

SMASH ALL ANTI-UNION LAWS

ALL OUT

WITH

ENGINEERS

THE decision of NIRC judge Sir John Donaldson to seize the assets of the Engineering union is nothing less than a declaration of war on the trade union movement.

After much hesitation the Engineers' executive have finally decided to call an indefinite national strike. This is a first step towards giving Donaldson and his ruling class supporters the reply they so richly deserve.

Donaldson's attack on the unions has been aided and abetted by Labour's policies. It was the Labour Government which decided to leave the Industrial Relations Act on the books, and which allowed Donaldson to keep warming his bench at the NIRC.

While Donaldson is grabbing the AUEW's funds, Employment Secretary Michael Foot is busy cracking the whip of the Tories' Phase 3 over the heads of the trade union movement.

The trade union bureaucrats have done nothing to prepare for the present situation. Scanlon and the AUEW leadership have known for weeks that the present confrontation was on the way. But action was put off until the very last minute.

The Transport Workers are facing a similar threat from the NIRC, but Jack Jones is sitting on his hands and letting the engineers go into the fight alone.

The national engineers' strike opens up a big opportunity for the workers' movement. Massive solidarity actions from other sections, leading towards a general strike, could not only block Donaldson's attack but force Labour to dump their whole armoury of anti-union laws.

In the coming struggle we must fight for:

*The immediate repeal of the Industrial Relations Act, the dumping of all proceedings

under the Act, and the nullification of all NIRC judgements (including the repayment of fines already collected).

*The immediate repeal of the Tories' Phase 3 pay laws.

*The freeing of the six jailed Shrewsbury building workers, and an unconditional pardon for all those convicted in the Shrewsbury frame-up trials.

*The immediate introduction by the Government of measures to abolish the conspiracy laws (on the basis of which, as Shrewsbury shows, trade unionists can be imprisoned for just *organising* a picket), and to guarantee the legal right to picket.

A victory such as this would rip the capitalist offensive against working class living standards to shreds. The capitalists would be robbed of some of their most important weapons, and a new, powerful spirit of unity and struggle would be forged throughout the workers' movement.

All the struggles of working people—for the engineers' claim, better pay in the social services, equal pay for women, the defense of working class incomes against inflation—could make a tremendous leap forward on the basis of such a victory.

ORGANISE FOR VICTORY!

*TGWU members should immediately strike and join the struggle — and at the same time demand that their leadership calls an official, national strike.

*Joint bodies should be set up between the AUEW and the TGWU at all levels (factory, district, and nationally) to coordinate the struggle.

*Mass solidarity actions — strikes and demonstrations — should be launched by every other section of the trade union movement.

*Militants in every area should set up local Action Committees to build the struggle: organise flying pickets to spread the strikes, set up self-defense for picket lines and union property, make preparations for a general strike.

*The demand must go up from every corner of the trade union movement for the TUC to immediately call a general strike to force the Labour Government to scrap all anti-trade union laws.

EDITORIAL

TOWARDS GENERAL STRIKE

The NIRC attack on the engineers shows clearly the present situation in British politics. The ruling class suffered important defeats with the miners' victory and the fall of Heath, but the economic and social crisis does not allow them to let up their attacks on the working class.

But the position of the working class is very strong. The miners' strike and the fall of Heath were big victories for the working class. No section which went into struggle against Phase 3, with the exception of the ambulance men, was defeated. Many sections which did not fight Phase 3 have since been able to see a perspective for struggle—for example, the teachers and local government workers in London. The fundamental fact about the present relation of forces between the classes is that the ruling class is being forced by the economic situation towards a decisive clash with a working class whose organisational strength is intact.

The task of militants is to ensure that the working class enters this clash with the policies necessary in a victory. This means, among other things, calling for the unifying and generalising of working class struggles. The slogan of the general strike is the central one with which militants must carry out their work.

Under the Tory Government the demand for the general strike was first connected with the Industrial Relations Act, and then for the need to remove the Government itself. Under Labour the slogan of the general strike is necessary to defeat assaults on the working class by the employers, as in the NIRC decision, and as a way of gaining certain key working class demands, such as a sliding scale of wages.

