

# Red Weekly

Red Weekly congratulates the Irish Republican Air Force on its successful rescue of Seamus Twomey and two other political prisoners from Mountjoy Jail in Dublin

PAPER OF THE INTERNATIONAL MARXIST GROUP (BRITISH SECTION OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL)

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## ORGANISE TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE

# SMAASH THE NIRC!

Monday will see a massive display of working class unity as hundreds of thousands of engineering workers strike and demonstrate in protest at the £75,000 fine slapped on the engineering union by the National Industrial Relations Court.

But a one-day stoppage alone will not overturn this outright attack on the right to strike (for that is what is involved in the Con Mech dispute). And it will certainly not do permanent damage to the hated Industrial Relations Act or its offspring, the NIRC.

Some militants see the strike as a means of getting 'revenge,' of 'making the employers pay.' But the bosses

be solicited, and the whole trade union movement should be drawn into the struggle.

The mounting of a series of local actions — stoppages, demonstrations, mass meetings, mass pickets — and the linking of the national fight against the NIRC with key local battles (such as that at Footprint Tools in Sheffield) can give life to a national campaign that will prepare millions of workers for an all-out struggle against the Tories. A national conference of engineering shop stewards' delegates should be organised, with representatives from all other workers pledged to solidarity action, to coordinate the local struggles. Such a body would also be in a position to organise a national all-out stoppage if the AUEW executive refused to take this step.

This is the only way to repel this latest attack by the bosses' state machine and prepare the ground for an all-out offensive against the Tory Government and its pay policy.

One group of workers have already opened up this offensive — the Glasgow firemen. These overworked and underpaid workers have been deserted by the local Labour Council, the Scottish and British TUCs, and their own union. Only the solidarity of rank-and-file firemen across the country and trade unionists in Glasgow, stand between them and the full might of the Tory Government.

These workers are simply the vanguard of the struggle which the big battalions of the class must take up in the near future if working class living standards are not to take a severe bashing. For that reason they must not be defeated. Every meeting, demonstration or strike against the NIRC must also take up the fight of the Glasgow firemen against Phase 3: to provide them with a platform from which to explain their case, expressions of mass support which will boost their fighting spirit and make the Tories think twice about any repressive moves, and practical aid such as money.

The working class movement must take all steps necessary to ensure the defeat of the NIRC and the victory of the Glasgow firemen. On that basis it can rapidly go forward to the crushing of Tory pay policy, and deal a death-blow to this anti-working class Government.

CHRIS BALFOUR

and the Government do not see the Industrial Relations Act and the NIRC as a means of raising money. They are weapons against the trade union movement: to make rank-and-file workers think twice about striking and to force the bureaucrats to crack-down on militants. It is well worth the price of a few one-day strikes if they can pull this off. Limited protest actions are only useful as a means of beginning a powerful mass campaign that can lead up to an all-out struggle to smash the NIRC and the Industrial Relations Act.

Already many workers have expressed a desire to go beyond a simple protest strike. Some districts of the AUEW have declared extended overtime bans. Many have called on the AUEW Executive to organise an all-out stoppage. Some 40 factories nearby Con-Mech have stated that they will begin an all-out solidarity strike on the 5th unless the dispute is settled.

An example which should be taken up immediately by militants everywhere is the decision of the Erith District Committee to convene a mass meeting of all AUEW members in the District on 8 November to discuss further moves in the fight against the NIRC. Special shop stewards' meetings and mass meetings should be organised in every district to plan future action. A campaign must be mounted within the AUEW calling on the executive to organise a national strike against the NIRC ruling. A massive propaganda campaign must be organised to make every worker aware of the importance of the Con-Mech dispute and the threat posed by the NIRC decision. Further pledges of support — such as those made by the NUM Yorkshire Area Committee and the Huddersfield Trades Council — should



Workers at the ILC site during their recent strike. Jim Kemp is on far right. Photo: Ezra Nathan (Red Weekly)

## BUILDING WORKERS: 'WHY WE ARE STRIKING ON THE 5th'

Jim Kemp, T&GWU convener of the ILC Bedford Row building site and a member of the International Marxist Group, talks to Red Weekly about the decision of his site to strike on Monday against the NIRC £75,000 fine on the AUEW.

Before the demonstration outside the NIRC the other Monday, the AUEW (Constructional Section) convener approached me about action, and the stewards discussed it. We felt that we could have got the lads outside the gates, but we have had a few defeats, and we face struggles going beyond our domestic site concerns this winter. Since we had a full site meeting coming up the following Thursday, we decided to wait and discuss the issues fully there.

At this meeting we related the NIRC fine to the freezing of the five dockers a year ago, and explained why the Tory Government had waited for a period of full in

the struggle before launching this attack. We explained that this was a blow against the movement, in face of the struggles this winter over the Industrial Relations Act, Phase 3, the engineers pay claim, and the use of the conspiracy laws against the Shrewsbury building workers.

But we knew that the lads' wives didn't discuss these issues with them, but did talk about rising prices. So we explained that it was only by challenging the Tory Government that we could take the first steps to deal with the problem of prices — not through petitions but through struggle. We also pointed out that wages, condi-

tions, etc. are not decided by 'justice,' but by the strength of our organisation and the balance of forces, and it was just the same with the law.

In this way we got a decision to strike on a conscious basis. It would have been easy to pull the lads out by making it demagogic appeal to their solidarity with other trade unionists under attack, but we wanted them to understand the issues involved. On a site like ours, where there are six different unions involved, it is important to cut across sectoral lines, so through this action we will not only support the AUEW, but will strengthen our own organisation on the site.

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## FUND DRIVE

When the Generals threw their road block across the path of Popular Unity they brought an end not just to a political episode in Chile, but to an epoch in the international class struggle. From now on all those who ask the workers and oppressed peoples to confront capitalism and imperialism with empty hands will have to answer the question: 'But what about Chile?'

Of all the papers on the British left the Red Weekly has been unmatched in analysing the implications, and providing information about the background and the ideas of revolutionaries in Chile. But we have also been to the fore in covering solidarity actions in Britain, and urging the need for vigorous support to the Chilean resistance.

We need your help to carry on with this work. In October our £300 fund drive stood at £280. Help us reach the target for November: send in your donations right away to Red Weekly Fund Drive, 182 Pentonville Road, London, N.1.

# Firemen's strike - lines drawn

The strike by 656 Glasgow firemen has had the effect of drawing lines sharply and vividly within the working class movement. Against the firemen stand the Tory Government and its Pay Laws, which prevent the firemen's claim for a £5 Glasgow allowance being met. Alongside the Tories stand Len Murray of the TUC and the Secretary of the Scottish TUC, James Jack.

Murray appealed to the men not to strike, 'on behalf of all trade unionists', and James Jack ordered all trade union bodies in Scotland not to take any action 'which would represent approval of the strike'.

## DECISIVE LEADERSHIP

With our good brothers Murray and Jack stands Terry Parry, leader of the 30,000 strong Fire Brigades Union. His leadership has certainly proved to be of a decisive type. When the leaders of the Glasgow firemen announced their intention to strike, he withdrew their credentials. He then marched his full 14 man executive up to Glasgow to wait for the strike leaders to beg forgiveness, call off the strike, and receive

their credentials back.

While they were there, FBU officials met with the Scottish Secretary of State to offer him advice on how soldiers, sailors and airmen could most efficiently be used to replace striking firemen. Then on Monday they convinced a special conference in London to condemn the Glasgow strikes. (Glasgow firemen are considering calling for a TUC enquiry into the conference procedures.)

This is the first strike in the union's history. Opposition to strikes is established policy of the FBU, grounded in the belief that because the fire brigades are a public service, the capitalist state must compensate firemen accordingly. But capitalism is not based on charity, and like other public service workers, firemen receive very low pay for the hard and dangerous work which they do. After a settlement in October, which was within Phase 2 guidelines, a fireman receives £26.76 for a basic 40 hour week rising to £28.20 if he manages to survive 15 years without death or serious injury. They must work sixteen hours a week compulsory overtime owing to the general lack

of staff, and get no extras for shift or weekend working. At present, FBU branches are considering action in support of national demands for a shorter working week and job re-evaluation, and London firemen have already begun a work-to-rule.

## SLANDERS

All the more disgusting then are the editorialists of the press, who have launched a campaign to brand the firemen as potential murderers for taking strike action. But it is the low pay in the public sector which the state has been able to get away with precisely by directing slanders against public sector militants in the past, which is responsible for the undermining of the fire service and thereby many deaths.

The Glasgow fire service is 200 firemen short. Between 1969 and 1972, 10 firemen have died in Glasgow fires. This year alone 70 have left the service. Firemen in Glasgow still have bitter memories of the whisky bond fire in 1960 when 14 firemen and five salvage men were killed. Yet the Fire Service does not even have a compensation scheme!

The Labour Party likes to tell us that it stands up for the weak and the dispossessed. Yet the Glasgow Corporation, run by a Labour Council, has treated the firemen with contempt by offering them an additional £2.48, £2 of which would be a 'national allowance'. Glasgow's Labour Councillors had a choice: either they broke the Tory Government's Pay Laws and attracted more men to the service, thus saving more firemen's lives in the future, or they saved their own miserable skins from Government prosecution. Despite previous 'brave' murmurs about defying the Housing Finance Act, their behaviour has made it perfectly clear on which side of the class barricades they stand.

This latest strike against the Pay Laws should get the active support of all firemen, whose national claim may be vetoed by the Pay Laws. All public service workers should back the firemen, for they are standing up for all those groups of workers, nurses, teachers, hospital workers etc whose devotion capitalism has been able to take for granted too often.

## TROOPS

The use of troops in the Glasgow dispute sounds an ominous note for the working class movement. Of one thing we can have no doubt: the Tories concern is with *breaking strikes*, not saving lives. The Government has long awaited an opportunity to use the military in a strike situation. If this tactic succeeds in Glasgow we can expect to see a massive use of 'strikebreakers in uniform' this spring.

Those who collaborate with troops are making the job of the Government easier. The assistance rendered by the FBU executive was outright treachery, and the 60 members of the Fire Officers' Union who are working with the troops should withdraw their services and join the struggle.

