of no confidence in Bessie Braddock, the GMC was promptly dissolved and a more amenable one found. No doubt this is the sort of democracy the Social Democratic Alliance and the capitalist class support. But the 'lefts' have totally failed to challenge this by publicly supporting the Newham North East Labour Party and Arthur Scargill's comments.

Mass action

The moves to ditch Prentice deserve the support of all socialists, inside and outside the Labour Party. But the only effective way of dealing with the right wing leadership of the Labour Party is to organise mass united action against Wilson's capitalist policies and, as a first step, against the Healey austerity measures. It is only by fighting for an alternative workers' plan to beat the crisis that the Wilsons, the Prentices, and their equivalents in the trade unions will be ousted for good from the

IN FOCUS

Uniting the left against Wilson

The Common Market referendum, the subsequent Government reshuffle, and now the Healey measures clearly constitute a decisive turning point in the history of the Labour Government.

It is true that from its first days in office the Government has defended the basic interests of capitalism, taking a series of openly reactionary actions (refusal to release the Shrewsbury pickets, use of troops in Glasgow, etc.). But equally it cannot be denied that the economic situation of the working class has been better than under the Tories, despite the existence of the Social Contract. Working class living standards rose by an average 4 to 5 per cent between June and December last year, for instance, while the early freeze on rents together with some food subsidies undoubtedly aided the lowest paid.

In this first period of Government the Labour bureaucrats, scared by the display of working class strength which had brought about the downfall of Heath, did not dare risk any centralised confrontation. Instead they prepared the way by concentrating on what they saw as the weakest links of working class resistance — issues such as the conspiracy laws, abortion, and Ireland.

The depth of the economic crisis would not allow the Labour Government to continue with this 'salami' tactic for any length of time, however. No major attack could be launched before the EEC referendum — membership of the Common Market was vital for the capitalist class, and any action which might have jeopardised a 'Yes' vote was out of the question. But as soon as the referendum was successfully out of the way, the Government was able to unleash its offensive against the working class. The Healey measures are a first instalment, to be followed by massive cuts in public expenditure and a huge growth in unemployment as the year draws to a close.

'lefts' fail again

The response of the 'left' Labour and trade union bureaucracy to this attack has been utterly pathetic. Once again it has been shown that no section of the labour bureaucracy can be relied upon to put up a serious fight in defence of the interests of the working class. Illusions in figures like Scargill as qualitatively different to other left social democrats have received a shattering blow.

Although quite radical left noises have been heard, every single section of the left bureaucracy from Benn through the Tribunes to Scargill has capitulated when it came to the crunch. It is this open crisis of leadership which has inevitably produced a certain demoralisation and disorientation within the working class in response to the Healey measures.

Yet despite this setback it would be incorrect to compare the present situation to 1966, when it took three years for mass working class resistance to get going following the infamous 'July measures'.

The whole international context — with powerful working class upsurges in Portugal, Spain, Italy and elsewhere — is now far more favourable. The economic and social crisis has developed much further. Most importantly, the working class has been through the most massive struggles since the 1920s without suffering any defeat on the scale of 1926 or 1931. All this means that the inevitable lull in mass struggles must be measured in months and not years, while on many other fronts on which the fight is being waged against the Wilson Government (campaigns on Portugal, abortion, Ireland, etc.) there is unlikely to be any serious downturn at all.

Furthermore, flowing from these other aspects of the situation, the forces which today stand clearly opposed to Wilson and his policies are quantitatively stronger than they were in 1966. Then the revolutionary left was a few hundred people; today just the members of the Trotskyist organisations number 6-7,000, while those they influence must be counted in tens of thousands. In 1966 only one major union opposed Wilson's measures; today as many as three million votes may be cast against incomes policy at the TUC Congress.

programme

What is still lacking, though, is any co-ordination of all these forces around common demands, common objectives, and common forms of organisation. It is the lack of united action on a basic programme for the situation which is the decisive weakness holding back the left in its struggle against Wilson.

- We believe that to achieve this will require three decisive steps:
- on the question of programme, any set of demands must include the following: a sliding scale of wages, hours, and public expenditure; the nationalisation of all firms creating redundancy; opposition to any form of incomes policy; immediate withdrawal of troops from Ireland; free abortion and contraception on demand; solidarity with the Iberian revolution; and many more.
 - on objectives, we believe that as the first step to the construction of a revolutionary party, the task must be to replace the existing leadership of the working class at every level — from the trade union branches to the Wilson leadership of the Labour Party — with forces clearly opposed to the Healey measures and all other aspects of Wilson's policies.
 - at the level of organisation, what is required is a united front within the mass organisations of the working class of all those prepared to struggle against Wilson's policies. The touchstone for such a united front must be the Healey measures — all working class forces opposed to them have their place in such a united front despite any incorrect positions they may have on other questions; while those who support the Healey measures should be excluded.

Such a united front, while having its main base in the trade unions, must pull in every working class organisation from Constituency Labour Parties through campaign organisations such as TOM and NAC up to every trade union body. Its aim must be to fight for the decisive points of the programme and for the removal of the Wilson leadership.

It is to the construction of such a united front, centralising all the existing campaigns and struggles of the working class, that socialists must direct their efforts in the coming struggle.

Daily Mail

THURSDAY, JULY 17, 1975

6p (2 copies)

FURY OVER MP'S PAY PAGE NINE

Daily Mail exclusive on the battle for a Minister's seat

EXPOSED— THE MAN BEHIND THE PRENTICE PLOT

TONY KELLY

By ANDREW WOODLEY and FRANK THOMPSON

The wife and children Tony Kelly left eight years ago

A DAILY MAIL special investigation has uncovered the carefully guarded background of Mr. Tony Kelly.

Tony Kelly, a Labour Party official in the Newham North-East constituency, has been the focal point of the press smear campaign to save Prentice. His personal life has been dragged through the gutter, and minor criminal offences committed years ago — such as stealing a road lamp and possessing cannabis — have become headline news.

Not once have the members of Newham North-East Labour Party who want to drop Prentice been allowed to explain their political reasons for wanting to do so. If anyone has been the victim of a witch-hunt in 'the Prentice affair' it is these people. They have been accused of being a tiny handful of unrepresentative people, despite the fact that any successful motion to sack Prentice would have to be supported by a majority of delegates to the General Management Committee representing 20 separate wards, trade unions and affiliated bodies.

Not so the capitalist press. Three corporations own 64 per cent of all national daily newspapers and 94 per cent of popular daily circulation. The Daily Mail, which has spearheaded the campaign against Kelly, has suddenly developed a touching interest in the welfare of the Labour Party. This rag, which preaches doom and destruction for the workers' movement if Prentice goes, has a memorable record: in the past it has supported Mosley, Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, while more recently it slandered the Shrewsbury Two while they were in jail and unable to reply to such attacks.

Militants in the labour movement will reply by giving their wholehearted support

IWC - A FALTERING STEP

The Institute for Workers Control Conference held last weekend in Sheffield took a number of steps forward. It took, virtually for the first time in its history, a resolution on a burning issue of the day - the Healey measures; it clearly projected at least some future action - a series of industry meetings and notably a reconvened winter conference; it took some correct positions on the struggle in Portugal; and the conference was a model of workers' democracy in allowing all viewpoints a clear opportunity to be expressed.

But the weak aspects of the conference were also very clear - the vagueness of the resolution adopted, the failure to extend the range of issues the Institute deals with, the lack of clear enough organisational projections, the ambiguous attitude to the left labour bureaucracy. All these stem from the very nature of the political strategy proposed by the IWC.

STRATEGY

The strategy of the IWC is clearly to build a united front which extends from the highest levels of the left bureaucracy - notably Benn - through to the Communist Party and the revolutionary groups. That is not in itself an ignoble ambition. If the left bureaucrats were, despite their reformism, opposed to the Government's policies on central questions of the day, then the creation of such a united front would be a perfectly correct thing to seek.

In the case of some of the 'lefts' - Audrey Wise, Ernie Roberts, Bill Jones, etc - there is no doubt that they do oppose the most central Government policy of the day - the Healey measures. No matter what the limited nature of their proposals for action against the measures, it is perfectly correct - indeed absolutely necessary - to engage in united action with these forces. But the problem comes when an attempt is made to create that unity across the crucial dividing line of the day.

Where this showed up most clearly was in the attitude of the conference towards Benn and towards the Labour Party Manifesto.

INCONGRUITY

In the case of Benn there was a complete incongruity. On the one hand the conference passed a resolution condemning the Healey measures. Yet it heard as the main speaker a member of the Government imposing these measures.

The same thing occurred over the Labour Party Manifesto. The conference voted that the Manifesto - not even parts of it, but the whole thing - should be the basis for any campaign against the Healey measures. The IWC, of course, may consider that the heart of the Manifesto is the 'fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and power' of which it talks. In the real world, however - and even apart from

by Alan Jones

its totally reactionary positions on questions such as Ireland - the guts of the Manifesto was the very Social Contract against which whole sections of militant workers voted and struggled, and which provided the ideological lead-in for the present incomes policy. A campaign on certain points of the Manifesto is one thing - although hardly an adequate basis for struggles - but to endorse the whole thing including the Social Contract is absurd.

These contradictions actually leave the IWC paralysed. It is very much like the situation in 1970, when the Institute got 1,000 delegates to its winter conference. But then it refused, because of its links at that time with Jones and Scanlon, to take a clear position in favour of the political strike called on 8 December against the Industrial Relations Bill. The result was that instead of the IWC growing rapidly as a central focus for struggle against the Bill it rapidly lost support. It has never since had a conference on the same scale as 1970.

CROSSROADS

Now, five years later, the IWC stands at a similar crossroads. It could play a massive role as one of the central organisers of united action against the policies of the Wilson Government. This would not mean a break with the left MPs and trade union bureaucrats who clearly oppose measures such as the present incomes policy - indeed these forces should be included in united action. But such a policy does mean breaking with anyone not prepared to oppose Wilson and his policies openly. If the IWC is not prepared to make that break it will both act against the interests of the working class and shrivel into an even smaller group bypassed by wider developments.

