

RED WEEKLY

Inside Four pages on PORTUGAL

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Over the past weeks the press of the capitalist world has been desperately trying to put a mask of respectability on the regime of King Juan Carlos. But now the mask has been ripped away, exposing the Francoist face beneath.

Big trumpet blasts were sounded for the 'amnesty' which Juan Carlos issued to celebrate his coronation. This 'concession' was miserly enough — a tiny number of well-known workers' leaders released, while the hundreds of political prisoners incarcerated by the Franco regime remained in jail.

But even this phoney ploy now lies in tatters, following the re-arrest and imprisonment of workers commission leaders Marcelino Camacho and Padre Paco who were let out with such liberal fanfares only last week.

This crackdown was combined with a ruthless wave of repression in Madrid. The area around the notorious Carabanchel prison has been turned into an armed camp in order to stop demonstrations for the liberation of all political prisoners. Small crowds of people were ruthlessly attacked and beaten last weekend and over 100 arrests were made.

Although Juan Carlos and his Francoist clique are going through the charade of tossing a few miserable sops to the Spanish people, these 'concessions'

cannot satisfy the determination of the working class to win those freedoms that were ruthlessly stolen from them 40 years ago. They will only encourage the masses to fight for demands such as democratic rights; for free elections to

a political body with the power to decide the political structure and government; for free trade unions; and for the right of self-determination for the oppressed national minorities of Euzkadi (the Basque country), Catalonia and Galicia.

Faced with such struggles, the regime will respond in true Francoist fashion — by brutal repression. But the resistance that erupted even while the old dictator was still alive shows that repres-

SPAIN: OPEN THE JAILS!

sion no longer works. It will simply goad the working class of Spain into extending their struggles, strengthening their organisations, and deepening their commitment to eradicate every vestige of Franco's legacy.

The struggles now on the agenda in Spain will make what has taken place so far — the massive general strikes and demonstrations — look like minor skirmishes. The power and capacity for independent organisation which the working class will forge in these struggles will place it at the head of a vast popular movement which will not just destroy the dictatorship, but will fatally weaken the power of capital in Spain and open the door to socialist revolution.

That is why the capitalists of Europe and their servants in the workers' move-

ment — the Wilsons and Callaghans of European social democracy — are doing everything in their power to prop up the bankrupt regime of Juan Carlos against a working class onslaught.

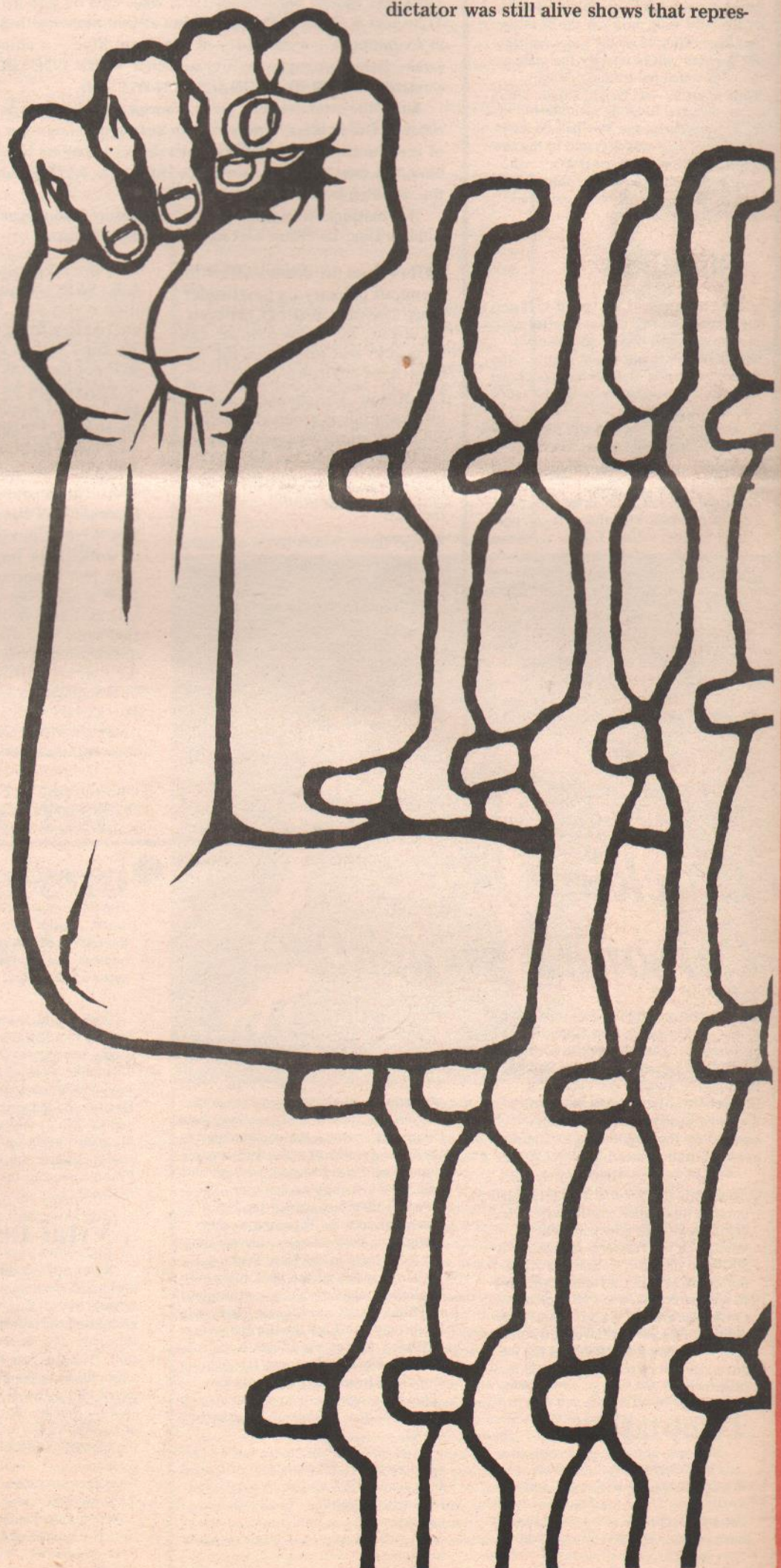
For the very same reason, the working class throughout Europe must now begin to organise to support the struggles that are unfolding in Spain. We must say to the Wilsons, Callaghans and their capitalist masters that they will not be allowed to rescue the heirs of Franco against the champions and defenders of democracy in Spain — the working class.

Down with Juan Carlos and the heirs of Franco!

Break all links with Spain!

Free all political prisoners now!

Solidarity with the Spanish working class!



AUEW Broad Left heads for another defeat

The severe defeat suffered by Broad Left candidates in last month's executive elections in the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers looks like being repeated next year when voting starts for a successor to Ernie Roberts, the present Assistant General Secretary. Roberts is due to retire in 1977, and the Broad Left nationally has decided to run Bob Wright again for this post.

Not only have they chosen a candidate who has twice been decisively defeated by the right wing, but — if the *Morning Star* is anything to go by — the policies put forward will be exactly the same as the ones which led to these defeats. While pointing out Wright's trade union experience and life-long membership of the Labour Party, the *Star* fails to mention that Wright was defeated in the executive election by Terry Duffy — who was neither well-known nor considered even by the right wing as an able trade union negotiator.

Blindness

The blindness of the Broad Left on the meaning of this defeat is reflected in a circular sent out to AUEW members in Birmingham, which simply notes the recent 'tragic' defeats and concludes that this is a reason for everyone to 'work harder in the future'.

But the real lesson of the Broad Left's defeat is clear: unless there is a break from the politics of internal union manoeuvring, and a clear fight launched for industrial action against unemployment and the £6 limit, then the next election will be another victory for the right wing.

A small step in the right direction has been taken by the North London AUEW district committee, which organised a lobby of the AUEW national committee on Monday to demand that it implement the decision of the national committee earlier this year to seek a substantial pay rise — irrespective of the £6 limit, which was formulated after this decision was taken. Now the task facing militants in the AUEW is to build up action on jobs and pay amongst the rank and file — a task that the policies and the tactics of the Broad Left have been incapable of fulfilling.

John Graham (Birmingham AUEW)

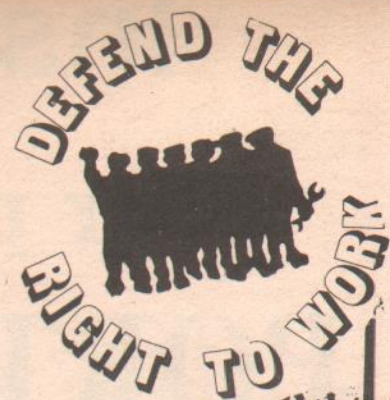
Blacking boosts Personna struggle

The workers occupying Personna Razor Blades at Hillington, near Glasgow, are preparing to consolidate the occupation and build solidarity for a long struggle through the winter. On Tuesday 2 December the latest manoeuvre of the Personna management was firmly rejected by the Negotiating Committee at an arbitration meeting.

The moguls of Philip Morris Inc. apparently had second thoughts about implementing mass redundancies during the season of goodwill. Their minions in the Personna management informed the Conciliation and Arbitration Services that they could not bear to see the Personna workers spend Christmas without wages. They proposed a return to work over Christmas and New Year, and a delay in the implementation of redundancies till mid-January.

Temptation

For the workers of Personna, in their eleventh week of strike and occupation, on £6.25 a week strike pay, the temptation of such an offer could have been very great. They could have brought some desperately needed cash home over Christmas and then attempted to resume their long struggle



Rio Tinto Ztinks

The strike against redundancies and wage cuts by 638 members of the Transport & General Workers Union at Commonwealth Smelting Ltd in Avonmouth — a subsidiary of Rio Tinto Zinc — is entering its fifth week. Below we interview site convenor TONY COOKSLEY and shop stewards ALUN BEYNON and LEN WILSON.

Since the interview was given, management have made no significant moves. The strikers, however, have been extending their struggle. Fifty of them occupied the DHSS against delays in paying benefit, and they have also won the support of Bath University ASTMS, who are taking up the scabbing by ASTMS members at CSL.

For messages of support, donations, information, speakers, etc. contact: Mike O'Dea, 10 Eldon Terrace, Bedminster, Bristol!

● How does the dispute affect the chemicals industry on Severnside? Tony Cooksley: Bristol Chemicals has already been closed down, and we believe that Fisons and ISC are in extreme difficulties.

Len Wilson: The chemicals industry on Severnside is grouped together. All chemical managements are looking to CSL, which has the best organised union. If they can break the union at CSL then they can break the rest.

● Are there moves to co-ordinate the different stewards' bodies on Severnside?

Alun Beynon: Yes. A decision was made on Thursday to disband the shop stewards liaison committee which previously existed because it had become rather ineffective. Instead we are starting a new shop stewards combine taking in CSL, ISC, Fisons, Tennaco, Savalco, and ICI.

● With the announcement of redundancies at BAC, how do you

view the job prospects in the area?

L.W: Well, obviously the whole position is very bad. What we at CSL are fighting for is the right to work. We don't believe that we are responsible for the crisis of capitalism, and so why should we be expected to pay for it. I would say to my brothers at BAC, for the past four weeks we've been fighting your fight as well as ours.

● The local paper carried a story from some of the strikers' wives who were campaigning for a return to work. How important is this?

A.B: Not important at all. The press is assuming a strike-breaking role as it always does. And I know that since that story at least half a dozen women have rung the *Evening Post* supporting the strike. I'll be interested to see if the *Evening Post* covers their story. We're also organising to get women and children onto the picket on Monday. T.C: Over a hundred women and children marched in support of their husbands on the demonstration to the DHSS. We think no

STOP PRESS

The Personna workers have returned to work. At the time of going to press, the details of the settlement remain unclear. Next week's *Red Weekly* will carry a full report.

As a result, two shop stewards will address factory, site, dock and trade union meetings in the Manchester area during the week of 16-20 December. Included in the tour are a number of Hawker Siddeley plants, the docks, and Pochin's building sites; and support is also being sought from the local trades council, the AUEW District Committee, and the printing union SOGAT.

Vital task

By organising similar tours and meetings in other areas, readers of *Red Weekly* can take up the vital task of mobilising the workers' movement in solidarity with the Personna occupation. The Glasgow IMG has prepared a brochure containing the blacking list of Philip Morris subsidiaries prepared by *Red Weekly*, the briefings discovered in the factory which expose the management's plans for mass redundancies and closure, and an appeal from Personna shop stewards for use in building trade union support.

Copies are available from: A. Jamieson, 18 Carrington St. Glasgow, G4 (041-332-8728). Funds for the occupation should be rushed to: Ruby Duncan, 27 Bonfield Cres., Penilee, Glasgow

join — factories like ICI, Rolls Royce, and Tennaco.

Is occupation of the plant possible, and what is your view about nationalisation of RTZ?