The working class movement must reply to the 'Tories' action with a massive display of support for the firemen and warn the Government that the use of troops in industrial disputes will only serve to multiply working class solidarity ten-fold.

Steps must be taken to show that the Glasgow working class need not rely on these 'scabs in uniform' to protect their families: fire prevention instruction should be organised by the strikers on all housing estates, and training given to special volunteer units to deal with local domestic fires. Glasgow workers should indicate their unwillingness to work under scab protection, by refusing to work where there is any fire risk.

Support for the Glasgow strike within the Fire Brigades Union is building up. Several areas are working to rule and answer emergency calls only, in protest against the Executive's actions. Manchester area have set up a strike fund for the Glasgow men - who are desperately short of money - condemned the Executive, and sent a tough letter to Len Murray.

Initial support has come from the Glasgow Trades Council, which is giving facilities to the strike committee, and messages and resolutions of solidarity are coming in from other unions in the Glasgow area. Students at Glasgow and Strathclyde Universities have already set up support committees. But backing from the trade union movement all across the country is urgently needed.

Send money and messages of support to: Strike Committee, Fire Brigades Union, Trade Union Centre, 81 Carlton Place, Glasgow.

JOHN KILBANE



Photo: John Sturrock (Report)

Mass meeting in Glasgow last week

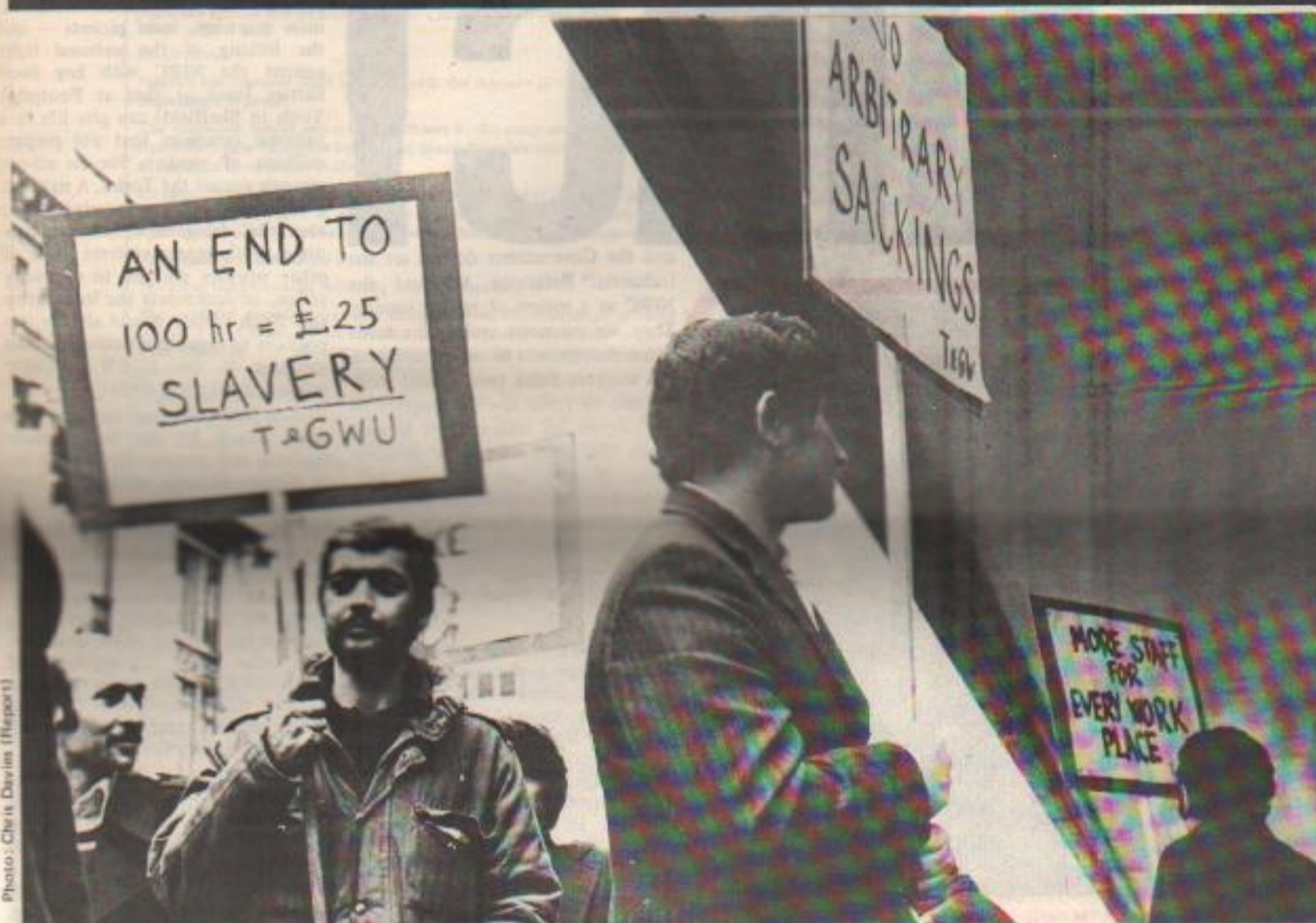


Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

Four hundred immigrant workers employed by the London Eating Houses chain returned to work on Wednesday after winning major concessions during their week-long strike.

The workers, mainly organised by the Turkish Workers Committee of the International Branch of the T&GWU, walked out on 24 October after three of their number were sacked. Although management immediately issued dismissal notices to all of them, and tried to bring in occasional labour, 60

Wimpy Bars, Texas Pancake Houses and Aberdeen Steak Houses belonging to the chain were severely affected by the strike.

Because of the effectiveness of the strike, management was soon forced to negotiate on the workers' demands: withdrawal of the dismissal notices on all the strikers; reinstatement of the three workers previously sacked; massive improvements in wages, hours and conditions; and full trade union rights.

At a marathon session on Tuesday, management were forced to give way on everything. Although the negotiations were conducted by a T&G official, the workers themselves elected two of their number to accompany him to make sure their interests were represented. Together they reported back to a mass meeting of the workers at 10 pm on Tuesday, who after four hours of thoroughgoing discussion voted to accept the terms negotiated.

## More setbacks for fascists

The National Front received a couple of nasty knocks in the North East of England on 25 October. A meeting of members and supporters organised in a Newcastle hotel for NF Chairman John ('Hitler fascist') Tyndall was swamped by local anti-fascists, resulting in the cancellation of the room by the hotel management. On the same day, Alderman Bill Owen, who had switched his label from the Progressive Party to the National Front, polled only 44 votes out of a total poll of 769 in a local by-election in the Biddick Hall ward of South Shields.

Like the rout of Martin Webster in Edinburgh, this was a step forward in the struggle to stop the NF from gaining an implantation in new areas, and it will be followed up by a demonstration against Enoch Powell's meeting in Durham University on 24 November. But vigilance is required in all such areas, for despite the defeat Webster suffered in Edinburgh he went on to carry through a series of meetings with Protestant sectarian leaders in the West of Scotland during the following week. This included a large meeting for members of the Orange Order

in Glasgow.

In the East End of London the racist policies of the *Newham Recorder* have provoked a picket to be held on Saturday 4 November. This follows an article published on 25 October, which tried to blame Asian immigrants for the shortage of places in local schools. The *Recorder* has consistently publicised the activities of the local National Front and Powellites, and has tried to make immigrants the scapegoat for shortages in housing, teachers and school accommodation.

In Hove the anti-National Front campaign around the by-election is well under way. On Saturday, 3 November, there will be a demonstration against an NF rally in Hove Town Hall. The aim of the demonstration is to expose the fascist nature of the National Front, and to make it clear that the NF is not an 'acceptable', or 'respectable' organisation. Furthermore the demonstration will draw attention to the fact that this racist organisation has been quite freely granted the use of Hove Town Hall for its reactionary propaganda.

A meeting called to initiate the campaign was marred by the action of the local Labour Party agent, who refused to support the campaign and persuaded the officers of the Trades Council to withhold their support. On hearing this the LPWS and the *Militant* group argued that nothing should be done, but that instead there must be a fight inside the Labour Party to expose those people who had tried to sabotage the anti-fascist campaign.

However other activists are determined to go ahead, since such demonstrations are necessary to alert the labour movement as a whole to the racist menace. And despite the action by the Hove Labour Party, Newham Trades Council, Brighton (Kemp Town) Labour Party, and Haringey Trades Council have pledged their support to the campaign.

The demonstration assembles at 12.30 pm on Saturday, 3 November at Brunswick Lawn, which is on the sea front just inside the Hove/Brighton boundary. For further information phone 0273 682791.

# Cooking up an imperialist peace

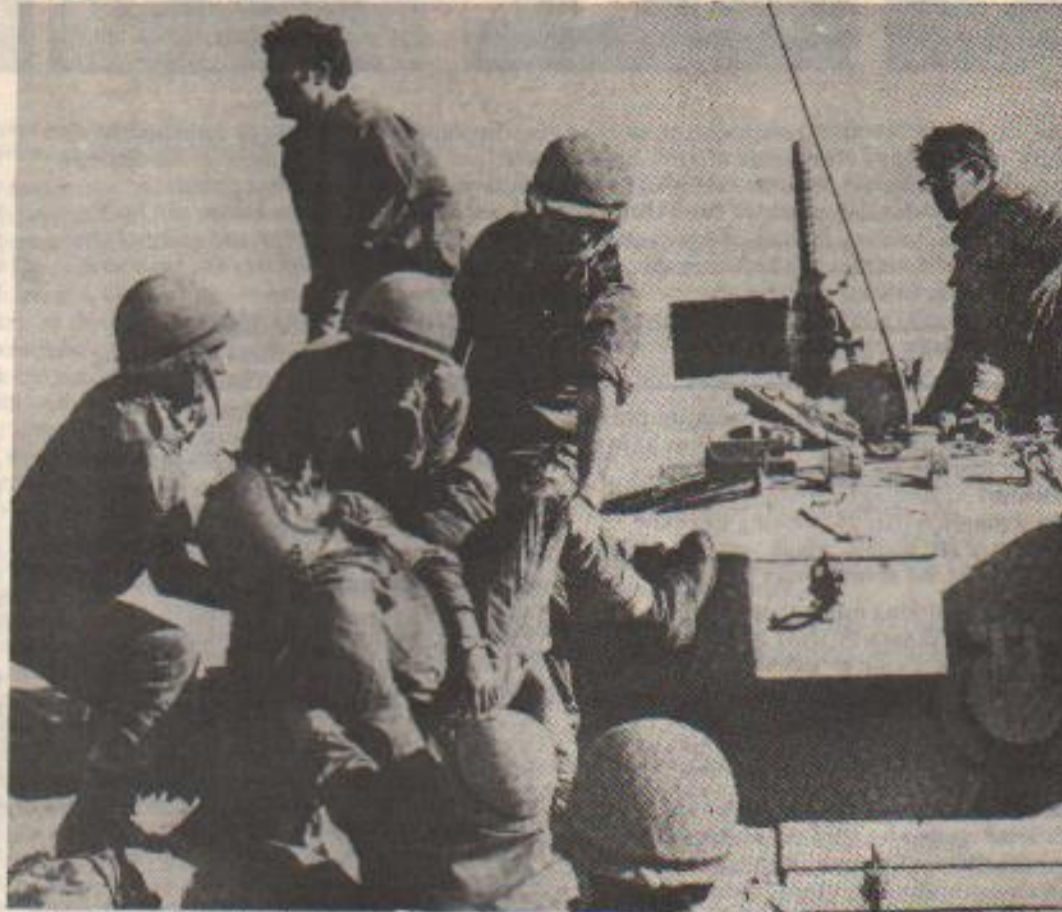
The statement by Egypt's foreign minister Zayyat that his country is ready to grant Israel 'formal recognition and everything demanded by the State of Israel before the 1967 war' should come as no surprise.