What then, should be the attitude of revolutionary socialists to the IWC? For the moment there is a convergence of interest - for how long, only time will tell - between the needs of the working class, the needs of the revolutionary left, and the strategy of the IWC. What is needed is a united front of all those who are opposed to the Healey meas-



Ken Coates addresses the Conference

ures and other central policies of this Government. In this the interests of the IWC - which starts off from the bureaucracy and extends down towards the left - coincide with the interests of the revolutionary socialists - who start with the needs of the working class, but are not frightened of united action with sections of the bureaucracy if this takes forward the class struggle.

Whether such united action can go on for any long period of time of course depends on the developing situation in the class struggle - and within the Labour Party, in particular. If the IWC refuses to break with those who remain on the wrong side of the fence on questions such as the Healey measures, then any collaboration between the main forces of the revolutionary left and the IWC will break down.

On the other hand, if the IWC breaks with those who refuse to oppose Wilson

openly, or if Benn & Co. are forced by the pressure of their base into at least vacillating opposition to Wilson, then the IWC - along with organisations such as the Chile Solidarity Campaign, the Troops Out Movement, the Medical Committee Against Private Practice, the National Abortion Campaign, and the movement in solidarity with the Portuguese revolution - can be one of the channels through which the revolutionary left and the Labour left can both debate their differences and engage in united action.

TRAJECTORY

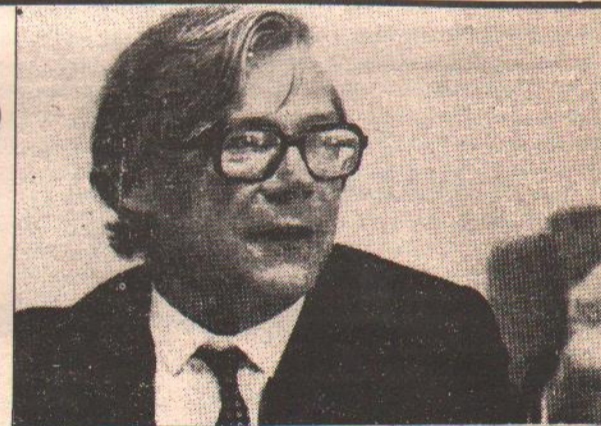
At the moment the trajectory of the IWC in this phase of the class struggle is still not clear or decided. The attitude of revolutionary socialists to the IWC should be one of attempting to ensure the best outcome and should be one of genuine collaboration with an aim not of

short term manoeuvres but of thrashing out a basis for joint activity.

In this context two tasks are posed. Firstly to ensure that the IWC keeps to its call for industry conferences - and above all for a reconvened winter conference - and to build those conferences in a big way. Secondly, to engage in a debate between the revolutionary left and the forces in and around the Institute on the basis on which united action can go forward - something which will permit a better debate than the sometimes scrappy ones at this conference.

If these two steps are taken, and provided revolutionary socialists are prepared to break with the forces in the IWC if and when they cross over the crucial dividing lines of the moment, then a genuine and not sectarian unity in action can be achieved, and the IWC can become a means by which the revolutionary left and the Labour left can engage in a struggle for common objectives.

HOMELESS UNDER ATTACK



GLC Under Sheriff, Alastair Black, who claims that there are few genuine homeless people today!

Tony Kelly from Newham isn't the only militant suffering a witch-hunt at the hands of the capitalist press. In recent weeks a carefully co-ordinated attack on squatters and the right to protest and occupy by students, tenants and trade unionists has also got underway. Strangely synchronised letters in *The Times* from politicians, civil servants and private individuals have been carefully orchestrated through the mass media and the gutter press into a vicious attack on squatters.

The squatters' movement has grown as a result of thousands of people, particularly in London, taking over property left empty either for speculation or to fall into neglect. The attack on squatting has seized on the actions of a tiny number of people - conveniently termed squatters - who have allegedly taken over *lived in* houses. At most they number less than one tenth of one per cent of all squatters. Yet although it would be possible for the owners to take legal action here, they have instead been used as an excuse for attacking all squatters - and more.

The Greater London Council and local councils are using the witch-hunt to blame squatters for the housing crisis and cover up the even more savage housing cuts which will come in the wake of the Healey measures. They are preparing the way for mass evictions and changes

to justify the use of bands of uniformed thugs - 'security forces' - as an illegal eviction force to attack the homeless.

Islington Council, presumably working with the GLC dirty tricks department through the London Boroughs Association, now plans to force the electricity and gas boards to cut off supplies to squatters in council property. No doubt the GLC will soon be taking measures to stop squatters from even buying food.

CONFIDENTIAL

The true facts about squatting are in fact revealed in a survey carried out by Lambeth Council and revealed in a confidential report to the Housing Committee (No. H.C. 108/74-75). It reveals (paragraphs 1.2 and 1.4) that over 60 per cent of squatted dwellings in Lambeth are occupied by families. Two thirds of the squatters came from

It is not squatters - the homeless who take action - who cause the housing crisis. It is caused by speculators, councils and the Government.

The solution is to fight for policies which defend the right of housing for all:-

- Stop the cuts in housing. Start inflation-proof social spending - including housing, with automatic increases for every rise in the cost-of-living-index.
- Immediate requisitioning of all empty property for the homeless.
- A crash programme of Government financed repairs and building. Use up the brick mountain and land bank!
- Stop the Criminal Trespass Law proposals, and instead give squatters legal protection against all harassment and make owners prove need for usage of property before getting a possession order.
- Nationalisation of building industry without loss of jobs. End unemployment in the building industry.
- End interest payments on money borrowed for housing programmes (at present 90 per cent of GLC rents go straight to the City as interest repayments).

WHAT'S ON

CUTBACKS IN THE NHS and how to fight them - meeting to discuss the situation in the Westminster area and thrash out campaign to defend NHS and fight private practice. Thurs 24 July, 7pm, St George's Hospital (large lecture theatre, medical school), Hyde Park Corner. Speakers include Jamie Morris (Westminster Hospital NUPE), Steve Johnson (NALGO health services officer) and Berry Beaumont (MCAPP/NAC).

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

PICKET RHODESIA HOUSE: in support of political prisoners facing trial and death penalty. Friday 8 August, 12-2pm (opposite Charing X station in the Strand). Organised by AAM.

'NO TO WAGE-CUT PLANS': Birmingham IMG public meeting, Tues 12 August, 7.30pm in Digbeth Civic Hall (Lecture Room 1). Speaker: Tony Homer (Sec. Oxford CSEU - in personal capacity).

WOMEN AND IRELAND: Conference called by Bristol TOM. Speakers include Anne Speed (Irish T&G shop steward), Fran Brodie (NUPE shop steward, Manchester), Maria O'Brien (NUPE shop steward, Bristol) and woman from Clann na hEireann. Sat 26 July at Friends Meeting House, Hampton Rd, Redland, Bristol. Registration 9.30am, conference from 10am-6pm. Creche provided, and meals available. Entrance 50p.

BROADSIDE MOBILE WORKERS THEATRE need versatile actor, and efficient, dynamic administrator. Committed socialists only. Administrator must have experience of the labour movement. Phone 01-730 5396, or write to 58 Holbein House, Holbein Place, London SW1W 8NJ.

SOCIALIST FORUMS on Tuesdays at the Metropolitan Pub, 95 Farringdon Road, at 7.30pm. 29 July: 'The Incomes Policy - Wilson's Drive to

SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY. Public meeting, 26 July at 7.30pm, Central Hall, Westminster (tube Westminster). Speakers: Carrillo, general secretary Spanish CP; a member of the EC of the British CP.

REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP Day-school on 'Chauvinism, Economism and the Current Crisis'. Saturday 2 Aug, 10am-6pm, The Enterprise Pub (Chalk Farm tube). Sessions on Fascism, Women and Ireland. For information on speakers and suggested reading write to David Yaffe, 78 Parkhill Road, NW3 2YT.

NEW WORKERS FIGHT PAMPHLET - For A Rank and File Movement - articles include 'Why a Rank and File Movement', 'A Programme for the Rank and File', and 'Lessons we have to learn'. Available from C. Whytehead, 2 Saville Place, Bristol 8. Price 10p + 5p p&p.

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL From Northern Ireland Campaign: meeting Fri 25 July, 8pm, at 6 Endleigh St, WC1 to discuss action around trials.

'THE SPECTRE' - monthly paper of the Revolutionary Marxist Current. First issue now available from Red Books (Liverpool), 81a Renshaw St., Liverpool 1. Send 10p for one copy. Annual sub £1.50.

CARDIFF PUBLIC MEETING: 'No to any incomes policy'. Thurs 24 July, 7.30pm, Adamsdown Hotel, Meteor St. Speaker: Tim Hall (IMG Nat Org).

DISCUSSION MEETING around IMG pamphlet on Housing, Squatting and the Urban Crisis. Introduced by Jeff Lever (NALGO) and Piers Corby. Roebuck pub, 108 Tottenham Court Rd (Warren St tube). Friday 25 July, 7.30pm.

FREE DESMOND TROTTER Campaign: Picket Fri 25 July, 4.30-6pm, outside Foreign Office.

CAMPAIGN FOR REPEAL of the 1971 Immigration Act: all groups and individuals who agree with aim of mobilising a mass movement around this question are invited to attend the Campaign's next meeting - Fri 25 July, 7.30pm at the Basement Flat, 101 Gower Street, WC1. Meetings every Friday. Further information from: Franco Caprino, Secre-

PORTUGAL

All across Portugal, reactionaries are rallying behind the banner of 'democracy', and their howls are being taken up by the press and capitalist politicians of the imperialist world. But the 'democracy' which the Portuguese reactionaries and their current spokesmen, the leaders of the Portuguese Socialist Party, want is *capitalist* democracy — based on the unfettered freedom of capital and the continued exploitation of the working class.

It is no wonder that among the foremost sponsors in Britain of the Socialist Party's defence of 'democracy' are the *Daily Mail*, erstwhile supporter of the 'democracy' of Mussolini; the *Daily Telegraph*, whose idea of 'freedom' is embodied in the Chile of Pinochet; and the *Daily Express*, which wrote last Friday (18 July) that

'NATO, a military alliance based on the principle "attack one, attack us all", should rescue a people who are being attacked from within'.

