

RED WEEKLY

Demonstrate for the
Right to Work
26th Nov
Assemble 1.00pm
Euston Square

20 NOVEMBER 1975

No. 126

PRICE 10p

OCCUPY TO DEFEND JOBS

WORK-SHARING

WITH

NO

LOSS

OF PAY

ALL OUT

NOV. 26

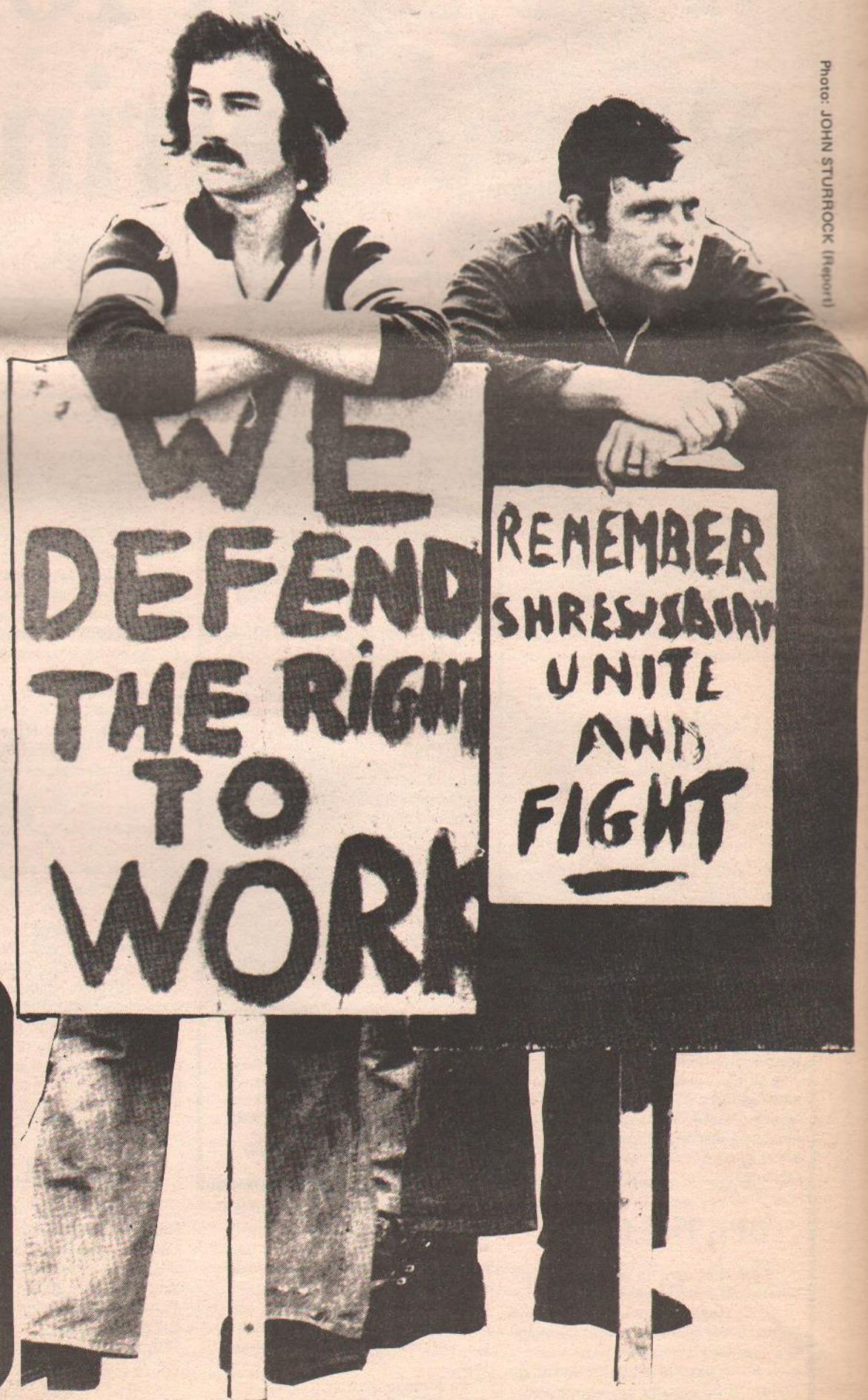


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

Solidarity with PERSONNA Occupation

By early next year Britain's unemployed will total 1½ million. Each day a further 1,000 jobs are lost, to add to the already staggering total of 1¼ million workless.

The crazy anarchy of the capitalist system is revealed most blatantly by the desperate shortage of schools, houses and hospitals at the same time as unemployment is escalating. In the construction industry alone there are 160,000 people out of work, a figure which according to the 'experts' could well rise to 300,000 in the coming months. At the same time 748 million bricks — 70,000 potential homes — are lying in stock piles. Building workers on the dole, and a growing number of homeless — these are the fruits of the capitalist crisis and the deliberate policies of the Labour Government.

For the working class the situation is serious. A return to mass unemployment means suffering and poverty for millions of people. It also means a weakening of the organised labour movement, strengthening the bargaining power of the employers against the trade unions. Unless a fight back is begun now, there is a real danger that the employers and their agents in the Labour Government will gradually erode the strength of the workers' movement.

The 'left' MPs and trade union leaders have protested

in words, but they remain passive when it comes to organising a struggle outside Parliament. Yet nothing but a real counter-offensive organised at both national and local level can meet these attacks. The 26 November lobby is an important start — but it is not enough. Every fight against redundancies demands the support of all the forces of the left. That means mobilising the widest possible support for workers refusing to accept sackings, and insisting that the Labour MPs and the trade union lefts take practical steps to win support for these struggles.

The 26 November demonstration must be the start of a campaign throughout the labour movement to implement socialist solutions to the crisis of unemployment:

- No redundancies; work-sharing with no loss of pay;
- For a 35-hour week;
- Nationalise without compensation all firms creating redundancies and place them under workers' control to guarantee all jobs;
- For a programme of socially useful public works;
- Open the books of the bosses and prepare a workers' plan for production that defends jobs;
- Full pay for the unemployed;
- Smash the £6 limit.

The fight for work-sharing

The massive jobs demonstration on 26 November can start a fight back in the labour movement against the Tory policies of the Wilson Government. But if it is to be more than a ritual parade to Parliament, carefully controlled by a section of the trade union bureaucracy, it must be a real day of action and mass strikes to demand the right to work.

In the struggle against unemployment, what is at stake is *who pays for the crisis* — which class will impose its solution.

Any working class answer to unemployment must begin with a clear rejection of the capitalists' right to chop and change their workforce as they please. The slogan of *work-sharing with no loss of pay* strikes right at the heart of the capitalists' right to rule. It demands that the entire labour force be maintained with full pay, with the available work being shared amongst all the workers by reducing the number of hours worked.

OCCUPATIONS

In many industries, particularly motor manufacturing, the bosses are already operating *their* version of work-sharing — three and four day weeks have been introduced in many plants because the employers fear that any attempt to implement large scale compulsory redundancies would lead to a wave of factory occupations.

But what this also proves is that the workforce has the strength to demand that full earnings are maintained. If the bosses want to reduce the working week — fine. We'll even give them a hand by forcing all the unions that have passed motions for a 35-hour week to launch a united campaign for this demand. *But any reduction in hours must not be at the workers' expense.*

OFF THE DOLE

Work-sharing with no loss of pay, whether it's in Chrysler, Leyland or GEC, means that workers' committees in every plant and combine open the company's books to work out how much work is available and then divide it up equally between plants and inside the factories. If some sections have to work longer hours than others in order to maintain the

flow of production, then this can easily be overcome by taking workers off the dole queues.

Everybody gains through a shorter working week, and nobody loses through loss of earnings. The unemployed are linked to the employed in a common struggle. If the bosses oppose work-sharing it is

VICTORY IN SIGHT AT BALFOUR DARWIN

After ten weeks of occupation against redundancies, victory is in sight for the 360 workers at the Balfour Darwin tools factory in Sheffield. A member of the strike committee told *Red Weekly* that after two meetings with Darwin management and a director from parent company Edgar Allen, the firm had agreed to provide jobs for all the workers who had received compulsory redundancy.

However, a mass meeting on 13 November voted unanimously to stay out on strike until some questions concerning the redeployment of the reinstated workers had been cleared up.

Although the occupiers have won their main demand for no compulsory redundancies, militants are under no illusion that this is the end of the fight to save the engineering works. Talks are continuing with management to attempt to get the company to carry out a re-investment programme. But rather than relying on the bosses who have just tried to sack them, Balfour Darwin workers could lead the fight in Sheffield for the nationalisation of the whole private steels industry — the most profitable sector in Sheffield steels.

not because of any technical objections — in industries like textiles, where the employers have the upper hand, workers have been on three and four day weeks for months — but because a real struggle for this demand will spill over into a fight for workers' control over production.

In some industries it is not even a question of reducing the number of hours worked, but of eliminating massive overtime working. More

than 160,000 unemployed building workers means that lump working has come back to the construction industry with a vengeance. In Woolwich, unemployed building workers have started campaigning for extra jobs at the Thames Barrier Project — a huge flood prevention scheme where twelve hour shifts are being worked seven days a week.

SEVEN DAYS !

At the North London Taylor Woodrow flyover site at Staples Corner, 200 men walked off the site last week when 42 men were made redundant. Alongside the sackings, other workers were expected to go on working seven days a week!

In Coventry, over 5,000 workers from seven GEC factories in the city have adopted the demand for work-sharing. A trade union committee with representatives from all seven plants is to draw up the plans to implement this. But the local union leaders have no intention of fighting for no loss of pay.

This is because any such struggle would involve an all-out fight to throw open GEC's books to reveal the current state of orders, sales and investment and then the re-allocation of work between the existing workforce. Campaigning on this class basis could force the Labour Government to put up the necessary finance to re-equip the industry, and reverse the cuts in Post Office spending which are responsible for many of the sackings.

TRAIL-BLAZING

It is the workers occupying the Personna Razor Blade factory in Glasgow who are currently blazing the trail in the fight for the right to work. They have rejected the management's plans for sackings, and are demanding work-sharing with no loss of pay. Workers on the 26 November demonstration must see to it that this struggle gets the support of every militant.

These workers are saying it is the bosses' crisis and they must



Over 5,000 workers packed into the Precinct in Coventry last Thursday for a mass demonstration against redundancies.

pay for it. If their struggle is won it could well ignite a movement right across the country for work-sharing with no loss of pay — a movement which could stop the Wilson/Healey clique in its tracks, and begin to impose a workers' solution to the crisis of unemployment through real measures of workers' control.

Report by
MICK GOSLING

INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUPSAYS
DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK
* 35 HOUR WEEK * NO LOSS OF PAY
* Nationalisation of the means of production *
* Full pay for the unemployed *
* Smash the £6 limit *
AGAINST THE WILSON GOVERNMENT
IMG Publications
Price 10p

New IMG pamphlet, available for 17p (inc. postage) from: RED BOOKS, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

NORTH LONDON



DAVE BURN, Islington NALGO shop steward and Executive member of the union's 1,500 strong Islington Branch:

A special branch meeting voted for a half-day strike on the morning of 26 November against the cuts and freezing of vacancies by the Council, and then another half-day strike in the afternoon in support of the lobby. In the morning we will be leafleting shopping areas and housing estates about the effect of the cuts on working people. In the afternoon we will be joining the demonstration.

Our decision to strike will be a big boost to the campaign against cuts and unemployment. For local government workers the two can't be separated. In London, for instance, we've got hundreds of frozen posts, which mean both a decline in the standards of public services to working people and jobs left empty that could be filled from the dole queues.

I should add that the London District

of NALGO has also decided to support the demonstration, despite the pathetic bleatings of our national 'leaders' to wait for a 'properly organised' demonstration and not 'rock the boat' for the Wilson Government.



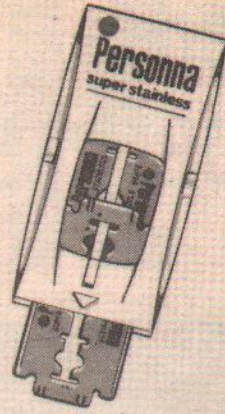
YIANNIS PSARAS, Secretary of 1/948 Branch of the Transport & General Workers Union, which covers 300 mainly Cypriot workers in the two confectionery factories of T. Pittas Ltd:

The branch voted to organise a one-hour stoppage and to invite the T&G Regional Organiser to come along for a full discussion on the fight against unemployment. We are supporting the lobby, and as many of us as possible will be going along in person.

Immigrant workers are always hit hardest by unemployment because they

Personna

SUPER STAINLESS



TWO BATTLES WON

The workers occupying Personna Razor Blades, Hillington (near Glasgow) won two vital battles last week in their struggle against redundancies. On Monday 10 November a meeting of shop stewards from Paisley, Renfrew and Glasgow pledged to organise regular financial support for the occupation. Three days later, a flying picket of Personna workers forced the top bureaucrats of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers into a snap decision to give official support to the occupation.

The Monday meeting of more than 60 shop stewards and convenors voted unanimously for a resolution proposed by Rolls Royce convenor George MacCormack, which pledged the stewards at Rolls Royce, Dunlop, Chrysler, Babcock & Wilcox, Scottish Cables, Albion Motors and many other workplaces 'to achieve...ultimate victory by giving maximum support both morally and financially'.

For the Personna workers, entering their seventh week of strike and occupation, this decision and a donation of £500 from UCS was a major boost. But the resolution posed no more than support through levies at the level of each local plant. When Personna convenor Phil McBride argued for a centralised fighting fund based on such levies, to fight redundancies throughout the area, a series of leading activists talked the proposal out.

ONE BASKET

Some, such as one Chrysler steward, did so in the belief that the main task posed was to concentrate all resources on the Personna struggle. But others were clearly motivated by the desire expressed by Jimmy Gilmore of Anderson's to 'stick to the one struggle - keep up pressure on the district committees, write to the Executive Committee, send out appeals'.

'This struggle is the correct line which all workers faced with redundancies should take. There's something lacking at the top of the house - we have to fight the devious methods of right-wingers like Boyd in trying to

suppress this struggle. What we need is a fighting committee of shop stewards; if we wait for the big guns we'll get nothing.'

The correctness of this was proved only the following day when the AUEW Executive Committee 'deferred' the question of official support and vital financial aid for the third consecutive

time. A flying picket of a dozen militants was despatched overnight by car to AUEW headquarters in Peckham, South London.