T.C: Occupation? Yes, it's possible. I consider any company who have such little respect for their workers as RTZ should most certainly be nationalised.

L.W: I would stress this is a personal opinion, but I think that we made a basic mistake when we gave up our sit-in. We had been running the factory and this should have been moved to a full-scale occupation. We handed back the factory to our employers by coming outside the gate. On the question of nationalisation I would refer you to the constitution of the Labour Party, Clause IV, and there my case rests.

A.B: My personal opinion is that occupation would be almost impossible. On nationalisation, I believe that all companies which have the power to throw people out of work in one national sector of their operation and to transfer operations to another should for the benefit of the workers be taken into public ownership.

● Your T&G branch is taking part in local campaigns against the cuts in education and the health service. Do you see a direct connection between the Government's attacks on these fronts and the struggle at the Smelter?

A.B: Yes, the connection is direct. Both moves are attempts by the employers to cut the living standards of the working class.

L.W: Workers must recognise that the whole of the working class is under attack. They must defend themselves as we at the Smelter are doing and make it quite plain that the capitalist system does not work. A new society must be formed.

T.C: It seems evident that the Government is co-operating fully with the masters of industry to subjugate the working class.



Attempts by the local press to turn husbands' wives against the strike got a sharp reply from these women who joined the picket line.

NALGO backs cuts demo

The National and Local Government Officers Association has decided to call a national demonstration against the cuts in the health service. NALGO — which is affiliated to the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS (NCC) — is calling the demonstration jointly with the NCC.

This sets the stage for a really big national mobilisation to oppose the vicious attacks of the Labour Government on the NHS. The task now is to work for a massive turnout from all workers' organisations. No effort must be

spared to win Labour Parties, trades councils, union branches, tenants' organisations, shop stewards' committees etc in every area to support the demonstration.

The demands of the NCC — for a sliding scale of social expenditure; for opening the books; for a Workers' Enquiry; and for an end to private practice inside and outside the NHS — show the socialist way out of the crisis.

The demonstration can be an important step towards fighting for these demands. It can involve tens of thousands of workers and begin to organise them to challenge the attacks of the ruling class and its agents in the Labour Govern-

ment.

The date of the demonstration has yet to be set, although it will probably be in the Spring. The fight to build it, however, must begin now. In the districts, local supporters of the NCC should start an immediate campaign to rally the greatest possible forces around the NCC demands.

The 540,000-strong NALGO is the first major union to mount an open challenge to Labour's policies of cuts. Militants should begin the fight now to get the support of other national unions.

SMASH CONSULTANTS, SUPPORT JUNIORS

This NCC notes the developments in the consultants' and junior doctors' disputes — in particular, the threats of resignations from the NHS. Our attitude to these is determined by the need for the workers' movement to defend the NHS against the attacks from the Labour Government's cutbacks.

There are two very different disputes in progress. The consultants, fighting for the inclusion of pay-beds in the terms of reference of the Royal Commission, are opposed to a health service meeting the needs of the working class. Through their actions and threats they are sabotaging the development of a free NHS so that they can continue to line their pockets tomorrow. This NCC is thoroughly opposed to the aims and actions of the consultants.

The case of the junior doctors (JHDs) is very different. The JHDs are being asked by Barbara Castle to accept a wage-cut before they are allowed the elementary right to a 40-hour week. The demand of the JHDs for a 40-hour week without loss of pay is wholly in the interests of the working class.

Lack of Resources

The workers' movement must support the fight of all groups of health workers for the best pay and conditions inside the NHS. Over half a million people are on the waiting lists, millions of people are suffering because of chronic lack of resources. It is the policies of the Labour Government, with the £6 pay norm and its refusal to expand the NHS, that are the major block to the JHDs' victory. Understaffing and the operation of the incomes policy in the NHS, both obstacles faced by the JHDs, are indirectly and directly the result of the Government's policies.

However, this NCC notes that the vast majority of the JHDs, faced with Barbara Castle's intransigence and the lack of real action from the labour movement in the past in defence of the NHS, are being thrown into the arms of the reactionary consultants. Like the consultants, many JHDs are threatening to resign from the NHS and are taking action which includes a refusal to operate emergency services. Moreover, many JHDs are siding with the consultants in a fight to retain private practice.

Statement from the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS

This NCC *cannot support* any alliance with the consultants over the JHDs' demands, opposes all threats to resign from the NHS, and in particular opposes any support by JHDs for consultants in their fight to retain private practice. Such a line for action can only serve to undermine the NHS further.

We believe that only a campaign to win the broad labour movement to take action in support of the JHDs and to defend the NHS can effectively win the JHDs' demands. In the course of this campaign we should try to win the support of JHDs with the demand: Break with the consultants. Fight alongside the trade union and labour movement to defend the NHS.

We believe the labour movement should support the following programme of demands for junior doctors, in line with the programme put forward for struggle by the full conference, and fight for an alliance with them in the battle to defend the NHS: For a 40-hour week for the JHDs; for satisfactory overtime rates compatible with other health service workers; increase the number of doctors in the NHS; for no discrimination against women doctors; for the right of JHDs to negotiate a contract of service without interference from consultants; whole-time NHS contracts for all consultants; for an end to all private practice; oppose the consultants' action on pay beds — 40 hours for JHDs — defend the NHS.

We believe we have to fight for the Labour Government to implement these policies and for JHDs to fight alongside the labour movement to achieve this.

In pursuit of this we believe the following actions are necessary: (a) fighting nationally for MPs, national unions, TUC, CLPs, trades councils etc. to take up these demands and organise for action to back them up; (b) organising through the action committees in the

localities to win the labour movement to these policies and actions necessary to win them; (c) inviting JHDs to come to the action committees and discuss ways of campaigning for these demands both within the labour movement and amongst JHDs; (d) building and extending the private practice bans called for by unions in the NHS; (e) fighting for all trade unions represented in the NHS to take these up through stewards' bodies and branches; (f) withdrawal of services for all consultants taking action in defence of pay-beds

A conference is to be called in the Humberside area to fight the cuts in the NHS. The Hull dockers, who are represented on the National Coordinating Committee, convened a meeting last week to plan the conference.

Docks shop steward Alan Kirkby chaired the meeting, which was attended by health workers from COHSE, dockers from the T&GWU and the National Amalgamated Stevedores and Dockers (the 'blue' union), Labour Party and Communist Party members, and other trade unionists. An organising committee was elected to start preparations for the conference, and a recall meeting will be held on 16 December which will discuss the resolution carried at the MCAPP Conference.



'It will be impossible for health workers to defend the NHS on their own'

The consultants' action to maintain private practice has not gone unscathed in some hospitals. Members of the National Union of Public Employees in Birmingham are blacking all 158 pay beds in NHS hospitals there, while health workers at the Royal Northern Hospital in North London have also started an immediate private patients ban. Red Weekly talked to STEVE JOB, a General & Municipal Workers Union shop steward at the Whittington and Royal Northern hospitals, about the ban.

How did the ban come about?

The same day the consultants started their action, an emergency meeting of porters and theatre technicians, supported by some nurses, voted unanimously to slap a ban on private patients. The ban is obviously hitting them where it hurts — our senior shop steward was called a 'nazi' by a frenzied consultant anaesthetist.

Do you think this type of action should be extended?

The consultants' action is threatening the very existence of the NHS and the health of the working class. We have to act fast — private patient bans should be started in every hospital where they exist.

Mass meetings should be called to explain the necessity for action and to co-ordinate the ban. I am very critical of our union leaders for not organising this kind of action at a national level.

What is the attitude of the junior hospital doctors to the consultants' action?

Unofficially most of them resent the consultants' attempts to merge the two disputes, but they still have illusions in the British Medical Association and the whole idea of doctors being some kind of 'elite'.

I think we have to break the juniors from the BMA and explain to them that their struggle for improved working conditions is part and parcel of the fight against the cuts and for the defence of the whole NHS. They should be involved in the private patient bans, and also in the committees to fight the cuts like the one we have here in Islington.

How do you see workers outside the NHS becoming involved?

I think taking this fight into the whole working class is extremely important.

It will be impossible for health workers to defend the NHS on their own. It was the strike action by Sheffield engineering workers and South Wales miners that really turned the tide during the nurses' struggle last year. Unless the junior doctors extend their fight and go out to the organised labour movement, they can never win their demands — Castle can just sit it out.

I'm also involved in the Islington Campaign Against the Cuts, which involves workers from the whole public sector. We're planning a local conference against the cuts early next year, and we hope this will involve the widest possible number of trade unionists, community organisations, etc, both inside and outside the public sector.

Do you think the resolution passed at the recent conference organised by the Medical Committee Against Private Practice shows a way forward?

I thought the conference was very impressive. The demands in the resolution — such as opening the books of the area health authorities, and building local action committees — are the kind of thing we need to go forward.



'Have you any beds? There must be someone you can chuck out!' It is lines like this, spoken by a harassed casualty officer to a ward sister on the phone, which make Red Ladder's latest production what it is — a hilarious, yet committed picture of the decaying health service and the need to defend it against attack.

This play should be required viewing by all workers organisations, and all those fighting the Labour Government's cuts. It is worth a million branch resolutions, both as persuasive propaganda and as a vehicle for a discussion of the way forward.

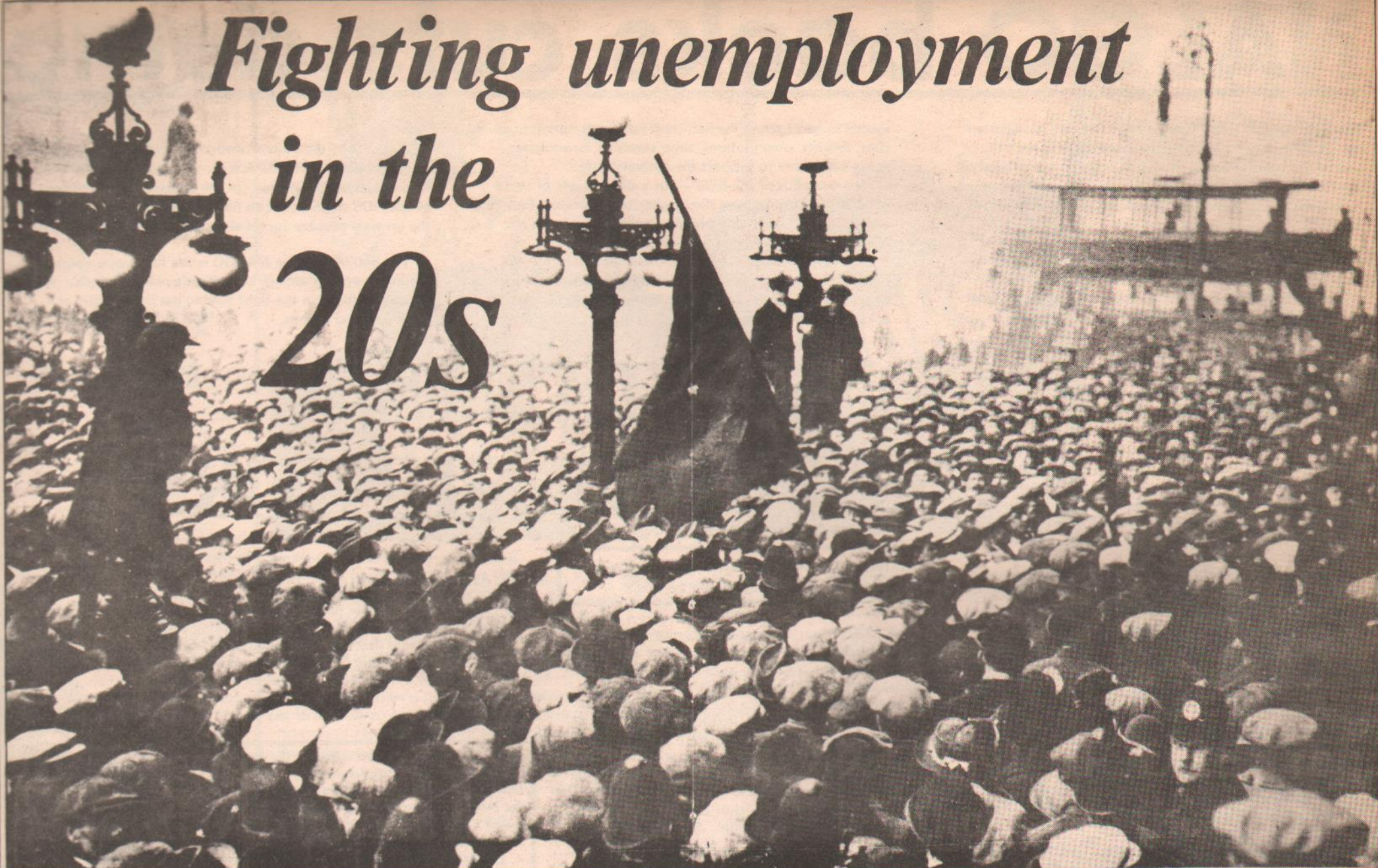
The play covers the whole field — the overcrowding, the under-staffing, the secrecy and back-door methods of Barbara Castle and the civil service, the role of the consultants, drug companies and private health schemes, the mystique of the nurses' 'vocation' — 'But what about the patient?' — and the meaning of the 'social wage'. It also touches on much deeper issues, such as the vital need to see many medical and psychological problems, particularly those of women, in their social context rather than in the cold isolation of the doctor's surgery. Perhaps its practical conclusions are weak — but it is precisely in discussion around the play that such questions can be thrashed out.