What is frightening these reactionary circles is the threat to capitalism posed by a new sort of democracy that is being born in Portugal today: *workers' democracy*, the creation of democratic bodies of workers' power. In the following pages we look at these developments, what they imply, and how the imperialists and their agents are attempting to frustrate them. We also look on page 8 at the growing crisis in the Portuguese colony of Angola, and the dangers here too of open imperialist intervention.

THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER



Portugal today is the scene of massive political mobilisations as hundreds of thousands of people come out onto the streets, either to demonstrate their determination to push forward the socialist revolution, or to demand the preservation of capitalism under hypocritical and phony slogans about 'democracy'.

The Socialist Party of Mario Soares has become the banner under which all sorts of reactionaries, many heavily compromised by their involvement with the fascist regime, have come together to try to confuse and divide the mass of exploited Portuguese people and regain their political influence. While the Socialist Party leaders are undoubtedly supported by many confused workers from small towns and more backward industries, as well as poor peasants influenced by the Catholic Church, it would seem that the bulk of the forces rallying behind their banner have little to do with the workers' movement. This is suggested by the following facts:

1 At no time in its reactionary campaign — either over the newspaper *Republica* or its resignation from the Government — has the Socialist Party received support from a single important body of the workers' movement. Not a single trade union, local assembly, or major group of workers has backed the SP. On the contrary, many of these groups have been the most determined opponents of the SP leaders (despite the fact that they include many rank-and-file SP members) and have gone well to the left of the Communist Party in their political demands.

2 Immediately after it left the Government the Socialist Party called a demonstra-

elections the SP received almost 600,000 votes in Lisbon, and another 250,000 in the surrounding region. Yet this demonstration gathered only 15,000 — a pathetic turnout by Portuguese standards (the demonstration called the previous day by the workers' organisations had been more than 100,000 strong).

3 The political complexion of this demonstration was so reactionary that it embarrassed the SP leaders. The first SP speaker was booed by the crowd because he was too 'moderate'. When Soares mentioned the name of General Saraiva de Carvalho (commander of the security forces and leading figure of the 'left' in the Armed Forces Movement) the crowd took up the chauvinist chant 'He is not Portuguese' (referring to the fact that Saraiva de Carvalho was born in Mozambique), and Soares felt obliged to interrupt his speech and defend Saraiva de Carvalho!

When a Socialist Party official appeared from the town of Rio Maior, where right wing demonstrators had burnt down the headquarters of the Communist Party the previous day, the crowd (obviously heavily infiltrated by provocateurs) shouted 'He knows what to do' and 'On to *Republica*'. The Socialist Party's stewards had to physically restrain their 'supporters' from marching on the *Republica* building and trying to repeat the Rio Maior sack-

4 Last weekend the Socialist Party and their allies the Popular Democrats were able to hold mass demonstrations in Lisbon and the northern city of Porto — but only by shipping in large numbers of people from the bastions of reaction in the northern rural areas.

Within days of the resignation of the Socialist Party ministers from the Government and the launching of their campaign to mobilise reactionary forces in the country, their political backers in the imperialist countries moved into action to back them up.

COMMON MARKET INTERVENTION

Two days after the Socialists left the Government the Common Market decided to reimpose customs duties on the import of Portuguese textiles to EEC countries. This was supposedly due to the severe competition British textile manufactures are facing from Portugal, but imports from Portugal account for only 10 per cent of Britain's total textile imports, and no other country is covered by this decision.

The Portuguese textile industry is dominated by American and European multi-nationals who chose to take advantage of the cheap labour available under fascism to produce for the world market. The Portuguese textile industry is thus very dependent on exports, and these new EEC measures are expected to have a devastating effect: they could lead to closure of 50 per cent of the country's textile factories.

Five days after the departure of the SP

met to discuss aid to Portugal. For months they have been holding out tantalising promises of aid if the Portuguese Government would show respect for imperialist interests. But the departure of Soares gave cause for concern that the growing struggles of the Portuguese working class might actually drag the country out of the imperialist orbit. So no aid was forthcoming — and Harold Wilson and James Callaghan left the conference uttering ominous threats about 'a catastrophic course of economic isolation' facing Portugal if it didn't come to heel.

The effect of measures such as these will be to worsen the already serious economic crisis hitting the Portuguese economy as a result of sabotage by national and international capital. It will create just the right climate for Soares and the Socialist Party to push their 'solution' of dependence on imperialist aid and investment, and the granting of whatever 'assurances' are necessary to get it.

BUILD SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

But it will also create the perfect climate for far more reactionary forces than Soares & Co. to crawl out of the woodwork and start mobilising large numbers of people and building up their support inside the army. Soares, Wilson and Callaghan are all working hard to prepare another 'Chile' for the Portuguese people. It is the task of the international labour movement, through the preparation of a massive solidarity movement, to ensure that the only graves these people are allowed to dig are their own.



Workers' control - springboard to workers' power

Extracts from the speech of Marcolino Abrantes, Vice-President of the Portuguese Textile Union, at the Institute of Workers' Control Conference. The speech is reprinted with his permission.

The situation in Portugal is characterised by an open struggle against the various aspects of capitalism. Against the power that capital holds over the means of production, against its ideology which through schools, the mass media and even the political parties imposes forms of thinking and living which are alien to the working class. In these fields, important victories have already been won, which were by no means an automatic outcome of 25 April 1974. They were won through struggle, and have led, for example, to nationalisations, the beginnings of agrarian reform, and freedom from manipulation through schools and above-all through the press and radio.

The struggle of the workers of the newspaper *Republica* is a clear example of this. The fact that a party which has clearly not been defending the interests of the workers wanted to control the paper to express exclusively its own positions shows the importance of the struggle in this field. The fact that workers were not prepared to give in, but on the contrary were prepared to fight against reactionary manoeuvres, was clearly demonstrated again by the workers of the Catholic-owned radio station Radio Renascença who, with the support of the organised working class, fought off all attempts by the Church to impose its control.

Decisive moments

We are now in my country living through decisive moments for the future of the revolutionary process. We are living through a time when, on the surface, there is a certain disorientation. The Government is the first to recognise its inability to govern. The Constituent Assembly has become the place where the forces of fascism (CDS) and the social democracy (PPD and PS) publicise their intentions of stopping the revolutionary process. The inter-party struggle has become heightened. There exist in Portugal revolutionary parties, counter-revolutionary parties, and parties which hesitate between the two.

The only organs which in this situation have shown the capacity of uniting and advancing the progressive forces are the organisations which the workers themselves have built up through all these months of struggle: they are the workers' committees, the neighbourhood committees, and the village councils. This is why popular power must be strengthened, in order to be able to give a political response to the economic crisis which the country is now going through, in order to put the economy at the service of the working people.

The struggle for power has been most advanced at the point of production. The working class have gained victories at this level which have forced the bosses to retreat. Workers' committees have taken the lead in these struggles. More recently they have begun to take up issues like control over production in cases such as the nationalisation of banks, insurance companies, shipping and airlines, railways,

power stations, oil refineries, steel industries, the CUF monopoly, petrochemicals, metal industry and the partial taking over of big agricultural estates. Working class pressure forced the Supreme Council of the Revolution to nationalise these sectors, raising the issue of workers control as a decisive step towards the advance of socialism.

Only the establishment, within a global perspective, of workers' power in every place of work can turn the nationalisations into an attack on profit, on the capitalised division of labour, on the reactionary discipline of the bosses on the one hand, and into a process of transformation of the Portuguese economy on the other, so that it will satisfy the fundamental needs of the workers.



Photo: ANDREW WIARD (Report)

MARCOLINO ABRANTES

Workers' control over production in the nationalised and private companies goes beyond the purely economic struggle. It poses clearly the question of power, not only in the factory, but within the general economic context. It means to veto and to control management decisions and policies which oppose the interests of the workers, and of the revolutionary process, and to impose decisions and policies which will help them to go forward when faced with a management and a state economic policy which continues to be essentially capitalist.

Workers' control is the springboard for workers' and people's power. It points the way towards a working class offensive which is the only way of making the capitalists pay for a crisis that they themselves have created.

Power of capital

Workers' control has to be based on bodies which challenge the power of capital, and these bodies have to be strengthened and extended to all factories and branches of industry. Such bodies of working class struggle and power are provided by the *Workers' Committees*. They are the basis of workers' control. Born out of the needs of the economic struggle, and deriving many characteristics from trade union organisation, many workers' committees have gone beyond the sphere of economic struggle, and

because of the depth of the economic crisis, have operated at a level at which the problem of power has been clearly posed.

The struggles against economic sabotage, against the refusal to pay wages, for the purging of fascists from the administration, have all reached the proportions, and taken on the forms (such as factory occupations), in which the power of the capitalists has been effectively fought.

From the north to the south of Portugal, the struggle of textile workers has decisively contributed to this. For example, when the French bosses of SOGANTAL tried to get into the factory and remove the machinery and finished goods, the workers reacted by locking them inside.

Bounced cheques

Likewise in the CHARMINHA factory - where the Austrian boss tried to pay the wages with cheques that bounced and then fled the country - workers occupied the factory immediately and began to sell the products in order to guarantee their wages.

This was also the case when the textile workers came out onto the streets in a huge demonstration demanding revolutionary measures which would deal with the sabotage by reactionary bosses, who were doing all they could to close their factories, run away with the machinery and sabotage the economy.

Workers' Committees, with their real experience of struggle, democratically elected, and working in cooperation with the trade union committees are the ground on which workers' control must be based.

National level

It is not enough to ensure working class dominance through the workers' organisations at factory level in order to guarantee control over production in the nationalised industries. What is at stake is the whole economy and this requires the creation of organs of control at sectional, regional and national levels.

As workers' control over production is a step towards people's power, workers' control has to be based on workers' democracy - that is, on elections of all representatives, on direct democracy, and on the mass meetings. The narrow anti-monopolism which considers nationalisations as an end in themselves will be superseded by the principled anti-capitalism which knows that to nationalise the key sectors of the economy is not enough; above all it is necessary to introduce qualitative changes in the relations of work and of production in the nationalised industries.