Shortly afterwards, right-wing General Secretary John Boyd was spotted trying to creep out of the side door. The abashed Boyd, confronted with demands for immediate action, scurried back to the inner sanctums. Seven minutes later, he returned with a decision of official backing and payment of hardship money!

EXAMPLE

Meanwhile, Personna's example in fighting redundancies seems likely to be followed elsewhere in the West of Scotland. Faced with the threat of closure, workers at Berg Manufacturing in Blair Linn, Cumbernauld - which makes brake components for the motor industry - occupied their plant during last weekend as a declaration of intent. Shop steward Bill McCutcheon told the *Scottish Daily News* free sheet: 'We will prove to the management that we will not take redundancies lying down. The men are determined to do everything in their power to prevent the closure.'

Report from

Stewart MacLennan

Defend the Right to Work:

Glasgow IMG public meeting with speakers Stewart MacLennan (IMG National Committee), Dave Oldham (Secretary, Edinburgh Direct Labour Department JSSC - in personal capacity) and invited representatives from Personna, Chrysler, and the Scottish Daily News.

Monday 24 November, 7.30, AUEW Halls, 145 West Regent Street, Glasgow.

STUDENTS JOIN THE STRUGGLE

The Scottish Area Council of the National Union of Students voted unanimously last weekend to back the Chrysler Linwood stewards' struggle for nationalisation without compensation and that at Personna for work-sharing with no loss of pay. It also pledged its active support for all factory occupations against redundancy.

The motion was proposed by a representative of Paisley Technical College, where a support meeting for these struggles has also been organised at the initiative of IMG militants. The platform will consist of a student representative, Chrysler convenor John Carty, Personna convenor Phil McBride, and West Renfrew Labour MP Norman Buchan. This is the sort of platform which should feature again and again in the fight for jobs.

week. This time, however, the 'big guns' got a counter-blast which knocked them and their scabbing manoeuvres for six.

A mass meeting of the Personna workers in the occupied factory on Wednesday, heartened by Monday's show of support, decided that the time had come to put a halt to the EC's deliberate prevarica-

Blacking Philip Morris

The Personna shop stewards have asked us to re-publish the list of other British subsidiaries of the American multinational Philip Morris Inc. Convenor Phil McBride told us: 'An all-out attempt will now be made by the officially backed occupation to secure blacking of these subsidiaries throughout Britain. The prime target this week is the docks.'

The subsidiaries so far located are: (PRINTERS) Thomas Jenkins Ltd., 108 Weston Street, London S.E.1; H.L. Vickery Ltd., Hackbridge Works, Hackbridge, Wallington, Surrey; Day & Wilkins Ltd., Finishers Ltd., and Perfect Plates Ltd., all of Mill Lane, Waddon, Croydon Surrey; (TOBACCO) Philip Morris & Co. Ltd., Boars Head House, Thameside Industrial Estate, Factory Road, London E.16.; Philip Morris Engineering Services, Artichoke Hill, The Highway, London E.1.; Godfrey Phillips Ltd., 8 Grafton Street, London W.1.; Pritchard & Burton Ltd., 132 Commercial Street, London E.1.; (GREETINGS CARDS) Celebration Arts Group Ltd., Barnards Inn, London, E.C.1.; Diplomat Greeting Publishers Ltd., 366 Chiswick High Road, London W.4.

The Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee has also promised to track down Philip-Morris subsidiaries in Portugal and work for blacking action there.

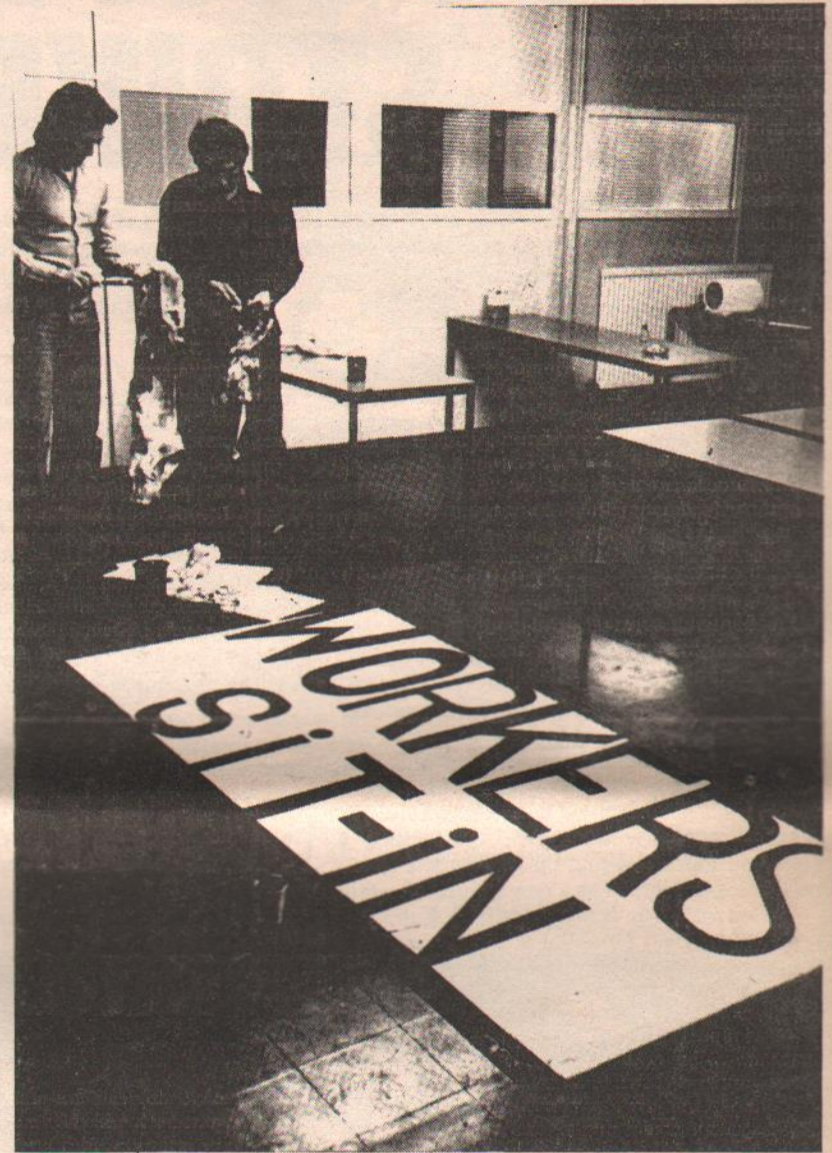


Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

'We're coming out!'

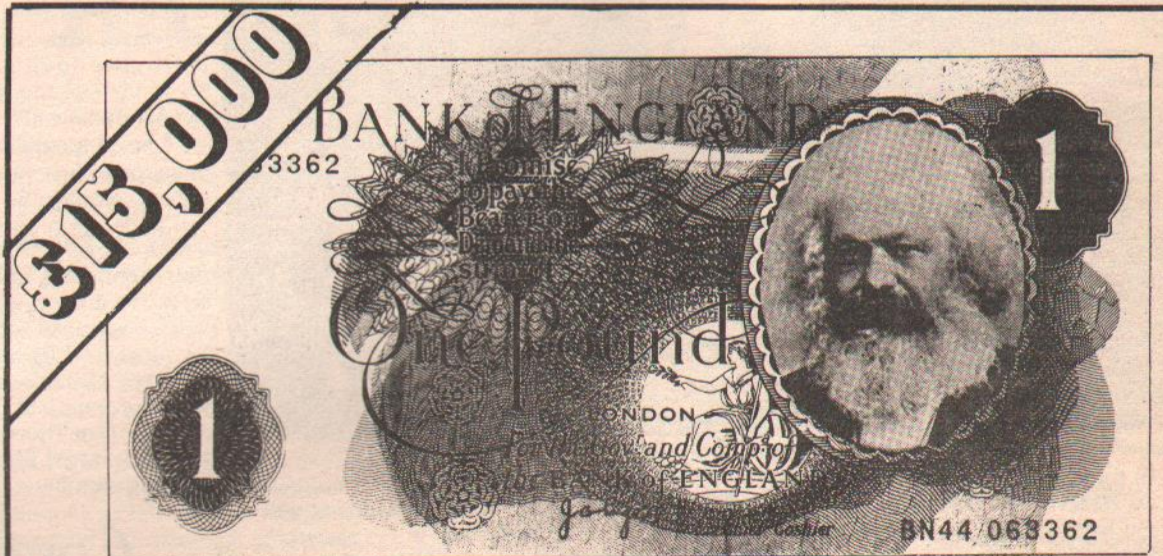
At Crosfield's electronics factory in North London, the scene earlier this year of a long occupation against redundancies, the workers will also be striking on 26 November. A member of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee told *Red Weekly* that the decision to strike was taken by a factory floor meeting last Thursday, and that they are expecting all their members to assemble at Euston station for the demonstration.



Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

are so often unorganised. We need to work with our English brothers and sisters to launch a hard, militant struggle to force the Government to change its policies and solve the unemployment problem. If it won't, we must force its leaders to stand down and make sure government comes into the hands of the working class.

The several hundred strong building side of Camden Direct Labour Force is also coming out on 26 November. The workers will be striking at lunchtime, and intend to march from Camden down to the demonstration assembly point at Euston Square.



We would like to thank all those supporters who have sent in donations to our £15,000 Fund Drive. Many people have donated money anonymously, but all have expressed support and solidarity for the work the IMG is doing in its various campaigns and activities - on unemployment, Spain and Portugal, the fight to defend the NHS, our work in the abortion campaign, etc.

Inflation not only affects the living standards of the working class, it also affects drastically the organisations of the working class. To produce a newspaper and pamphlets, arrange meetings, organise demonstrations etc. all costs more now than it did last year. Your donations help us not only to keep up with inflation but also to develop our influence.

A big boost to the Fund Drive has been a response from two more supporters to our call for individual donations of £250 or more. Are there any more people with this kind of money? Our total so far is £2,435, so we need to raise another £1,565 if we are to meet our November target of £4,000.

We are not ashamed to say that the IMG is the only organisation on the left with a programme to resolve the present crisis, and that without increased financial support our ability to put many of our ideas into practice will be jeopardised. Unlike capitalist businesses the bank does not give us credit, nor will the Government subsidise our activities. Our only source of income comes from people who support the fight against capitalism.

If you support our fight, if you sympathise with our ideas, then support our Fund Drive. Rush donations to Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. (cheques/POs payable to 'The Week').



OCCUPATIONS

Part III of our series by JOHN ROBERTS

THE OCCUPATION STRIKE

Many workers learnt very quickly from the mistakes and failures of the UCS work-in. These groups saw that a work-in could in fact be used to subsidise the employer, and so decided on occupation as the best way to hit the company. The first and most important occupations followed closely on the decision by the UCS yards to work-in. These were at Plessey in Dumbartonshire – very close to UCS and in the same area of high unemployment – and then at Fisher Bendix in Liverpool.

Plessey bought the Dumbartonshire factory in May 1970 with the help of a government grant of £3 million, given to help provide jobs in a depressed area. But less than 18 months later Plessey decided to pull out. In September 1971 closure was announced. Six hundred dismissed workers immediately occupied to prevent Plessey moving out machinery for resale or re-siting in the cheaper labour zones of South Africa or Portugal.

Barbed wire entanglements were set up to ensure that no personnel unauthorised by the workers gained admittance, and management were forced to leave the factory. After an occupation lasting five months, during which the other factories in the Plessey group blacked all work normally carried out in Dumbartonshire, the company negotiated. A substitute company was set up and the Plessey site is now being developed as a new industrial estate.

However, it was Fisher Bendix that showed some of the great potential of a militant occu-

machinery, breaking the company's contracts and causing widespread disruption – it is a more effective weapon.'

As closure became imminent, the shop stewards made preparations for resistance. Links were established with other factories in the Thorn Electrical combine, and attempts were made to set up a combine committee to ensure the necessary blacking. The support of Merseyside dockers and other workers was sought and given. Plans were laid for preventing the movement of machinery.

Deadline

As the deadline for the first redundancies in January 1972 drew nearer, feelings hardened. Although production continued as normal, somehow fewer and fewer products were loaded for moving out. In the last two weeks nothing at all left the factory.

responsibility to take it.' An active campaign was to be waged in the whole of the labour movement.

The crucial response was from the docks. The shop stewards committee published and circulated a list of every firm in the Thorn empire so that all Thorn products entering or leaving the country were blacked. Thorn had a simple choice – settle Fisher Bendix, or halt production nationally.

The blacking appeal had stressed that Fisher Bendix was a battle for the right to work, and as such concerned the whole labour movement. Support in the Merseyside area grew. Spurred into action, the Liverpool Trades Council organised mass mobilisations of pickets to counter any possible attempts by police to evict the occupying workers, and also began to prepare a local general strike against redundancies.

Mushrooming

The Fisher Bendix issue began to look like mushrooming into a general fight against redundancies in a historically militant working class area. 'If you carry out this plan we'll do a Fisher Bendix on you', became a popular phrase amongst worker militants.

The determination of the workforce, the effective blacking and the growing solidarity movement frightened Sir Jules Thorn. In trying to close down a single factory he had put his whole vast empire at risk. Settling Fisher Bendix became his top priority.

A growing solidarity movement that was prepared to fight the Tories with action was also of considerable concern to the Labour and trade union bureaucrats. After only three weeks Harold Wilson, whose constituency is near Merseyside, intervened in an attempt to settle the dispute. He produced a company, later to be called International Property Developers (IPD), which was prepared to take over Fisher Bendix and guarantee the work force until at least the end of 1973. So anxious was Thorn to settle the issue that they guaranteed IPD a profit of 9 per cent for nine months.

Combativity

The combativity and self-confidence that the workers at Fisher Bendix gained from this victory can be gauged from the fact that within one year of the occupation they had won a 35 hour week, a wage increase to bring the rate up to £1 an hour, and an extra week's holiday a year. But the new company invested not one penny in new plant and machinery, and by mid-1974 was claiming that without a £1 million government subsidy it would be impossible to keep the factory going.

There was now a Labour Government in office, however, with Tony Benn responsible for any such subsidies. In these circumstances it became perfectly acceptable to the stewards that they should become involved in discussing how to keep the firm going.