Egypt and Syria only launched the latest war in order to put pressure on US imperialism to force Israel to reach a 'negotiated solution', an imperialist peace which the Arab ruling classes could accept without losing face. The challenge was not to Zionism, but to its right to hold on to the territories occupied in 1967.

The terms announced for the ceasefire are not based to any extent on the military relationship of forces. The Soviet Union and the United States (who, despite the sabre-rattling, are as thick as thieves in preventing any revolutionary development in the Middle East) look quite favourably on Egyptian demands as long as they don't go beyond the terms of the Security Council resolution. To cut Israel down to size—since she categorically refused to hand back the occupied territories—it was only necessary for the Arab armies to show that they were capable of striking serious blows at Israel without being wiped out in the process.

## IMPERIALIST PEACE

The peace which is now being cooked up with the outright collusion of the Soviet bureaucracy—while the Chinese studiously refrain from using their veto—is an imperialist peace. The way is being prepared for a complete capitulation to Zionism by the Arab ruling classes. Thus the seal will be set on the woeful inadequacy of petit bourgeois nationalism. Three main points are likely to be dealt with in any forthcoming agreement: evacuation of the territories occupied by Israel in 1967, recognition by the Arab states of Israel's right to exist, and, finally, demilitarisation of most of the occupied territories. By demilitarisation



Israel was taken aback by number of casualties inflicted by Arab forces

is meant the direct military control of the Soviet Union and the United States. One conclusion logically follows: *the liquidation and repression of the Palestinian cause.*

This was of course the precise intention behind the Security Council resolution—to get rid of the 'trouble-makers' who are threatening the social order in the Middle East.

## HASTY INTERVENTION

The hasty intervention of the big powers and their go-betweens, Kosygin and Kissinger, no longer comes as any surprise. Neither side has any interest in a long drawn out war.

On the Arab side, a continued war effort could only increase the mobilisation and organisation

of the masses, a development of which the ruling classes are mortally afraid.

On the Israeli side, failure to achieve a clear-cut victory in such circumstances could have disastrous consequences, destroying the myth of Israeli invulnerability and opening the way for internal social struggles challenging the expansionist nature of the Zionist regime.

As a leading figure in the Jordanian regime put it to the French daily, *Le Monde*: 'A new defeat would poison the atmosphere still further, and would inflict a new and deep-going humiliation on the vanquished, who would seek—quite naturally—not peace but revenge, whether in a month, a year, or ten years' time.' (*Le Monde*, 20 October). The big powers stepped in to make absolutely sure that their plans for the area were not frustrated by a clear-cut defeat for either side in the conflict.

## MATZPEN STATEMENT

Last week we published a statement by our comrades in Israel, the Israeli Socialist Organisation (Matzpen-Marxist). Through an error a paragraph of this statement was omitted.

Immediately after the section concluding that 'our enemies are not the Arab masses who wish to recover the lands conquered by Israel and restore the rights of the Palestinians, but they are our own ruling classes and the Zionist State', should have followed:

'For us, the political struggle does not end when the firing opens up. On the contrary, our comrades must use the occasion of this war, both inside and outside the army, to expose the meaning of Zionism and the price which the workers of Israel are called upon to pay for the criminal policies of the Zionist State.'

# MINERS CHALLENGE PHASE 3

In the struggle against Phase 3, the group of workers which presents the biggest challenge to the Heath government is the miners.

It was the initiative taken by the miners in closing down the power stations in the 1972 strike which led to the humiliating defeat of the Government's 'unofficial' pay norm. Both the union leaders and the Government know that the future of Phase 3, and with it the short-term prospects for British capitalism, could well hang in the balance if the NUM were to go into struggle.

## OIL CUTS

The Government's fear of a miners strike has now been sharpened by the oil cuts imposed on the imperialist countries by the Arab states, which make worse a situation that has already been a cause for concern to the capitalists. Both Labour and Conservative politicians have recently been arguing for a slow down in the rate of pit closures as the price of imported oil continued to rise. On top of this, some 600 miners are estimated to be leaving the pits each week owing to low wages and dangerous working conditions.

The only remedy would be to pay miners much more money for their dangerous and unpleasant work, but Phase 3 rules out this particular solution. With the Arab oil cuts, however, the threat of oil rationing this winter will turn the unscratchable itch of the ruling class to capitulate to the miners' claim, into a sharp but incurable pain.

The miners have never before been in such a strong bargaining position, and it would be difficult under the best of circumstances for Heath to meet their demands.

But Heath's room for manoeuvre is restricted by the Phase 3 norms, and only the 'unsocial hours' clause in the Pay Code gives the Government any leeway at all.

For those miners on permanent night shift,

this clause could yield total rises of up to £9 a week, including the Phase 3 rise in basic rates. But the number of men who would receive the full benefit of this clause is reckoned to be no more than 15,000. The great majority of miners stand to gain little more than £2.50 under Phase 3, which, furthermore, cannot be paid until next March. According to the NUM this is in violation of the Wilberforce deal which promised a rise this November.

But the NUM claim is for £12.71 for underground workers, £9.71 for surface workers, and £8.21 for those on the power-loading agreement. So the Government's attempt to buy off a section of miners in advance through 'unsocial hours' payments and thus weaken the unity of miners is unlikely to succeed. The most it will do is buy time, as the NUM negotiates with the National Coal Board to get unsocial hours payments spread over other miners.

## OVERTIME BAN

Last week, a delegate conference of miners gave the EC authorisation to call an overtime ban. Such a ban would be aimed at running down the coal stocks held by the power stations, in preparation for a strike in the new year. This year, the safety men will also join in, making the cut in output even more effective. Each of the 20 area councils are now voting on whether to apply an overtime ban, but so far the Executive has avoided saying whether such a ban would be implemented before Christmas, even though it is absolutely essential preparation for an all-out struggle.

The leaders of the NUM are obviously frightened of having to lead another miners' strike. Joe Gormley made this clear when he warned that a strike might enable the Tories to win the next General Election, presumably by once again wheeling out the freezing pensioner and the dying hospital patient to prove the 'irresponsibility' of the trade unions and boost the Tories' electoral fortunes through a union-

bashing binge.

Gormley did not suggest any ways in which the miners might forestall this threat: for example, by massive propaganda to win sympathy for their struggle, by ensuring a rapid victory through coordinating their claim with other workers such as the engineers or electricity workers, or by pressing the TUC to draw up a plan of action to fight for pensioners' claims. Gormley was simply interested in trying to frighten the miners off the prospect of a serious struggle.

In fact a massive victory by the miners would leave the Tories' policies in shreds and raise



Mass picket at Sattley last year

the self-confidence of the working class to new heights: it would be a major step towards driving the Tories out of office and *keeping them out.*

## PREPARATIONS

Several pits in the Durham area have already decided to go ahead with an overtime ban irrespective of the EC. This initiative should be followed by other areas so as to reduce the chances of the EC putting off any action until the new year. But this is not the only danger in the situation. The EC have been stressing recently how the oil crisis proves that the miners are exceptionally valuable to the 'national economy'. There is more than a hint in this that the EC will see an overtime ban, not as preparation for a strike, but as a substitute. As the overtime ban begins to bite, the NUM leaders will argue that this is sufficient to pressure the Government, beleaguered by an energy crisis, into granting substantial concessions. Vague offers and promises could then be turned into an excuse for discussions and negotiations that would drag on until the spring, when an all-

out stoppage would be much less of a threat to the Government.

But it would be a mistake to think that the 1972 strike can be repeated in every single respect in 1974. Last time, the Government under-estimated the threat posed by the pickets to the power stations until it was too late. This year they will be prepared to intervene before things reach that stage.

All the rank and file initiative displayed in 1972 will be needed to win again. But the rank and file should not wait until a strike breaks out before making preparations. The flying pickets should be planned and prepared in advance.

Groups of workers who gave support in 1972, such as the railway workers who cut off supplies to oil-fired power stations, and dockers who blacked coal imports, should be approached straight away to line up support.

The miners can deal with this situation only by using all the resources at their disposal, and this must include joint action with other groups of workers who are facing the prospect of a struggle in the new year. Rank and file miners should seek to forge links with groups such as the engineers, with a view to co-ordinating their struggles as closely as possible. For example, area councils of the NUM and district committees of the AUEW should hold joint meetings, and these or other bodies should sponsor joint conferences, with a view to coordinating actions and fighting within their respective unions for strike action to be taken at the same time, with no one group settling without the other and with all negotiations subject to mass meetings of all those involved.

# CHILE AND THE

The bloody, counter-revolutionary upheaval which recently descended upon the Chilean workers and peasants brought to an end an experience of great historic importance for the world working class movement. For Chile represented a concrete, practical test of *one* strategy for the transition from capitalism to socialism.