Shortcomings

Workers' control over production must be seen as a basis for overcoming the present shortcomings of the workers' organisations. It will also point towards the formation of workers' councils which will be organs of popular power, which will unite, within a given region, the struggles of the industrial working class and its allies, namely other workers, soldiers and sailors.

So, comrades, the struggle must move onto the offensive. It must be an anti-capitalist and not merely an anti-monopolist struggle. In this struggle the solidarity of the British and European working class is fundamental, and

The big world demo

An instrument working class



On 10 July the Lisbon newspaper *Republica* appeared on the streets of Lisbon once again - but this time under workers' control.

Shut down since 19 May because of a bitter row between the newspapers' workers and its editors - the latter being backed by the journalistic staff, a majority of whom were members of the Socialist Party - *Republica* became the first rallying point for the reactionary campaign launched by Socialist Party general secretary Mario Soares.

But the workers were determined to make *Republica* into a truly independent paper in the service of the working class, rather than the undercover organ of the Socialist Party that it had become. Despite the capitulation of the military Supreme Council of the Revolution to the Socialist Party's demands, the workers stood firm. On 9 July they announced that they were 'not prepared to wait indefinitely' for the Government to work out a solution, and were going to publish the paper 'under the responsibility of the workers'.

Faced with this decisive action, the Government reversed its position and named a military officer as director of the paper, thus allowing it to be published legally. But the paper's production remained under the control of its workforce.

Eagerly received

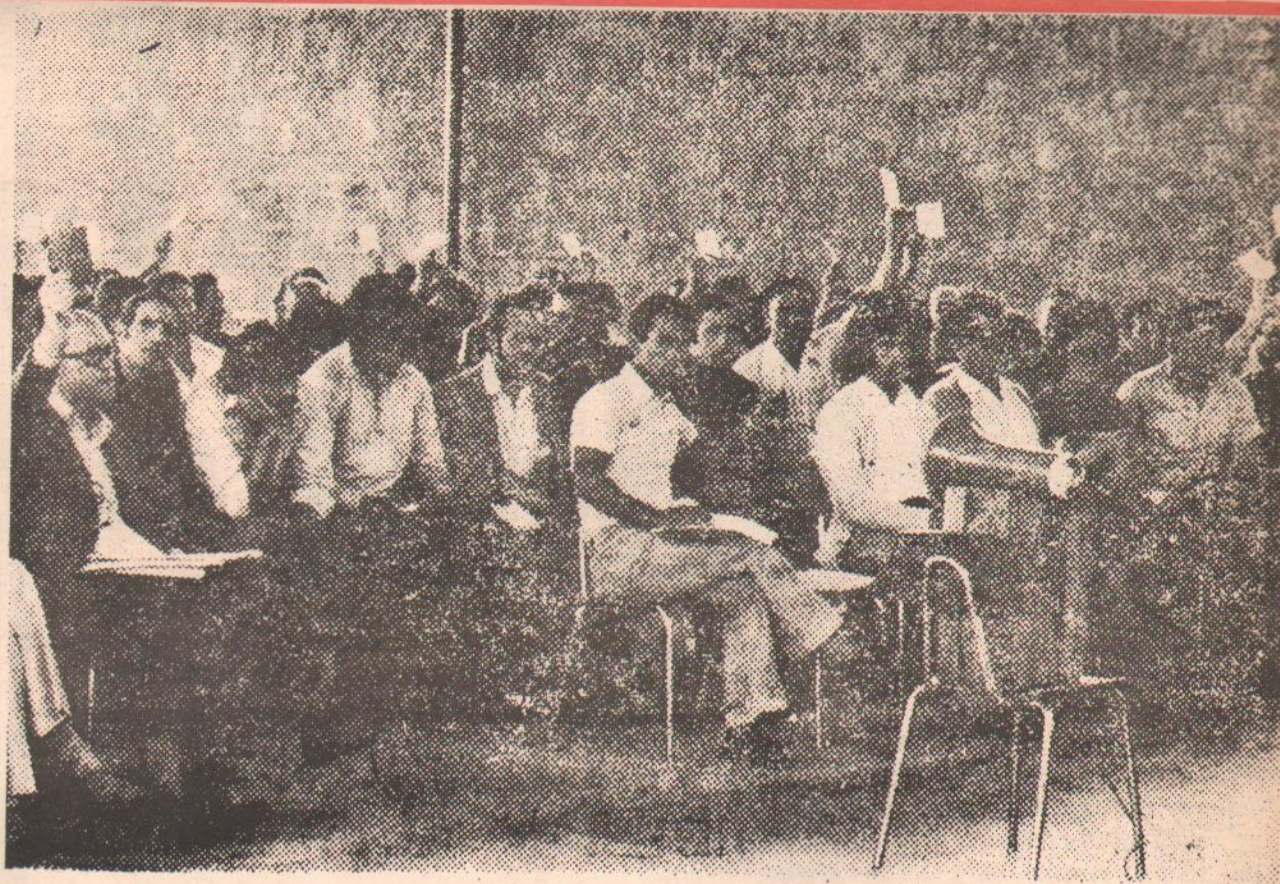
Since 10 July *Republica* has appeared regularly, and has been eagerly received by the militant workers of Lisbon, who understand that it is their own. The new *Republica* is a model of working class journalism, featuring prominent and regular coverage of the major workers' struggles, and open to different shades of opinion inside the workers movement.

The absurdity of the slander that the workers' struggle was an attempted 'Communist Party take-over' is shown by the fact that *Republica* runs a prominent column called 'workers in struggle' (at least a full page, and often two, in every issue) at a time when the Communist Party leadership has been opposing strikes as 'inopportune' and placing all its emphasis on the 'battle for production'.

While *Republica* is a politically committed paper, it has not tried to hide uncomfortable facts. In its issue of 16 July it carried a full report of the Socialist Party demonstration of the preceding day (at which a big section of the crowd had tried to march on the *Republica* building) under the headline 'Ranks of the SP say Yes to the Leadership'.

The publication of the workers' *Republica* is a big win for the Portuguese working class.

Birth of Workers' Democracy



Point of Workers' struggle

and it will certainly prove its importance as an arm of struggle in the coming months. Below we print some excerpts from the 'Manifesto of the workers of *Republica* to all the workers, poor and exploited of Portugal' issued on 11 June:

'We, workers of *Republica*, are aware that we live in a society in which knowledge and education are scarce, and which lacks, moreover, a policy for the news media that, instead of crippling the working class, exploited and poor, gives them intellectual and economic power.....

Socialist construction

'We defend, in the presence of all Portuguese workers, the idea that for the construction of a truly socialist society the news media must aim at the transformation of the working class from an exploited and ruled class into a class that rules through its own grass roots organisations, more and more conscious, responsible and free.....

'We declare to all Portuguese workers that we are fighting in order that the working class can control the power of the news media.... We declare that in the news media it is, the workers who must have the power to ensure that the fruit of their labour — the paper — is applied to ends that concern the transformation of man and life, and not the rows of politicians, the privileges of corrupt minorities, or the exhibitionism of political parties....

'We are in solidarity with all the workers, exploited and poor of Portugal who, in the factories, the fields, the fishing ports, the service and transport industries, are fighting for a revolution in the service of the workers and not in the service of a few dozen power seekers or other such traitors to the revolutionary soldiers.'

Workers demand military training

In the present conditions of reactionary provocations and sabotage, it is not surprising that the Portuguese workers are asking for and even insisting on access to military training; and that the soldiers, the NCOs, and also some officers are agreeing to help out.

In one barracks on the outskirts of Lisbon, more than a hundred people — members of the workers' and neighbourhood commissions — could be seen training on Sunday. The previous week there had been posters stuck up on the walls of the barracks, announcing that the zonal popular militia would be training then.

POPULAR ASSEMBLY ADOPTS REVOLUTIONARY CONSTITUTION

Two Sundays ago — on 13 July — saw an historic occasion for the Portuguese working class in the town of Pontinha. For on this day the recently-formed Popular Assembly of Pontinha became the first in the country to draw up and approve its constitution.

The Popular Assembly — a democratic body consisting of delegates from 15 workers' commissions, 24 residents' committees, and the local army unit — met in the local barracks, which is occupied by a unit that has broken with the hierarchy of the capitalist army and conducts its affairs (including the election of representatives to the Assembly) through mass meetings.

According to the statutes adopted, the purpose of the Assembly is to: 'Mobilise the popular masses for the tasks of building socialism; constitute the basis of a new state in the service of the workers; guarantee that the popular masses can take their destinies into their own hands; control production, prices and rents; defend the revolutionary process from attacks by national reaction and imperialism; and contribute to the constitution of a collective consciousness and a popular culture.'

All decisions at the Assembly are taken by a show of hands after an open and democratic discussion. The Assembly is the sovereign body of the working class in the area, and its decisions are binding on all the organisations that take part in its deliberations. At the next meeting of the Assembly a Revolutionary Committee will be elected to act as its executive body.

As the Lisbon newspaper *Republica*, now published under workers' control, said in its report of the Pontinha Assembly: 'It is this organisation which will allow the unity of all those forces who are struggling against the dictatorship of capital. This and only this sort of organisation is profoundly democratic and truly represents the workers. It guarantees that the exploited masses can themselves take matters into their hands, leading them forward in the struggle for their liberation, and ensuring that this leads to socialism (the only free society, for it is run in all its aspects by the workers), and not to new forms of capitalism and oppression.'



'It is necessary to impose a government that is controlled by the workers and by trade union, neighbourhood and factory assemblies ...'

In the struggle to forge, unite and generalise mass democratic organisations of working class power in Portugal a leading role has been played by the International Communist League (LCI — Portuguese sympathising organisation of the Fourth International). The following is a statement issued by the LCI on 17 June, before the withdrawal of the Socialist Party from the Government, spelling out the tasks facing the workers' movement. On the basis of these views the LCI has been able to reach a common agreement with several other organisations of the revolutionary left on a plan of united action to press forward with the construction of organs of workers power as the next step forward on the road to the Portuguese socialist revolution.