On 10 July, IPD called in the receiver, who

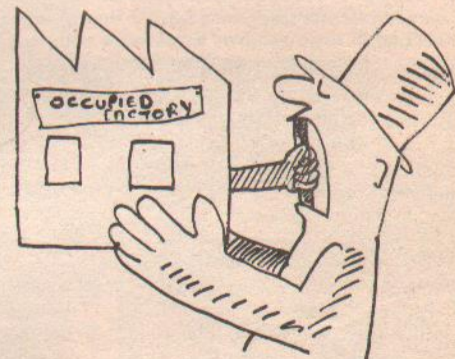
announced that only 450 jobs could be guaranteed. A mass meeting the following day voted to expel the receiver and start a work-in. In an atmosphere contrasting sharply with the emotion of the previous occupation, the workers coolly marched to the manager's office and escorted the receiver to the gates.

Stewards

Because the stewards were already involved in discussing how best to keep the company as a going concern, it now seemed perfectly consistent and logical to work-in rather than sit-in. A work-in would demonstrate the 'responsibility' of the workers and their ability to continue production. This attitude was shown in the organisation of the work-in, when mass meetings were cancelled to allow senior stewards to travel to London for consultations with Benn and the Department of Trade and Industry.

After a feasibility study, during which the workers were persuaded to agree to rotating lay-offs, Benn announced to a factory meeting on 6 September that the DTI had agreed to the setting up of a workers' co-operative on the model of Triumph Meriden. The Government injected £4.9 million, of which about £2 million went to pay off IPD's debts. The remaining money will not be enough to equip the plant and, unless the workers increase productivity, the £30,000 weekly loss will have to come out of the grant.

The Labour Government, via Benn and the DTI, has been deeply involved in most of the co-operative ventures – all the major ones have required government loans or



grants. By a combination of left phraseology – calling co-operatives 'industrial democracy in action' – together with outright refusal to give any lead for nationalisation of bankrupt industries, the Labour leaders have thus far managed to direct the fight against redundancies and for the right to work into co-operatives, a channel perfectly acceptable to big business.

Of course, today many workers see nationalisation as synonymous with attempts to rationalise essential but unprofitable sectors of the economy. But the nationalisation of bankrupt industries forced by militant occupations and mass action would be a very different proposition and would pose a clear political lead to all workers. It is just this that the Labour leadership has so far successfully avoided.



In the spring of 1972, occupation strikes took place in engineering factories throughout the Manchester area—a struggle tactic learnt from workers fighting redundancies



Plessey workers followed the UCS work-in with a strike-in.

occupation. In four weeks not only did their occupation set Merseyside alight, it terrified employers and forced Harold Wilson to intervene personally.

Labour costs

The Fisher Bendix company intended to transfer production of its washing machines to Spain to lower labour costs, and planned to close the factory by May 1972. An animated discussion on the relative merits of a work-in or sit-in took place amongst the shop stewards and militants. A delegation was sent to UCS and Plessey to review the effectiveness of the alternatives. Jack Spriggs, AUEW convenor, reported:

'We decided that the UCS-type operation of a work-in was impractical for us. Plessey was more effective. The work-in involves problems of supply to keep production going, sales of products and payments of workers. At Plessey a strike-in is tying up the movement of

On 5 January matters came to a head. Senior stewards were meeting management when a group of 14 militants met at the radiator shop to organise a demonstration of support within the factory. As they marched towards the administration block their numbers grew to 200.

These workers marched into the boardroom where the management and shop stewards were meeting, filling the room until it was impossible to get any more in. With the management's refusal to reconsider their plans to close the factory, the workers dropped the factory keys onto the conference table and formally declared the factory occupied.

From the start it was made clear that the fight at Fisher Bendix was not going to be fought along 'special case' lines, but turned outwards into a general fight against redundancy. As Jack Spriggs put it: 'We have a golden opportunity to lead Merseyside in a fight against big business....Merseyside is waiting for a lead. We have got to have the

OPEN THE BOOKS!

Q. How can you tell when a firm's going bankrupt?
 A. It offers its workers a 'revolutionary' deal including (a) worker participation, (b) profit-sharing, and (c) possible Government intervention.

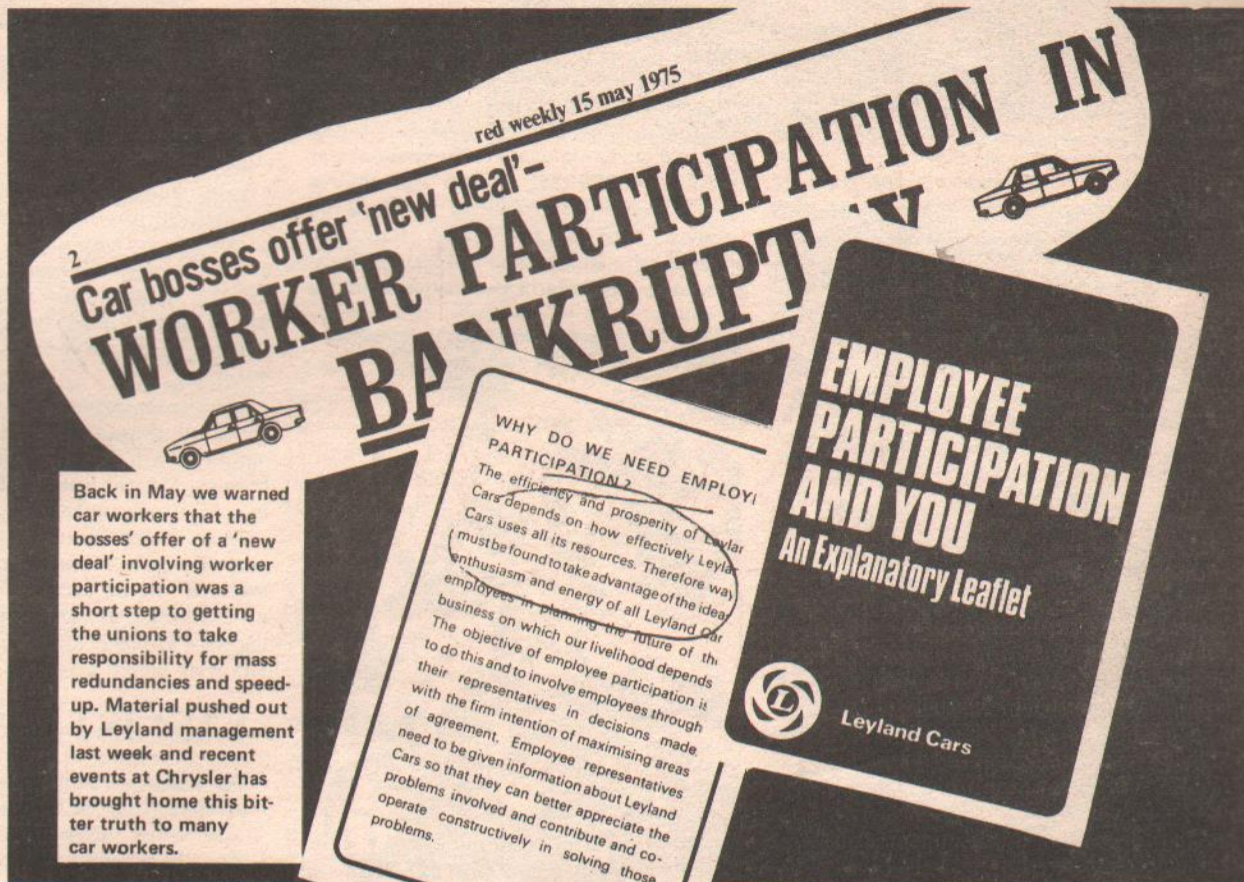
That's what Red Weekly said about Chrysler's worker participation scheme, produced out of a hat back in May to get the 4,000 workers at the key Stoke, Coventry engine plant to call off their pay strike. The 'strings that strangle' were accepted. The men were offered two lump sums of £50 to accept the deal—and thousands will soon be finding out that the second instalment is all the money they will be getting from Chrysler in the New Year.

Time is running short for Chrysler workers. To save their jobs, reliance on the Labour Government is useless. As with the £1000 million being pumped into British Leyland, any government finance for Chrysler will be used for 'rationalisation'—meaning speed-up and sackings.

What is needed is real measures of workers' control to implement the Chrysler Linwood stewards' demand for nationalisation without compensation. This means the opening of the company's books by workers' committees in every factory, which can reveal the real facts about Chrysler's crisis, expose the systematic running down of operations in Britain, and prepare a workers' plan for production and nationalisation which defends jobs.

Workers at British Leyland's Cowley assembly plant have already begun to show how this can be done. In recent weeks the 'Open-the-Books Committee' of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee there has worked hard to undermine the Ryder participation fraud—last week only a derisory 1,687 workers out of a possible 6,000 voted in elections for five shop floor representatives to the 12-strong participation committee in the plant.

Nevertheless, as COWLEY IMG reports below, Leyland workers have suffered a substantial set-back as these plans have been steamrollered into operation. The lessons of the fight over Ryder must be learnt by all car workers if jobs are to be defended.



Back in May we warned car workers that the bosses' offer of a 'new deal' involving worker participation was a short step to getting the unions to take responsibility for mass redundancies and speed-up. Material pushed out by Leyland management last week and recent events at Chrysler has brought home this bitter truth to many car workers.

WHY DO WE NEED EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION?
 The efficiency and prosperity of Leyland Cars depends on how effectively Leyland Cars uses all its resources. Therefore way must be found to take advantage of the ideas, enthusiasm and energy of all Leyland Car employees in planning the future of the business on which our livelihood depends. The objective of employee participation is to do this and to involve employees through their representatives in decisions made with the firm's intention of maximising areas of agreement. Employee representatives need to be given information about Leyland Cars so that they can better appreciate the problems involved and contribute and cooperate constructively in solving those problems.

EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION AND YOU
 An Explanatory Leaflet
 Leyland Cars

After months of back-stage secret manoeuvring by the trade union bureaucrats, Leyland workers have had Ryder's participation proposals rammed down their throats. A fortnight's junketing in plush Midlands hotels completed the betrayal, with the 32-man ad hoc committee of senior stewards and staff representatives signing an agreement which has one main objective: to attack the independence of shop stewards' organisation, and to use them to pave the way for rationalisation and speed-up.

Even in Cowley, despite a vigorous campaign by the International Marxist Group through its factory bulletin 'The Organiser' and a strong intervention by IMG and Workers Socialist League stewards, the Joint Shop Stewards Committee voted by 128-72 to accept the proposals. During an historic two-day meeting, vicious attacks on trade union autonomy were wrapped up in 'left' demagoguery. In fact the proposals have as many holes as a sieve:

- the participation committees have absolutely no power; they can't vote, and, if there is no agreement, management has the final say;
- the management has a built-in majority, since foremen and works policemen form part of the 50 per cent 'employee' side of the committees.

RANTINGS

These were just the main points from dozens of anomalies recognised by the stewards. Yet they voted to accept. Why? It was not the openly class-collaborationist rantings of witch-hunting TGWU senior steward Reg Parsons which carried the day. What convinced the stewards to swallow the bitter pill was the intervention of the fake 'lefts' aided by the plant's tame stalinist, Soanes.

Forced to admit that the proposals had many faults, the latter nevertheless went on to suggest that they offered 'a

foot in the door' and, as such, represented 'a step on the road to real (!) participation'. He urged acceptance because: (1) the unions retain their autonomy; (2) 'having no vote is no obligation'; (3) established disputes procedure would be followed; (4) the initial 12 month period would be used 'to get voting rights on participation committees'.

FRAUD

This was clearly a fraud perpetrated on the stewards. Voting rights are of no consequence on puppet committees which are already stacked against the unions. But this is a minor point. The main thing is that the whole Ryder plan is intended to get the workers to pay for Leyland's crisis.

Ryder's projection of a 50 per cent increase in sales by 1982 can only be achieved by a doubling or trebling of present productivity levels combined with the total injection of £2.8 billion. This means a savage attack on trade union rights and organisation. Far from defending the unions' autonomy, 'participation' means involvement in dismantling independent trade unionism. Yet to hear Soanes and the fake lefts, workers would have thought that the Ryder plan was a half-way house to socialism.

Even before these paper committees were set up, the assembly plant workers got a taste of participation in practice. Under the guise of a 'quality drive', management launched an attack on the Princess line workers. Several were suspended for practically no reason at all; one man was suspended for two nights—a fine of £32—for missing four tiny grommets. At once the press screamed about 'shoddy work' and a 'dossers' paradise'.

The men fought back but were fobbed off by the senior stewards with a joint enquiry—an example of 'participation at work', as Parsons put it. But the com-

pany had already made its position clear and clearly intended to maintain its monopoly of information.

TU ENQUIRY

The day shift rejected the senior stewards' recommendations and called for a trade union enquiry by the Open-the-Books Committee. Although the senior stewards refused to drop the joint enquiry, Princess stewards refused to cooperate and instead gave their information to the workers' committee.

The Open-the-Books Committee sought to establish who is responsible

for reject cars. It reported: 'Everyone knows that 99 per cent of all rejects have nothing to do with the assembly worker. They are due to faulty components and shortages.' To prove this point the report reproduced an ADO 71 (Princess) Problem Report from supervisors on section four, track four which listed ten problems dating back as far as a year ago. This report effectively gave the lie to Leyland's accusations.

NATIONALISATION

The investigation of the company's books and all aspects of its operation by

elected trade union committees is in sharp contrast to the collaborationist policies of participation. But it must not stop there. Throughout the car industry, in Ford, Vauxhall and Chrysler as well as Leyland, similar committees are needed in every plant to examine the books of the car industry.

This will not only break management's monopoly of information. It will allow car workers to ascertain the true state of the industry and demonstrate the need for its complete nationalisation under the control of workers' committees.

COWLEY IMG

Unemployed teachers - the fight back begins

Five thousand now - nineteen thousand next September. No, not the number of extra teachers being sent into overcrowded and understaffed schools, but the number of unemployed teachers.

This disastrous situation has been brought about by the Labour Government's cuts in social expenditure.

Teachers face a possible staff cut of 180 in Gloucestershire next year with three new nursery schools and a new Educationally Sub-Normal school being left empty. Nursery education in Bristol will be virtually wiped out if 26 redundancies are allowed to go ahead. In Hereford and Worcester the council voted by 41 to 39 against cutting 150 teaching jobs, but these will be under the axe again as the cuts bite deeper.

Prospects

The prospects for their pupils are no less bleak. After spending a fruitless summer searching for work, many school leavers are back in the classrooms - not from choice, but to stay off the streets. And in London, for example, the Education Authority expects these students to be provided with a meaningful job-orientated course without any prior preparation or additional staffing and material resources.