This strategy claims to map out a road to socialism which can by-pass large-scale violent struggle through the skilful use of the existing institutions of the capitalist state, to elect a socialist government which will gradually undermine the power of the capitalist ruling class.

This is the strategy put forward by the Communist Parties, and the left-wing of the social democratic parties, throughout the world. It is, for example, clearly the plan which underpins the recently forged 'Union of the Left' in France, and is the basic idea behind the British Communist Party's 'British Road to Socialism.'

Chile now gives us a full-blown test of this strategy in action. While advocates of the 'parliamentary road' have been in business for a long time, in Chile they achieved unparalleled success in their own terms: they managed to accomplish their central objective — the formation of a government — and held this position for almost three years.

Of course, the Popular Unity Government did have to contend with many unfavourable circumstances. But the power of the capitalist class is not just an idea from a Marxist textbook — it is part of the harsh fabric of reality. The only serious testing ground for revolutionary strategy is the real world of the class struggle. That world is bound to be full of 'unfavourable circumstances.' Indeed, what is the purpose of a strategy in the first place if it is not to minimize the weaknesses of the revolutionary forces and maximise their strengths in order to defeat the ruling class, *despite* 'unfavourable circumstances'?

In looking at the ways in which the British Left has discussed the lessons of Chile, we are not merely examining their powers of historical judgement — we are getting a foretaste of how the various sections of the Left would fare in a 'Chile' situation, of their ability to face up to the tasks with which a revolutionary situation in Britain would confront us all.

## COMMUNIST PARTY

It should come as no surprise that the Communist Party of Great Britain has found in the Chilean events nothing to contradict the theory of the 'parliamentary road.' That theory has been the official basis of Party activity for over twenty years. To express doubts about the strategy of the parliamentary road now would raise awkward questions about much of the history of the CPGB and the entire international Communist movement.

The CPGB, then, defends the political course of the Popular Unity Government, and in particular of its sister party, the Chilean Communist Party which, more than any other Popular Unity partner, can claim to be the architect of the 'Chilean Road.' For them the disaster was an unavoidable product of the 'unfavourable balance of class forces' — i.e. the hostility of the Chilean middle classes to Popular Unity.

The only way out of this dead-end was for Popular Unity to win over greater numbers from the middle class. In the words of Jack Woddis, head of the CP's international department (*Morning Star*, 22 September):

'... the central political aim of the forces of Popular Unity was to drive forward the implementation of its programme, step by step, in order to weaken the economic and political positions of the big capitalists and landowners and detach from their side a substantial section of the peasants, urban petty-bourgeoisie (shop keepers, lorry-owners, small manufacturers, etc.) professional people and technicians, and women, and even some sections of workers who in Chile have usually voted Christian Democrat or Nationalist ... If Popular Unity had been able to gain more time, then there would have been the possibility of winning a decisive majority of the people and this would have had its impact on the armed forces too.'

The abysmal bankruptcy of those who put forward this kind of argument is clearly exposed in one simple fact — they are totally unable to propose any possible way out of the dilemma in which Popular Unity found itself. All they can do is mumble 'if Popular Unity had been able to gain more time ...'

But *how* could Popular Unity have gained this time? Do our advocates of the 'parliamentary

road' expect the forces of reaction to behave 'fairly' and give the Left chances to carry out its programme? In fact, the three years which Popular Unity was able to snatch from the hands of a crisis ridden capitalism was a more generous allotment than the Left should count upon having in future.

## TIME FOR WHAT?

What if Popular Unity had been miraculously granted more time? What would it then have done to forestall the counter-revolutionary offensive? According to Woddis it would have been a simple matter of 'winning a decisive majority of the people' which 'would have had its impact on the armed forces too.'

But there is nothing magic about winning a majority — it cannot by itself disarm the forces of counter-revolution or guarantee the success of the revolutionary forces. In fact, the Popular Unity coalition did succeed in getting a majority of votes in the municipal elections held six months after it came into Government.

This, of course, did nothing to solve the problems created by the hold of reactionaries over the Chilean Congress. But Popular Unity had always realised that the Chilean political set-up would be an obstacle to the carrying out of their programme, even if it had majority support. They had therefore planned to hold a popular referendum to introduce a radically new constitution which would overcome this obstacle. They hesitated to take this step after their victory in the municipal elections not so much from fear of losing the vote as from fear of *winning*: because a step like this could have unified the reactionary camp and threatened an immediate military coup.

Similar problems faced them with regard to the army. A solid majority behind Popular Unity would only have had its impact on the army too' if it had been used to 'back up a campaign within the ranks of the army against reactionary political ideas, and if the power of the counter-revolutionary Generals were broken. But it was precisely this the Government refused to do, again for fear of alienating the military and provoking a coup. As Chilean Communist Senator Volodia Teitelboim stated (*Morning Star*, 15 October): 'After the failure of the attempted coup of June 29, 1973, there began the arrest and punishment in Chile's navy of sailors and petty officers who were opposed to the coup.' In other words, the Government sat by and let its supporters in the navy be punished for the 'crime' of supporting the Government!

An electoral majority is only useful as a weapon to back up the correct policies; with the wrong policies such a majority is just another set of figures.

## BALANCE OF CLASS FORCES

The 'balance of class forces' cannot be reduced to a numbers game. What is referred to is the relative *political strength* of the two main social classes — the working class and the bourgeoisie (capitalist class).

The ultimate source of the power of the bourgeoisie is its hold over the state (especially the repressive machinery — army, police and courts), its economic position (owner of capital, possessor of 'business secrets': information necessary for the running of the economy) and the influence of pro-capitalist ideas over other sections of the population. The power of the working class derives from its decisive position in the economy (the supplier of labour power), its capacity for organisation and united action, and its ability to put forward a practical, alternative model for the running of society to that represented by the bourgeoisie and their spokesmen.

In the course of the class struggle each class will use its own weapons. The bourgeoisie will use its control of the economy either in a spontaneous fashion (withholding of investment for 'lack of confidence') or an organised way (deliberate economic sabotage), it will carry out systematic propaganda appealing to 'the law,' 'established institutions,' 'national traditions,' etc., and will ultimately rely upon the forces of the state machine to defend its interests. The working class will adopt strikes and mass demonstrations as its main instruments of struggle.

The 'balance of class forces' will be determined

by the ability of each class to maximise its own positions of strength and weaken the strategic positions of its enemy. For example, a successful lock-out by the bosses will both undermine the organisation and unity of the working class and consolidate the economic power of the bourgeoisie.

A successful factory occupation has the opposite effect: it strengthens the working class on its own terrain and undermines the economic power of the bourgeoisie. Yet Popular Unity in power opposed mass factory occupations as 'ultra-left,' claiming that they would alienate middle class support.

But a Government determined to influence the 'balance of class forces' would not set its sights upon a few extra votes, but upon measures that would contribute decisively to organising the camp of the working class and disorganising the camp of the bourgeoisie. From this standpoint a wave of factory occupations would be a major step forward. Indeed, the most powerful means of influencing the 'balance of class forces' is to encourage and push forward every anti-capitalist initiative that comes from the masses: factory occupations, land seizures, requisitioning of essential supplies.

## WORKERS' GOVERNMENT

The role of a Government that really represents the interests of the working class is not to obstruct mass initiatives, but to coordinate them and provide them with the stamp of Government authority. For example, a wave of factory occupations could be organised into a national system of workers' control of production, with elected workers' committees scrutinising the production process, breaking the capitalists' monopoly of 'business secrets,' ensuring that Government planning requirements are met, and preventing economic sabotage. Coupled with direct state control (nationalisation) of the 'commanding heights' of the economy this would shatter the economic power of the ruling class — and thus tip the 'balance of class forces' decisively in favour of the working class.

Similarly, local committees that spring up to deal with prices and shortages of essential goods

could be extended into a national system of workers' control of distribution. Indeed, in the wake of widespread economic sabotage by the bourgeoisie the Popular Unity Government set up popular supply committees (the JAPs) to ensure the distribution of essential goods. However these bodies had very limited power to act on their own initiative, and their activities were systematically obstructed by the army, acting in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

As the class struggle develops, the ruling class will turn increasingly to the forces of the state for support. Popular initiatives and bodies which are dependent upon the capitalist state are doomed. There must be created a popular authority to carry out anti-capitalist measures, and this authority must have the means necessary to defeat harassment by state forces — i.e. it must have its own armed forces. For this reason the question of an armed workers' militia is central to the 'balance of class forces.'

This is the essence of the 'armed road' — not a technicolour spectacle of workers seizing guns and staging a shoot-out with the ruling class, but the existence of an armed popular power to prevent the mass struggle from being at the mercy of armed capitalist power. The 'peaceful rousers' always make a token acknowledgement of the possibility that the ruling class will put up armed resistance, but they *systematically* refuse to prepare for this eventuality. The 'armed road' is not of necessity a 'violent road,' any more than the 'unarmed road' has turned out to be a 'peaceful road.'

What is also clear is the necessity to create local bodies of popular authority to direct the mass struggle, control the workers' militia, and prevent the state from carrying out its counter-revolutionary job. Such bodies are expressions of an important asset of the working class — its capacity for organisation — and spring up spontaneously in the course of the class struggle.

In Chile, these took the form of *cordons* (local workers' action committees) and 'communal command centres' (which linked the *cordons* with popular committees in the workers' residential districts). Given full backing from the political forces of the Left and the Government, such bodies could have

Part of the IMG contingent on the demonstration against the military coup passes the Chilean Embassy



# BRITISH LEFT

rapidly developed into a national system of popular authority with deep roots in the struggle of the masses — into soviets.

## MIDDLE CLASS

The advocates of the 'parliamentary road' lay great stress on the need to win support from the middle class. And they are correct in this: the middle class represents the principal mass base for the bourgeoisie, and is the main source of personnel for staffing the various agencies of the capitalist state. To split the middle class — winning over a section to the workers' camp, neutralising others, and leaving only a small fraction allied with the bourgeoisie — is an important objective of revolutionary strategy.