The dramatic highspots of the play are the consultant's tour of the wards, followed by his admiring, mesmerised brood of students, and the careful build-up to the first blacking of private patients by ancillary staff — 'We're not doing privates today' — which will have you cheering and rolling about. But the thing which lifts this play into a class of its own is the music — from the song-and-dance opening sequence, tracing the origins of the NHS, through the cabaret-style send up of BUPA and the consultants, to the brilliantly performed *Vallium* [complete with chorus and pill-bottle maracas] which hits hard and low at the drug manufacturers.

All in all this is a show not to be missed — political theatre at its very, very best. Those in the North, where Red Ladder will soon be based, have a rare treat to come.

Carl Gardner

Fighting unemployment in the 20s



In the years after the First World War a mighty movement grew up in Britain against unemployment. Then as now the union leaders muttered pious words about the 'horrors and deprivations of unemployment'; but then as now they remained at the best passive, while at the worst they acted as a barrier to building working class unity against unemployment and the capitalist system that spawns it.

In this series of articles BOB PENNINGTON examines what happened to the unemployed movement of the 1920s and 1930s, and what lessons it holds for us today. In the first part below, he discusses the stormy days of the early post-war period and how the unemployed movement got off the ground.

Less than two years after the end of the imperialist carnage of the Great War, the promises of a 'Land fit for Heroes' were looking decidedly thin. By the autumn of 1920 there were nearly two million unemployed.

Soon the first forms of organised resistance began to appear — committees of 'Unemployed Ex-Servicemen'. Generally they confined their activity to charity-type protests within their own areas. But as unemployment grew, the 'natural' candidates for the sack were increasingly militants of organisations like the British Socialist Party, the Socialist Labour Party, and the supporters of organisations such as the National Shop Stewards' and Workers' Committee Movement.

The class collaboration of the official union leaders during the war had resulted in the growth of powerful rank-and-file movements, which had organised the main struggles in the factories and ship yards and had attracted the most class conscious workers to their ranks. When these workers found themselves amongst the ranks of the unemployed they rejected the charity-type basis of the local committees and argued for a national movement based on working class policies.

Thousands

In October 1920 tens of thousands of unemployed workers converged on Whitehall to support Lansbury and other Labour mayors from the London boroughs who were seeing the prime minister about the increasing unemployment. Without the slightest provocation the demonstration was set on by a mob of baton-waving police. The savagery of this attack added strength to those who

wanted a nationally organised movement that would challenge the Government.

The idea that 'we have to stand together' and 'stop begging and start fighting' gained increasing support. By late 1920 the whole of London was organised under the London District Council for the unemployed, and twice a week delegates from 31 London boroughs met to discuss the co-ordination of their activity.

Local Guardians

The London District Council organised a number of demonstrations — all of significant size — under the slogan of 'Work or Full Maintenance'. Marches were organised to the offices of the Local Guardians — who were responsible for supplementary benefits — demanding outdoor relief. Occupations often forced the Guardians to grant relief irrespective of the law.

By campaigning around the Guardians, the movement made sure the unemployed got supplementary relief over and above that paid at the labour exchange. But the movement did not confine its activities to the unemployed. The London District Council of the Unemployed also sent a deputation to a conference at Central Hall, Westminster called by the Executive of the Labour Party, the Parliamentary Committee and the Trades Union Congress. This deputation was supported by the presence outside the Hall of 10,000 unemployed.

The right-wing leaders preferred parliamentary manoeuvres to mass action, and so rejected the request of the London District Council to address the conference. Nevertheless, feeling was running so high that

they were forced to accept a resolution calling upon the executive councils of all trade unions affiliated to the Labour Party and the TUC to test the feeling of their members on the issue of direct action against the Government's failure to do anything about unemployment.

Meanwhile the socialists and militants in the unemployed movement fought for united action by the whole working class. The London District Council supported the miners against the employers' lock-out in April 1921, and carried a resolution pledging support for 'the splendid stand' which the miners 'are making on behalf of the whole of the workers'.

Pay cuts

The London District Council also organised action at the Central Aircraft Factory in Kilburn, where workers were taking pay cuts and working overtime. After a lightning occupation by 30 unemployed workers, the management agreed to end overtime working; the factory raid then became a frequent and successful feature of the unemployed struggles.

The need for a national organisation was vital, and the London District Council had already started moves to get a national movement underway. Supported by the *Daily Herald*, they had put out a call for a national conference on 15 April. At the conference it was agreed that the demand of 'Work or Full Maintenance at Trade Union Rates of Wages' should be the main plank of the campaign. A national headquarters was set up and officials were elected.

Movement

Despite the failure of the Labour Party and the TUC to take up the struggles of the unemployed, the movement set its face to winning support from these bodies. Delegations with speaking rights attended the Labour Party Conference in Brighton in 1921. The reception was polite; but the action was nil.

Meanwhile the Government started to slash benefits — on 30 June

1921 they were cut to pre-March levels and the Guardians started to implement measures to cut down relief. In Wandsworth the Guardians announced that applicants for relief would be offered tickets for the workhouse.

Reponse

The response of the unemployed organisations in Battersea and Wandsworth was to take up this challenge. Over 200 workers and their families accepted the tickets, and headed by a band they marched on the workhouse. At the sight of 700 people — the total number of workers and their dependants — descending on the workhouse, the authorities were thrown into a panic.

Immediately the new 'inmates' started a battle about better food, complained about conditions, and demanded improvements. The next night, as workers from the area thronged the streets adjoining the workhouse, the militant inmates hoisted a red flag over the workhouse. Night after night solidarity demonstrations took place outside.

Overcrowding

Faced with overcrowding, unable to deal with the aggressive spirit of their new arrivals, the authorities tried everything that they could to get them to leave. By 27 July the Wandsworth Guardians were defeated. They agreed to restore the former benefits. All over Britain similar struggles were taking place — and in most cases they too forced the local authorities to restore the old benefits.

But apart from a few exceptions — like the Labour-controlled Poplar Council — the official movement remained aloof. Their adherence to a parliamentary approach, their commitment to working within the capitalist system for reforms, ensured that they would be hostile to actions that challenged capitalism's right to rule and sought to use the independent strength of the working class to change the situation. Yet time after time the unemployed had to challenge the law and the police to secure even the most elementary justice.

The eruption of mass struggle be-

gan to get results. When Parliament re-assembled in October 1921 it was announced that unemployment scales were to be revised, and for the first time dependants' allowances would be paid. Heartened by this success the unemployed movement spread its roots, and on 21 November 1921 it met in London for a three-day conference. In contrast to the first conference, representatives came this time from as far away as Scotland.

The conference unanimously agreed to set up a national organisation consisting of local branches. There would be district committees and a national administrative council consisting of delegates from the district committees.

Its programme made it clear that the demand for 'Work or Full Maintenance' at trade union rates was to be its main thrust. Besides raising demands like 'three meals a day, weekends and holidays included, to children of unemployed parents', it also called for 'free unconditional provision of halls to enable the unemployed to meet' and 'the use of public parks and recreation grounds for public meetings'.

Immediately after the conference big demonstrations were held all over the country in support of its demands. Raids on factories and Guardians' offices and struggles against low wages on relief jobs as well as solidarity strike actions with workers in dispute mushroomed. Evictions were bitterly and often successfully countered by mass actions.

Cap-in-hand

The cap-in-hand unemployed committees had been swept away. A national movement was emerging. It had an anti-capitalist programme. Its tactics were bold and imaginative. Its resonance inside the mass movement was getting stronger. It had still not made sufficient impact on the organised labour movement to challenge effectively the paralysing grip of the right-wing leaders, but it had brought together the powerful forces that could go on to do that.

By the beginning of 1922 the unemployed were up off their knees. The fight back had started in earnest.

the revolution in a state of siege

25 November — like 25 April 1974, 28 September 1974, and 11 March 1975 — marks a new stage in the development of the Portuguese revolution.

After the victory of the construction workers, more than 100,000 people demonstrated on 16 November. In spite of the efforts of the Communist Party to avoid frontal attacks on the Sixth Government as such, the most commonly chanted slogans were directed squarely against Prime Minister Pinheiro de Azevedo. In addition, the bakers threatened to use the same methods as the construction workers if the Ministry of Labour persisted in opposing their demands.

In the army the 'revolt' of the Tancos paratroopers occupies a position of prime importance. After blowing up the Radio Renascença transmitter, the Tancos paratrooper regiment itself exploded. The paratroopers elected a new commander and 'placed themselves at the service of the revolution' with all the confused haste characteristic of a completely new radicalisation. The Government then went 'on strike', on the grounds that the 'armed forces can no longer assure the Government the authority necessary to govern'.



By CHARLES-ANDRE UDRY

POLARISATION

In this context a polarisation developed around the nomination of Vasco Lourenço (a member of the Council of the Revolution and one of the leaders of the 'group of nine' of Melo Antunes) to the post of commander of the Lisbon Military Region. In effect, this nomination meant that Otelo de Carvalho, who had been strongly supported by the CP in recent weeks, was to be deprived of command of the military region of the capital.

In a deformed and dangerous way, the dynamic of politico-social confrontation tended to be reduced to the battle around the commander of the Lisbon Military Region. Such a battle resulted in a military confrontation not effectively linked to the mass movement or even to the independent movement of soldiers. At the beginning of September in Oporto, the SUV (Soldiers United Will Win) had approached a similar problem — the removal of General Corvacho from the Northern Military Region — from an entirely different angle that permitted a stimulation of the organisation of the soldiers themselves.

But to understand the meaning of the events of 25–26 November more exactly, it is useful to recall the fundamental characteristic of the present period — that the extremely profound crisis of the state apparatus (especially the army) has not been matched by the development and centralisation of embryonic organs of dual power. Such a situation cannot persist for long. It has to be resolved either through a more or less partial reestablishment of the state apparatus, or through a growing over towards a situation of dual power — whatever the intermediary steps.

ILLUSIONS

In addition, the deep crisis of the state apparatus — which allowed a workers' upsurge to go on without meeting any major obstacles — gave rise to illusions in the bourgeoisie's capacity for political initiative and, even more important, in the operational possibilities of the military hierarchy. But although the crisis of the state apparatus did not allow the bourgeoisie to confront the mass movement head on (without risking civil war), it certainly did not prevent the success of a military counter-offensive against an adventurist operation of the type launched on 25–26 November.

In examining the initiative taken by the Tancos paratroopers on the morning of 25 November, it is difficult to separate provocation, 'mad adventure', and the application of a plan. At about eleven o'clock in the morning they occupied the base at Tancos, the bases of Montijo, and the installations of the first air force region at Monsanto, and took control of access to the Monte Real base.

But the links among these initiatives — the measures taken by various units to occupy radio and television stations, and the appearance on television of Durand Clemente, one of the heads of the former Fifth Division —

indicate that the elements of a 'military plan' reminiscent of putschism were being applied on 25 November, even if the Tancos paratroopers carried out this plan in a precipitous and disorganised manner.

This sort of adventurism does not simply drop from the sky. For two or three months now, various centrist organisations, essentially the MES (Left Socialist Movement) and the PRP (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat) as well as some radicalised sectors of the army, have been developing an adventurist conception that has taken the form of a putschist orientation, under the pretext of anticipating 'a reactionary coup'.

ALARMIST

A manifesto distributed on 21 November entitled 'Manifesto of the Revolutionary Officers to the Soldiers, Sailors, Working Class, and Toiling People', and signed by Tome (the major of the Lisbon Military Police), Durand Clemente and Matos Gomez, stressed the imminence of a reactionary offensive: 'We are now seeing a desperate reactionary escalation; the parties and officers of the Sixth Government are joining in attempts to crush the powerful popular offensive.' What is reflected here is the position of centrist organisations which confuse the desire of various sectors of the military hierarchy to carry out a reactionary coup — and even the preparation of the coup — with the establishment of the general conditions for doing so with any serious chance of success.

This manifesto appeared on the front page of the 21 November issue of the weekly newspaper of the PRP. On 10 November, this same PRP held a press conference during which Isabel do Carmo declared: 'For us, at this moment, there is no solution except armed insurrection. As all history shows, the bourgeoisie unleashes a civil war every time it wants to defend its interests. Fortunately, the forces of the right possess no army in Portugal. To get one, they must resort to mercenaries based in Spain or to the armies of the United States or NATO' (*A Capital*, 10 November).