The increasingly strident cries for more discipline and more authoritarian teachers are an attempt to divert attention from the real source of the crisis in the schools, and from the only solution to it: united working class action against unemployment, the cuts and falling living standards.

All levels

This fight can begin at all levels. At the Hackney Downs school in London, an inter-union committee of all workers has been set up as a result of possible reductions in technical and ancillary staff. This committee will take up the cuts and unemployment and could start to develop much broader support by investigating the state of education spending in the school and area, and by informing the local labour movement of any proposed cutbacks.

In many areas, organising teachers and students will be the first step in building the campaign. The Socialist Teachers Conference, for example, is organising a meeting for all unemployed teachers in London on 20 November.

In the Extra Metropolitan (London) District, teachers have agreed not to cover for non-appointed staff and for teachers absent for more than three days. This raises the issue of sharing the available work with no loss of pay between all teachers

and uniting employed and unemployed teachers in a common struggle.

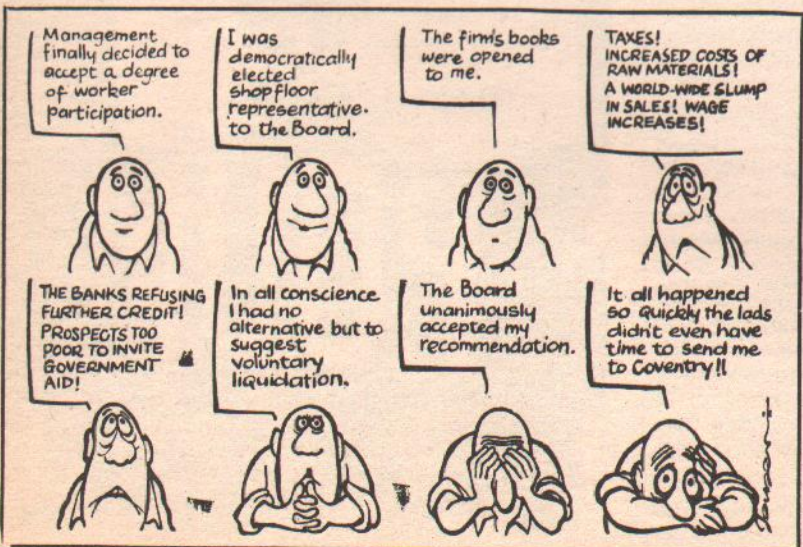
Much of the information education service workers need to know about the extent of planned cuts is handled by local government workers in NALGO, who have access to financial plans and the books of the local authorities. These must be made available to committees of teachers and all trade unionists so that they can draw up alternative plans to the Government's cuts in spending.

Programme

A programme of socially useful public works allied with a sliding scale of social expenditure to protect spending against inflation are vital elements of such an alternative. The 26 November lobby and demonstration against unemployment can be an important step in building a mass campaign against unemployment and setting up Right to Work committees in every area. Teachers, students and school students should make sure they turn out in force.

The attacks on education spending hit the social wage of every worker. United action by all workers, inside and outside the service, will be needed to defend jobs and throw back the cuts.

Betty Hunter
 (Wandsworth NUT)



Not the way to open the books! And even Red Weekly didn't appreciate the double irony of the concluding caption when we printed this first time round.



His repressive career begins: Morocco, 1921

The defeat of the Spanish revolution and the establishment of the Franco dictatorship in 1939 was one of the great tragedies suffered by the European working class. The fascist victory after nearly three years of civil war left 600,000 dead out of a population of 24 million. It ushered in thirty-six years of brutal repression in Spain, and it was the prelude to World War II.

Franco's fascist uprising was the answer of the Spanish capitalist class to a situation it could no longer control by traditional methods. The Great Depression had shattered the fragile stability imposed by the military dictatorship of Gen. Miguel Primo de Rivera. In 1930 the dictator was forced to resign. The following year, under the pressure of massive political strikes, a republican mutiny in the army, and a decisive electoral defeat, King Alfonso XIII left the country and a republic was proclaimed.

NO SOLUTIONS

A coalition government of the Social Democrats and various capitalist parties was set up, engendering high expectations among the masses. "Under a régime of liberty, the bloodless revolution is still more possible, still easier than under the monarchy," the Anarchist newspaper *Solidaridad Obrera* declared in April 1931.

But the capitalist regime proved unable to solve even the agrarian problem—the most pressing and most elementary of the tasks facing it. Seventy percent of the Spanish population lived on the land—almost all of them partially or wholly dependent on wage labor on the big estates. The division of the land was even more unequal in Spain than it had been in Russia, and starvation among the peasantry was commonplace.

In his book *The Spanish Cockpit*, Franz Borkenau discussed the problem from a liberal capitalist perspective:

The civil service, deeply implicated with the interests of the large landowners, sabotaged the reform, and the only way left to make it effective would have been to appeal to the peasants to take their claims into their own hands; which would have meant social revolution. The republicans were far from wanting that. Exactly as in 1873, but with more violence, the republic had awakened the masses of the peasants, who, without the invitation of the Government, tried to speed up matters by revolting against the guardia [riot police] and the landowners. All over the country ran a wave of peasant risings. They merged, in a disquieting manner, with proletarian risings in all the larger towns of Spain. The workers, too, had expected the republic to introduce a new régime to their advantage, and, as they got nothing without a fight, they tried to take their cause into their own hands. Under the leadership of the CNT [the Anarchist-led trade-union federation], Spain was filled with combined risings of workers and peasants. The Government had little hesitation in deciding how to deal with them; it called for the help of the guardia and the army, and thus put itself into their hands.

The republican government went so far as to put down a general strike in Seville by shelling the working-class districts. Asaltos, the republic's special police, moved in to break up a land occupation in the village of Casas Viejas by shooting down the peasants. Prisoners were shot without trial.

In November 1933 new elections were held. After their experience with the liberal bourgeoisie, the masses withheld their votes from the republican parties and the Social Democrats. An openly rightist government was formed.

GENERAL STRIKES

However, the combativity of the workers and peasants remained unbroken. The new government was met by a series of general strikes.

Another dimension to the mass resistance was added by the national liberation struggle of the oppressed Basque and Catalan minorities. These minorities accounted for roughly five million persons.

The rigid centralizing policies of the rightist government resulted in growing opposition in the Basque Country and Catalonia.

In October 1934 representatives of the clerical-fascist party of Gil Robles were invited into the government for the first time. The working-class parties compared this move to Hindenburg's appointment of Hitler as chancellor of Germany the previous year. General strikes were called in numerous cities. In Catalonia the nationalists led a revolt. In Asturias the Anarchists and left Socialists led an insurrection and declared a socialist commune. All were put down.

The Asturian workers in particular were suppressed in the most brutal way. Under the command of Gen. Francisco Franco, who had made his name in the colonial war in Spanish Morocco, foreign legionnaires and Moroccan mercenaries killed 3,000 persons, most of them after they had surrendered. More than 30,000 political prisoners were held in connection with the rebellion.



Franco's troops hold up severed heads of Asturian miners, 1934

But the repression of the Asturian workers created a rallying point for the masses instead of intimidating them. New layers of the population were drawn into political activity by the campaign for amnesty for the political prisoners. Street demonstrations against the government repeatedly drew hundreds of thousands of participants.

The regime staggered from one crisis to another; finally, new elections were called for February 1936. In these elections the Communists and Socialist parties joined with the bourgeois republicans in an electoral bloc pledged to release the political prisoners. With the tacit support of the Anarchists, the Popular Front coalition swept to victory. A new government was formed under the leadership of Manuel Azaña, who headed the republic from June 1931 until the rightist victory in 1933.



MANUEL AZANA
Among the points in the Popular Front's program were the following:

The republicans do not accept the principle of the nationalization of the land and its free distribution to the peasants. . . .

The republicans do not accept the subsidy to unemployment (dole) solicited by the workers' delegation. . . .

The republican parties do not accept the measures of nationalization of the banks proposed by the workers' parties.

In addition, the Popular Front program had nothing to say about the right of Morocco to independence or the right of the Basques and Catalans to self-determination.



The workers and peasants, however, had other ideas. They broke open the jails without waiting for the promised amnesty for political prisoners. A great strike wave began. "Every city of any importance had at least one general strike during those five months," Felix Morrow wrote in his description of the period between the election of the Popular Front government and the fascist revolt.

Land occupations involving tens of thousands of peasant families were mounted against the big estates; in the province of Malaga 125,000 peasant families engaged in a five-week strike.

The Popular Front regime did its best to stem the tide. Press censorship and the state of alarm decreed by the previous government were extended, Anarchist leaders were arrested, and Anarchist headquarters were closed down.

FASCIST UPRISING

On June 4, Minister Augusto Barcia announced that "if the syndicalists persist in disobeying the orders of the Ministry of Labor, the government proposes to declare syndicalism outside the law."

But the Spanish ruling class had lost confidence in the ability of the reformist regime to hold the revolution in check. On July 17, 1936, the fascist rebellion began in Morocco. Within days almost all the fifty garrisons in Spain had joined in.

The republican government responded by assuring the masses that everything was under control, while it sought to make a deal with the fascist officers. For two days, with the rebellion advancing, the government refused to arm the workers. Azaña's prime minister, Casares Quiroga, announced that anyone giving arms to the workers would be shot.

The inability of capitalism to solve the problems facing Spain had been demonstrated during the failure of the reformist regime of 1931-33, and by the record of the Popular Front in power. It was proved once again by the republican reaction to Franco's rebellion.

WORKERS RISE UP

The mass of the propertied classes went over to the fascists. Even the few bourgeois figures who remained with the republic showed that they were more afraid of a socialist revolution than of a fascist triumph. As Borkenau described it:

The ruling group disintegrated immediately. Casares Quiroga broke down. Martinez Barrios took office, and saw himself between the alternative of arming the workers or surrendering to the generals. He and his Minister of the Interior, Sanchez Roman, resolutely refused arms to the trade unions, which implicitly meant surrender to Franco.

Had the conduct of affairs been left to the republican politicians, the fascists would have come to power in Spain, as in Germany, without a fight. It was the spontaneous uprising of the working masses in city after city that prevented this. Barricades were erected, armories seized, and garrisons stormed. The civil war had begun.

George Orwell, who fought against the fascists in Spain, wrote of the masses' response to the fascist uprising in his book *Homage to Catalonia*:

It was the kind of effort that could probably only be made by people who were fighting with a revolutionary intention—i.e. believed that they were fighting for something better than the *status quo*. . . . Men and women armed only with sticks of dynamite rushed across the open squares and stormed stone buildings held by trained soldiers with machine-guns. Machine-gun nests that the Fascists had placed at strategic spots were smashed by rushing taxis at them at sixty miles an hour.

In Catalonia, where nearly half the industrial proletariat in Spain was concentrated, the workers pushed the capitalist government completely aside in their re-

HOW

MADR



A photomontage by the German artist/photographer Hans Bellmer, showing Italian fascism, Franco's backers, threatening the

CAME T

by DAVI

sponse to the fascist uprising. The trade unions took over all transportation, public utilities, and big industrial plants. Factory committees were elected by the workers, and workers militias rapidly conquered all four Catalonia provinces. Under workers control, industry was converted for war production.

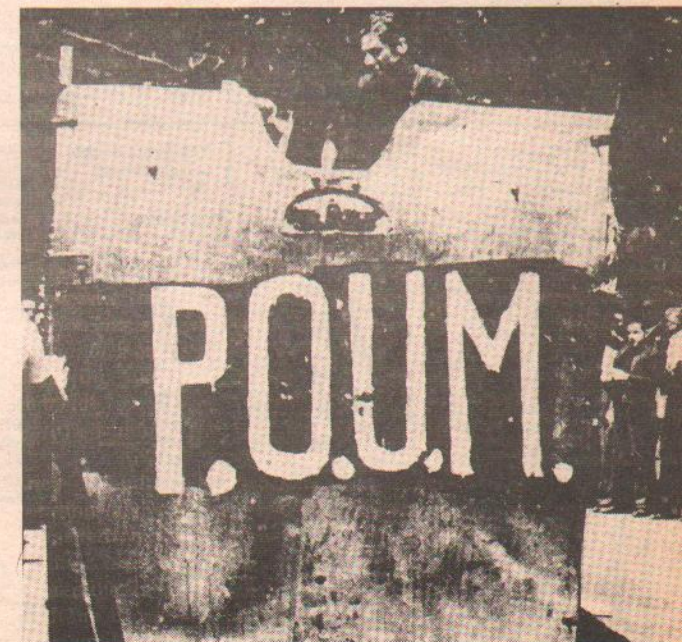
Borkenau said of this:

Neither the anarchists nor the socialists took Government office. But they alone retained real power in their respective strongholds, and exerted it through the defence committees created in the days of the street-fighting.

The rising of the p socialists and anarch have achieved: in ha seven largest towns i hands of the revol problems were: Could they make of it?

Even with the w control of the r Stalinists and So continued to insist the capitalist gover

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An armoured car belonging to the POUM, a centrist party strong in the eventually physically liquidated by the Spanish Communist Party, on S

FRANCO

1936



Heartfield, depicting the vultures of German and the ruined city of Madrid.

POWER

FRANKEL

... had achieved what themselves would never in and in six out of its played power into the ary proletariat. The hold it? What use could

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attempts to suppress the workers patrols that had fulfilled police functions up to that time.

On the front lines, the Popular Front government systematically withheld arms from the units of workers militia not reorganized as part of its regular army.

These measures were vigorously pushed by the Stalinists. Although the bourgeoisie had gone over *en masse* to the fascists, the Stalinists were determined to preserve capitalism in Spain. As early as September 1936 they raised the slogan, "Protect the property of the small industrialist."

'DIVERSION'

The Stalinists argued that the social revolution could only be a diversion from the antifascist struggle. In accordance with the strategy being followed by the Kremlin at that time, they advocated an antifascist alliance with the liberal bourgeoisie and the imperialist democracies.

They consciously and systematically strangled the Spanish revolution. The aim was to prevent the rise of a workers state in Spain, in hope that this would enhance Stalin's prospects for a pact with the imperialist democracies against Hitler.

In his article "The Class, the Party, and the Leadership," Trotsky said:

The most consistent policy in the ruling bloc was pursued by the Stalinists. They were the fighting vanguard of the bourgeois-republican counterrevolution. They wanted to eliminate the need for fascism by proving to the Spanish and world bourgeoisie that they were themselves capable of strangling the proletarian revolution under the banner of "democracy."