The revolution will advance toward the power of the workers and their representative organs — councils of elected delegates in the factories, neighbourhoods, and villages — only if the basic steps to beat reactionary resistance, put an end to unemployment and poverty, and crush reaction and its parties are taken right now.

We will advance down this road by struggling for:

- * the generalisation and unification of all the popular vigilance committees linked to armed self-defence pickets in the unions and factories and directed by local coordinating bodies of workers' and tenants' commissions.
- * the immediate convocation of zonal assemblies centralising and pressing forward the creation of delegates councils in all factories, impelling forward the strengthening of workers' commissions charged with exerting workers control over the work pace, orders and stocks, with holding general assemblies for controlling all administrative activities (as at CUF, where the workers have demanded nationalisation), and finally, with proposing to the tenants' commissions the setting of prices and controlling of prices of food, transport, and rent.

Agrarian reform

- * the application of a radical agrarian reform giving the produce of the land to those who till it, unifying the common struggle of the workers of the countryside and the cities against capitalist exploitation, for the socialist revolution.

Those are the measures that must be ap-

workers have already taken initiatives in this direction. That is the road of struggle against capitalist reaction and for socialism.

In order to go forward, today more than ever it is necessary to form a solid united front of all the workers' organisations. All workers, all revolutionaries, all militants struggling for socialism, those of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and all the revolutionary organisations, must unite in representative bodies of workers against capital and reaction. To crush the gangs of the PPD and the CDS, to prevent new reactionary provocations, to defend the workers and their struggles, to defeat economic sabotage and imperialist pressure, it is not enough simply to assert the will for unity. We must participate massively in the workers' and tenants' commissions, in the zonal assemblies, in the village councils, in the popular vigilance committees.

But in order for these measures to be extended throughout the country and be really applied, it is necessary to impose a government to break with the policy of class collaboration, nationalise without compensation and under workers' control the big commercial, industrial, and agricultural companies, establish a monopoly of foreign trade and create a single state bank, disarm the reactionaries, dissolve their organisations, and ban their activities, generalises workers' control throughout the system of production and exchange and throughout the whole economy on the basis of a central plan,

rights of the workers and soldiers.

This government of workers' organisations must be controlled by the workers and by trade union, neighbourhood, and factory assemblies and must be responsible to the workers' councils elected in the work places and neighbourhoods.

This government will have to be based on the workers, on their demands, decisions, and permanent mobilisation. It will have to be based on representative committees of soldiers, sailors, and airmen that press the purge of fascists to its conclusion, organise general assemblies within which all officers are elected, and guarantee the right of propaganda and assembly to all political and trade union currents

Workers' commissions

From this point on, for the workers and popular movement the present crisis represents much more than a government crisis. It is thus urgent to elect workers' commissions or delegates councils that can structure the workers' offensive, prepare the zonal assemblies, organise self-defence, and coordinate the tenants' commissions with the assemblies and elected committees of soldiers and sailors.

It will be around these bodies that the workers will have to gather in determined fashion in order to:

- * apply workers democracy, decide the future, and choose representatives;

- * prepare a real national workers assembly uniting all the organisations of workers and peasants, whether in or out of uniform and

HANDS OFF ANGOLA

by TONY HODGES

The latest crisis in Angola has seen both the imperialist states and the neo-colonial African regimes talking of the need for military intervention by United Nations troops in this oil rich colony. Portugal's Supreme Revolutionary Council has attempted to step up its intervention by flying reinforcements to the 24,000 Portuguese soldiers already there — although some of the 'reinforcements' have resisted leaving Portugal.

The Lisbon Government claims that its troops are only there to 'keep the peace' between the three rival Angolan nationalist movements — the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) — which have been embroiled in a series of escalating military conflicts since March, leaving several thousands dead.

TROOPS

Stating that the Portuguese troops were pursuing a policy of 'active neutrality' in the fighting, Foreign Minister Melo Antunes explained on 13 July that 'active neutrality means that they will not fold their arms and look on, but will actively intervene very vigorously to put the aggressors in their place.'

The attitude which is being taken by Antunes and the Supreme Revolutionary Council is in clear contrast to the policy of a truly revolutionary government, which would recognise the right of the Angolan people to immediate, unconditional independence, and would withdraw every Portuguese soldier from the country. The real role of this continued military presence in Angola is to prevent any threat to imperialist interests and hold back the liberation struggle — a struggle which will have repercussions throughout Southern Africa. A successful socialist struggle in Angola would threaten imperialist domination of a region where Portuguese, American, British,

German and French capitalists have massive interests in Angolan oil, diamonds, iron, coffee, cotton, sisal and other natural resources.

With oil output now hitting nine million tons a year, mainly from Gulf's oilfields in the enclave of Cabinda sandwiched between Zaire and the Congo Peoples Republic, Angolan oil production is now the third largest in Black Africa. The Portuguese troops remaining in Angola are objectively maintaining the defence of these imperialist holdings and preventing the Angolan liberation struggle from leading to socialist revolution. It is for this reason, and in view of the unreliability of Portuguese troops, that the African neo-colonial regimes are now discussing at the OAU Conference their own 'peacekeeping' UN force.

UNITED NATIONS

Instead of condemning this, Antunes warned too that he might call on the United Nations to send troops to defend imperialist interests in Angola — as they did in the Congo (now Zaire) in the early sixties. He said that he was 'prepared to resort to anything, including the international organisations, to achieve peace, and not only peace but an adequate political platform'.

The 'political platform' Antunes has in mind is the construction of a stable neo-colonial government that the imperialist powers can count on to defend their interests. This had been the Portuguese Government's aim in signing the Alvor Agreement last January with

ments, which had the loyalty and support of the overwhelming majority of the population, into the Government.

As a final guarantee, 24,000 Portuguese troops were allowed to remain in Angola under the agreement and the Portuguese High Commissioner was empowered to take control of the security forces in the event of an 'emergency'. The agreement stipulated that the last Portuguese troops would not have to be withdrawn until the end of February 1976, nearly four months after independence.

None of the three nationalist movements in Angola have socialist objectives. The FNLA which has received considerable backing from the Government of Zaire (the second largest recipient of US aid in Africa), is openly anti-communist. The movement's President, Holden Roberto, who is brother-in-law of President Mobutu of Zaire, stated in February that 'the population of Angola, which is Christian, actively rejects Communism'.

UNITA too supports capitalist interests in Angola. In a February interview, UNITA President Jonas Savimbi declared that 'we must have free enterprise. If we took away the stimulus of profit then we would have stagnation.' UNITA supports detente with South Africa, and has called on the Portuguese Government to send more troops to Angola.

NOT SOCIALIST

The MPLA has been widely described as a 'Marxist' movement. But the MPLA too denies that its goals are socialist or communist. The movement's president, Agostinho Neto, announced in Lusaka, Zambia, on 20 April that he wished to 'make it clear that we appreciate and recognise the assistance we receive from all our friends including Russia, but do not accept any form of foreign political orientation'. The 28 February issue of the Luanda publication *Portuguese Africa* reported that two MPLA ministers, while visiting a Luanda oil refinery, 'stressed the role of private initiative in Angola's development'.

The MPLA leaders, like those of the FNLA and UNITA, have opposed strikes and supported a decree published by the Transitional Government at the end of February allowing the Government to ban strikes and place workers under military control. All three movements signed an agreement in Nakuru, Kenya on 22 June, one of whose clauses stated that 'the Transitional Government should take firm and effective measures to prevent strikes or wage demands which jeopardise the economic stability of the country'. The three movements also pledged themselves in the agreement to disarm the civilian population.

The MPLA leadership, despite its anti-imperialist sloganeering, has aided imperialism by supporting the presence of Portuguese troops. However, despite the statements of the MPLA leaders, the base of support of the MPLA is prepared to act beyond their declarations.

RADICALISATION

The Alvor agreement failed to forge a strong neo-colonial regime. The radicalisation continued apace. Though the dockworkers were placed under military control in accord with the 'Mobilisation Law', they went back on strike, winning big wage increases. On 9 April the Popular Neighbourhood Commissions in Luanda organised a huge demonstration against the law. The Transitional Government was also completely incapable of disarming the workers.

Though the MPLA ministers in the Government voted for the disarming of civilians and for the outlawing of strikes, they were incapable of disciplining their own supporters to accept these measures. MPLA leader Lopo do Nascimento found himself forced to speak out in public support for the Mobilisation Law on 9 April after thousands of MPLA sympathisers had marched through Luanda against it.

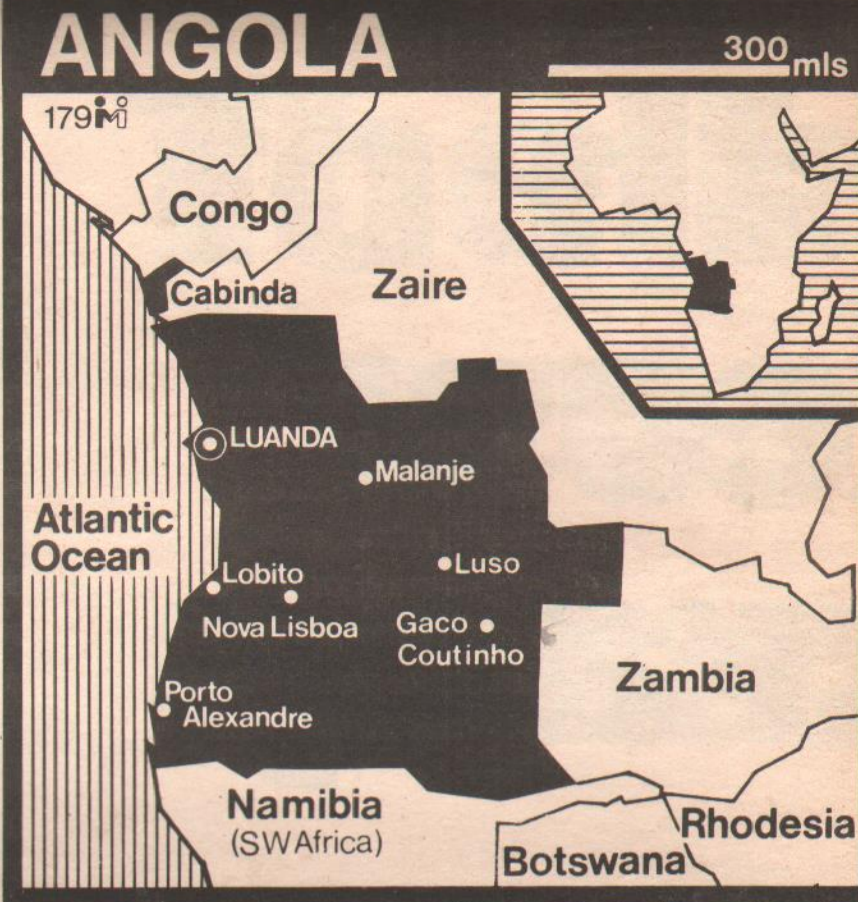
SELF-DEFENCE

Lucio Lara, a member of the MPLA Central Committee, explained the difficulty his movement had in attempting to disarm workers in Luanda: 'Part of the population has been armed, but that was done in July 1974 to resist aggression from reactionary whites. These self-defence units have placed themselves since under the MPLA banner, but we do not control them. It is essential to understand that we are not in a position to disarm them'. It is on smashing this independent working class activity, which must be defended against all attacks on it, that the imperialists are concentrating their efforts.