UNDER-ESTIMATION

This ultra-left and adventurist orientation took shape around several points:

1. A considerable under-estimation of the capacity for military initiative by the sectors controlled by the militarist hierarchy — combined, paradoxically, with a multitude of assertions about the imminence of the establishment of 'an authoritarian regime that will assume fascist forms, that will rapidly resort to blood bath and terror in order that "peace and discipline" may reign' (*Revolução*, PRP weekly, 17 November). This latter assertion rests essentially on a simplistic conception of the relationship between the economic crisis and the establishment of 'an authoritarian regime that will assume fascist forms'.
2. A radical misunderstanding of the level



Tears of defeat — outside the gates of the Tancos parachute regiment's headquarters

of consciousness of broad sectors of the masses — of the grip of democratic illusions among significant layers of the working class, because of the lack of an experience of dual power that would enable the legitimacy of bourgeois institutions to be shifted to the organs of workers power; and an under-estimation of the negative effects of the division of the working class and of the uneven development of struggles among various branches and regions. All

this leads to the most impressionistic judgments about the conjunctural situation.

For example, the MES declared: 'The military, political, and economic conditions exist for the development of a popular offensive. From the military point of view, the right

Cont. Page 6



...a state of siege



REGIMENTO DE ARTILHARIA LIGEIRA Nº 1

Prepared to resist at the RALIS barracks—but the vacillations of their officers turned the situation into a shambles

does not possess the soldiers to carry out a coup; from the economic point of view, the rising cost of living, unemployment, and the satisfaction of the most immediate needs are problems that cannot be resolved without a revolutionary regime; from the political point of view, illusions in bourgeois democracy, illusions in the reformists, are beginning to be clearly overcome and the workers finally understand that it will not be the politicians who will make the revolution in their name; only the masses through their organisation and their struggle will be able to make the socialist revolution triumph' (*Poder Popular*, weekly of the MES, 5-11 November).

Insurrection

It is obvious that such an orientation, even if it does not utilise the PRP formulation of 'armed insurrection', implies seeing the revolutionary officers and the SUV as sources of a military instrument with which to resolve the question of the seizure of power, which is itself conceived of as a technical complement to the development of 'organs of popular power' (which are, in fact, embryonic, non-centralised, organs of dual power).

On this point, there is a striking analogy between the formula that serves as a governmental slogan in the manifesto of the revolutionary officers and the formulation used by the MES in its editorial in the 19-25 *Poder Popular*: 'We must create the conditions for the formation of a government of revolutionary unity that holds power until the creation of the National People's Assembly.'

3. This is accompanied by extraordinary illusions in the Communist Party. The MES claims: 'It is not the "revolutionary left" that is being dragged in the wake of the Communist Party, but the Communist Party that, since giving support to the COPCON document systematically at decisive moments of the struggle, has been dragged in the wake of the revolutionary left' (*Poder Popular*, 5-11 November).

In reality, since the beginning of October the Communist Party has taken the initiative again, after having been routed during August and early September. Further, there is no need to insist on the confusion of the MES on the subject of the strategic orientation of the CP, a confusion that explains the group's lack of understanding of the nature and limits of the tactical turns made by Alvaro Cunhal's party.

Ultra-left

4. An ultra-leftist attitude toward the Social Democracy. The MES says: 'Thus, the Social Democratic forces serve the advance of the fascist forces; consequently, we cannot separate our slogan "Death to the ELP [fascist Portuguese Liberation Army] and those who support it" from the slogan "Down with Social Democracy"'. That, comrades, is why the MES says — and this is ever more correct and appears ever more clearly — that the



Above: right-wing commando chief Jaime Neves, now the darling of the Socialist Party; Below: pro-government tanks prepare to move in.



Social Democracy is a phase in the transition to fascism' (*Poder Popular*, 5-11 November).

On the basis of their characterisation of the SP, the centrists rejected any coherent policy of united front taking advantage, for example of the tensions that exist within Mario Soares's party because of his opposition to the movement for the demands of the construction workers and metalworkers. Hence the centrist organisations not only consolidated the division of the working class, but also failed to offer any response to the uneven development of the mobilisation in the North and the South — an unevenness linked, among other factors, to the varying influence of the SP among the workers of the of the two regions.

For two days, on 25 and 26 November, slightly more than 400 commandos literally waltzed around from one area to another in the region of the capital. Colonel Jaime Neves emerged as a brilliant orchestra conductor capable of using a very small number of troops to whip several of the major military units of the Lisbon 'commune' into line.

Efficiency

But on 25-26 November it was not fundamentally the strict military efficiency of the commandos that carried the day. In spite of the profound crisis of the state apparatus and of bourgeois political leadership, what was asserted during these two days was the capacity for *centralised initiative* still possessed by the bourgeoisie despite its weakness.

Militarily, the command of the counter-offensive was coherent and centralised. But we must also note Costa Gomes's cleverness and haste in making sure that the mass media

tical School of Military Administration), the Lisbon military police, and the RALIS (Lisbon light artillery regiment) was totally disorganised in offering any military response to all this. The soldiers of the units involved in this operation not only possessed no central command; above all, they were not prepared to launch into a confrontation that would open the way to civil war.

The hesitations in the ranks of these soldiers increased from hour to hour. In face of determined troops who appeared as defending 'legality' against 'rebellion', these vacillations inevitably increased, especially when the 'dynamisation commission' (linked to the former Fifth Division) gave the order to cease fighting at four o'clock in the morning of 26 November.

Logical

As is logical, the working class took a *wait-and-see attitude* towards this obscure military confrontation, with the exception of some sectors among whom a mobilisation took place (at Setenave, for example, where the PRP has some influence).

Clearly the Communist Party did not join the operation, contrary to the possible expectations of the centrist groups or the forces nostalgic for the Fifth Division. The CP was content to mobilise defensively in the work places. On 27 November the CP published a communique stating: 'The left forces committed to a grave error by over-estimating their own strength and attempting this desperate act.... The attempt of the forces of the right to take advantage of a favourable situation to impose such hegemony would be dangerous. The solution must be political and negotiated.'

The CP was only reaffirming its orientation. For the CP, the false battle engaged around the nomination of Vasco Lourenço — even if its dynamic was very dangerous — fell within the general framework of the CP policy of exerting pressure for a recomposition of the Council of the Revolution and the Government.

As for the 'revolutionary left', and more precisely the MES and the PRP, they of course called for 'armed insurrection' and denounced the 'betrayal' of the CP. Here again, there is continuity.

The counter-offensive decided on by the commandos of Jaime Neves and supported by the tanks of Salgueiro Maia (commander of the EPC — Practical Cavalry School) won very rapid success. Although this success has allowed the military initiative to pass back into the Government camp, the real scope of this victory must nevertheless be measured carefully.

Four areas

For the moment, the Government is making gains, or trying to make gains, in four areas.

1. The measures of demobilisation of the Military Police (temporary?); changes in the command of various units (RALIS, EPAM, Military Police); the return of the reactionary sergeants to the Military Police; arrests of many officers; the removal-resignation of Carvalho, Coutinho and Fabiao — all these moves point in the direction of regaining a grip on the army and of attempting to homogenise the command structures. After the abortive attempt to construct the AMI (Military Intervention Group) on the basis of the example of the Amadora commandos, the hierarchy is now seeking to reconstitute a viable intervention force *within the army itself*, in collaboration with the police forces of the National Guard (GNR) and the Public Service Police (PSP).

2. The nationalisation of Radio Clube Portugues, the handing of Radio Renascença back to the Catholic Church, and most important, the strict control over the national radio and television station are concretisations of the measures that the Sixth Government has been vainly trying to impose since September. These measures reflect a not inconsequential change in the political situation.

Previously, because of the influence of the workers of these radio stations and because of their declared collaboration with the struggles of the working class, the working

— a crucial instrument of centralisation — would be in the hands of the Government. The broadcasting towers of Portuguese national radio and television were silenced; by eight o'clock at night, the Government was on the airwaves from Oporto, broadcasting its orders throughout the country.

Finally, inscribing his response within the framework of the 'democratic counter-revolution', the president of the republic took care to have the Constituent Assembly vote on the state of emergency. The motion was carried by a majority composed of the SP, PPD (Popular Democrats) and the CDS (Centre Democrats).

The movement initiated by the Tancos paratroopers, the soldiers of the EPAM (Prac-

...commanded both a fantastic tool for publicising its battles and stimulating criticism and a possible instrument of centralisation. The bourgeoisie understood very well. It is thus trying to bring all the means of mass communication back into its grip. In addition, in the realm of written communication, the administrative councils of newspapers have been modified and right-wing editors who had been removed are retaking their posts. It is not at all impossible that a battle around *Republica* will come up in.

3. The searching of the headquarters of MES, the PRP and the LUAR (League Revolutionary Union and Action) may represent a first step in a policy of selective repression that will initially be carried out around the decree on the 'obligation to return arms' and the decree against 'armed military'.

Suspension

The suspension of collective contract negotiations until the end of December is undoubtedly extremely significant. In fact, in taking this measure the Azevedo Government is trying to transfer its military advantage in the social and political spheres. More precisely, this decision implies a rejection of the theories that have already been won or appeared probable in many sectors (textiles, construction, bakers). But once these measures have been taken, even if all of them have not yet been success-

ing of a democratic and pluralist socialist society. The participation of the CP in the building of socialism is indispensable.' Because of the present relationship of social forces and the tensions among the various tendencies within the Government, the bourgeois crisis of political leadership has not yet been resolved.

Some trauma

Second, the working class as such has not been hit and the economic crisis is continuing. Of course, because of the many links between workers and soldiers that have been forged during past months, the success of Neves's counter-offensive has certainly produced some trauma among the ranks of the workers. *But it would be an exaggeration to claim that the modification of the relationship of forces on the military field will be directly reflected on the social field.*

The capacity of the working class to break down the policy of the Government and the employers in the realm of material demands remains the real test. The fact that 10,000 people turned out to a demonstration called by the Intersindical (the trade union federation) and the SUV in Oporto on the night of 27 November indicates that the potential for combativity is significant.

In addition, the victory on the military field is far from absolute. On the one hand, many units in which the CP and the far left have broad influence remained apart from the events and have not suffered the demoralising effects of a defeat without resistance. Further,



Construction workers' struggle showed the power of mass action

...applied, two central questions come up. First, the bourgeoisie has recovered its confidence somewhat. CDS and PPD leaflets are screaming for blood. The Antunes group must be afraid that it will be outflanked on the right. If that happens, the Government could be led to make decisions that do not correspond to the real relationship of social forces.

Precarious

This in turn could precipitate a workers' mobilisation openly supported by the CP, which today is not frontally opposing the state of emergency and is instead seeking negotiations. Such a mobilisation would highlight the *presently precarious character of the victory* on the governmental and military level. Antunes is quite conscious of this and has already proposed a different option. He declared on television on 27 November: 'I think that the roads to the right can be definitively cut in Portugal and that the military men who now hold political leadership will be the bearers of an alternative left programme which is a historic bloc for the build-

...certain units are already reacting. For example, the RIOQ (Operational Infantry Regiment of Queluz) decided to take over the functions of the Military Police. It organised patrols in Lisbon so that the GNR-PSP were not able to operate alone during the state of emergency.

On the other hand, the military success of the right is going to permit the establishment of a striking force and the imposition of tight control over arms depots. That changes the situation. But it does not resolve the crisis in the army as a whole. The coming weeks will provide a basis for measuring the effects of 25-26 November more exactly.

The defeat suffered in this adventure by a part of the vanguard of soldiers can certainly not be compared to the defeat of the German proletariat in January 1919. The position adopted by the MES and the PRP of creating a 'united anti-fascist commando' goes back to the same orientation that led up to placing the armed insurrection on the agenda. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the blows that have been dealt will permit the bourgeoisie to take measures to re-establish the state apparatus, and this will modify the terms of future confrontations.



Parting of the ways for Carvalho (left) and Gomes

Diary of Events

Tuesday 25 November EARLY HOURS

Rebel paratroopers occupy Montijo air base (south of Lisbon), Tancos air base (120 kms. east of Lisbon), Monte Real air base (near Aveiro) and the air force headquarters. 06.00 RALIS (light artillery regiment) occupies positions on the access motorway leading to the north, to Lisbon airport and to the Beirolas arsenal. EPAM (school of military administration) forces occupy the television studios in Lisbon. 07.00 Monsanto Air Force Communications Centre is occupied by paratroopers. 09.00 Emergency meeting of the President with the Revolutionary Council and military commanders begins. Carvalho is called to see Costa Gomes. On his way he stops at Copcon HQ where he is asked to direct the Copcon troops in the rebellion. He replies he must first see Costa Gomes. Gomes tells him he must help to put down the rebellion. Carvalho refuses and is 'detained'.