The December 1936 *Pravda*, the Soviet Communist party newspaper, had written, "So far as Catalonia is concerned, the cleaning up of Trotskyists and Anarchists has begun and it will be carried out with the same energy as in the USSR."

GPU TERROR

And in fact, the GPU went to work in Spain, applying the methods used by Stalin in the Soviet Union against political oppositionists, including murder.

But in rolling back the social revolution, the Stalinists cleared the way for the triumph of Franco. As Trotsky explained immediately after the civil war began, in July 1936:

A civil war is waged, as everybody knows, not only with military but also with political weapons. From a purely military point of view, the Spanish revolution is much weaker than its enemy. Its strength lies in its ability to rouse the great masses to action.

It is necessary to proclaim that, from now on, the land, factories, and shops will pass from the hands of the capitalists into the hands of the people. It is necessary to move at once toward the realization of this program in those provinces where the workers are in power. The fascist army could not resist the influence of such a program for twenty-four hours; the soldiers would tie their officers hand and foot and turn them over to the nearest headquarters of the workers' militia. But the bourgeois ministers cannot accept such a program.

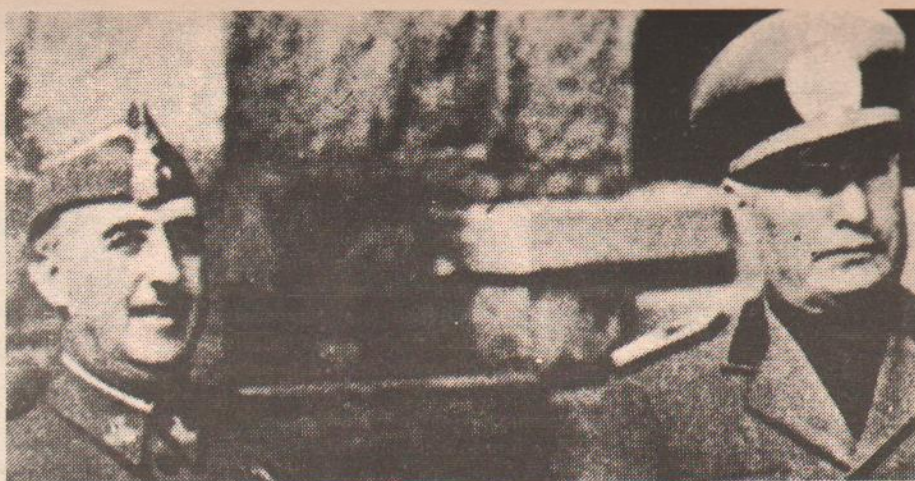
Indeed they could not. In a country where peasants made up 70 percent of the population, the Popular Front regime refused to expropriate the wealthy landowners and declare the land the property of those who till it.

MOROCCO LOST

Morocco was the base of the fascist rebellion; much of Franco's army, including many of his crack units, was Moroccan. It had taken fourteen years of warfare to subjugate the freedom fighters, but the Popular Front government refused to declare Morocco independent. Any tampering with the colonial status of North Africa would have upset the French imperialists, and it was to them the republican regime looked for aid.

The imperialist democracies, however, were afraid that the rapid defeat of the fascist uprising would result in a Soviet Spain. Paris, London, and Washington, pledging "nonintervention" in Spanish affairs, clamped an arms embargo on both sides in the conflict. In reality, this was aimed solely at the antifascist side, since Franco was liberally supplied with arms by Hitler and Mussolini.

The Nazis openly sent their "Condor Legion" and other forces, totaling about 16,000, into the war, and Mussolini dispatched 50,000 Italian troops. The Kremlin sent supplies to the republican regime, but never enough for a decisive military effort. Stalin's policy of limited aid was similar to the one followed by his successors in relation to Vietnam.



Franco hobnobs with his fascist mentors: Mussolini (above) and Hitler

Enough was given to prevent early defeat of the Loyalists and the consequent collapse of Soviet prestige in the international working class. And this fitted in, at bottom, with Anglo-French policy, which did not desire an immediate Franco victory. But not enough was given to facilitate a victorious conclusion from which might issue—once the spectre of Franco was gone—a Soviet Spain.

The worthlessness of relying on the imperialist democracies for support against fascism was dramatically shown when London and Paris recognized the Franco regime in February 1939 while the loyalists still held one-third of Spain.

Those who argued that the Spanish workers should tailor their policies to limits acceptable to Moscow—and ultimately to the imperialists—were answered by Trotsky. He wrote in 1937:

Revolutions have been victorious up to this time not at all thanks to high and mighty foreign patrons who supplied them with arms. As a rule, counterrevolution enjoyed foreign patronage. . . . The proletariat of Russia conquered domestic reaction and foreign interventionists without military support from the outside. Revolutions succeed, in the first place, with the help of a bold social program, which gives the masses the possibility of seizing weapons that are on their territory and disorganizing the army of the enemy.

The defeat of the republic was accompanied by an exodus of approximately 500,000 refugees. Nevertheless, the Franco regime officially admitted to 271,000 political prisoners in 1940. The number of persons in prison in 1942 totaled about 241,000. The decline, however, was not because of the number of prisoners released.

MASS MURDER

Gabriel Jackson wrote in *The Spanish Republic and the Civil War, 1931-1939*:

... I consider it certain that close to 200,000 men died in the years 1939-43. A professional officer and lawyer, who had served with the Nationalists in the war and was appointed as a defense attorney for the mass court-martials, swore to me that on the basis of Ministry of Interior lists alone, he knew that more than 300,000 death sentences had been executed by the end of World War II.

Even this staggering repression, however, failed to root out working-class opposition. In May 1947, for example, 50,000 Basque workers struck on May Day. Government reprisals sparked strikes that were admitted by the regime to involve 40 percent of the workers in the Bilbao area, and 75 percent of those over a broader area.



In 1951 there were even bigger struggles. In Barcelona, 300,000 workers took part in a one-day general strike in March. The following month 100,000 struck in Bilbao and other Basque towns, and students went on strike in Madrid.

With help from Washington, however, Franco was able to stabilize his regime during the following years. In January 1950, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Acheson announced that Washington was ready to vote for an end to the diplomatic blockade that had been instituted by the United Nations in retaliation for Franco's aid to Hitler during World War II.

In December 1950 Washington and Madrid exchanged ambassadors, and the following year Washington began negotiations for bases in Spain. Also, Spanish officers began to train in the United States. Since concluding its 1953 military pact with Franco, Washington has supplied him with a steady flow of economic and military aid.

Now, with the reins dropping from the old dictator's hands, Spanish capitalists may soon be facing the day of reckoning postponed by the fascist victory in the civil war.

(From *Intercontinental Press* - slightly abridged)



Refugees from Franco's terror cross the border into France, 1939

A NEW WAVE OF WORKERS' STRUGGLES

Last week saw a further deepening in the struggle against the reactionary Sixth Provisional Government headed by Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo.

The massive strike of metal workers, the strike and siege of the Government by construction workers and last Sunday's demonstration of 100,000 workers in Lisbon all show that the working class is really on the move again. The Government of Azevedo is now clearly in deep crisis.

Furthermore, under the impact of the new wave of struggles, the Socialist Party is being forced into deeper splits — with large numbers of Socialist Party workers resigning in Torrao and other towns, and with Soares being forced to pull out of a pro-Government rally in the northern town of Viseu. This follows the approaches already made by the Socialist Party youth to the revolutionaries for a joint campaign in support of Spanish political prisoners.

The struggle of the soldiers also continues. The soldiers and sergeants of the paratroop regiment of Tanços — the same regiment which was used to dynamite the transmitter of Radio Renascença — have den-



Two SUV soldiers guard Radio Renascença studios. But paratroopers were tricked into blowing up the transmitter.

ounced the reactionary purposes for which they have been used. The left wing of the Armed Forces Movement (AFM), once again feeling itself under the pressure of the workers, has been forced to adopt a more open attitude of opposition to the Government — with General Carvalho ostentatiously boycotting AFM meetings, and Admiral Coutinho declaring his support for the demands of the construction workers.

VANGUARD

Within the workers' demonstrations and strikes a powerful vanguard has developed. The CP leaders of the Intersindical trade union federation were continually rebuffed in their attempts at a sell-out over the building workers' demands. The Communist Party declared on 14 November that 'the siege [of Azevedo's residence] did not benefit the workers and permitted all sorts of provocations' — a curious response to an action which won the workers' demands, and one which cannot have boosted the Party's standing amongst the thousands of workers who participated in the struggle! So it might be thought that the revolutionary left — which only six weeks ago was able to get 40,000 workers and 4,000 soldiers onto the streets of Lisbon in support of the 'Soldiers United Will Win' (SUV) movement — was in an excellent position.

SECTARIAN

Unfortunately, however, the ultra-sectarian policies of the Revolutionary United Front (FUR) have wasted most of the potential which existed. There was a tremendous opportunity to campaign around clear concrete demands which could have consolidated the early victories, rooting them in the broad masses of soldiers and workers, and strengthening the embryos of workers' self-organisation — demands like the election of officers; wage increases to com-



pensate for increases in the cost of living; an economic plan for the nationalised industries; etc.

ERRORS

Instead, the majority of the revolutionary left committed a series of disastrous errors. Firstly they characterised the Socialist Party as a party of the bourgeoisie — or even worse, as 'social fascist' — and rejected the offer of an alliance with the Socialist Youth. Then the FUR began to have further illusions that it could also jump over the mass of the workers who followed the Communist Party, and started to adopt a sectarian attitude even to the CP rank and file.

The result that in Portugal today large sections of the revolutionary left are in a state of collapse or disintegration. The FUR demonstrations today are only a fifth or a tenth of the size of those six weeks ago. The Movement of the Socialist Left (MES) has lost most of its working class base. The LUAR is declining rapidly. The PRP, following its insane analysis that the domination of the Government by the Socialist Party means the domination of extreme reaction or even fascism,

first sent its armed 'Revolutionary Brigades' underground, and is now carrying on an idiotic and extremely dangerous campaign for an immediate insurrection.

The result of this crisis of most of the revolutionary left is a real strengthening of the position of the Communist Party, not merely at the expense of the Socialists — with, for example, many unions which had disaffiliated from Intersindical rejoining — but also at the expense of the revolutionary left. It is this double strengthening which will probably now allow the CP to achieve its goal of greatly strengthening its position in a new government — something it is carefully pursuing through its combination of working class mobilisations with avoidance of any head-on clash with the AFM.

TURNING POINT

It is clear the situation in Portugal is approaching another turning point. The renewed weight of the Communist Party, the growing opposition inside the SP to the right-wing line of its leaders, and the friction between the SP and the bourgeois PPD, make the most likely outcome the formation of a new

'left' CP-SP-AFM government.

The revolutionaries could gain greatly from this, breaking down the present left image of the CP. But for that a radical re-orientation of policy would be necessary, of which the majority of the FUR is incapable.

Only the Trotskyists of the LCI — in particular, in their defence of the soldiers in Oporto — have begun to show the capacity for the bold united front tactics which are necessary in the present situation. The second congress of the LCI, to be held in December, will mark an important turning point for the whole Portuguese left.

by John Marshall

Republica

EDITORIAL STATUTES SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN FROM THE BRITISH WORKERS TO THE PORTUGUESE WORKERS



English edition of 'Republica' now out! Available from Red Books (30p inc. p & p) or bulk orders from PWCC, 12, Little Newport St., London WC2.

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE PLANNED

The following is a declaration issued by the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation following a meeting in London convened by the Foundation, and attended by a number of leading figures in the British labour movement and representatives of the major European revolutionary organisations. At this meeting the decision was taken to convene a 'European Conference in Solidarity with the Portuguese Revolution' on 13-14 December in Paris.

In the face of strong and sustained attacks, the Portuguese working people have been able to establish a whole series of exciting initiatives in the field of workers' control in the economy and popular power in the community. These offer vital lessons to the entire European socialist and labour movement: but they also call for active help from European trade unions and socialist movements, since their defence can by no means be accomplished from within Portuguese frontiers alone, when powerful commercial interests and various State agencies are organising on a continental scale against them.

The need for international solidarity with the Portuguese working people is becoming daily more urgent, not only in the face of threats from such bodies as the CIA and NATO, neither of which should be underestimated, but also in response to systematic measures of 'destabilisation' of the Portuguese economy, by a whole series of organisations,

ranging from particular transnational companies to the EEC.

To meet such onslaughts, the European labour movement needs to begin to organise responses at a multiplicity of levels. Not only must there be a widely based campaign against foreign imperialist intervention in Portuguese affairs, but it is also necessary to begin to develop systematic exchanges between Portuguese workers' organisations and their opposite numbers in other countries, to generate a trans-national trade union resistance to the discriminatory and hostile policies of international combines, which have been disrupting Portuguese economic development. Such exchanges are also important if we are to encourage the movement to provide material aid of kinds which may be directly helpful.

The overall political movement of solidarity with the Portuguese Revolution requires a constant flow of accurate and relevant information in all the main languages.

This Conference will be an important step towards coordinating the solidarity of the European left on an international level against the sabotage and wrecking activities of imperialism and its allies, who *already* have the advantage of such coordination. The Conference deserves the broadest support by the left in this country, and every effort must be made to ensure that there is a large and representative British delegation attending it.

At the same time that they attack the Portuguese workers, the imperial powers and the trans-national companies are intervening with full force in order to prevent the achievement of genuine national independence by the former Portuguese colonies, notably in Angola and Timor. In Angola, in addition to admitted CIA involvement against the MPLA, there is open military intervention based on Zaire and South Africa. In Timor, Fretilin is under attack from Indonesia.

We suggest, therefore, the following themes for the Conference:

- 'Defence of the Portuguese Revolution against encirclement and economic sabotage by NATQ and other hostile organisations.'
- 'Defence of political activists and workers' organisations; aid to workers, peasants, soldiers and sailors in their struggles for popular power and workers' control.'

We propose that the Conference make detailed plans for initiating and sustaining the following activities:

1. Development of a flow of accurate information on the Portuguese Revolution in all the countries concerned.
2. Exposure of foreign intervention against the Portuguese Revolution, either at the Government or corporation levels, and organisation of resistance to such actions on a European and international scale.
3. Organisation of political and material aid to the workers, peasant, neighbourhood and soldiers' rank-and-file committees; development of exchanges between these bodies and organisations of the labour movement abroad; support of the right of these bodies to defend themselves by every means at their disposal.
4. Exposure of the interventions by imperial powers in Angola and Timor; aid to the struggles of the MPLA and Fretilin against these attacks.