At the same time, the struggle between the three nationalist leaderships — which has led to four major waves of fighting since March — has prevented the establishment of a stable pro-capitalist government. The movements have failed to fuse their armies into a unified national army under the control of the Transitional Government, and only three weeks after the 22 June Nakuru agreement (signed by Neto, Roberto and Savimbi to salvage the Alvor agreement and stop the fighting) hundreds more were killed in fighting between the MPLA and the FNLA.

SOLIDARITY

Under these conditions, the danger of UN intervention or an escalation of Portuguese military intervention is a very real one, using a supposed breakdown of 'law and order' as a pretext to put down the independent workers' mobilisations and to defend capitalist interests. The imperialists might also throw their backing behind the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) in a bid to set up a breakaway government in the oil-rich enclave. Socialists in Britain have an internationalist duty to prevent continued imperialist intervention in the affairs of the Angolan people, to demand that Portugal's army leaves the country, and to oppose any UN or escalated Portuguese intervention.



The Presidential College: l to r, Lopo do Nascimento (MPLA), Johnny Eduardo (FNLA), Jose N'Dele (UNITA)

Our Common Struggle

PORTUGUESE WORKERS NEWSLETTER 7P

Republica workers fight for press freedom

The latest issue of *Our Common Struggle*, journal of the Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee, has articles on *Republica*, textile workers' struggles, the political crisis in Portugal, NATO and the Azores, Spain, local workers' struggles, and news of the Portuguese Solidarity Campaign. Available from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Price 13p (including postage).

the MPLA, the FNLA and UNITA. This agreement set up a coalition 'Transitional Government' to 'guide' Angola to independence later this year on 11 November — the ten-month transition period being intended to provide time to construct a reliable pro-capitalist government and weld the three movements' guerrilla armies into a unified bourgeois army.

The Portuguese Government signed the agreement because it seemed to offer the best chance of restoring political stability to the crisis-racked country. The African masses were demanding national independence and engaging in ever-more militant mass struggles; strikes were breaking out in one industry after another; peasants were seizing lands belonging to foreign-owned plantations; and thousands of workers had armed themselves in self-defence after facing vigilante attacks by right-wing settlers. The Armed Forces Movement calculated that the best way of demobilising the masses would be to bring the nationalist move-



CHILE The MIR 18 months on

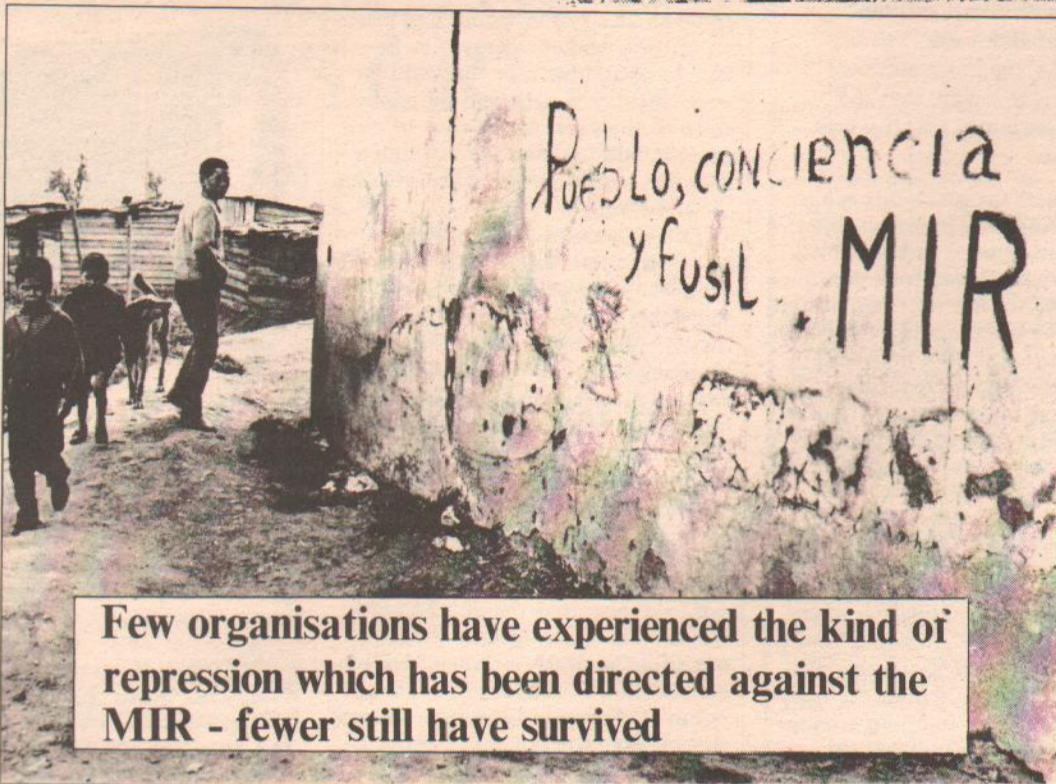


JEAN-PIERRE BEAUVAIS concludes his eye-witness account of the situation in Chile today by looking at the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left).

'The resistance will win! MIR'

This slogan, hastily painted, runs the length of a boundary wall in the popular quarter of San Miguel. It is early in the morning, but already a team of soldiers — under the mocking gaze of numerous passers-by — are busy white-washing the wall to cover up the 'seditious' inscription.

Undoubtedly painted the previous night, just before the curfew, it can only have been up a few hours. But the military seem to fear this kind of wall painting: not only do they make every effort to cover them up immediately, but the orders to patrols are strict — open fire without warning on anyone caught doing it. Woe also to anyone who lives opposite a wall carrying such an inscription: treated as equally responsible because they did not see or turn in the authors of this hideous crime, they risk prison.....or even worse.



Few organisations have experienced the kind of repression which has been directed against the MIR - fewer still have survived

HYSTERIA

This is one of the many forms taken by the Chilean junta's deliberate policy of terror — a policy characterised by an incredible anti-MIR hysteria. You only have to listen to the radio, read the papers or watch the TV to be convinced of it: the MIR is everywhere, and responsible for a thousand and one crimes. A rape is committed in a remote area — it's the MIR who did it. Some drug traffickers are arrested — of course they must be members of the MIR. A robbery is carried out — inevitably the hand of the MIR is detected behind it.

According to the junta the MIR is everywhere, involved in every shady affair and dirty deed throughout the length and breadth of Chile.

The object of such a systematic campaign is twofold: on the one hand, to discredit the organisation by blaming it for every act of gangsterism or ordinary crime; on the other hand, to justify the continuing repression by exaggerating the supposed power and influence of the MIR.

This does not always have the desired effects. No Chilean worker can seriously believe that the MIR, whose positions were universally

known under Popular Unity, has been transformed from a revolutionary organisation into a gang of criminals. And many, naively clinging to the slightest ray of hope, draw the conclusion that such a campaign must reflect the strength of the organisation, whose prestige — already large — has thus increased still further.

The reality of the situation is rather more complex.....

OPTIMISM

'This defeat is not that of the working class, nor of us. It is that of the reformist organisations and their strategy....We are thus faced with a historic responsibility — to create the conditions for a victorious mobilisation by the workers to overthrow the dictatorship and carry through the socialist revolution. After such an experience the Chilean masses will not allow themselves to be drawn up the same blind alley again.'

It was a comrade from the Central Committee of the MIR who put forward this position to us a few weeks after the coup, in mid-October 1973. It reflects quite well the thinking

and morale of the organisations' militants: surprise at the nature of the coup and the scale of the repression, but optimism about the new responsibilities and tasks it implied.

In these first weeks of the dictatorship the organisation gave evidence of its cohesion and solidarity. There were no desertions, there was only limited disorganisation, and the leadership — many of whose analyses had unfortunately been confirmed — reacted with considerable political maturity to the new situation, notably in its opposition to any ultra-left temptation to launch isolated actions, etc.

In the course of the eighteen months since then, hundreds of its militants have fallen. Only at a considerable cost have the gaps been filled, have the defeats been overcome as quickly as possible, and has what has been destroyed been relentlessly rebuilt. Few organisations in the history of the world revolutionary movement have experienced the kind of repression which has been directed against the MIR — the number one target of the Chilean military in their efforts to destroy all forms of working class organisation and most particularly those of a revolutionary character. Fewer still have survived in such a situation.

aimed to be an important pole — have not been realised. More seriously, the historic defeat of reformism in Chile has not been translated — as the MIR rather mechanically forecast — into a new relationship of forces inside the workers' movement (see previous articles).

Furthermore, the Communist Party has broken the casual links which it established with the revolutionary left in the period following the coup, doubtless reckoning that they contradicted its strategy of aiming to establish a common front with the Christian Democrats.