AFTERNOON

16.30 President of the Republic, Costa Gomes, announces a State of Emergency in the Lisbon region. Gomes assumes direct command of all units in the region. 19.15 Amadora commandos surround and recapture Monsanto air base. Three men are wounded. 20.45 Radio transmissions from Emmissora Nacional are switched over to the Oporto station. 21.10 Captain Duran Clemente, ex-member of the Fifth Division, appears on television explaining the motives of the rebellion and appealing for support. He is faded out in mid-sentence. The State of Emergency is raised to a Partial State of Siege. 22.20 Monte Real base is recaptured from the paras.

Wednesday 26 November MORNING

01.30 Pro-government commando unit opens fire to disperse a crowd of several hundred outside Belem palace. 04.00 Dinis de Almeida, commander of RALIS, gives himself up to President Costa Gomes. 04.30 Revolutionary Council prohibits the publication of any Lisbon newspapers. 08.00 - 10.00 National Guards and commandos from the Amadora base storm the Military Police barracks near Belem palace, using bazookas and rockets. Three combatants killed; 1,000 military police surrender. Costa Gomes extends the 'partial state of siege' into martial law. General Otelo de Carvalho is dismissed as head of Copcon.

Hundreds of civilians gather outside RALIS light artillery regiment near Lisbon and ask soldiers to distribute arms.

In Setubal a clandestine radio station - Voice of the Revolution - goes on the air.

AFTERNOON

13.00 Paratroopers evacuate Montijo air base and return to Tancos. All originally occupied air bases are now evacuated.

15.00 Pro-government Cavalry unit from Santarem occupies the arsenal garrison.

Workers from Lisnave and other factories on the south bank of the Tagus assemble outside the Armada Fort. They are dispersed by a detachment of naval fusiliers.

In the early evening a communique from Chief of Staff, Armed Forces, announces that RALIS regiment 'is at the disposition of the chief of staff of the armed forces'. Soldiers at RALIS confirm their surrender.

On Wednesday night a civilian is shot dead during curfew for not stopping at a roadblock.

Thursday 27 November MORNING

Early morning - some dozens of military personnel flown to Custodias prison near Oporto. They include various officers as well as members of the coordinating committee of Air Force sergeants. Northern military command announces that at least 51 NCOs are now held.

EVENING

General Otelo de Carvalho and General Fabiao resign from their positions in the Armed Forces. Costa Gomes announces that right-winger Ramalho Eanes is the new Chief of Staff of the Army.

Friday 28 November MORNING

The publication of eight state-owned newspapers is suspended. The editorial boards and the management of these papers are dismissed. Government administrators are appointed.

The Revolutionary Council suspends all wage negotiations until the end of this year; a decision which jeopardises the building workers' recent wage increase.

Tancos paratroopers surrender, with 1,000 men.

A funeral procession of 400 is Lisbon follows the coffin of the military policeman killed on Wednesday in the attack by commandos on the HQ. No mention of the funeral is made in the media.

EVENING

Prime Minister Azevedo appears

on television. He announces that the 'strike' of the cabinet is over; the Sixth Provisional Government will now return to work. The state of emergency may be lifted in the near future. His address ends: 'In this hour of reconciliation, the Government should govern, the workers should work, the armed forces should watch, the institutions should function, and the revolution should advance.'

Admiral Rosa Coutinho resigns.

Saturday, Sunday 29, 30 November

Arrest warrants are issued on Saturday for the 'leadership' of MES and PRP. These warrants are then withdrawn the following day.

Admiral Filgueiras Soares is dismissed as Chief of Staff for the Navy. He is replaced by Admiral Augusto Silva Cruz.

By the end of the weekend it is reported that 120 officers are now under arrest.

On Sunday *Republica* and some other newspapers appear in Lisbon. Six newspapers where the administrative board was dismissed by the Government still have publication suspended.

LUAR headquarters are searched for arms by pro-government troops. None are found.

Costa Gomes talks to leaders of all parties during Sunday and Monday at Belem palace. He makes a three part appeal to them; to hand over any weapons, war materials or clandestine transmitting equipment; to refrain from holding or encouraging demonstrations or gatherings that might disturb public order; to work to encourage higher productivity and output across the country.

It is announced that Monday will be a public holiday. It is also announced that workers from Setenave and National Steel Works are expressly forbidden to turn up at their factories on Monday.

Adapted from an emergency edition of *Our Common Struggle* - available from the Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee, 12 Little Newport St., London W.C.2 (Price 17p inc. p&p).



In Lisbon on Wednesday 26 November, only one newspaper appeared. Its name? *Luta Proletaria* - the paper of our comrades of the LCI (Internationalist Communist League, Portuguese organisation of the Fourth International). They had rushed out a special issue as part of organising a response to the events of the previous day. In the present situation, where the columns of all the daily papers except *Republica* are now closed

to the revolutionary left, the ability of our comrades to produce a regular paper giving a lead on all the major issues facing the Portuguese working class will be of paramount importance.

To do this they need money - your money - desperately. We want to raise at least £200 for *Luta Proletaria* by Christmas. Send donations urgently to: Red Weekly (Iberia), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN PORTUGAL

Alvaro-Miranda, a leading member of the Portuguese Workers Co-ordinating Committee, has just returned from Portugal. *Red Weekly* asked him about the recent events.

ALVARO MIRANDA

Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)



there will be a real problem inside Radio Clube Portugues, because the workers in there are very radicalised — I would be very surprised if something there doesn't blow up again. And in the newspaper *Diario Popular* I have already seen that the workers have taken a decision not to accept the sacking of the management.

As far as *Republica* is concerned, *Republica* was the first newspaper to come out when newspapers were allowed to appear again. The workers at *Republica* are very confident that they will be able to put the paper back on its feet, although of course to a certain extent they may have to be a bit careful to begin with in case they get chopped.

But they have got a serious problem at the moment in that the military managing director, who was *legally* in charge of the paper, has resigned. This could give the Revolutionary Council and the Government a loophole by which they could do something against the paper on the basis that it is coming out without proper authority.

Q Has any balance sheet of the events yet been made by the organisations of the revolutionary left?

A Not so far. When I left Portugal the leaders of the PRP and MES had only just come out from underground. The discussions are only beginning. I'm hoping that the lessons will include the clear realisation that activity inside the army — with army officers etc. — can be very dangerous unless it includes and is based on mass action by the working class.

I would say that probably no left organisation in Portugal can get away without some self-criticism over the recent events. The main lesson is the inability and ineffectiveness of considering coups or even military insurrection as a way of solving the problems of the working class.

We have received a reply from the editor of *Socialist Worker* to the 'Open Letter to the IS on Portugal' printed in last week's *Red Weekly*. Unfortunately it arrived too late for this week's deadline. We will be printing it next week together with a reply.

Q What's the present reaction inside the working class?

A There will undoubtedly be a period of a certain demoralisation, which will probably include a search for answers and responsibilities. I don't think that it has been in any sense a final blow. There are already indications that the working class in certain areas are prepared to continue fighting. Their organisations have not been physically destroyed, although their morale may have suffered quite a set-back.

Already struggles have begun in some of the newspapers against accepting new managements. There is great competition between the 'Nine' and the SP here, with leading members of the SP being publicly canvassed for positions inside the newspapers and inside the radio and television stations.

I think the TV will probably go without very much of a struggle. But

in its first issue, as well as a statement by Colonel Jaime Neves of the comandos that the Portuguese problem can only be resolved 'by physical force'.

There is even talk that the Antunes group would be prepared to form a new government without the right-wing Popular Democrats (PPD). However, the Socialist Party is still absolutely adamant that it will not break with the PPD because the latter is the second largest party in Portugal. That's a rather surprising reason. Perhaps Harold Wilson will say he will not break with the Tories because they are the second largest party in Britain!

The other thing to note is that a new initiative at the political level has been started by a group of ex-MES technocrats and intellectuals. They have issued a platform that can clearly be seen as a platform of civilian support for the 'Nine'. This group is led by Cesar de Oliveira, and is quite clearly aiming at the left wing of the Socialist Party. The peculiar thing about this is that the Antunes group is rhetorically to the left of the Socialist Party but is still demanding a major role in politics for the military; while the Socialist Party leaders, with a right-wing line, are simultaneously demanding the devolution of power to the civilians. This, of course, just adds to the confusion.

However, in a way it's quite convenient for them to allow *Republica* to come out — it gives the impression of having a democracy at work with a quite widespread spectrum of opinion represented. If they closed down *Republica* they would be open to the charge that they closed every newspaper except those close to the Socialist Party — like *A Luta* and *Jornal Novo* — and those even further right.

I should mention that some really right-wing papers are now coming out: there's one called *Barricada* which carried a large article supporting Franco

groups that were initially included in the FUR.

Q Had a split in the FUR been developing previously?

A The FUR was in fact officially suspended two days before the paras' rebellion started. There was a serious split between the PRP and MES on the one side, and the LCI (International Communist League — Portuguese organisation of the Fourth International) on the other. But several other different splits were also involved.

Q Why would you say there was no reaction from the working class despite the huge mobilisations of the working class just a few days beforehand?

A Because there was no effective leadership to the working class. In the first place, it didn't immediately appear to the working class as an action in defence of the working class. It very quickly developed into having all the appearances of a military action.

Even if the working class had seen the initial paras' action as something they ought to mobilise support for, they certainly wouldn't have seen the military shambles which followed as being something in their interests.

Q So what's the situation now?

A The immediate result of the thing was a great advance for the right. There was even talk in certain right-wing quarters about keeping a state of emergency for two or three months.

The lifting of it, and the general pulling back, has been effectively due to the fears of the group led by Melo Antunes, the 'Group of Nine', about the advance of the right wing. The 'Nine' have been very actively trying to hold the line and stop reports of Communist Party implication in the

Q How did the military revolt come about?

A Some of the left officers were convinced that there was going to be a 'constitutional coup' from the right-wing majority in the Revolutionary Council to re-establish control over military units on the one hand, and over the radio, television and newspapers on the other.

Most probably they began discussions to try to find ways of opposing this. But then the paras revolted.

It was a hurried response by people who replied in the only way that they knew — militarily. There is no doubt that these officers must be politically condemned, because although one might say they were under extreme provocation, the response to the struggle in the paras was entirely wrong.

It should not have been a military response. It should have followed the example given over Radio Renascenca, where the struggle was conducted as a mass struggle.

The small group of Radio Renascenca workers refused to re-occupy the transmitters by themselves even when they had the possibility of doing so because the soldiers had abandoned the place. Instead they mobilised a mass of people in support and eventually re-occupied on that basis. And it was a 100 per cent successful struggle — both because they got the transmitters back again and because eventually it did break the paras.

At the time the paratroopers were a right-wing unit; and it was the struggle at Radio Renascenca — because it was a mass struggle and not individual action — that created the situation inside the paras. A similar type of response was needed to the right-wing manoeuvres, not an attempt at a military uprising as such.

Q What was the response of the left-wing political organisations?

A Well, on the first day as far as I know practically all parties of the left, from the Communist Party leftwards, issued calls for action around the paras' struggle. By the second day, I think that most of the left parties realised it was going to be a defeat and withdrew.

This was particularly true of the CP and the UDP; others had been thrown into confusion. It's difficult to pinpoint the exact situation — that reflects the shambles into which the rebellion was thrown.

Q The Revolutionary United Front (FUR) now no longer exists?

A It has been replaced by what I think are called Revolutionary Committees of Anti-Fascist Unity. They are based on an anti-right wing policy.

As far as I understand, this position has been agreed to by the MES (Left Socialist Movement), the PRP (Revolutionary Party on the Proletariat), and the FSP (Popular Socialist Front) — and though the FSP has still not finally agreed. I don't know whether there has been any response from the other

Some comrades responded very well to our appeal for money to be rushed in to meet our extended November target:

- East Mediterranean comrades £7.50
- Hackney IMG £100

- Leeds IMG £55
 - West London IMG £19
 - Brighton IMG £15
 - Scottish IMG £50
 - D. Oswald, Edinburgh £40
 - Manchester IMG £70
- And one comrade who didn't

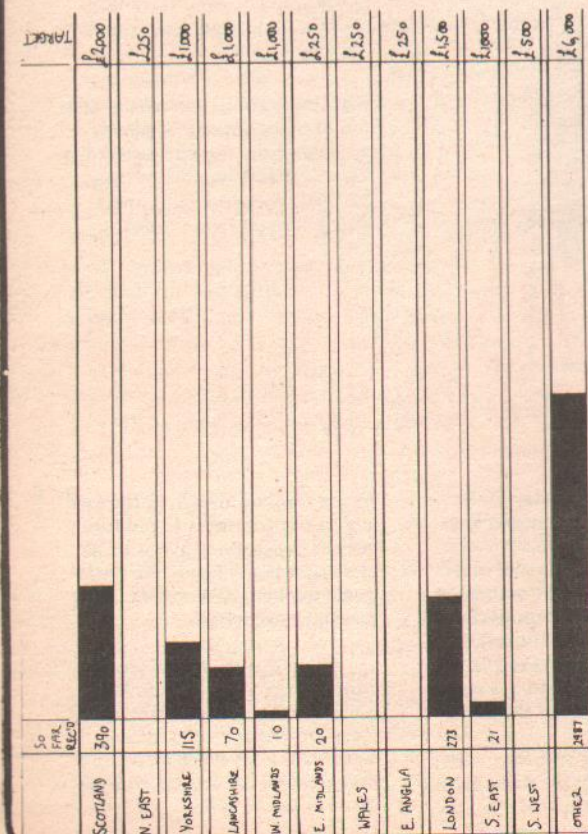
want to see us miss our November target decided to sell his car and gave us a post-dated cheque for £500.