DEFEND THE ANGOLAN REVOLUTION!

On 11 November the wretched Portuguese flags were torn from the masts in the Angolan capital of Luanda, as the last of the Portuguese troops and officials retreated from five hundred years of colonial brutality in Africa. The flag of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) was raised instead over the city; but elsewhere in the country the blood-stained flags of reaction, indistinguishable from those of their imperialist benefactors, led the way towards smashing some of the most exemplary struggles that have yet been witnessed in Africa.

The MPLA has suffered significant defeats against the coordinated onslaught of South African troops, the fascist Portuguese Liberation Army (ELP), the Zairian army (whose intervention Mobutu now openly admits), and the joint forces of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

Massive

Massive aid continues to be poured quite openly into the coffers of the reactionaries by European and American imperialism; and it

Julius Karanja

appears increasingly likely that the FNLA may be able to march into Luanda to obliterate the MPLA, UNTA (the Angolan trade union organisation), leftist militants, and the workers' and neighbourhood committees that have given the Angolan revolution the dynamic that has so threatened imperialist interests in Africa today.

In spite of its 'seizure of power', the MPLA faces increasing isolation. Only a handful of states—and

Britain is not among them—have recognised its government; although the effects of this isolation are to some extent being offset now by substantial Cuban and Soviet aid.

The FRELIMO Government in Mozambique has also sent 250 guerrillas to fight alongside the MPLA. While this aid, no matter how small, is to be welcomed, it is worth noting that it only follows an unsuccessful attempt by FRELIMO to bring about a 'settlement' between the three Angolan movements—precisely the type of move to which the MPLA leadership concedes, and which has brought about the present disastrous state of affairs.

Severity

The severity of the present crisis and isolation of the MPLA are having marked effects on the movement itself. The right wing within the MPLA is responding eagerly to the feelers being put forward by Savimbi (UNITA) for a coalition with UNITA and FNLA; but the Neto leadership current realises that such a move would prove disastrous for its credibility—particularly amongst the urban workers of Luanda, who clearly would not accept such a proposition easily. However, the present unfavourable relationship of forces inside Angola means that the Netoist leadership is nevertheless under strong pressure to capitulate to the right.

Solution

The problem for them is to find a solution that the militant workers will swallow. These workers have undergone experiences that have made their responses qualitatively different from the days of the Mombasa and Nakuru accords and compromises, when the Neto leadership was able to make concessions to the right while still maintaining its credibility amongst the masses.

Further, in spite of the fact that the FNLA and UNITA now hold some of the key positions in Luanda, it is clear that they are unwilling to launch a direct offensive against Luanda; this is amply borne out by the continuous proposals made over the last week for a ceasefire and coalition. The reason for their reluctance to launch an offensive is that it would necessarily involve an unholy massacre of the entire workforce in Luanda.

Such a move would not only

cause enormous opposition worldwide, but would be hardly conducive to the restoration of capitalist order—which, after all, must depend on this workforce. Thus their strategy must be, if possible, to enter Luanda 'peacefully'. Once there, they will aim to indulge in a selective massacre of militant workers and leftists with the help of the right wing of the MPLA, and thus crush the workers' movement with the minimum damage to the restoration of capitalism.

Compromises

But in spite of the compromises and opportunism of the leadership, socialists must give full critical support to the MPLA, for it is to this movement that the workers and toiling masses of Angola look for leadership. Against the unholy alliance of FNLA, UNITA and their reactionary benefactors, a resounding cry must come from socialists worldwide in solidarity with the MPLA, for the recognition of the MPLA government, for immediate supply of arms to Angola, against imperialist and pro-imperialist intervention, and for the immediate withdrawal of South African and Zairian troops. Such demands should be taken into the workers' movement, trade unions, trades councils, and the Labour Party, and the Labour Government should be forced to give immediate recognition to the MPLA Government.

Revolutionary

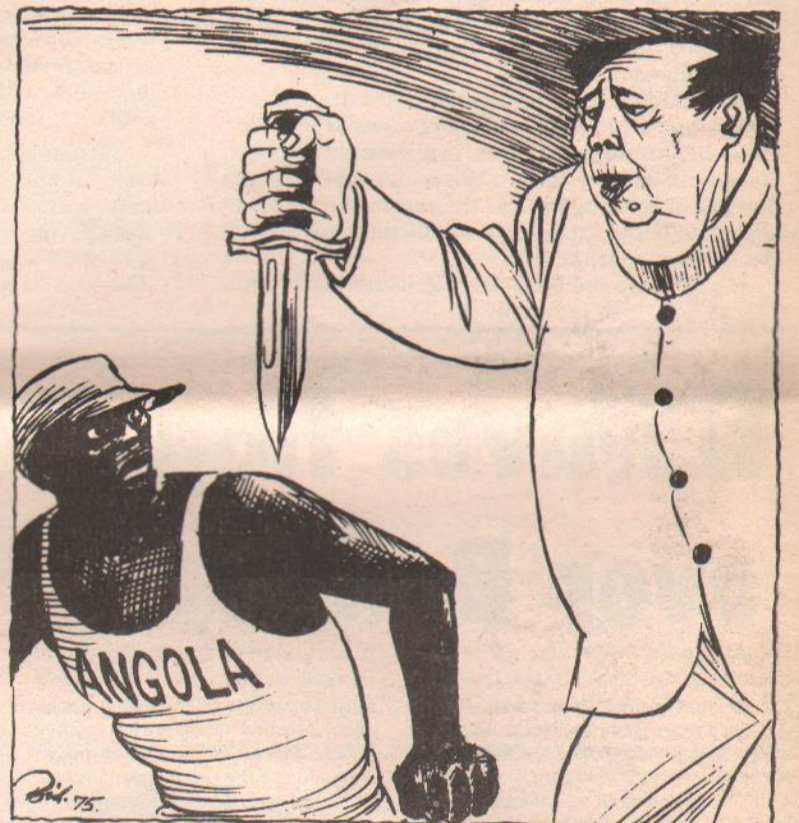
militants arrested

Reports have been received that the MPLA leadership has arrested twenty revolutionary militants in the ranks of the movement. This move clearly attests to the rightward swing of the petty-bourgeois Neto current, and can only play into the hands of reaction at a time when the Angolan revolution is in danger of being crushed by imperialist and reactionary forces aligned against the MPLA.

DISARMING

These militants have been active in developing the struggles of the workers and neighbourhood committees which so heroically took the lead in ousting the FNLA and UNITA from Luanda. Their arrest serves only to disarm the masses who were responsible for many of the successes of the MPLA, leaving them weakened against the coming onslaught.

The International Marxist Group will be organising a campaign for the release of these militants—details will be published shortly. Meanwhile, militants in Britain should be raising this matter in all their initiatives in solidarity with the MPLA. For further details, contact: Africa in Struggle (Angolan Defence), 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



Chairman Mao's aid for the FNLA means that he too is wielding the knife against the Angolan revolution—in company with the CIA, South Africa, and Portuguese fascists

-WHAT'S ON-

BLACK COUNTRY: Warley Trades Council demo against unemployment. March from Smethwick to West Bromwich. Assemble at 'Spendcroft', Smethwick, 2pm, Saturday 22 November.

UNEMPLOYED TEACHERS meeting, Thurs 20 Nov, 7.30pm in Prince Albert, Wharfedale Rd, N.1. (Kings X tube). Sponsored by Socialist Teachers Conference.

NURSERY CAMPAIGN—meeting to discuss the fight for better nursery provisions and against Government cuts. Sun 23 Nov, 2pm, in Co-op Hall, Seven Sisters Road, London N.7.

CRITIQUE CONFERENCE on the World Crisis and Eastern Europe. Fri & Sat, 21-22 Nov. New Hall, City University, St John St, London EC1. Fri 21 Nov: 7.30, Ernest Mandel. Sat 22 Nov: 10.30, Ivan Szelenyi; 2.30, Zhores Medvedev & Georges Haupt; 7.30, Hillet Ticktin. Fee £2.50 or £2 for Critique subscribers.

BIRMINGHAM IMG public meeting: 'Fight for the Right to Work'. Sun 23 Nov, 7.30pm, Digbeth Civic Hall.

NEWCASTLE IMG educational meetings, every Thursday at 8pm in the Bridge Hotel.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK! Brighton public meeting, Tues 25 Nov, 7.30pm, Brighton Poly Arts Faculty, Grand Parade. Speakers include George Cooper (Pres. Brighton Trades Council), Andy Durr (Vice-Pres. Trades Council), Labour councillor, Bob Pennington (IMG Political Committee).

AUSTRALIA: Open forum organised by left-wing Australians, Tues 25 Nov, 8-10pm, in the Roebuck pub, 108a Tottenham Ct Rd (Warren St tube). Speakers include Jack Munday.

FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO WORK—South-West London IMG public meeting, Tues 25 Nov, 7.30pm, Brixton Training Centre, Brixton Hill (opp ABC cinema). Speakers include member of IMG Political Committee, Betty Hunter (NUT, Wandsworth Trades Council), Tony Young (unemployed building worker).

DEFEND EAST END HOSPITALS Against Wilson's Cuts! Demonstrate Fri 21 Nov against closure of ICCH (Balaam Hospital). Assemble 6.15pm at ICCH, Balaam Road, E15, march to East-Ham Town Hall for Newham Community Health Council public meeting. Organised by E. London Action Ctee Against the Cuts and supported by E. London MCAPP delegates.

RED LADDER THEATRE Grand Variety Night. This pioneer socialist theatre group needs money for permanent move to North of England. They will perform their new play 'It Makes Yer Sick'—about Health and the NHS—at a special benefit where they will be joined by much acclaimed women's rock band Steptey Sisters. Fri 5 Dec, 7.30, St Pancras Assembly Rooms (Kings X tube). Bar from 7pm. Tickets £1.

FIGHT UNEMPLOYMENT! Meeting organised by London IMG Students, Tues 25 Nov, 7pm, in Room 2D, ULU, Malet Street, WC1. Speaker: Tim Hall.

BIRMINGHAM Centre for the Arts, Aston University, Socialist Theatre Season 4 Nov—6 Dec. 27 Nov: Banner with 'Collier Laddie'; 28 Nov: Clarion Singers with 'Truth on the March'; 29 Nov: Banner with 'Womankind'.

PUBLIC MEETING—'Unemployment and how to fight it'. Chairman: Arthur Harper (Pres. B'ham AUWE E. District). Speakers: Mike Cooley, Wally Preston. Thurs 27 Nov, 7.45pm, The Matador, Bull Ring, B'ham.

LONDON SOCIALIST FORUM: 'Opposition Currents in Eastern Europe'. Tues 25 Nov, 7.30pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq., WC1. All welcome.

'OPPRESSION OF WOMEN By Science': joint meeting of Science for People (BSSRS) and Brunel Women's Action Group, Tues 25 Nov, 7.30pm in Lecture Block, Brunel University, Uxbridge.

'WOMEN AGAINST THE CUTS' Conference planning meeting—Fri 21 Nov, 7pm, at 'Mother Redcap', Camden High St, NW1 (Camden Town tube).

WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER Campaign National Conference planning meeting, Sat 22 Nov, 2pm, 18 Finsbury Park Road, N4 (226 2491). Pooled fare. For accommodation phone Sophie Cox (eves), 609 1748. Also fund-raising disco in evening, 7.30pm at Sols Arms, Hampstead Rd, NW1 (Warren St tube).

MANCHESTER Revolutionary Communist Group day school on the Crisis, 10am, Sat 13 Dec, Lass O'Gowrie, Charles St, Manchester 1. Speakers: David Yaffe, Frank Richards. Write to John Smith, 11 Balleratt St, Levenshulme, Manchester for reading list.

REBEL public meeting—'What Course for Socialists?' Speaker: Paul Hoggett (Battersea South CLP). Sun 23 Nov, 8pm, at The George, Liverpool Rd, N.1.

SEMINAR ON CHILE - ONE BIG COVER-UP

Last week's international seminar on Chile, organised jointly by the National Union of Students (UK) and the International Union of Students, was the first of its kind for a number of years. It showed the political changes that have taken place in the British student movement since the late 1960s; however, the participants signally failed to understand the meaning of the student struggles which broke out internationally at this time.

FAILURE

This failure to understand the role played by the student movement in 1968 was clearly shown by the willingness of delegates—including NUS executive members—to give full recognition to the puppet Czech student union CSUV, which was set up after the Soviet invasion in 1968. Only one delegate from the NUS executive, Valerie Coultas, protested that this was a blatant breach of NUS conference decisions before withdrawing from the seminar.

The Committee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists distributed a statement calling on the CSUV delegates to state unequivocally their condemnation of the jailing of Czechoslovak socialists like student leader Jiri Muller. The statement pointed out that 'the Socialist Opposition in Czechoslovakia have frequently expressed solidarity with their persecuted comrades in Chile, and have made clear that they regard the two movements as

part of one world-wide struggle for socialism, freedom and democracy'.

It went on to quote from an open letter sent by thirty recently released political prisoners to the Society of Czechoslovak Lawyers, accusing the latter of using 'propaganda to safeguard the status quo in our country, one feature of which is active trade between Czechoslovakia and the fascist Chilean Junta while asylum is refused to Chilean refugees.' However, most of the delegates at the seminar cynically responded by warmly applauding a CSUV speaker and denouncing those who wished to raise the issue of Czechoslovakia as 'bent on disruption'.

TRAGIC

Almost as tragic as this was the seminar itself. After £4,000 had been raised from British student unions to help finance the seminar, those few student observers who did turn up had little chance to discuss with the international delegates. Instead they had to sit through one long speech after another without any discussion or even questions.

Worse still, these speeches—while graphically outlining the brutality of the Chilean regime—were notably vague when it came to practical proposals for how to fight it. But then, anything else might have shown up the double-dealing of the East European bureaucrats...

7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

The bloody feud between the Official and Provisional IRA appears at the time of writing to have been halted while discussions take place to resolve the matters in dispute. Hostilities ceased at 4 pm on Thursday 13 November; and for the nationalist minority in Belfast, the end came not a minute too soon.