But the 'peaceful road' theorists repeat the old mistake of thinking that this can be done by being kind to the middle class, by being very 'moderate,' and showing a willingness to compromise with the capitalist order. The error of this idea has been pointed out long ago. Writing about France in 1935, Leon Trotsky had this to say:

Parliamentary cretins who consider themselves connoisseurs of the people like to repeat: "One must not frighten the middle classes with revolution. They do not like extremes." ... Naturally the petty proprietor prefers order so long as business is going well and so long as he hopes that tomorrow it will go better. But when this hope is lost, he is easily enraged and is ready to give himself over to the most extreme measures. Otherwise, how could he have overthrown the democratic state and brought Fascism to power in Italy and Germany?

... But the petty bourgeoisie can also find a leader in the proletariat ... To bring the petty bourgeoisie to its side, the proletariat must win its confidence. And for that it must have confidence in its own strength.

"It must have a clear programme of action and must be ready to struggle for power by all possible means. Tempered by its revolutionary party for a decisive and pitiless struggle, the proletariat says to the peasants and petty bourgeoisie of the cities: "We are struggling for power. Here is our programme. We are ready to discuss with you changes in this programme. We will employ violence only against big capital and its lackeys, but with you toilers we desire to conclude an alliance on the basis of a given programme." The peasants will understand such language. Only, they must have faith in the capacity of the proletariat to seize power ... It is necessary to understand the

situation and to place oneself seriously on the revolutionary road." (*Whither France?*)

The determined measures necessary to organise the power of the working class and undermine the power of the bourgeoisie, far from 'alienating' the middle class, are the only way to win them over. A Government resting firmly upon a working class growing daily in strength and self-confidence, taking sweeping measures to solve the economic and social crisis of capitalism, would exercise a magnetic attraction over the most numerous layers of the middle class. But what did they actually see in Chile? A Government paralysed by indecision: warning of the danger of a military coup, calling on the military to maintain a 'professional', non-political stance, and then inviting the very same military into the political arena by offering them cabinet posts; denouncing the manoeuvres of imperialist high finance, but then continuing to make payments on international loans incurred by previous Governments, eating up foreign reserves, cutting off many imports, and contributing to some of the worst inflation in Chile's history; noting the hostility of American imperialism, but then allowing the Chilean military to continue receiving aid and training at the hands of that same imperialism.

## REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

At every stage in the development of the Chilean struggle the Popular Unity coalition was presented with the alternative: rely upon the struggle and organisation of the masses and deal with the crisis through anti-capitalist measures, or rely upon the bourgeois state and hold back the mass struggle in order to compromise with the ruling class and its agents.

These same choices will face the British Left as the crisis of capitalism deepens in this country. They can be seen in a preliminary form in the struggles of today: at every stage the advocates of the 'peaceful road' in this country call on workers to look to the bureaucratic heads of the workers' movement for leadership. The International Marxist Group, on the other hand, while not opposing moves to force the bureaucrats into action, has systematically put forward proposals for extending the organisation of those in struggle, so that they will be able to lead that struggle themselves.

Photo: Chris Davies (Report)



In a recent exchange in the paper of the International Socialists, *Socialist Worker*, Communist Party member Bob Rowthorn quotes sections from the 'British Road to Socialism' to show that the CP is aware of the need to take strenuous measures against the military and the capitalist state machine. But Chile shows us quite clearly that the behaviour of those who take the 'parliamentary road' is not determined by the words they write in their programmes in times of relative peace, but by the unavoidable logic of the situation which they create in time of crisis by relying upon the capitalist state and failing to create an alternative source of power through the promotion and organisation of mass struggle independent from the capitalist state and the working class bureaucracies.

The record of Chile speaks far louder than the words of a Party programme: the 'parliamentary road' is the road to compromise, political paralysis and defeat. The only viable revolutionary strategy is that which places the struggle of the working class and its allies at the very centre, consciously strives to extend, unify and organise such struggles, and sees in the organisations which grow directly out of the struggle of the masses the sole source of the power necessary to destroy capitalist rule.

A revolutionary strategy must work towards the creation of a situation of 'dual power' — a situation in which the working class and its allies are organised to the point that in every sphere of social life organs of mass struggle exist alongside the organisations of the ruling class, challenging their right to rule. Such a network of organisations — a network of soviets — would be the basis for a revolutionary workers' government to carry through all the measures necessary to break the power of the capitalist class on all fronts and establish workers' power. This was the road which Popular Unity did not take in Chile — but it was the only road to victory.

## REVOLUTIONARY LEFT

So far we have concentrated our attention on the advocates of the 'parliamentary road'. But what have the revolutionary left had to say about the lessons of Chile?

The most important organisations of the revolutionary left — the Socialist Labour League and the International Socialists — have always been scathing critics of those who seek to focus socialist strategy on parliamentary and electoral activity, so they have found little difficulty in making generally correct criticisms of the Popular Unity coalition. In particular, they have pointed out very forcefully that Chile confirms the basic Marxist teachings on the need for the working class to destroy the capitalist state machine.

However effective revolutionary criticism must go beyond general points of this sort: it must be able to show how such generalities can indicate an alternative way forward, to demonstrate that there is a *revolutionary road* to workers' power.

In this respect the record of the revolutionary left is not impressive — neither the SLL nor the IS have shown any capacity to come to grips with the problem of a revolutionary strategy for the Chilean situation.

Because of this failing the criticisms of groups like the IS and the SLL have been doubly barren: on the one hand they allow the defenders of the peaceful road to retain the initiative by not taking up the central problems facing the Chilean working class and, on the other, they produce no *concrete* lessons for revolutionaries in Britain.

The reason for this failure is not difficult to locate. As we have already argued, the *only* alternative way forward for the Chilean working class movement was the road of 'dual power' — ie the forging of an alternative, embryonic state power out of the organs of struggle created by the activity of the masses, on which the authority of a genuine workers' government could be based. But this conception finds no place in the political thought or practice of either the Socialist Labour League or the International Socialists.

## SOCIALIST LABOUR LEAGUE

For the SLL all problems are reducible to the crisis of leadership'. So, like a quack doctor,

they have a universal remedy for every ill: 'build the revolutionary party'.

Of course, the creation of a revolutionary party is essential if the power of the capitalist class is to be overturned. But the recognition of this fact only allows us to correctly pose the central questions: How is this party to be built? Once built, how is this party to 'conquer the masses' — how will it become 'the leadership'? And once it assumes a position of leadership precisely what will it lead the masses to do? On these key questions the SLL has almost nothing to say.

The SLL has an essentially bureaucratic conception of revolutionary leadership and of the new revolutionary party. For them revolutionary leadership is the TUC General Council flying the red flag and quoting Trotsky: just another version of the present set-up, only with a different set of orders being issued — 'destroy the state' instead of 'trust the state', etc.

What they fail to understand is that revolutionary leadership can only exist in a totally different context from the present, reformist leadership: revolutionary leadership presupposes the mobilisation and organisation of the masses independent from the state and the bureaucracy. The revolutionary party can only be built in the process of promoting such mobilisation and organisation, and revolutionaries can only win the leadership of the masses on such a basis.

## INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISTS

The International Socialists are practitioners of a similar political quackery. Recently they too have become devotees of 'building the party.'

But beneath this similarity of phrase, they hold a very different conception from that of the SLL. For them the party (with the addition of its front-type 'rank-and-file' bodies) is the organisation within which the masses will be gathered to coordinate their struggles and press their independent demands.

This idea is twice confused. On the one hand it fails to understand that a real independent mobilisation of the masses cannot organise itself securely through the medium of a political party or parties (which of necessity will only draw in the most politically aware), but requires the creation of organs of genuine proletarian democracy — bodies that encompass the entire class, from the most advanced to the most backward, and draw in other anti-capitalist social groups.

At the same time, this idea produces misguided attempts to turn a revolutionary organisation into an organisation of the masses through the frenetic recruitment of anyone who doesn't protest too much. This creates an organisation without a clear political foundation, without a politically educated and disciplined membership, and incapable of operating in a manner that is both democratic and at the same time centralised. Such an organisation will be unable to carry out the essential tasks of a revolutionary party: centralised intervention into the mass organs of proletarian democracy to win the leadership of the struggle and guide it along a correct strategic course towards the seizure of state power.

The IS's politics blind them to the real tasks facing revolutionaries with regard to the organisation of the masses — the development in the struggles of today of experiences of independent organisation which will prepare for the development of 'dual power' in future upheavals. At the same time these politics create an organisation that is incapable of providing genuine revolutionary leadership in the mass struggle.

It is no idle boast to say that the International Marxist Group has been almost alone among organisations on the left in being able to come to grips with the lessons of Chile. That ability is no accident: it is a product of our correct understanding of the direction in which a revolutionary strategy for the class struggle in Britain must be sought, and our firm roots within the international class struggle, as the British section of the Fourth International.

For those same reasons we are aware of the tremendous practical importance of building active solidarity with the Chilean struggle among British workers. Such activity is essential to convince the working class of the international character of their strength and allow them to learn from the heroic sacrifices of their class brothers and sisters in Chile — to prepare them for their part in the world-wide struggle for socialism.

Chris Balfour

# PROVOS: 'WE WILL FORCE THE BRITISH OUT'

Behind the pillared facade of Stormont Castle the Northern Ireland Assembly drones on, locked in debate over whether or not a mace and prayers for the Queen should grace its uncertain future.

Meanwhile, outside in the streets of the cities, and on the border roads, the fate of the Assembly, and of the State itself, is being contested by mass civil resistance and bodies of armed men and women.

The seemingly futile arguments which have occupied the Assembly's time fulfil an important function. For more than a year and a half Whitelaw has spun out the implementation of his White Paper proposals, making haste slowly, relying on continued political uncertainty to demobilise opposition.

The success of this tactic can be seen in the comparison between the voting in the Assembly elections, and in the local government elections. The massive swing to the SDLP in the Assembly elections was a reaction against the fact that in the local government elections Catholic abstentions, and votes for Republican Clubs and other Catholic candidates, split the vote, and in many areas prevented the SDLP from winning council seats. This was a throw-back to the old voting pattern of the minority in the Assembly elections; they voted for the Catholic candidate with the best chance, i.e. in most cases, the SDLP.