But even so, we only raised £856.50 last week — which means we missed our November target of £4,000 by £127.95.

Our December target is £9,000 — which gives us barely three weeks to raise £5,127.95. Some IMG areas — for example, the North East, Wales, East Anglia, and South West — have not yet sent any money at all to the Fund Drive, so we shall be especially interested in these over the next few weeks. Scottish IMG is in the lead at the moment, although London is very close behind. With unemployment higher in Scotland than in London, this is a really good effort by these comrades.

We know Christmas is coming and there is great pressure by the capitalists for us to spend our money buying expensive presents. Well, the best Christmas present you can give this year is to give money to the IMG and its fight against the Wilson Government, which is spearheading the attacks on the working class.

Rush your money to: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Cheques/POs etc should be made payable to 'The Week'.



£5,127,000



"I saw over 50 South African soldiers at Benguela airport"

TONY HODGES reports direct from Angola on the South African invasion



Picture proof: Major-General Jack Dutton (left), of the South African Army, 'advising' 'Lieutenant Paulo', local commander of the FNLA, in Chitido, southern Angola.

South African troops have advanced more than 600 miles into Angola. I and four other British and American journalists who flew to the coastal city of Benguela 400 miles north of South African-occupied Namibia, saw South African soldiers manning armoured cars in the city. The South African force is fighting alongside units of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) against the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

On 5 December a joint column of South African, UNITA and FNLA troops marched into Benguela and Lobito, Angola's largest port, 20 miles north of Benguela. MPLA soldiers who had held the cities since mid-August fled northwards to the port of Novo Redondo, 300 miles south of Luanda. The South African-UNITA-FNLA column, reportedly well-equipped with armoured cars, has now captured Novo Redondo too. The MPLA claims however, to retain control of the next city up the coast, Porto Amboim, 55 miles further north.

HIT AND RUN

South African troops first entered Angolan territory in early August. Mr Pieter Botha, the South African Defence Minister, admitted on 9 September that the South African army had crossed over the border from Namibia and proceeded about 10 miles into Angola to take control of the Ruacana Falls hydro-electric scheme on the Cunene River. Power from the Ruacana Falls is expected to satisfy nearly all of Namibia's energy needs shortly after the first three of its 80 MW turbines go into operation in 1977.

The South African Government has also admitted that its troops have staged hit-and-run missions into Angola to attack freedom fighters of the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO). In mid-October, South Africa announced that its troops had crossed the border and killed 13 SWAPO militants. Again on 16 November, the South African Defence Ministry said that its forces had killed 10 SWAPO militants in the 'border operational area' on the Namibian-Angolan border.

DENIALS

The South African Government has repeatedly denied, however, that its forces have become involved in the Angolan civil war. On 24 October, for example, the South African Defence Ministry denied accusations levelled by the MPLA that South African troops had advanced 150 miles into Angola towards the city of Sa da Bandeira. In response to recent eyewitness reports of South African troop activity deep inside Angolan territory, the South African Foreign Minister Hilgard Muller categorically stated on 23 November in an

interview with the South African Broadcasting Corporation that 'South Africa does not intend getting involved in the civil war in Angola'.

UNITA too has sought to deny charges that it has received South African aid. Speaking in New York on Angola's formal Independence Day, 11 November, UNITA's representative in the United States, Jeremiah Chitunda, said that 'South African intervention on behalf of an Angolan liberation movement does not exist'.

UNITA's Department of Information in Lusaka, Zambia, charged on 16 November that 'both radio and press have been presented with false reports that white South African soldiers were fighting alongside UNITA forces in Lobito and Southern Angola'. UNITA alleged that 'without confirming their nationality', visiting journalists had mistaken white Angolans in UNITA's army for white South African soldiers.

NO DOUBT

But I, a correspondent of Reuters and a Japanese journalist were able to verify that these soldiers were not white Angolans when we were allowed — due to a temporary lapse of UNITA security — to interview three white soldiers at the UNITA-held Silva Porto airport, 442 miles south-west of Luanda. They were driving two Panhard armoured cars daubed with 'Viva Unita' slogans. The men could not understand Portuguese and spoke English with strong and unmistakable South African accents.

I, along with a British television crew and representatives of Reuters and the New York Times, saw over 50 South African soldiers stacking arms crates at Benguela airport on 10 November. Two more Panhard armoured cars, manned by young, sandy-haired soldiers, guarded the airport access road. Aged between 18 and 20, these soldiers were too young to be mercenaries and appeared to be regular conscript soldiers.

The Southern African intervention proves that the detente policies pursued by the neo-colonial regimes in 'independent' Africa towards the white-ruled south of the continent have emboldened the South African racists to act with even more cavalier disregard for the rights of the African masses. The invasion

is not, as it might appear on the surface, inconsistent with South Africa's detente offensive, but designed to promote it.

South African prime minister John Vorster has calculated that intervention by his army at this stage can tip the balance in favour of political forces firmly committed to collaboration with South Africa. UNITA's strong pro-detente line has been spelt out on numerous occasions in interviews granted to foreign journalists.

"REALISTIC"

In an interview with the Luanda publication Portuguese Africa, UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi stated on 28 April that 'economic cooperation with South Africa is only realism, however much we may be opposed to the inhumanity and injustice of apartheid'. The 2 May issue of the bulletin went on to report:

'Dr Savimbi said he was in favour of detente and of dialogue as a means of solving problems, and that he did not believe, in the present Southern African context, that armed liberation wars were necessarily the solution for the problems of Namibia and Zimbabwe. Dr Savimbi said he believed that South Africa's Premier, John Vorster, is a 'responsible leader'.

South African imperialism must also welcome Savimbi's espousal of the virtues of a free enterprise economy. In the same interview, Savimbi favoured a state that would 'leave as much as possible of the economy to private enterprise'. He stated that 'we welcome any source of foreign investment, and will give the investor all facilities and guarantees'.

BETRAYAL

South Africa certainly knew that its dispatch of troops to Angola would meet with little response from the neo-colonial African states and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). MPLA president Agostinho Neto has charged, during an interview with the Algerian press agency APS on 22 November, that 'most African countries are betraying us by remaining silent in such a situation and avoiding condemnation of South Africa'.

Countries like Zambia, which have played a key part in promoting the detente with South Africa, have issued no protests against the invasion — though, according to London Observer correspondent David Martin, who was granted an interview with Zambian president Kenneth Kaunda on 22 November, Zambia was first informed of South African intervention in early September.

Kaunda, who has described Vorster's detente propaganda as the 'voice of reason', has

also given Savimbi strong support. UNITA has been promoted in the strictly government-controlled Zambian press, and material aid to UNITA has been funnelled through Zambia's ruling (and only legal) party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP).

British journalists here have seen large crates of British-made radio equipment air-freighted out of Lusaka International Airport to UNITA territory. The crates had been sent from Racal Communications Ltd., a major British telecommunications firm, to UNIP for forwarding to UNITA.

Another factor behind Kaunda's backing for UNITA is his Government's desire to reppen the strategic Benguela Railway (now controlled entirely by UNITA except in the extreme north-east), which has been used in the past to export over 45 per cent of Zambia's annual copper production of around 700,000 tons. Zambia earns over 90 per cent of its foreign exchange from copper exports, and has been hit hard by the closure of the railway since mid-August. Over 146,000 tons of imports destined for Zambia have also been held up at the port of Lobito because of the railway's shut-down.

MERCENARIES

American mercenaries are also helping the UNITA war effort. I was told by a translator working at UNITA's Capola training camp near Silva Porto that 15 Americans were based at the camp as instructors. An ex-Green Beret named 'Skip' told me that he had offered his services as a trained pilot to UNITA.

It is widely believed that most of the war material arriving for UNITA and the FNLA is routed through Zaire, a major recipient of United States military aid. The Ford administration revealed on 26 October that it was about to propose to the US Congress a 19 million dollar military aid programme for Zaire in addition to 60 million dollars of emergency financial aid already under consideration. This would amount to a more than fivefold increase in US military aid to Zaire.

ARMS RUNS

According to pilots at Silva Porto airport, a Pearl Air Viscount runs a daily arms run for UNITA from Kinshasa, the Zaire capital. Unmarked transport planes are also landing tons of heavy weapons at Benguela airport, apparently the main supply point for the advancing South African-FNLA-UNITA force on the coast. We saw a giant camouflaged Hercules touch down only minutes after our arrival at the airfield.

Internment ends but repression continues

From JOHN MAGEE
in BELFAST

Northern Ireland Secretary Merlyn Rees has brought four years and four months of internment to an end. But he warned that he was prepared to resort to 'something like internment' if nationalist resistance continues. Rees still holds internment powers, and 27 internees remain in Long Kesh as 'sentenced prisoners' — including those given terms of imprisonment for attempted escape from internment camps.

A statement from the released internees declared that 'any celebration would surely be premature'. It went on to say that their release was tinged with sadness that 'so many of our fellow countrymen and women are still behind the wire', and express the hope that their release would not be long postponed.

Eruption

Internment began on 9 August 1971 when thousands of British troops and police invaded the Catholic districts of the North of Ireland. By breakfast time over 300 men had been lifted — and the nationalist population had erupted in protest. The following days saw some of the fiercest fighting between Republican forces and the British Army. Fourteen people were murdered by the British occupation forces on the first day alone.

Resistance to internment united the anti-Unionist working class, leading to the development of the 'No-Go' areas and the mass civil disobedience campaign. In these early days even the Social Democratic and Labour Party were

drawn into the protest, declaring their full support for the rent and rates strike. But its opposition to internment was short-lived.

At the first whiff of imperialism's money the SDLP initiated a campaign to break the back of the resistance and dislodge the civil resistance campaign. Once installed in the soft chairs of Stormont as members of the power-sharing Executive, the Fitt-Curry-Paddy Devlin gang imposed financial penalties on the rent and rates strikers.

While protesting their opposition to internment they deprived internees' families of their social security payments.

Thus for the SDLP the internees only had words of scorn: 'To the SDLP we say: take no credit for our release. While our people

suffered you connived with the enemies of Ireland behind our back. You speak for no-one but yourselves: you are quislings.'

Guinea pigs

The first internees were used as guinea pigs by the British security forces. They were subject to torture and brutality — or 'ill treatment' as the more sensitive Sir Edmund Compton preferred to call it. They were unwilling volunteers for experiments in perfecting sensory deprivation techniques, for the future use of the British Army wherever and whenever it is called on to fulfil its repressive role.

The misery inflicted on the anti-Unionist working class by internment is not open to calculation. But one thing is clear. Internment has firmly stamped the nature of imperialism on the mind of that working class. It will not forget. Neither must the British working class forget that it was a Labour Government that has maintained internment for the past two years.

Incarceration

Hugh Coney, Jim Moyne, Paddy Tear, Teddy Campbell and Paddy Crawford did not survive their incarceration in Long Kesh. Whether shot in cold blood, murdered by deliberate medical neglect, or driven to suicide by the inhuman conditions of their imprisonment — the responsibility for their deaths lies with the British capitalist class and the Labour Government which shields it.



Paper of the RMG, available price 17p (inc p&p) from Red Books, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



Free at last! A released internee is greeted by his daughter.



Two hundred pickets were bodily thrown out of Manchester Polytechnic Art Centre by police last Thursday. They were protesting against the bestowing of an honorary degree on Reg Prentice. The picket had been called by local staff and student unions, but as the protesters shouted 'No Tory Cuts from a Labour Government' the police were ordered to move in.

Before hurling out the pickets, the police cleared the hall of journalists and compulsorily exposed the film of one cameraman who remained behind. In response angry pickets shouted 'Where were you on Sunday' — a reference to the absence of the police when National Front thugs launched a vicious attack on a conference called to discuss the Prevention of Terrorism Act a few days earlier. Militants in Manchester are determined to continue their activity against both the education cuts and the Prevention of Terrorism Act — regardless of police or fascist harassment.

AUSTRALIA

Labour defeat almost certain

Interview with JOHN GARCIA — one of the 'Brisbane 3' charged for their activities in building the black movement in Australia. Their frame-up trial was thrown out by the judge after a big working class defence campaign.

What's behind the present Tory grab for power in Australia?