The anti-Unionist people were sickened by the feud, and put mounting pressure on both sides to end it. Statements condemning the feud were issued by the Andersonstown Central Civil Resistance Campaign, the Irish Republican Socialist Party, People's Democracy, the Revolutionary Marxist Group (Irish section of the Fourth International), and the Communist Party of Ireland.

DEMONSTRATIONS

The women of the nationalist areas also took to the streets in protest demonstrations. Although some of these had the character of prayer meetings, that held in the Short Strand (a small Catholic enclave in East Belfast, totally dwarfed by the Loyalist population) made it clear that it opposed the violent factional dispute because it strengthened Loyalism and British imperialism.

The statement declaring that hostilities had ceased came on the same day that the Falls Taxi Association threatened to block all approaches to the Falls Road throughout Saturday (15 November) in an attempt to end the bitter feud. The 'Peoples Taxi' service on the Falls was suspended after Michael Duggan, the Chairman of the Taxi Association, had been murdered the previous Wednesday.

His death brought the grim toll of the dispute to eleven dead, scores wounded, and dozens of families intimidated from their homes. In at least three cases the persons killed were members of neither movement. But grim as these figures are, the cost to the nationalist people in the struggle against British imperialism has been even grimmer.

The feud allowed the Social Democratic & Labour

Party to step up its 'Bring back the RUC' campaign within the ghettos. Fitt, Devlin & Co. have been busy exploiting the fear and confusion that has been caused amongst the nationalist people to claim that the Catholic areas are more terrorised by the Republicans than by the British Army or the Loyalist para-militaries.

RUC MORE CONFIDENT

That the SDLP has not been entirely unsuccessful in this was shown by the fact that the leadership of some of the demonstrations was taken by the Church, and also by the incursions made by the RUC into the ghettos over the past few weeks. On some occasions the RUC have entered the hearts of the nationalist districts to carry out searches and patrols without the British Army, showing a confidence unprecedented since 1969.

Imperialism has naturally been delighted at the spectacle of Republican shooting Republican. British soldiers on the streets of Belfast have been laughing at the dead bodies of Republicans and taunting the population about the 'Army of the people'. But the biggest smirk is to be found up at Stormont Castle, on the face of the Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees.

The feud gave Rees the perfect pretext for closing down the incident centres, thus conceding one of the Loyalists' major demands. Counter-allegations by both the Officials and the Provisionals that the other is no more than 'a gangster outfit' also gave Rees the chance to reveal that he was abolishing the special category (political) prisoner status. Rees aims to depoliticise the anti-imperialist struggle by tarring the militants of both IRA wings with the 'criminal' brush.

Hostilities may now have ceased, but steps must be taken to ensure that the halt is permanent and that such feuds are not repeated.

'ANTI-IMPERIALIST UNITY

A statement from the Irish Republican Socialist Party suggesting a meeting of all anti-imperialist groups to prevent future conflicts is welcome, as is their call for anti-imperialist unity. As the IRSP point out, this 'is the only ultimate guarantee that the struggle will succeed'. But more than statements are needed.

All anti-imperialist organisations that recognise the need for united action must unite now around practical initiatives to stem the onslaught of the 'gangsters' in British Army and Loyalist para-military uniform. This is the best way to foster anti-imperialist united action. The need is immediate: the time is now!



Bloody Sunday Commemoration Demonstration

The Bloody Sunday Commemoration Committee, set up to organise a national demonstration on 1 February for British withdrawal from Ireland, continues to attract wide support. Among the latest sponsors is the Wandsworth & Battersea Trades Council, and indications of support are also coming in from several branches of the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Several hundred sponsorship appeals have already been distributed. More are available from: Ted Coxhead, BSCC Secretary, c/o 1 North End Road, London W.14.

The committee meets every Tuesday at 7.30 p.m. in Room 2E of the University of London Union, Malet Street, W.C.1. Why not come along?

Manchester 'Terrorism Act' Conference

Last week, Roy Jenkins announced that the 'draconian measures', masquerading under the twice misnamed 'Prevention of Terrorism Act' were shortly to be made tougher and permanent.

It takes only a few moments to look at how the Act has been used to see what its real role has been. Joe Gallagher - guilty of being a good shop steward and member of Blethley Trades Council - arrested under the Act. Pat Arrowsmith - guilty of daring to distribute pacifist leaflets exposing the role of the troops in Ireland - arrested under the Act.

The law has been used as a blanket means of investigating and harassing the Irish community in Britain, and against all those active in campaigning against the role of the troops in Ireland.

As Brigadier Kitson (military adviser to the Government) says: 'The law should be used as just another weapon in the Government's arsenal, and in this case it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public.'

A conference called by Manchester NCCL, and sponsored by Salford Trades Council and the local AUEW-TASS Divisional Council amongst others, is the first step towards building a national campaign against the renewal of this anti-working class legislation. But it will take more than conferences to remove this legislation - it will require a campaign of the whole labour movement, united against Jenkins' laws and in defence of democratic rights.

The conference, along with the pamphlet 'The State, the Law, and Ireland' (produced by Manchester NCCL) is but the first step in what will be a hard fight. It will take place on Sunday 30 November starting at 2.30 p.m. in the Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST, Sackville Street, Manchester. For further information, contact Mart Collins, Flat 2, 1 Palatine Road, Withington, Manchester 20.

1) Waves flag over Belize

The Labour Government has now selected a more glamorous location than the streets of Northern Ireland for displaying its military hardware to the world. In the name of self-determination for Belize (British Honduras), a battalion of British infantry and six Harrier jump jets have been despatched to repel a threatened invasion from Guatemala.

As the *Guardian* was not slow to point out: 'If the Harriers go into action, even against such limited opposition, their performance will be watched with interest all over the world. This is the first time the RAF has deployed them outside Europe.'

CYNICAL

How much the Labour Government has the interests of the Belize masses at heart can be judged from the antics of its predecessor in 1945-51. The country's biggest export, timber, was then consistently undervalued in customs declarations in order to prop up British trading interests. This situation reached its height in 1949 when the Honduran dollar was sharply and arbitrarily devalued against the pound.

The explosion of anti-colonial sentiment which erupted against this action was brutally put down by the British. 'Subversion Control' legislation was used to imprison the leaders of the anti-colonial movement. The Belize City Council was even dissolved because it refused to hang a portrait of the King in the City Hall!

GUERRILLAS

Today Special Air Service forces patrol the borders of Belize, as much to stop activities by the opposition guerrillas in Guatemala as to report on the activities of the Guatemalan army.

Of course, Guatemala has no legitimate claim whatsoever to the territory of Belize. Ever since the CIA invaded Guatemala in 1954 on behalf of the United

Fruit Company - creating what has been called a second Vietnam - the regime has existed on a diet of the most bloody repression of the Guatemalan masses combined with a series of boundary wars against weaker neighbours. These act as a diversion from the internal contradictions of the regime, in a country where the average per capita income is four per cent of that in the USA, its 'benevolent protector'.

But James Callaghan has no interest in the problems of the suffering Central American workers and peasants. For the Labour Government this is merely an opportunity to flog the Harrier jump jet and parade its concern for the continuation of a neo-colonial set-up which will never serve the interests of those it holds in thrall.



British Harrier jump jet arriving in Belize

LABOUR FOREIGN POLICY



2) Sticks knife into Hong Kong

Six members of the Revolutionary Marxist League in Hong Kong were arrested on 27 October for protesting against a possible rise from £11m to £40m in defence expenditure from April next year. They were calling instead for British troops to get out of Hong Kong.

The British Government plans to shift the defence budget onto the shoulders of Hong Kong as part of its plan to reduce military expenditure east of Suez. Troops have already been withdrawn from the South East Asia Treaty Organisation and the tiny oil-rich state of Brunei. In Hong Kong, however, the British Government has decided to maintain its troops there and make the people pay.

POLICE ROLE

But why should Hong Kong shoulder the defence costs? The troops aren't there to defend Hong Kong from outside invasion - they hardly put up any show of resistance before surrendering to the Japanese in the Second World War. The number of British soldiers stationed in Hong Kong now stands at 3,700. To maintain them Britain and Hong Kong have been jointly spending £40m each year. This contrasts with a social welfare budget of only £30m.

The native capitalists, as taxpayers and faced with such embarrassing figures, have of course muttered a few protests. But they recognise the basic necessity of the troops to 'gain the confidence of foreign investors', i.e. to quell upsurges of the working masses such as that in 1966-67.

SILENT

The pro-Peking elements in the colony have remained the quietest of all over the issue. After all, Britain is supposedly an important ally in the struggle against that 'dangerous superpower', the USSR. Only the Revolutionary Marxist

League has demanded the complete evacuation of the garrison. Only the RML has spoken out on behalf of the working masses. The RML appeals to its comrades in Britain to support them in this struggle against colonialism and imperialism.

from U. CHEN



Arrested - for distributing a leaflet demanding British troops out of Hong Kong.

BATTERED WIVES STRIKE OUT FOR THEMSELVES

A group of 50 women and children moved into the empty, spacious Palm Court Hotel in Richmond last week. The women were forced to start a new squat after Hounslow Labour Council's threat to take legal action against Chiswick Women's Aid - a refuge for battered wives and their children. The Council insists that the number of women and kids staying there must be reduced from more than 100 to 36 before they will renew their annual £10,000 grant, because - they say - the place is a fire hazard.

The Council, however, has no plans to provide an alternative for the women and children they would thereby force to move out. And the neighbouring Tory Richmond Council refused a grant for a Women's Aid place to be set up last month - thinking that if they ignored this issue it would simply go away.

Instead the women took over this hotel themselves. The owners - Goodhews Holdings, a large brewery group - have let the property stand empty for over six years, and there are plans to convert the site into a car park.

HARD WORK

Meanwhile the women there are hoping to stay and are working hard to make their new home more comfortable. They moved in with bedd-

By MINNIE JANSON

ing, gas stoves, paraffin heaters, pans, food etc., converting one of the former bars into a kitchen and other rooms into bedrooms, sitting rooms and office. They also plan to have a school on the premises for the children.

Unlike any of the other 33 Women's Aid centres in the country, Chiswick has always had an open-door policy. As Anne Ashby, their secretary, says: 'The women here are all for this policy, because as they see it they could have been the woman who was turned away.' Therefore no-one is ever sent away, because that would mean sending them back to a violent husband. A space is always made in the overcrowded house, no matter how hectic it gets there.

In her Penguin book *Scream Quietly Or The Neighbours Will*



Hear, Erin Pizzey, founder of Chiswick Women's Aid, says: 'Those women who come to sleep on the floor with their children must have left unimaginable suffering to be able to bear this way of life. There's no privacy in the house and no chance of peace and quiet.

FAIRY TALE

'As long as the myths of beauty and beast, the princess and the frog hold strong, young girls will believe that the love of a good woman can save any man, that the ugly frog will turn into a prince once the princess takes him into her bed and kisses him.

'Anyone who has been badly knocked about loses all sense of reality and ability to cope. Battered women are almost permanently in a shocked state. The constant fear of another beating leaves them very tense and nervous. Some can't eat, others sleep little. Even the toughest find it hard to fight off the depression which overwhelms them.'

VIOLENCE

The women leading the campaign

for more places in Chiswick (where they have also squatted 20 other places, used as second-phase community houses for smaller family units) see the cause of wife battering only as violence being handed down from the father to the son. What they don't realise is that this is merely a physical extension of the oppression of the woman within the family. With a deepening economic crisis, worsening social conditions are putting an enormous strain on the family. Husbands vent their frustrations on their wives, because they are socialised by a society which treats women as inferior.

Doctors and social workers often close their eyes when they suspect a case - they haven't got the resources to deal with what they see as an insoluble problem. All they feel able to do is to send the woman back home, and perhaps take her kids away from her to be put into care.

INADEQUATE

Labour Party councillors and MPs can mostly only see a solution to wife-battering in terms of more crisis centres and second-phase refuges, where women can start to pick up the pieces of their lives and

identities once more. Of course these places are needed. All councils should provide accommodation and financial aid for women to run these centres under their own control and large enough to cope with an open-door policy. They have to take responsibility for the damage done.

GENERALISE

But we can only really start to tackle the problem by taking it up as part of the general struggle for women's liberation. Anne Ashby and Erin Pizzey claim that wife battering has nothing to do with politics. But only a political fight against all forms of women's oppression will ever create the conditions where it will be possible to end this brutal treatment of women.

A fight is needed to oppose all cut-backs in the social services - in fact these services must be extended so that better facilities can be provided for battered wives. The sexist ideology which dominates attitudes at both the public and private level must be challenged by socialists, which means an unambiguous stand in favour of women's struggle for equality now.



Birmingham NAC campaigners held a street meeting in the main shopping centre last Saturday to highlight the sabotage even of the 1967 Act by reactionary consultants

BOOST FOR NUS WOMEN'S CAMPAIGN

The NUS Women's Conference in Bristol on 8-9 November has laid the basis for an active campaign in the student movement against the attacks on women being co-ordinated through the policies of the Labour Government.

Firmly rejecting motions such as an International Socialist-backed resolution to focus almost solely on abortion, the Conference recognised the wider implications of the capitalist crisis for women by adopting a motion which emphasised the need to link up with all sections of the labour movement in defence of working class rights and living standards.

The resolution included a demand for the NUS to campaign actively in defence of the NHS through support for the initiatives put forward at the recent MCAPP conference, and to fight for the implementation of the TUC and Labour Party conference resolutions on abortion. It also called on the NUS to build and strengthen the Working Women's Charter Campaign, and together with women's

groups in the colleges to support the forthcoming 'Women against the Cuts' conference and build for the mass unemployment lobby on 26 November.

The Conference voted support for the moves by some members of the Association of Teachers in Technical Institutions in Hemel Hempstead to introduce maternity leave for males, thus challenging the traditional attitudes towards child care as simply women's responsibility. The Conference also affirmed the right of women, both in the colleges and in the labour movement, to hold closed meetings. It thus recognised that women can only be liberated through their own self-activity.

Overall, the Conference represented a major step forward for the NUS women's campaign. It remains, however, for students to fight for these policies in their unions and to get them supported by the NUS national conference.

Sarah Roelofs

NAC Week of Action

by Penny Duggan

As the attack on women's right to abortion mounts - following the Labour Government's acceptance of the restrictive Third Report of the Select Committee - Barbara Castle's pious claim that the Government is taking 'serious steps in the direction of prevention' remains pie in the sky. She was referring to the Labour Government's scheme to allow women to get contraception from GPs other than their own at no cost. But the 13 November issue of *Doctor* shows that this is largely a fake.