## PROTESTANT OPPOSITION

On the Unionist side the position is even more ambiguous. Brian Faulkner did not fight the election on the basis of sharing an executive with the SDLP, and he most certainly did not fight on the basis of the Unionist Party being a minority in the Executive. He is being coaxed and kicked into that position by the British Government, and given the choice between shared power or no power at all, he will accept this fate. But he revealed his true feelings at the Tory Party Conference when he attempted to appeal, over the heads of Whitelaw and Heath, for a majority in the Executive.

Faulkner's only advantage is that the fragmentation of the Unionist Party has gone so far that no credible portion of it is capable of rallying the small businessmen and working class protestants who oppose power sharing and dilution of the protestant ascendancy. Thus although the Faulkner Unionists probably do not have as much grass-roots support as the combined forces of the anti-White Paper Unionists, the Vanguard and the Democratic Unionists, Faulkner has been able to stitch together enough Assemblymen to go into the Executive.

The relative success of the British Government in the Assembly has tended to obscure another more profound problem — the reform of the state apparatus. It was this which brought the O'Neill reforms to grief, for no matter how radically a Unionist Prime Minister might depart from Unionist tradition the state machine remained sectarian.

## STATE SECTARIANISM

The SDLP recently walked out of a meeting with one of Whitelaw's aides, Mr. Van Straubenzee, after failing to get any satisfaction over the continuing discrimination against the minority. The dossier they presented outlined a number of cases in which RUC chief constables have refused to issue certificates enabling catholic small businesses to obtain compensation for damage caused by the actions of Protestant extremist organisations. An important part of the SDLP's base of support is being alienated from the state institutions by this highly discriminatory practice.

The dossier also highlighted cases of discrimination by the courts. A Mr. John Brooker of the UDA, who admitted to illegal possession of 650 rounds of ammunition, was given a suspen-



Ruairi O Bradaigh speaking at the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis

ded sentence, while IRA members are being sentenced to up to ten years for possession of smaller quantities.

This sectarianism in the state apparatus is the submerged reef against which British government initiatives have always foundered. It is the source of the continuing anger and resistance of the minority.

## PROVISIONALS' STRATEGY

The fate of the Northern Irish state, therefore, is still undecided. Either the Executive will be set up, and will gradually enforce its authority, eventually achieving a stabilisation, or the White Paper strategy will be swept away, opening a new phase in the struggle.

A great deal hinges on the actions of the Provisional Republicans over the next few months. If they are defeated no other force will be capable of stepping into the breach and maintaining the impetus of the mass resistance. It is therefore necessary to examine their strategy carefully.

That strategy was spelled out to the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis on 21 October, in a statement read by Daithi O Conaill:

'We shall never see a new Ireland until the British make a commitment to leave our land. That is the major objective of the Republican Movement now. There are those who say it cannot be achieved; but these were the very people who said Stormont could not be abolished. It was abolished. We destroyed it and we shall go on to secure a British withdrawal.'

In *Red Weekly* 20 we pointed out that the Heath/Cosgrave negotiations indicated that the British government is committed to a withdrawal, and is now seeking to set up the structures through which they can continue to control Ireland after they leave. This does not mean that the Provisionals' objective is compatible with that of the British Government; the Provos' aim is to force a withdrawal before the British have created the pre-requisites for maintaining their control. In the Provos' view a British withdrawal would, under these circumstances, open a struggle to replace the existing state structures with the 'New Ireland' outlined in their programme *Eire Nua*.

## CLEAR OBJECTIVE

Just as the overthrow of Stormont provided a

focus for the mass struggle after internment, a British withdrawal is a clear central objective which could open the way to a further development of the Irish revolution. However, there are a number of dangerously wrong political ideas underlying the Provisionals' strategy.

They call for the British Government to 'commit' itself to a 'phased and orderly withdrawal.' This is inadequate on two counts. First it creates the illusion that the British can be forced once more into negotiations, in the course of which they would relinquish their grip on Ireland. Second, it suggests that the struggle for a British withdrawal can be successful if it limits itself to that objective. It is in fact far more likely that the struggle for a British withdrawal will spill over into a more general confrontation with both the Northern and Southern states, before the British are forced to move in the direction of a withdrawal.

Whitelaw means it when he says that he will not talk to the Provisionals again. British Imperialism will not make the concessions to them that it made to Jomo Kenyatta, or the French made to Ben Bella in Algeria. The Provisionals do not contain the elements of a national bourgeoisie who could be relied upon to maintain a neo-colonial relationship between Ireland and Britain following a British withdrawal.

The Irish national bourgeoisie is alive and well, and in power in Dublin. Sooner or later Britain means to hand over control of the North to them, depending on their success with the Executive and the Council of Ireland. The Provisionals must therefore defeat the 26 county bourgeoisie as well as British Imperialism.

## WAR OF ATTRITION

Both the Provisionals and the British Government are engaged in a war of attrition, but the key to victory is not just who can fight longest, but who can consolidate a solid base of popular political support before a resolution of the military conflict.

The British are relying on a power-sharing Executive, piece-meal reforms, and an alliance with the Southern bourgeoisie. The Provisionals

are relying almost entirely on a military campaign. Since the fall of the Free Areas the mass civil resistance in the North has not maintained its impetus and, more seriously, the political resistance in the South has been totally ineffective.

This lag in the mass political struggle reveals most clearly the political inadequacies of the Provisionals. Their programme *Eire Nua* provides no perspectives for mass mobilisation; it is not a programme for immediate political action, but a utopian and unrealistic programme for the transformation of Ireland after the defeat of the British.

The only way to overcome this gap between the military and political aspects of the Irish revolution is to open up struggles around demands which meet the immediate concern of the masses, North and South, but which have the potential to draw new forces into the struggle, and lead to a sharper and more fundamental confrontation with British Imperialism and its Irish collaborators. This, however, requires a programme which, unlike *Eire Nua*, makes a real break with the class interests which have kept Ireland partitioned for fifty years.

## MERGE THE STRUGGLES

In the North such demands will focus on internment — and British Army repression. The pre-emptive demand of the SDLP at the time of the second anniversary of internment, that the mass demonstrations should cease, indicates its awareness that the position of the SDLP depends upon its ability to pose as the mediator between the British Government and the minority. If the masses in the ghettos act for themselves the SDLP will relapse into irrelevance.

In the South the struggle must focus on increasing state repression, with the struggle against extradition as its sharpest edge. As the experience in Britain has shown, state repression rapidly becomes generalised.

There is currently an upsurge of industrial conflict in the South. It is possible to link this up with opposition to repression against Republicans, and solidarity with the Northern struggle. In this way it will be possible to merge the struggle at the point of production with the political struggle against the Dublin Government and British imperialism. It is particularly important to take up these questions within the Southern industrial working class at this time, since the participation of the Labour Party in the Coalition Government closes it as a channel of working class political action, and it is possible to weaken the coalition by eroding the Labour Party's base of support.

Unless the Provisionals meet the challenge of effective political action, they will find themselves on the road to nowhere, having failed to win the victory over British imperialism which they now believe is theirs for the taking.

BOB PURDIE

## WHAT'S ON

**CAMBRIDGE IMG PUBLIC MEETING:** Gerry Lawless speaks on 'The fight against British rule in Ireland,' at 8.00 p.m. on Monday 5 November in the Red Cow pub (behind Guildhall).

**IMG RED FORUM:** Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Every Tuesday at 8.00 p.m. in the General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (5 mins. Kings X tube). Tuesday 6 November: special meeting on Chile, speaker Tariq Ali.

**NEWCASTLE RED FORUMS:** Wednesday 7 November — Hilary Waitwright on 'The role of the family in capitalist society'; Wednesday 21 November — Norman O'Neill on 'Revolutionary politics in the trade unions.' Both at 8.15 p.m. in the Bridge Hotel.

**COVENTRY IMG:** Discussion meeting on 'The fight against Phase 3,' speaker Brian Heron. Wednesday 7 November, 7.30 p.m. in Hertford Tavern 1011 Queens Road.

**MANCHESTER RED CIRCLE:** Every Thursday at 'The Ancoats,' Great Ancoats Street. Thursday 8 November: Will Ross on 'The Irish Struggle.'

**CHILE — LIVERPOOL DEMONSTRATION:** Saturday 3 November, assemble 11 a.m. at Islington Square. March to meeting at noon at Pier Head. Speakers: Chilean representative, Eric Hoffer MP, Cllr. Howell James (Liverpool Labour Party), Eddie Loyden (Liverpool Trades Council), Roger O'Hara (Merseyside CP), Brian Anderson (ALDWI), Mick Daniels (Merseyside Anti-Fascist Committee). Organised by Merseyside Committee for Solidarity with Chile.

## Fourth Conference of Radical Scholars of Soviet and East European Studies

Union Concert Hall, Imperial College, Prince Consort Rd., SW7 (S. Kensington tube)

Saturday 10 November Theme: The Law of Value  
11.00 am Maurice Godelier — 'Some Primitive Societies: Brief Remarks'  
2.30 pm Paul Walton & Andrew Gamble — 'The Law of Value and the State'  
7.30 pm Hilis Tiekka — 'The Law of Value in the USSR'

Sunday 11 November  
11.00 am Jean Kavanova — 'Opposition in Czechoslovakia'  
2.30 pm 'China after the Cultural Revolution' (symposium)

Registration at door: £1.50 (students £1)

# SPANISH LEFT UNDER ATTACK



Marcelino Camacho, one of the Carabanchel 10

The last week has seen further moves by the Carrero Blanco government to step up the repression in Spain. Last Saturday it was reported that six leading members of the Revolutionary Communist League (a sympathising organisation of the Fourth International) had been arrested, while at the same time the regime was claiming to have smashed the Communist Party in the southern province of Andalusia. On Sunday a further 100 people suspected of attending a Catalan separatist meeting in Barcelona were also taken into custody.

This repression forms the basis of the government's policy, since the depth of the economic crisis prevents it from making the slightest concessions to the demands of the working class. Central to this policy is the case of the 'Carabanchel 10,' leaders of the Workers' Commissions (illegal trade union bodies) who have now been held for many months. The prosecution at their trial is expected to demand sentences totalling 162 years in prison.

The left in Spain has been mobilising around this issue for some time. As a recent statement signed jointly by the Revolutionary Communist League and ETA (VI) [the Marxist wing of the Basque liberation movement] points out, 'the trial is intended to make an example of the Carabanchel 10 in the repression against the Workers' Commissions, and as such constitutes a threat to the entire mass movement.' Below we print extracts from this statement outlining the perspectives for the campaign put forward by the RCL and ETA (VI).