What we have just witnessed in Australia is the ruthless determination of the bosses to press home a political and economic attack on the working class. Basic to the present conflict is the economic crisis that Australia — like every other capitalist country in the world — is now facing. The issue, as put across by the Liberal and National Country Party Coalition (LIB-NCP) and the bourgeois press, is 'responsible economic management' — but what is and has been at stake for the past three years is the bourgeoisie's need for a decisive defeat of the working class, as a necessary condition for the implementation of a capitalist solution to the economic crisis.

Three years ago a significant section of the Australian bourgeoisie chose to back the Labour Party (ALP) in the elections. They considered that because of its links with the trade unions the ALP was in a better position than the LIB-NCP to implement some form of incomes policy. Rupert Murdoch, the press baron who now personally super-

vises the vehement press attacks on the ALP, was one of Whitlam's staunchest supporters in the December 1972 elections.

By mid-1974, it had become abundantly clear that the bourgeoisie had overestimated the ALP's ability to curb wage struggles. The more militant sections of the working class, naturally enough, took advantage of what they considered to be a Government favourable to their interests to push forward massive wage claims. Significant wage increases were achieved by large sections of the working class in the first half of 1974.

The State Governments, mostly Liberal-Country Party, responded by adopting anti-trade union legislation, while the bosses responded with production cuts and lock-outs which brought unemployment to the highest levels since the 1930s.

It was clear from the May 1974 elections onward that the Australian bourgeoisie would have to take desperate steps to prepare for an all-out attack on the working class. The LIB-NCP tempor-



arily resolved its leadership crisis by electing staunch right-winger Malcolm Fraser as their leader, and quickly patched up the cracks that were beginning to form in the coalition. The rest is the story of scandals to discredit the ALP and constitutional manoeuvres leading up to the ousting of the Labour Government on 11 November.

What has the ALP's position been in this crisis?

I think the ALP has a lot to answer for. Australian workers view the ALP as their party, as the party that will defend their interests; and during its first year in Government, 1973, the ALP to a certain extent lived up to these expectations. It introduced significant social reforms by taking advantage of the favourable economic conditions prevailing during that year. But as the economic crisis began to hit Australia, so Labour's policies became more and more openly pro-capitalist.

The last 18 months of Labour rule consisted of the consolidation of a solid pro-capitalist and clearly anti-working class bundle of policies, culminating in

the Hayden Budget. This was the very same budget that was stopped for political reasons in the Senate and that brought about the dismissal of the Whitlam Government. But the economic policies contained in the budget have the support of the LIB-NCP coalition, and it will be used by them — if they win the elections — as the basis for a more savage attack on working class living standards.

The trade union bureaucrats have aided the ALP's pro-capitalist plans by consistently demobilising working class struggles, such as that against wage indexation. In the Metal Trades Union, which could have spearheaded a nationally coordinated attack on the wage freeze, the bureaucrats 'engineered' a narrow vote in favour of an uncoordinated struggle at shop-floor level.

This continual betrayal of rank-and-file militancy by the bureaucrats seriously exhausted an organisationally strong but politically misled working class, and undoubtedly served to increase the optimism of the bourgeois parties that a decisive defeat would be possible if they could only get into office. In other words — and you seem to have the same situation in Britain now — Labour's right-wing policies more or less ensured that it would be defeated when it went to the polls.

The most tragic betrayal of the interests of the working class by the ALP has taken place in the last few weeks. Never was the necessity for extra-parliamentary action in defence of the workers' interests so clearly realised by masses of workers as during the recent political crisis. The spontaneous upsurge against the parliamentary offensive of the bosses' parties provided Australia's ruling class with the clearest expression yet of the strength and unity of the class they are determined to smash.

But the ALP lost no time in taking hold of the upsurge and directing it towards its parliamentary fight. The trade union bureaucrats hurriedly got together to work out how to restrain the rank-and-

file from taking strike action. Bob Hawke, in his capacity as president of both the ALP and the Australian Congress of Trade Unions, spearheaded the call for restraint.

Even the Communist Party of Australia, which has significant influence in the trade union bureaucracy, ended up tail-ending the ALP. It made some token concessions to the need for extra-parliamentary working class action by calling for a national stoppage in its press; but it made no serious attempts to organise for such action.

What will be the consequences of a LIB-NCP victory at the coming elections?

A LIB-NCP victory, which is now very likely, will represent a serious setback for the Australian workers. In Government, the bosses' parties are in a position to wield very significant power against any militant struggles — and what is crucial is that this Government will.

It will have been elected with an open hand to increase the profitability of the private sector and it will do so by cutting back on wages and public expenditure. It will also have the support of the majority of states in its fight to control the trade unions.

The combination of this power and the demoralisation of militant workers as a result of their recent experience will at first weaken the likely response of workers to these attacks. But it will not prevent an eventual outburst.

The key problem likely to be discussed amongst workers in the next few weeks will be the question of an alternative leadership capable of organising extra-parliamentary struggles. It is probable that militant workers will receive a more favourable response to the creation of strong intermediate organisations such as rank-and-file action committees than they have in the past. I would venture to say that the union bureaucrats are in for a rough time in the coming period.

Women fight the cuts



Working Women's Charter supporters join Islington picket against the cuts

- * In 1973, the Tories introduced cuts of £1,350 million in spending on the welfare state.
- * In January 1975, the Labour Government imposed further cuts amounting to £900 million.
- * In 1973, only £9 million was spent on nursery education — of 4 million children under school age, only 40,000 managed to get placed in nursery schools.
- * In 1970, up to £10,000 a day from NHS funds was spent on tranquillisers — mainly for women. The figure today is undoubtedly much higher.
- * Overall unemployment rose between November 1973 and May 1975 by 65 per cent — but female unemployment rose by 89 per cent in the same period.

Background

It is against a background of facts like these that a London conference on 'Women and the Cuts' has been called for 28 February by the Working Women's Charter Campaign. Women are particularly hit by cuts in social spending and by unemployment as British capitalism is thrown deeper into crisis. The Charter Conference will be an important step in ensuring that the fight against the attacks on working class living standards will be a united one — with women at its forefront.

Women are used as a reserve labour

force which can be drawn on as needed. At work many women suffer low pay and bad conditions. Courtaulds estimated in 1972/73 that their profits would have dropped from £68 million to £25 million if they had granted equal pay. This is but one example of the way in which women are doubly exploited, a situation which will continue — despite the inadequacies of the Equal Pay Act — until they are given the equal right to work, with full state provision made for their domestic responsibilities.

by Stephanie Ware

Because they are 'less well organised' women are often easier victims of redundancy. This is reinforced by the rationalisation that they don't need to work because they are not the 'breadwinners' of the family, and their first place is in the home. There are already nearly half a million women registered as unemployed (approx one third of total unemployment) — but if you are married, you are not allowed to receive unemployment benefit, so in reality that figure is much higher.

Mothers are nearly always the target of discrimination. Maternity leave is rarely guaranteed by employers; and where it does exist, fellow workers are often forced to take on the extra work load. Cutbacks in social expenditure have meant a decrease in the already limited number of nursery facilities, yet 37 per cent of all women responsible for kids work!

The justification for cuts in the welfare state is often that certain sectors are 'unnecessary'. But unnecessary to whom? Lack of facilities and staff shortages in

the NHS have meant that patients are often discharged from hospital early, the waiting period for some operations can be several years, and abortion is only available to a limited few. Facilities for the care of the elderly and handicapped are also totally inadequate. These have all added to the burden of women, some of whose responsibilities had previously been taken on by the welfare state.

The conference on 'Women and the Cuts' will be discussing how the economic crisis is affecting women both at home and at work; how women can be better integrated into the existing organisations fighting the cuts (through the availability of creches at meetings, etc); how links between the Working Women's Charter and campaigns against the cuts can be increased; and how these campaigns can take up the needs of women. This will be only a London conference (though visitors from elsewhere will be very welcome), but it is hoped to call a national conference on women and the cuts later in the year.

Sponsors

Westminster Trades Council, ATTI Rank & File, the National Coordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS, Islington Cuts Campaign and ATTI Will-eden Tech. branch have already sponsored the conference.

All trade union, tenants' and women's organisations fighting the cuts should throw their weight behind this conference in order that a united campaign can be built. For further information on sponsorship, delegates, planning meetings etc, contact: Women and the Cuts Conference, c/o Michele Ryan, 39 Parkholme Road, London E.8.

BUILD FOR 3 APRIL DEMO ON ABORTION

The Government favours the re-establishment of the Select Committee — the parliamentary body responsible for drawing up the present restrictions on women's right to abortion. That's official according to the Catholic paper *Universe*, which quotes Labour Chief Whip Bob Mellish to this effect.

The newspaper also reports that Mellish has given assurances that if the Select Committee is not re-established the Government is 'willing to give time to any other Private Member's Bill seeking similar reforms'. The Chief Whip's Office has once again maintained the position that any vote on this issue will be a 'free vote' — continuing to pose this issue as one above party and class.

At the planning meeting of the National Abortion Campaign held in London on Saturday, it was decided to meet these attacks on abortion by beginning now to build for a mass demonstration on 3 April. The call for a mobilising committee has gone out, and this will be meeting in January to discuss how to build a demonstration similar to the one attracting 20,000 last June.

New date

The demonstration will bring together all those who agree with the demands for 'Free Abortion on Demand — A Woman's Right to Choose', 'No Return to Backstreet Abortions', and who oppose any attacks from the Labour Government on women's right to abortion.

The new date for the demonstration — previously NAC was committed to building the International Women's Day demonstration in March as a major national focus — followed several hours of debate. Linda Smith of the IMG argued that it was fitting for NAC to build the largest possible demonstration on this day because it would allow all the campaigns and groups fighting against women's oppression to come

together politically. This would demonstrate the real steps that have been taken in the labour movement and in the community in the fight for women's rights.

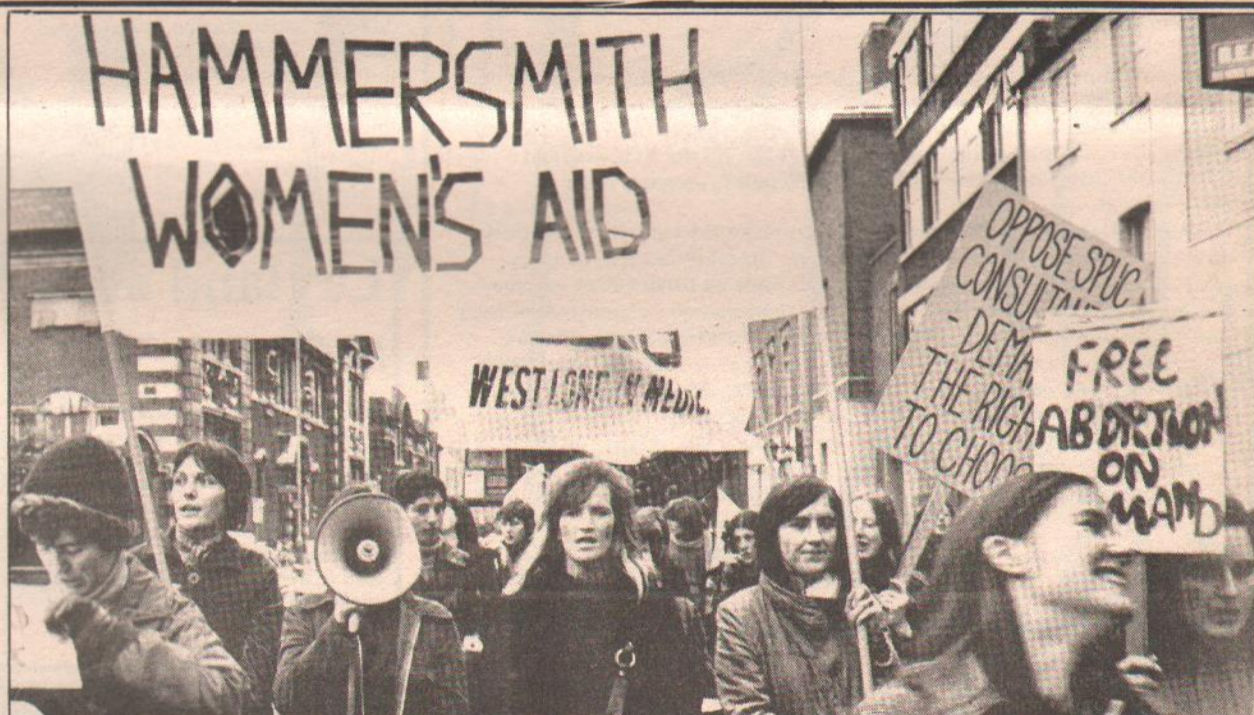
Gwyn Vorhaus, also of the IMG, explained that International Women's Day had been called by the Second International following a textile workers' strike in America to mark the actual struggles launched by women. She argued that all campaigns should be represented on the march and there should be no restrictions.

Six demands

But most of the NAC groups represented at the meeting rejected this view. Other speakers argued that the International Women's Day march would be called on the basis of the six demands of the women's liberation movement, and because NAC was fighting for only one of the demands — free abortion on demand — many of the people mobilised by NAC would not understand or even agree with the other demands. It was argued that this would cause great friction with people who supported NAC but who did not consider themselves part of the women's liberation movement.