First of all, the Government has taken no measures to publicise the scheme. A survey of nine area health authorities in Greater London showed that only three have posted lists of GPs in their areas included in the scheme. But even in these areas the number of doctors participating is pitiful - in Islington and Camden, only 39 per cent of all GPs are involved.

FOCUS

The National Abortion Campaign is fighting these attacks to women's abortion rights by organising a Week of Action which began on Monday, to coincide with the reopening of the new parliamentary session. Lobbies of MPs, pickets of DHSS offices, rallies, motorcades and public meetings will take place throughout the week. The focus of these activities is opposition to the re-constitution of the Select Committee which was set up in March after the second reading of the James White Abortion (Amendment) Bill.

The Government may try to hide the anti-abortion bias of the Select Committee

by appointing fewer avid anti-abortionists, or by extending its framework to include an investigation into the more liberal findings of the Lane Committee. But any Select Committee is unacceptable!

Even the women Labour MPs 'sympathetic' to NAC put their names to the Select Committee's restrictive Report. After all, to call for freely available abortion facilities on demand on the NHS, as NAC does, means opposing the present cuts in spending in the NHS and all the social services. Thus they would have to oppose a central part of the Government's present plan to solve the capitalist crisis at the expense of the working class.

Instead of listening to the recommenda-

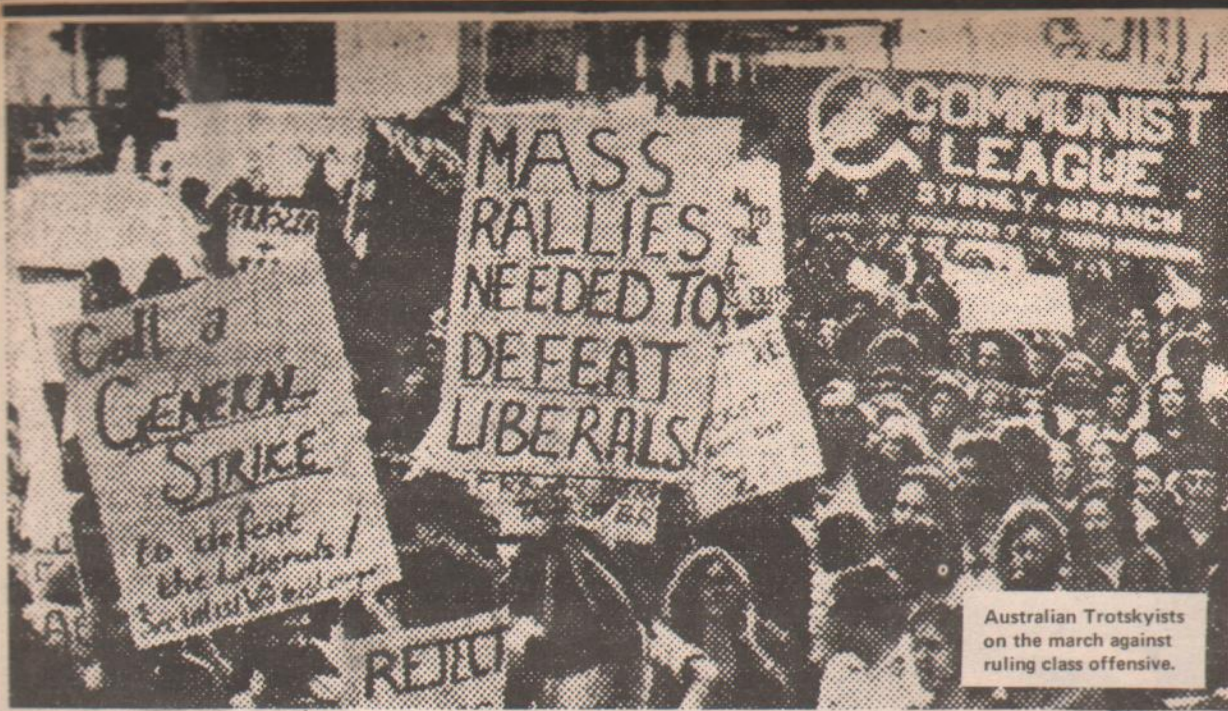
tions of an unrepresentative committee of fifteen MPs with an inherent anti-abortion bias, the Labour Government must be made to listen to the representatives of the mass of working people in Britain - the very people whose interests it is supposed to represent. It should be held responsible to the Labour Party and TUC conferences which both voted for abortion on request. The NAC Week of Action can be an important step in posing this demand throughout the labour movement.

INTERNATIONAL ABORTION DEMO in Rome, Saturday 6 December - for details of cheap transport, contact NAC, 30 Camden Road, London NW1 (01-485 4303).

TWO IMPORTANT EVENTS IN THE 'WEEK OF ACTION' IN THE LONDON REGION

THURSDAY 20 NOVEMBER - LOBBY YOUR MP IN PARLIAMENT. Hundreds of NAC supporters will be converging on the House of Commons to urge a vote against the reconvening of the Select Committee. Write to your MP in advance to let him/her know, then turn up at 2.00 or 6.00 pm to join the lobby. Women Labour MPs will also be receiving the 'abortion on demand' petition bearing thousands of signatures. Official delegations from labour movement organisations will be lobbying Wilson too.

SATURDAY 22 NOVEMBER - MASS RALLY IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE. Come along between 2.00 and 4.00 pm with banners. Speakers will include Labour MPs, trade union representatives, doctors who support abortion on demand, and well known women. Theatre groups and singers will be providing entertainment as well.



Australian Trotskyists on the march against ruling class offensive.

AUSTRALIA -

WORKERS FLEX THEIR MUSCLES

The most remarkable thing about Australia's constitutional crisis has been the direct action of Australian workers and students in strikes, demonstrations and rallies throughout the country.

For months the Labour and trade union leaders had prevented any major outburst against rising unemployment and the effects of skyrocketing inflation by arguing that any attempt to rock the boat could well dislodge the Labour Government. Now the sacking of that Government has taken the lid off the situation.

The Australian Labour Party was elected to office in December 1972 after 23 years of uninterrupted rule by the conservative Liberal-Country Party coalition. It promised vastly increased expenditure on the social services, health, education, etc. and also pledged to increase productivity in the over-protected private sector by lowering tariff barriers and thus increasing competition.

HEAVY DOSE

To these promises was added a heavy dose of nationalist rhetoric—highlighting the increasing penetration of overseas capital in the Australian economy, Labour campaigned on a slogan of 'Australia for the Australians' and promised to buy Australia back.

In its first 12 months the Whitlam Government was able to consolidate its working class base by implementing several parts of its programme. Pensions were increased, equal pay for women was granted in Parliament (and to some extent in reality), wages rose faster than the cost of living, and public spending rocketed. But in mid-1974, Australia entered its worst recession since the

depression years of the 1930s—and Labour's programme crumbled.

The building industry collapsed. The textile industry went the same way, as the lowering of tariffs produced a flood of cheap imports. The car industry developed serious problems, with British Leyland closing down its Australian plant. Only the beer manufacturers avoided serious cutbacks in production.

Unemployment rose rapidly towards the 300,000 mark in a matter of months, in a country that has experienced full employment for most of the last 25 years. Increases in government spending fuelled inflation so that it soon reached 20 per cent. In this situation the Labour Government adopted a solution familiar to British workers—a 'social contract' which would make the working class pay for the capitalist crisis.

In return for the establishment of a toothless body to monitor price increases, the Government got the support of the trade union bureaucracy in forcing through an incomes policy in the form of a wage indexation scheme. Wages rise automatically each quarter, adjusted to rises in the consumer price index. Since wages only go up after prices, on the basis of an

index weighted against the working class, this produces a gradual but significant cut in workers' living standards.

But in spite of the Government's success in implementing this policy—after a record strike wave in the first three months of 1974, when 2½ million working days were lost—all was not well with the ALP. It was increasingly evident that only lack of organisation and political direction was holding back the opposition of thousands of militants to wage indexation. The most recent indication of this came during this year's metalworkers' wage campaign, when the leadership's recommendations were only narrowly carried at mass meetings.

SHARPENING

This period also saw a sharpening of the left-right divisions inside the ALP. The left wing opposed the rightward shift of government policy; but because of their failure to take the struggle outside Parliament they were defeated, and left-wing cabinet ministers were sacked. But the worst was yet to come.

It is ironic that the opposition parties did not block the budget—thus producing the present crisis—because they disagreed with it. In fact they thought it was reasonable—particularly the cuts in government spending and the subsidies for the private sector. They

claimed that they would not pass the budget because the Government was incompetent and deceiving the people, and their evidence was the Great Loan Scandal.

Australia has vast mineral resources but lacks the capital to exploit them. In an effort to keep 'Australia for the Australians', two cabinet ministers attempted to obtain loans from Arab billionaires using shady middle-men. The affair was more of a B grade melodrama than a great scandal, but it appears to have been a carefully orchestrated plan by the Australian bourgeoisie and the Liberal-Country party—with perhaps the help of the CIA—to discredit the Government and remove it from office.

The official reasons given are certainly not the only ones. Federal elections were not due until the middle of 1977, and this would have given the Government time to call an election when an anticipated economic recovery would have improved the chances of its re-election.

PRESSURE

The conservative parties were also under strong pressure from the Australian bourgeoisie, who recoiled from their brief flirtation with Whitlam as they saw their profits declining. Their hurried moves to push Labour out of office expressed a primitive and somewhat short-sighted class reflex, perhaps reflecting the crisis of bourgeois political leadership—Fraser is the third opposition leader in as many years.

Certainly, whatever the Governor-General's motives for sacking Labour,

the prospects for the Liberal-Country Party are not too good. If they win the elections, the social contract will be destroyed and they will have to battle with a militant and well-organised working class. If they lose, they will be racked by further inner-party dissension and it will be some time before they can once more present themselves as a viable political force.

The ALP leaders are in a contradictory position. They did not expect the spontaneous mobilisations of workers and students that followed the blocking of the budget, and they have every reason to fear them. Bob Hawke, president of both the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the ALP, appealed to the workers to stay calm, saying: 'We are on the verge of something terrible, and it is important for the unions to respond to leadership.'

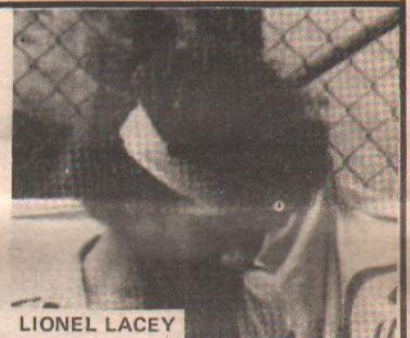
Whilst only the active support of the working class can return a Labour Government, this activity threatens the very basis of the class-collaborationist social contract as the trade union bureaucrats feel the heat turning on them. It also shatters the Labour Party's claim to be a 'responsible' (bourgeois) party.

The working class still has many illusions in the Labour Party. But the present heightened feeling of working class power creates many possibilities for revolutionary propaganda and agitation. While defending the Labour Government against attacks by the ruling class, the Australian Trotskyists will use this opportunity to expose the fraud of bourgeois democracy, putting forward demands and forms of struggle that lead the working class to understand that the only solution to the crisis is workers' power.

PROTEST FRAME-UP TRIAL OF BLACK MILITANTS

A picket outside the public entrance to Australia House in the Strand will be held on Monday 24 November from 12 to 2 p.m. to protest the frame-up trial of Denis Walker, a leading black militant, Lionel Lacey (Fogarty), a young black activist, and John Garcia, a white supporter of the black movement. On that day criminal hearings will recommence on charges against them of attempting to obtain the services of the (then) president of the University of Queensland Union with threats. If convicted, they face up to 14 years in jail.

This is no ordinary criminal trial, but part of the Australian ruling class's consistent attempts to destroy the black and working class movement in Australia—attempts that are very much in evidence at the present time. All three militants were leading a campaign to abolish the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Acts, an extremely racist piece of legislation that compares unfavourably with South Africa's apartheid laws.



LIONEL LACEY

The campaign in defence of the three is gaining wide support. The Brisbane Trades and Labour Council passed a resolution that the charges be dropped. Support has come from the Federal Council of the Miners Federation and the president of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, Bob Hawke. Demonstrations have been held in Tokyo and Hong Kong, and support has come from New Zealand Maoris and students unions. A picket held in London on 14 August was given good TV and press coverage in Australia and was greatly appreciated by the three.

The demonstration is being organised by 'The Committee in Defence of the Brisbane 3'. For further information write to: PO Box 60, 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.

THAT'S BETTER!

Last week's appeal did find a response. Liverpool sent in £16.50, Coventry £10, Bristol £1.50, Hull £7, Portsmouth £3, and Huddersfield £4. We also got an anonymous donation of £20.

That has not got us over the hill — but it is an excellent start. It shows what can be done. Now it is up to the rest of the areas to do the same. A similar effort from every other city and town can smash the £500 target.

We have recovered from a bad start, and the ball is rolling. Now, comrades, it is up to you to increase its speed. Remember the address: Red Weekly Fund Drive, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1. Cheques, postal orders, pound notes, any form of currency will do — just make sure we get it.



NAME..... SUBSCRIPTION RATES
ADDRESS..... DOMESTIC: £6 per year
£3 for six months
FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail
£12 per year airmail

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

SPANISH SOLIDARITY DEMO



A 1,000 strong demonstration in solidarity with the struggle of the Spanish working class against the dictatorship took place in London last Saturday.

Delegations came from all across the country to this demonstration, called by the Action Group against Repression in Spain and the 'Iberian 19' Defence Committee. Among the speakers were Ernie Roberts, AUEW Assistant General Secretary, and a Hull docker.

While the demonstration was not the success which the organisers had hoped for, it was the first nationally coordinated solidarity action around recent events. A statement circulated at the demonstration by the organisers urged the establishment of a national solidarity body, and called for a meeting on 10 January of representatives from all organisations concerned with the struggle in Spain to establish such a body.

Conspicuous by their absence at the demonstration were the International Socialists, who were nominally supporting it and had repeatedly assured the organisers that they were mobilising in London.

The 'Iberian 19', charged with conspiracy for their peaceful occupation of the Iberian airlines office last September, next appear in court on Tuesday, 25 November. There will be a picket outside the court: 10 a.m. — Marlborough Magistrates Court (nearest tube Oxford Circus). Bring banners.