'Only a powerful mobilisation throughout the country, with the support of the international working class, can drag the Carabanchel 10 from the claws of the dictatorship, and thus open the way for a further advance of the mass movement towards the overthrow of the Franco dictatorship.

'Strikes, mass meetings and demonstrations outside factory gates and colleges, mass flying pickets moving from one factory to the next, massive street demonstrations - these are the forms of struggle we must adopt ...

'Every struggle, strike, meeting or demonstration must be protected by defensive pickets made up of the militants who have shown themselves the most determined in struggle ... the organisation beforehand of large picket squads, well armed with clubs, iron bars, etc., will enable us to defend our public demonstrations and allow them to take over the streets during the trial in defiance of the repressive apparatus.

'The greatest possible co-ordination and unity in action of all working class and revolutionary forces is essential to achieve victory. The Workers' Commissions must be at the head of the struggle in defence of their leaders, which requires the unity in struggle of all the existing Workers' Commissions without any exclusions for sectarian reasons. This activity must be co-ordinated with that of all the workers' parties and organisations and with the bodies set up to campaign against the trial among tenants, students, etc.

'This co-ordination of the activity of the working class and its real allies in the struggle against the Franco regime, in opposition to any collaboration with sections of the bourgeoisie or the Church, can make it possible to take the struggle forward effectively ...

'In each residential area, college, university faculty, etc., committees to campaign against the trial must be set up, grouping together all militants prepared to struggle against the Franco regime, and co-ordinating

their activity with the Workers' Commissions ...

'The tasks of the Workers' Commissions must be: to emphasise the democratic organisation of struggles through mass meetings and elected committees, which can play a very important role in extending the struggle (as happened during the Pamplona strike earlier this year); to co-ordinate these committees at a district, area and regional level; and to call public demonstrations with organised self-defence for the opening of the trial ...

'The actions which must be initiated now in every factory, committee and locality should culminate in a massive day of mobilisation and struggle when the trial is announced. The possibility that the trial will once again be postponed should in no way hinder us; on the contrary, the organisation of a day of struggle can be the means of centralising the initial actions, and increasing the ability of the mass movement to respond to the threat posed by the murderous dictatorship.'

# END OF INDUSTRIAL PEACE IN GERMANY

The unofficial strike by over 13,000 Saar miners which ended last Friday was only the latest in a series of struggles which have shattered the myth of 'industrial peace' in West Germany.

The first strikes took place in February of this year following the conclusion of the annual wage agreements in the engineering industry, in which the trade union leaders accepted a paltry 8% increase on behalf of their members. But it was only in August that a mass upsurge took place, when the workers returned from the holiday break to find that their pay awards had been eroded almost completely by a sudden spate of price increases on top of the steady inflation of previous months.

In the last four months the strike movement has spread to involve some 140,000 workers in over 80 separate stoppages. But no less important than the scale of the movement has been its development in militancy and organisation since the last wave of struggles in 1969.

In particular, the strikes have been marked by a willingness to launch struggles independently of the trade union bureaucracy; the wide variety of industries in which they have taken place; the massive involvement of immigrant and women workers, who have often assumed a leading role; the formation of independent strike committees elected by the workers in struggle and separate from the works councils, which are dominated by the bureaucrats; and the extension of the demands in many cases to cover not just wages but issues like the organisation and rate of work.

Such developments were particularly noticeable during the Ford strike in Cologne, where the work-force of 32,000 includes 12,000 Turkish workers. The strike started after 500 Turkish workers were sacked for returning late from the holiday break, but its demands rapidly extended to take in questions of speed-up, etc. Launched in defiance of the trade union bureaucracy, the struggle was led by an elected committee of 12 Turkish and German workers from a variety of political tendencies.

But the most advanced strike took place some weeks earlier at a big factory in Lippstadt, after management had given an increase of 15 pfennigs (2½p) an hour to 800 German workers but nothing at all to the 3,500 immigrant workers employed there. An immediate walk-out in one workshop rapidly spread to the rest of the plant, spearheaded by a group of young Spanish workers. The factory entrance was barricaded and the canteen occupied.

Despite violent attacks by the police from the neighbouring town of Bochum (the authorities didn't dare to use the local force), the workers

stood firm and organised a demonstration of thousands through the town as well as a series of mass meetings. On the fourth day came a turning point, when militants of the revolutionary left successfully proposed at a mass meeting that a strike leadership be set up.

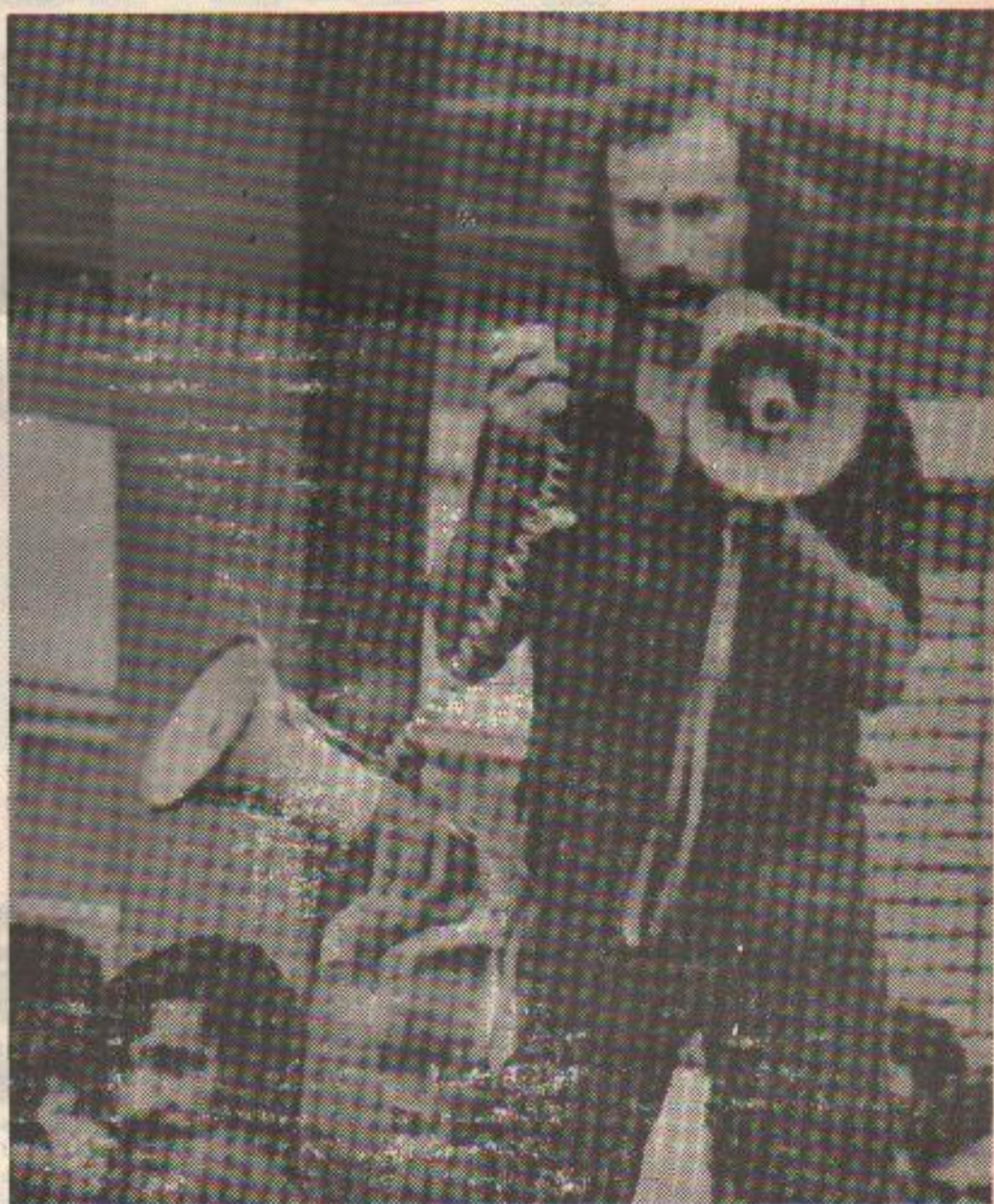
Very rapidly, with some help from outside, various steps were taken to strengthen the organisation and involvement of the workers: defence guards at the factory gates, allocation of 20 workers to negotiate with the bosses, a system of couriers to keep the rest of the workers informed about the negotiations, etc. Management soon crumbled, conceding an across-the-board increase of 50 pfennigs (8p) an hour, three days' strike pay, and a guarantee of no victimisations.

In this first strike wave, an unprepared management have tended to settle very quickly to avoid a disastrous loss in production, which could cripple the export trade. But it will not be so easy again. Already the capitalists are hitting back, with 50 militants victimised at Ford's and an increasing use of police and unofficial strike-breaking forces against such struggles. The press has also been brought in to play the racist card: the daily paper *Bild*, published by Axel Springer, has carried stories warning of a 'conspiracy of foreign workers against Germany, encouraged by the extreme left'.

This situation also poses problems for the trade union bureaucrats, who have long been integrated into the capitalist apparatus as well as being closely tied to the governing Social Democratic Party. As prime minister Willy Brandt put it to the employers: 'If you think you are in a bad way, gentlemen, I tell you that your partners in IG-Metall (the engineering union) are in a far worse situation.' The wave of unofficial strikes has for the first time in recent years put on the agenda the possibility of building an alternative leadership to the bureaucracy in the trade unions. The struggles which are expected to break out round the annual wage negotiations this winter can only accelerate this process.

This development is of importance not only to the German workers' movement but to that in the rest of Europe. Not only has it already provided certain lessons in terms of organisation, the role of immigrant and women workers, etc. which have a common relevance to all workers' struggles, but it signals the opening of an attack on a ruling class which plays a vital role in the whole structure of European capitalism. With major struggles likely to develop this winter in France, Britain and other nerve centres of capitalist Europe, the new willingness to struggle of the German working class vanguard may well be crucial.