In light of the differences within that without the backing of the entire campaign any national mobilisation would be unsuccessful. It was thus unanimously agreed to call for a demonstration on 3 April.

The tasks are now set for the coming months. Every students union, trade union, women's group, tenants association and Labour Party must now be approached to affiliate to NAC, to sponsor the demonstration, to organise transportation and publicity, and to begin to discuss how they can implement the decisions of the workers' movement — taken at the TUC and Labour Party conferences to fight for abortion on request. The plans for regional co-ordination discussed at the national planning meeting can only help to take the campaign into the heart of the workers' movement.



Marching for free abortion on demand in West London last Saturday

WRP use anti-gay insults

One of the more unfortunate aspects of the 26 November jobs demo was the reaction of the Workers Revolutionary Party contingent to members of the Gay Liberation Front supporting the demo. These GLF comrades (mostly trade unionists, and including some recently victimised workers) were subjected to vicious and sexist abuse from WRP supporters, one of whom went so far as to yell that 'they ought to be sacked from their jobs'.

Such behaviour has nothing in common with revolutionary politics. Attacks on minorities (including homosexuals) are used by the ruling class to deepen the already existing divisions inside the working class; the task of revolutionaries is to fight to overcome these, not strengthen them. This is particularly important on questions relating to sexuality and the family.

The GLF has protested to the WRP about the behaviour of its supporters — a protest which is fully supported by *Red Weekly* and the IMG.

— WHAT'S ON —

CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CUTS in public spending — demonstration in Birmingham 13 December. Assembly 10.30am, Victoria Square. Speakers include Tom Litterick MP, Ernie Roberts (Asst Gen Sec, AUEW), Jeff Rooker MP, Ken Barlow (UCATT), Val Coultas (NUS Exec), Chris Adamson (NUPE), Gordon Green (NUT).

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

BREAK ALL LINKS with Fascist Spain! Public meeting organised by West London Spanish Solidarity Committee at Southall Town Hall (Uxbridge Road), Friday 19 December at 7.30pm. Speakers include: Syd Bidwell MP; Fred Gore, ETU convener, Heathrow speaker from PWCC. Sponsored by Southall and Hounslow Trades Councils.

BWNI 14+ Defence Group meets every Friday at 8pm at 6 Endsleigh St, London WC1. Badges also available, 10p + post, from Box 69, 197 Kings Cross Road, London WC1.

BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS urgently required for Irish prisoners in Long Kesh and elsewhere. Send to Republican Press Centre, 170A Falls Road, Belfast.

FREE DESMOND TROTTER! Demonstrate for acquittal in the Privy Council — Sat 13 Dec, 1pm, Speakers Corner. March to Foreign Office, Downing St.

SQUATTERS HANDBOOK — new edition just out, cost 10p + postage (cheques/POs made out to Islington Squatters). All orders to: Squatters Handbook, 2 St Pauls Road, London N.1.

UNEMPLOYED TEACHERS in London meet every Wednesday at 7pm in Room 61, Northern Poly, Holloway Road, N.7.

CRITIQUE SEMINAR 11 December — Chris Arthur of Sussex University on 'E-B Pasukanis: A Materialist Conception of Law'. 7.30pm, St Clements Building (Room S117), London School of Economics.

IRELAND and the British Labour Movement — public meeting with speakers Mike Knowles (Sec, Hackney Trades Council) and Dom Flynn (Hackney North LPYS). Fri 12 Dec, 7.45pm, Manchester Town Hall Extension Basement Theatre. Organised by TOM.

DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK badges — 17p inc postage from: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Bulk rates on enquiry (01-278 9526).

CONFERENCE ON IRELAND organised by East London TOM with workshops and film — Saturday 13 Dec, 10am — 5pm. Social in evening (starts 8pm), entrance 60p. Both at City of London Poly, Whitechapel High Street (Aldgate East tube).

HARINGEY STREET THEATRE have a play about the Working Women's Charter available evenings and weekends, expenses only. Phone 888 2610 (evenings).

YES — it's coming again! Another North London IMG spectacular, with all the sounds, food and booze (Rud-ies County Bitter amongst others) you can manage. Saturday 13 December, 7.30 till very late at The Bank, Tolmers Square, London N.W.1. Entrance 50p. Be in the vanguard for Christmas!

TYNESIDE SOCIALIST CENTRE, 235 Jesmond Road, Newcastle. Grand opening, Sat 13 December. Left bookshop opened 2.30 by Jim Allen (author of 'Days of Hope') followed by discussion. Socialist Centre opened 7.30 by Harry McShane, followed by social with live music and theatre group. Tickets £1 — phone Newcastle 812266.

RCG MANCHESTER Public Day School on Inflation and the Crisis. Speaker David Yaffe. Sat 13 Dec, 10am — 4pm. 'Lass O' Gowrie', Charles Street.

Government plays for time

Recall the TUC - build Right-to-work Committees

Two million unemployed by 1977. That is the forecast of top stockbrokers Phillips and Drew. Pointing out Britain's difficult - in fact almost impossible task - of borrowing money from current sources, a market research review commissioned by them points the finger at the awful trade gap British capitalism is now facing.

Even if British capitalism can get loans from its present normal sources - a very uncertain prospect - this will still leave a deficit over the next two years of a staggering £1,200 million. This means that at least 400,000 more jobs will disappear. The dole queues will grow and the frightening figure of two million jobless will become a reality.

Meanwhile the Labour Government and its allies in the TUC mutter platitudes about 'keeping down unemployment'. The policies of the social contract have led to massive cuts in working class living standards. The Child Poverty Action Group now estimates that the number of families living below the poverty line has passed the two million mark. Unemployment is no longer merely a threat - for millions of workers and their families it has become a dreadful reality.

Wages are buying less. Jobs are disappearing. And all the TUC leaders can do in this situation is to scab on the struggle against unemployment. Their attack on the 26 November jobs demonstration was a callous stab in the back of the workers' movement and a service rendered to the interests of capitalism.

SIMMERING REVOLT

Twenty thousand people thronged the streets of London on 26 November. This was the beginning of a powerful, simmering revolt against the politics of betrayal. The fight against that betrayal must now be taken into the organisations of the working class itself. If the TUC will not fight for the interests of the workers, then a new leadership must be built that will.

An important step in this campaign is to make the leaders of the working class accountable to their own members. In every branch, in every union, district and area committee, the call must go forth for an emergency meeting of the TUC. Let the bureaucrats stand up and be counted on their position on unemployment. The agents of capitalist policies - Murray, Jones, and the rest of the trade union bureaucracy - must not be allowed in silence to get away with their criminal policies. They must be forced to wage a fight or stand exposed before the working class.

Build on the 26 November demo. Re-call the TUC. Fight for work-sharing with no loss of pay. Fight for nationalisation of all firms threatening redundancies, and for workers' control of these industries. Build Right-to-Work Committees - based on the working class movement - in every area.

Jeff King

We need an Xmas present!

After last week's call for help we did get a response. Leeds set the pace with £25, West and North London came in with £18 and £10 respectively, and then there were some individual contributions. All told we got a total of £67.44. But that's not enough.

Over Christmas we will be missing an issue of the paper - but we still have to pay wages, overheads etc. for that week. That's an added burden, on top of the fact that we fell short of the November target. So it's up to you, the readers and supporters of Red Weekly, to help solve the problem. Your paper needs an Xmas present. Make sure that we hit our December target of £500, but add a little bit extra so that the November deficit is not just made up but exceeded.

Every penny, every pound, every fiver or tenner you can spare - or even not spare - is needed. Rush it all in to 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1. Don't delay - do it now.

'Make Chrysler another UCS' was the call issued by Linwood steward Danny Sharp to a meeting last Friday of 350 shop stewards from Chrysler's Coventry plants and many other Coventry factories. To huge applause, Sharp repeated the Linwood stewards' demand for nationalisation and the intention of Linwood workers to occupy their plant if closure is attempted.

Initiated at the eleventh hour by Ryton convenors seeing the jobs of their workers being shipped out along with machinery, the meeting had a 'star-studded' platform: six Coventry Labour MPs and two national trade union officials. But all Bob Wright of the AUEW could offer was a vision of Chrysler being taken over by the National Enterprise Board and made a competitive firm in a mass volume market - presumably so that it can compete with the NEB's 'rationalised' British Leyland! Only Linwood stewards made a clear call for the Chrysler fight to be turned into a fight for the right to work of the whole working class.

Scandalous

The contributions of the 'left' MPs were nothing less than scandalous. None called for nationalisation. None spelled out the action needed to defend jobs. It was left to right-wing Labourites to even mention these things.

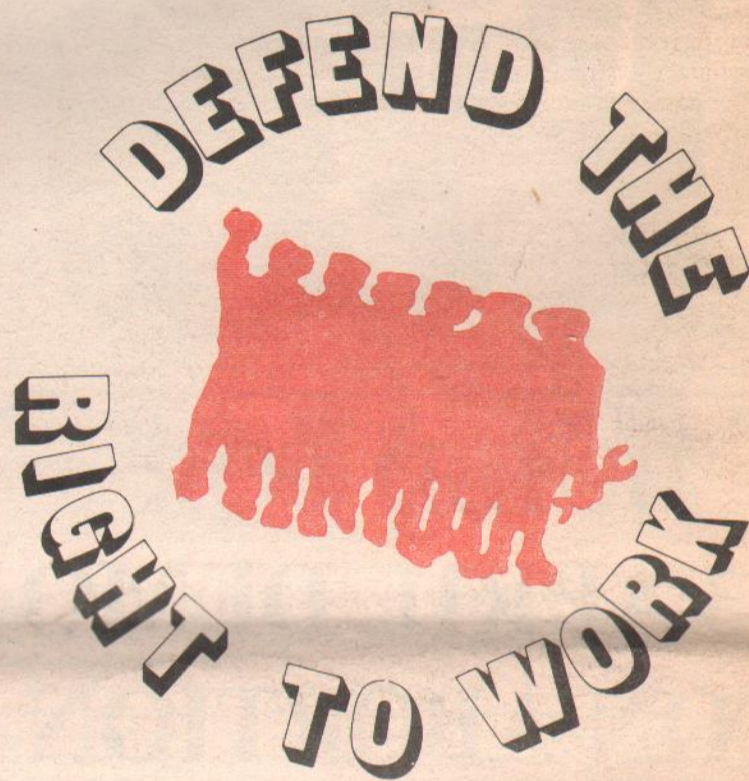
'Bigger protocol', exclaimed William Price, MP for Rugby. 'Although I'm a junior minister, I will fight and fight again in this Government for the jobs of Chrysler workers'. Not only that: he also

said it was nonsense to talk about two state-owned car firms in Britain, and a single state-owned car industry was needed! And it was left to right-winger George Park, ex-Ryton convenor and now a Coventry MP, to put forward the demand for nationalisation without compensation.

It was from the floor that possible leads for the Chrysler fight came. Harold Stanisgoult, AUEW(TASS) convenor at Chrysler's research and administration centre at Whitley, announced that he and

Jones warned that the Labour Government was playing for time, aiming to demoralise Chrysler workers by weeks on the dole before actually sacking them. The Whitley stewards should extend their action and draw up a plan for work-sharing with no loss of pay throughout the Chrysler combine: a plan fundamental enough to be the basis of nationalisation.

He explained that when the Government took a majority shareholding in Herbert's it had demanded further redun-



Leyland stewards say 'No'

British Leyland's 'worker participation' proposals have suffered another big defeat. Following the example of workers at the Standard Triumph assembly plant at Canley, Coventry, shop stewards at Rover, Solihull, have voted to recommend rejection of Ryder's proposals to a mass meeting of all Rover workers in Birmingham. Only eight stewards voted for acceptance out of over 300 present at the meeting.

his fellow workers were drawing up a report on the internal workings of Chrysler. Contrary to popular belief, not only had new models been designed at Whitley - there had been 18 of them. But none had been built in Britain. The report was due to be issued this week.

The importance of the Whitley stewards' action was underlined by IMG member Martin Jones, an office worker at Herbert's - where 300 redundancies have already been implemented. He emphasised that occupation was the decisive tactic. Chrysler workers should not hang around for the Government announcement.

Nationalisation at Chrysler had to be under workers control to save jobs. Appealing for the formation of a Right to Work Committee, Jones argued that this was necessary to support Chrysler workers on the basis of a campaign for a common jobs policy in Coventry.

But with time running out, the resolution failed to issue a call for occupation and nationalisation, and simply demanded the retention of all Chrysler plants and for Coventry to be given the status of a development area. It is now up to militants throughout Chrysler to seize on the Linwood and Whitley initiatives to develop the fight for the right to work.



Demonstrators march through Clay Cross last Saturday in support of the former councillors, who are now being stripped of their possessions because - unlike the Labour Government - they fought to represent the interests of the working people who elected them

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