In these conditions, and leaving aside the ambiguities that we have noted on several past occasions, the proposals for united work made by the MIR to the whole of the Chilean left have hardly had a chance to take on a concrete meaning, even in a partial way. The Political Front of the resistance proposed more than a year ago by Miguel Enriquez — to be made up of the parties of Popular Unity, the so-called 'left' sections of Christian Democracy, and the MIR — is more than ever unrealisable. The move into opposition by the whole of Christian Democracy has meant the assimilation of these 'left' sections in the framework of the bourgeois opposition, while also reinforcing the credibility of the CP's perspectives.

As to the forms of resistance and united mobilisations at the base proposed by the MIR along with the Political Front, both the facts of the objective situation and the relationship of forces inside the workers' movement have limited their scope. The resistance committees where they exist, tend to be mobilising structures for the periphery of the revolutionary left rather than larger structures of a more broad-based character.

ISOLATION

This political isolation, the result of the weight and tactics of the reformists, poses more sharply than ever the problem of a Revolutionary Front. Because it dominates the extreme left, only the MIR could provide the backbone for such a structure. Yet just because it is dominant, it considerably underestimates this necessity. Numerically, the forces that would make up such a front would not — at the beginning — be that much greater than those of the MIR itself.

Politically, on the other hand, the impact of such a front on the confused sectors, on the vacillating left of the Socialist Party, on the isolated militants who continue to regard themselves as critical supporters of MAPU, and also on many militants in the Communist Party, would be very different.

That is the perspective put forward by our comrades of the Liga Comunista de Chile in the resolutions of their second congress held recently underground in Chile (see *Red Weekly*, 15 May 1975). The remarkable activity of this little nucleus of Trotskyist militants, their progress over the last few months, together with the heroic and difficult resistance of the MIR, are not without significance in the present situation in Chile.

Defeat and repression, betrayals and manoeuvres — these have all failed to do the job. The flame of the revolution has not been extinguished in Chile.

FREE DESMOND TROTTER!



Supporters of the Campaign to Free Desmond Trotter leafleted outside the concert of Jamaican rock and reggae group the Wailers at the Lyceum last week. They drew attention to some aspects of the Caribbean which are usually kept well hid.

In the part of Kingston where the Wailers come from, families desperate for homes regularly squat on disused car and rubbish dumps. They use the discarded bodies of the cars as houses, and live off whatever they can find on the tips. With a chronic housing shortage, unemployment of up to 30 per cent, inflation at 25 per cent and the profiteering and corruption of both businessmen and politicians in Jamaica, all that the poor get is,

But it's not only poverty and neglect for the poor and the unemployed. In the same area stands the now notorious Gun Court. With barbed wire, watch-towers, armed guards and dogs outside and cells just big enough to turn round inside, this Jamaican-style internment camp is a detention centre, courtroom and prison camp all in one.

Meanwhile Desmond Trotter, the young freedom fighter and member of the Movement for a New Dominica, is still awaiting execution in Dominica on a frame-up charge of killing a white tourist. This despite the fact that he and other brothers and sisters have been hunted down simply for fighting to change the conditions of

corruption and repression on the island.

When Dennis Hills, a white lecturer, was recently threatened with the firing squad in Uganda, royal ambassadors and the Foreign Secretary scurried to save his life. But not a finger is lifted by the British Government to save black freedom fighter Desmond Trotter. Britain is in fact now poised to uphold Desmond's sentence through the decision of the Privy Council, to which he has finally appealed.

We therefore urge all labour, trade union, student and black organisations to give their support via solidarity meetings, resolutions, messages of support and money to the Campaign to Free Desmond Trotter, 27 Tottenham Park,

SURVIVED

But the MIR has survived. The slogans on the walls bear witness to this, as do the tiny stickers left here and there in public places. So also do its militants, who for several months have been reactivating its work in one of the main shantytowns of Santiago, setting up several groups of sympathisers; as does the group of militant workers who were in the Communist Party under Popular Unity and have been recruited since the coup.

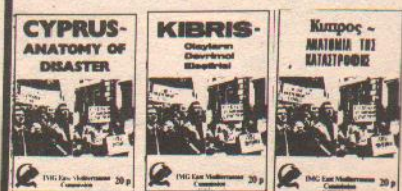
Smaller in numbers — in relation to its size at the time of the coup — the MIR is not however in a position to capitalise on its growing prestige. The very conditions of political activity today in Chile mean that most of its militants spend the bulk of their time ensuring that the organisation continues to function in the strictest clandestinity. As a result, outside activity is much reduced.

The organisation is weaker politically as well as numerically. A large section of its best cadres — notably the core of its leadership team — are dead or in prison at a time when crucial political problems are or will inevitably be posed.

CHANGES

The perspectives laid down in the months following the coup have not appreciably changed. But the situation in which they were

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SHOW TRIAL AIMS TO BOOST ANTI-IRISH HYSTERIA

by Mary O'Brien

For the past six weeks the State has been staging an elaborate costume drama at the Lancaster Crown Court. Dressed in the finest silk, wearing expensive wigs and surrounded by highly paid extras, the judge and the prosecution lawyers have the star parts. Their role is to ensure that this lavish production has a successful run and most importantly that it serves the interests of its backers — namely the ruling class.

Staged as a classic 'whodunit', the plot centres on nine Irishmen brought to 'justice' by the heroic and dedicated forces of the British State. Six of these nine are charged with the murder of 21 people last November in Birmingham when a pub was blown up. The other three are charged with conspiracy to cause explosions. All nine have pleaded not guilty.

But on looking at this particular production a little more closely it becomes clear that the question of 'whodunit' is not the real centre of the plot. With lines written by the Department of Public Prosecutions, prompting from the Home Office, stage managed by the police and with special effects from a team of skilful 'experts', the closing scenes are a foregone conclusion — the nine defendants will be found guilty. Those who have seen this sort of thing before will quickly recognise it as another episode in the 800-year old saga entitled 'Carry on Irish Oppression'.

The aim of the producers is not simply to find nine Irishmen guilty of the Birmingham bombings, but to ensure that the audience is convinced that the IRA were responsible. Using all the trappings of ruling class 'justice' and supported by weeks of critical acclaim in the bourgeois press, British imperialism is running a show trial to strengthen the anti-Irish feeling of its own working class.

DISCREDIT

In this way they hope to demoralise the minority population of the North of Ireland from giving continuing support to the anti-imperialist forces there, and discredit the forces in Britain who are building a movement for the withdrawal of the troops and who support the right of the Irish people to self-determination. In addition the 'necessity' for continuing the Prevention of Terrorism Act, under which hundreds of Irish people in this country are harassed,

will be reinforced.

With this aim, as part of the strategy of handing over to the Loyalists in the North of Ireland, the ruling class is not fussy about the methods it uses. From behind the scenes at Lancaster emerges a story of intimidation, false statements and harassment of the accused.

BRUTALITY

On 25 November last year, when all the defendants first appeared in court, they were in good health and looked well. Three days later all of them had severe facial injuries, ranging from black eyes and bruising to cuts that had stitches. One of the defendants, William Power, was beaten up and kicked by police and prison officers while on remand at Birmingham, and his wife and children were threatened. He was not allowed to read his statement after he had made it, and has claimed that much of it was put in by the police without his knowledge.

Other defendants tell a similar story. Noel McKenny was threatened with a revolver by Detective Constable Woodwiss, who told him that the 'Home Office approved of his being shot' and that it would be explained that this was done while he was trying to escape. With this the policeman fired his gun at McKenny, but owing to a 'faulty mechanism which would be put right next time' it did not go off.

It was under duress of this kind that McKenny signed his 'confession' claiming that the pub bombing was 'in retaliation against Birmingham' for the death of James McDade — a member of the IRA killed in a bomb explosion in Coventry. Patrick Hill suffered the same sort of thing at the hands of the police when in custody at Morecambe Police Station. He was kicked and punched, beaten with a truncheon and revolver butt and burnt with cigarette ends.

Using techniques like this the Brit-

ish police have extracted and concocted a series of 'confessions'. Use of such methods has been reported to a limited extent in the British press without so much a liberal query. As far as the press is concerned all Irish people are 'fair game' and probably guilty just by being Irish. Nor has the press mentioned the consistent denials by all defendants that they have ever been members of the IRA. As always the press of the ruling class is doing the job it is paid to do — feed the working class a diet of lies and distortions.

Little has been said, however, about the Loyalist murder gangs of the UDA and UVF who are at present standing in the wings waiting to take over the main role if British im-

perialism and its allies show any signs of weakening. As a result of their activities four Catholics have died for every Protestant over the last six months — while the Labour Government simply steps up its harassment of the Catholic minority.

Socialists and defenders of the Irish right to self-determination must fiercely combat the intentions behind the Lancaster trial. Our task is to cut across all the lies by explaining loudly and clearly to the labour movement that the Irish people, individually and collectively, have never and will never receive any justice at the hands of British imperialism. Ours is the task of assisting them to get the only form of justice possible — that which they seize with their own hands.



This American-made machine-pistol was found along with a book containing 51 photos of prominent Provisionals, car registration numbers, and a series of individual dossiers when a member of the British Army in civilian clothes crashed in the Falls Road in Belfast last week. The machine-pistol, which is virtually a silent weapon and has no recoil, would be very useful for a provocateur engaged in sectarian assassinations. Furthermore, there would be no way of linking them with the Army since the weapon was not known to be standard Army issue.

BRITISH GUNS FACE ARDOYNE

Below we print an interview with a member of the Relief Committee in the Ardoyne area of Belfast. This is a solidly Catholic area of about 2,000 families, totally surrounded by Loyalist areas.

●What are conditions like in the area?

In August 1969 we had approximately 50 families burnt out — left completely homeless. Since then almost every family has been affected in some way by the troubles.

Some have been forced out of work because their work was in dangerous areas. Over 60 people from the district have been killed. The number injured from Loyalist bomb blasts and rubber bullets from the Brits goes well up into the hundreds. Probably 1,000 people have been injured or suffered hardship of one form or another — just in the Ardoyne.

●What do people feel about the British Army?