Martin Meteyard



## International Marxist Group (British Section of the Fourth International)



I would like more information about the IMG and its activities

Name .....  
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182 Pentonville road London N1

# CHILE

# Red Weekly

## APPEAL FROM MIR

This appeal by Miguel Enriquez, secretary general of the Chilean MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), was recently smuggled out of Chile. Enriquez has asked for its widest possible distribution at a time when solidarity movements are developing all over the world which 'omit to mention the militants who are most hounded', ie the revolutionary left, and particularly the MIR. Enriquez, for example has a price of 500,000 escudos on his head and is, along with Socialist Party secretary Carlos Altamirano, the most wanted man in Chile.

While the Fourth International has a number of political disagreements with the leadership of the MIR, we consider it to be an elementary duty of internationalist solidarity to publicise as widely as possible the initiatives, declarations, and political positions of the MIR, in view of its dominant position within the extreme left in Chile.

### Comrades,

Fascism has imposed itself in Chile, with the support of US imperialism and its sub-imperialism in Brazil.

The dominant fascist sectors, the officers in the army and the reactionary extreme right, are trying to resolve by fire and blood the crisis which runs through the system of capitalist domination in Chile.

All democratic freedoms have been abolished. By now at least a thousand people have been shot. The number of dead must amount to tens of thousands. Nearly as many again are detained in concentration camps where torture is widespread.

Parliament has been closed down.

The army has intervened militarily in the universities.

The workers' organisations have been dissolved. Thousands of workers have been sacked. A real system of forced labour exists today. Wages have been frozen. Prices shoot upwards. The administrators named by the government to run the factories are the former owners, the former directors.

A state of siege exists throughout the country. The whole population is subject to the curfew and can be hauled before a military tribunal as in time of war.

The number of summary executions is increasing, and a virtual pogrom is being carried out against foreigners.

A regime which draws its inspiration from Nazi Germany rules Chile today.

### Comrades,

It was neither socialism, nor the proletarian revolution, nor the workers which failed in Chile. In Chile what collapsed so tragically was a reformist project based on the illusion that one can achieve socialism by counting on the passivity of the ruling class and working within the framework laid down by the bourgeoisie.

The struggle has hardly started.

A battle has been lost, not the war.

The working class and the people, the left and the revolutionaries are still powerful. The struggle will be long and hard. But we are sure of winning.

From the struggle for the restoration of democratic freedoms, today abolished by the dictatorship,

from the defence of the standard of living of the masses, today under direct attack by fascism,

uniting the whole left and the democratic sectors prepared to push forward the struggle against the dictatorship, the mass movement will reorganise itself,

the popular resistance to the dictatorship in the country and in the towns will develop and grow.

This will lead to the overthrow of the dictatorship, to the restoration of democratic freedoms, and will open the way for a powerful revolutionary process involving the workers and peasants, which will culminate in the proletarian and socialist revolution.

### Comrades,

The struggle of the Chilean working class and people against the fascist military dictatorship is an integral part of the struggle of the peoples of the world against imperialism. The international solidarity of the socialist countries, of the democratic and revolutionary countries and sectors, and particularly of the Cuban revolution and of the fraternal revolutionary movements in Latin America—the ERP in Argentina, the Tupamaros, and the ELN in Bolivia—has been and will continue to be fundamental.

I do not want to end without paying tribute to Salvador Allende, who gave his life in defence of his beliefs, to the workers and to the militants of all the organisations of the left, and in particular to our own militants who are dead, are dying, or are imprisoned in the fight against the fascist military dictatorship.

## RESISTANCE GROWS

Guerrilla actions are now a day to day occurrence in the Chile of the Generals. The cruel repression is being met with armed resistance, and the junta is being denied a monopoly of violence.

Reports issued by a clandestine news agency have spoken of between one and five soldiers being killed every day, of the destruction of six helicopters and eight aircraft, of military posts being attacked and companies of soldiers being ambushed. The agency claims that the Second Maipo Regiment was ambushed outside Valparaiso, and lost all of its weapons and all but two of its eighty-six soldiers. In some areas as a 'spontaneous punishment by the people' soldiers are being given presents of poisonous food.

### THE MIR

Among the most important organisations in the Chilean resistance is the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left). Its political aims were explained to *Le Monde* (30 October) by one of its leaders: 'Today it is necessary to create a united revolutionary front ... It is necessary to create new forms of political and trade union organisation ... the resistance to the dictatorship is the first priority, the point of departure

for a new revolutionary process drawing in the workers and peasants and leading towards the socialist revolution. This process, in our opinion, must of necessity be based on the armed struggle. But the most elementary forms of resistance can contribute to the re-unification of the forces of the left.'

The structures of the MIR were functioning 'normally' he said, despite the difficult conditions. Reports coming out of Chile have indicated that the leadership of the MIR has survived almost intact. The seriousness with which the junta treats them is indicated by the fact that 5 out of its ten most wanted men, all of whom have a price on their heads, are MIR leaders.

There is as yet no clear indication of the attitude of the Communist Party towards the proposed revolutionary front. The CP youth organisation is reported to be in favour, as are important sections of the Socialist Party, but the CP leadership may still be looking for unity with the 'liberal' sections of the Christian Democratic Party.

### FRESH BURDENS

The junta continues to impose fresh burdens on the masses. Its 'free price' policy has resulted in price rises, in essential items, of between 200% and 1800%. Sugar now costs

five times more, coffee seven times more, bread is up 265%, cooking oil 600% and tea 1800%. The regime claims that wage rises and bonuses will offset this to some extent, but if prices continue to rise at this rate the impact on popular living standards will be disastrous. (The junta estimates that inflation, now at 323%, will rise to a world record of 1200% by the end of the year.) In addition the standard working week has been increased from 44 to 48 hours, without extra payment.

Foreign monopolies, however, are receiving kinder treatment. Forty American companies are amongst the 200 domestic and foreign companies, nationalised by the Popular Unity Government, which are now to be handed back to their former owners. Negotiations for the compensation of other nationalised companies, including the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation (ITT) have been re-opened.

### SOLIDARITY

World-wide solidarity with the Chilean resistance is growing. In France a 'Committee to Support the Revolutionary Struggle of the Chilean People' has been set up, backed by all the organisations of the revolutionary left and the United Socialist Party (PSU).

The Platform of the Support Committee says:

'In the face of the military junta, the resistance of the Chilean people in all its forms and particularly the armed resistance, needs the active support of all those who see in the coup a blow struck against their own struggles and their own hopes. The solidarity with the Chilean people must be as broad as possible: particularly in France where the Pompidou-Messmer government has cynically expressed its welcome for the Pinochet junta and maintains its diplomatic links with the murderers of the Chilean people.'

Active revolutionary solidarity has also been launched in Italy where a fund set up by the far left organisation 'Lotta Continua' has raised £40,000 in its first three weeks.

In Britain a committee set up in the LSE has also appealed for funds to aid the Chilean resistance, and there is every indication that the movement in solidarity with the Chilean resistance is well under way in this country.

## Solidarity actions, and demonstration

- Friday 2 Nov. **IMG public meeting.** Speakers: Tariq Ali (IMG) and Roberto Suarez (Chilean Socialist Party). 7.30 pm at Conway Hall, Rvd Lion Square, WC1.
- Saturday 3 Nov. **Picker of British Leyland showrooms** — to demand gift to junta be withdrawn. 2.00 pm at 41 Finsbury, W1.
- Teach-in** — organised by LSE Committee for Support of Chilean People. Includes films 'Campeamento' (first showing in Britain) and 'When the people awake'. 5.30 pm at LSE Old Theatre, Houghton Street, WC2.
- Sunday 4 Nov. **Demonstration** — leaves Speakers Corner at 1.30 pm, marching to Trafalgar Square for final rally.
- Tuesday 6 Nov. **IMG Red Forum.** Special meeting on Chile, speaker Tariq Ali. 8.00 pm at General Picton, Caledonian Rd (5 mins Kings X tube).

## British troops out of Ireland!

'It has been British policies, from the days of Strongbow to the present day, which have been the cause of so much bloodshed in Ireland.' So spoke Pat Arrowsmith, well known British pacifist who has been arrested twice in the recent period for campaigning against the British Army's presence in Ireland.

Speaking at a meeting in the Fulham Town Hall organised by the West London Troops Out Committee, she said it was shameful that, despite the intense repression carried out by the Army in the north of Ireland, neither the TUC, the Labour Party nor the Communist Party had taken a clear stand in the interests of the working class in Ireland by demanding the withdrawal of British troops.

### WORKSHOP

Jim Kemp, TGWU convenor and member of the International Marxist Group, spoke

of the links between the repression in Ireland and the increased denial of civil liberties. Northern Ireland, he said, was a workshop of repressive techniques which would one day be used against the working class movement in this country.

The Stoke Newington 8, the Belfast 10, the Shrewsbury 24, the use of the Special Patrol Group against pickets, and dawn police raids on innocent victims were all warnings of what is to come. Trial by jury was done away with in Ireland, he said, because Irishmen couldn't be relied on to convict fellow Irishmen. In the future the argument will be that trade unionists cannot be relied on to convict fellow trade unionists.

The meeting was also addressed by James Wellbeloved of the Labour Party. The greatest stumbling block, he said, on the road to peace and unity in Ireland, was the belief that Britain had some right to be there. The Constitution Act, he said, was a fraud and didn't have a chance in hell of solving the problems of Ireland.

Speakers from the floor were very critical of the Labour Party, which sent the

### CENTRAL LONDON AIL FORUM

Hear Bob Purdie speaking on John MacLean this Friday, 2 November, at 8.00 pm in the General Picton, Caledonian Road (Kings X tube)

troops into Ireland in 1969 and now works in complete harmony with the Tory Government.

### DEMONSTRATION

All the speakers agreed on the need to fight inside the British working class movement to raise the demand for an immediate withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

At a meeting in London on Tuesday an ad hoc committee of delegates from British socialist and working class organisations was set up to prepare a demonstration and rally for the first weekend in December. The demands of the demonstration will be for the immediate withdrawal of British Troops and the recognition of the right of self determination for Ireland. In the coming weeks support must be mobilised throughout the labour and student movement for the December demonstration. This will be the first step towards a big campaign inside the working class movement for a British withdrawal from Ireland.

Gus Fagan

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