At first they were accepted. Realising we had the military might of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the B Specials, all Protestant, against us, it's no wonder people clamoured for the Brits. But when they took up their positions across the divide, their guns pointed into the Ardoyne, it was seen then that they were under the Unionists' control.

Things went peacefully for a few months, but this didn't seem to suit the Unionists. They engineered the troops into conflict with the minority, and the hate they engendered led to vicious rioting by their

to provoke our people. It led to serious rioting. The troops openly sided with the Stormont crowd and clobbered the minority people.

●How has the truce affected things?

Before the truce the media were trying to persuade the people that they were weary. Psychologically the people began to accept it. When the truce came people breathed a sigh of relief. If the truce had been kept on both sides it could have had a great effect. But the British Army kept up their harassment.

●What have the troops been doing during the truce?

Continuously raiding houses. We had a family made homeless by fire, for instance. We decided to fix up this house. We were in the process of fixing it when the Brits walked in and wrecked that house.

Quite a few other houses have come in for this treatment during the truce. The soldiers make provocative remarks and gestures from the jeeps. They're trained for violence and they want some sort of release for their training.

●What happened during the Ulster Workers' Council strike?

The Loyalists tried to wreck the minority districts, by cutting off all public services (gas and electricity). With no wholesalers or large suppliers in the area, we had to go as far as the South to collect



to run UDA road blocks. We were running trips night and day.

Fortunately the strike only lasted a couple of weeks. We supplied bread to the district, milk when we could get it. We brought in turf, coal for the OAPs, and we had open fires going on the street corners to save fuel for cooking facilities. It really raised the morale of the people that they could organise the whole area themselves.

●Do you believe that there will be a civil war if the troops are withdrawn?

Well, it depends what you call civil war. The situation now is that the Brits' guns are trained on the district, there are 60 dead, and homes are burnt out by the Loyalists still. You might call the last five years in Northern Ireland civil war.

●But if the Loyalists were really beginning to attack the Ardoyne, what do you think the Army would do?

Well, that has happened before. What happens is that once the Army has heard about ten shots coming from the Loyalists and one shot back, they move in on us and start raiding houses, sealing off houses, harassing.

When we call for British troops to be withdrawn from Ireland now, it is because the troops can do no good for the Irish people as a whole. They make the prospect of more deaths due to their actions and to sectarian killings by the Loyalists



ABORTION - HOSPITAL WORKERS LEAD THE WAY

As we go to press, the Select Committee set up after the second reading of James White's Abortion (Amendment) Bill is deciding on its plan of action. The Committee may decide to stop hearing evidence - even though the only evidence received from the 'public' (rather than the professional associations) has been from the infamous and discredited Litchfield-Kentish *Babies for Burning* team. If this happens, there may well be moves to get the Bill through Parliament this session.

Even if the Committee decides to go on hearing evidence, the dangers of this Bill - which would drive 80,000 women to back-street abortions - will still be with us.

Wilson himself has clearly said that women should not have the right to choose whether their pregnancy is to be terminated (see his letter reprinted in last issue of *Red Weekly*), piously stating that the decision should be left up to two doctors. When massive cuts in social spending take away even the limited and run-down facilities that enable willing doctors to perform abortions on the NHS, such statements leave an especially sour taste in the mouth. In fact more and more State responsibilities are falling onto the shoulders of women in the family (such as nursing, educating, child-care) as all sectors of social spending are chopped.

In strengthening the ties of women to the family, the Wilson Government does two things. First, the family is encouraged to act as a shock

absorber for the crisis by taking on those tasks previously carried out by the State. Secondly, the fight for the rights of women is put into reverse gear at a time when it is absolutely crucial for every member of the working class to be in a position to fight back against the capitalist offensive.

WAY FORWARD

Wilson's attacks will only be thrown back if the workers' movement takes up all such issues, which can otherwise be used to weaken its defences. A number of actions have been launched recently which show the way forward in the fight to smash the White Bill and to win the right for women of free abortion on demand on the NHS.

A picket of Hammersmith Hospital on 2 July was organised jointly by the Hospital's 'Abortion and Nursery Campaign' and the West London NAC, attracting 150 people.

Richard Kramer, a member of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee at Hammersmith Hospital, told *Red Weekly* why the picket was called: 'Hammersmith has a particularly disgraceful record on abortion. Only five abortions are done each week because of the reactionary views held by the head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Professor McClure Brown - who is an executive member of the anti-abortion group SPUC. So the shop stewards went to see the management demanding the removal of McClure Brown as well as any other consultants not prepared to carry out abortions.'

'I think this is an important demand, because it shows that we are prepared to organise as workers, to ensure that our jobs are done in the interests of the working class.'

'Another demand we are raising is for an out-patient abortion clinic. This would be the best way to ensure

that all demands for abortion are met as quickly and safely as possible. It would mean women could go home after only a few hours, because they would not need a general anaesthetic.

'Finally we are calling for nursery facilities to service patients, staff and visitors to the Hospital, because we think that part of a woman's right to choose must be that she can decide to have children as well. But if she wants children, it shouldn't automatically mean that she's tied down with them on her own at home.'

The Hammersmith campaign has been organised in such a way as to involve rank and file workers from the start. A mass meeting in the hospital was attended by 30 nurses, plus technicians, doctors and ancillary workers, and it was decided to link up with the West London NAC. Ten thousand leaflets were distributed in factories, local housing estates, trade union branches, schools, etc.

At another hospital in London, University College Hospital, a campaign for abortion facilities is also under way. Again workers in the hospital have been drawn in, both by distributing a regular bulletin around the canteens at meal times and through NUPE, ASTMS and the Joint Shop Stewards Committee.

A picket is taking place this week supported by Camden NAC and the Trades Council, to demand that part of the 120-bed private block is converted for this purpose. Hospital workers are thus showing that they will fight not only for women's rights, but also for the right of the whole working class to take control over their health care, by organising to defend and extend the NHS and oppose all private practice.

CONFERENCE

The support gained through such actions can help to build a strong movement which will make it impossible for the Labour Government to let White's Bill through. They demonstrate that the way forward in the campaign is not to rely on MPs in Parliament, but to develop mass organisation outside those walls. The NAC Conference on 18-19 October can lay the basis for a unified response with the broadest possible representation from the workers' movement against Wilson's complicity with the White Bill.

Dodie Wepler & Berry Beaumont

Details of the NAC Conference on 18-19 October, at Imperial College in London, can be obtained from NAC, 80 Raiton Road, London S.E.24.



Benn speaking at the IWC Conference, with (l to r) Audrey Wise, Bill Jones, Jim Murray, and Alastair Mackie

DEMAND BENN RESIGNS!

A remarkable scene unfolded at last weekend's Institute for Workers Control conference in Sheffield. On Sunday morning the delegates at the conference unanimously condemned the Healey incomes policy measures. On Sunday afternoon, however, the same conference delegates were offered a main speaker, Tony Benn, who is a member of the very Government which is imposing the Healey measures.

Benn's speech to the conference was itself quite extraordinary. It touched on everything under the sun, with the single exception of the question which at present dominates the political situation - the Healey measures.

REVEALING

Perhaps even more revealing than his silence on the Healey measures were Benn's answers to various questions put from the audience. On the question of whether he should resign from the Government all he could say was that 'there were many times in which one would find oneself in a minority' - the nearest he got to attacking the Healey proposals all afternoon; and that 'given our commitment to the people in the Manifesto, the right thing to do is to seek to maintain

the Government and to seek to achieve as far as can be the implementation of this policy'.

The little fact that this Government is heading for inevitable defeat through its policies, that a Labour Government can't 'be maintained' through capitulation to Wilson, that this Government is carrying out the most viciously anti-working class policies since the 1930s, and that Benn is used as a left cover by Wilson to prevent workers from opposing these policies - all this was left out of Benn's answer.

NO ANSWER

Perhaps even more revealing was his answer to one delegate who wanted to know why - as the incomes policy had evidently been discussed for months in the Cabinet - he had not warned the labour movement of what was being prepared. Benn did not even attempt to answer this question.

Instead he replied that 'the phraseology of the Manifesto is absolutely clear and on a number of occasions at trade union conferences I have attended in the last two or three months I have taken the opportunity of reading the words that were contained in the Manifesto on this matter. The commitment of the Party to collective bargaining within the context of an agreement between the Government and the TUC is set out

quite clearly in the Manifesto and when I said that we must campaign to implement the Manifesto I had that passage in mind.'

In short, Benn did not feel it necessary to warn anyone because he thinks that the present Healey measures fall within the Labour Manifesto. As a great supporter of the Manifesto, perhaps he should be telling people it is a good thing the Healey measures have been passed. No wonder Benn got considerably less applause after he had made his speech than when he first entered the room.

All this shows the necessity of continuing to demand that Benn resign from the Government, so that he is either forced to leave the Cabinet - which would be a step forward, as it would prevent Wilson from using his presence within the Government as a left cover to head off workers' struggles - or rapidly exposed so that he is no longer able to provide such a left cover.

REFORMIST

But one thing is clear above all from Benn's gutless performance over the last weeks. Even if the best happens, and he does resign from the Government, Benn's pathetic capitulation before Wilson and Healey shows that no confidence can be placed in him to stand up to the ruling class and its agents in a real crisis.

RED WEEKLY

GIVE US A BREAK!

There will be no *Red Weekly* for the next two weeks (31 July and 7 August) as our staff will be on holiday. This means we need extra help from our readers to cover the normal running costs that *don't* take a holiday.

Last week we received £30 from two IMG comrades in Japan, £15 from two East London teachers, £14 from a lecturer in Newcastle, £5 from a Hull hospital worker and many smaller contributions bringing our July total to £248.53. This is only half the amount we need a month just to keep the paper going. But if everyone was as conscientious as the comrades in Japan we would be well on the way to overcoming our financial problems and expanding the paper.

We know it's the holiday season, and readers will be saving what little extra they can. But a little spared for the *Red Weekly*, the only paper with the programme to beat the Healey measures, will increase the possibility of more for all later. So give us a break. While the paper is away for two weeks use this opportunity to rush extra donations to *Red Weekly*, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

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