In the case of the NIRC decision the steps which must be taken are very clear. The AUEW executive has taken the right decision by calling an indefinite strike. Now the task of militants is to get the rest of the working class out in support as well. The first objective is obviously the TGWU—which is also threatened by the NIRC. Action committees must be formed and flying pickets organised to get out all workers in support of the engineers. Action from the miners would be particularly important. Meanwhile, the call must go out for the TUC to call a strike of all unions against the NIRC decision.

Labour must be forced to immediately abolish all anti-trade union laws.



8000 people demonstrated their solidarity with the Chilean resistance in London last weekend. (See full story p.2)

The British intelligence officer who tried to extract information from 74-year-old Granny Daly in the Ardoyne a couple of weeks ago must have known how that Captain felt. The Army had raided her house, and had found two ArmaLite rifles. So they took her in for questioning.

'Now Mrs Daly, who put the rifles in your house?'

'I wouldn't be knowing that—I didn't get a right chance to look at them.'

'Here's a phone number. All you have to do is ring and tell us. No one need ever know.'

'Oh I'm sorry, but I've never been able to use a phone.'

The officer showed her some photographs of people from the Ardoyne. 'Do you know any of these?'

OUT OF THE POGROMS

A good question. Granny Daly has lived in Ardoyne since 1941. The estate was built in 1936, and was meant to house protestants, but catholics from nearby areas, who had been burned out in the pogroms of that year simply moved in.

It has remained, ever since, a small island of catholics surrounded by a sea of hostile loyalists.

What that means can be judged from the blackened and boarded up houses which edge the area. They are a grim reminder of the pogrom of August 1969, when the Green Howards stood facing the people of Ardoyne, while at their backs

Granny Daly's rifles

or: How the army met its match in the Ardoyne

'The bold English Captain turned pale as the snow, he muttered "Good evening" and started to go, saying: "What is the use when a maid of sixteen, would lay down her life for White Orange and Green?"'
(Republican Ballad).

loyalists set fire to catholic houses.

In the Ardoyne the solidarity natural in a community created under the circumstances of 1936 has been developed into a system for survival, and the people have been drawn even closer by the last five years of struggle and suffering.

So he showed Granny Daly photographs of her friends and neighbours. 'Do you know any of these people?'

'No,' said Granny. 'I don't know any of them.'

'Do you know these two women', he asked, showing her pictures of her close friends Rose Craig and Rose MacAdorey.

'No, I don't know them.'

'Well that's strange, because they are both downstairs waiting for you.'

In the end Granny Daly was not charged, although if she had

been ten years younger she might have ended up in Armagh jail. Her case illustrates the nature of the present war between the British Army and the catholic ghettos.

AFTER THE MEN . . .

During the two previous IRA campaigns—1939-45 and 1956-62—the internment of a sizeable section of the adult male population had been enough to force the catholics into a mood of communal demoralisation. But today, despite the huge number of men and the increasing number of women who have been interned, imprisoned or forced on to the run, the communal mood is one of defiance.

The British Army deals with this defiance by a mounting harassment of women and adolescents. Granny Daly's friends, the two Roses, have both been charged with possession of arms and expect to be sent to

Armagh jail. The possibility of acquittal or a fair trial does not even enter their mind.

Rose MacAdorey's main concern is for her 14-year-old son, Dominic, who has been charged along with her and has evidently been singled out for harassment. A few days ago, a British officer threatened to shoot him.

His father, who was shot dead by the British Army on the morning internment was introduced, was a Staff Captain in the Provisional IRA. Rose, his mother, is also a well known Republican militant, who has served a sentence for wearing an illegal uniform on a picket.

One of Dominic's friends, also from a Republican background, is in Long Kesh now, a few days after his 17th birthday. The Army had told a younger brother that he would be inside when he was 17, and they were as good as their word.

When Merlyn Rees complained recently about the 'use' of women and teenagers by the IRA, he was in fact making an excuse for the Army repression against these sections of the catholic population.

Do not be surprised if Granny Daly does end up in Armagh. Because if they can't defeat people like Rose and Dominic MacAdorey they will extend the repression even further. Unless, that is, the British labour movement says 'enough', and forces the Government to get the Army out of Ireland.

BOB PURDIE

Troops Out Conference could launch enquiry

Roy Jenkins has shelved the Scotland Yard report on the Lennon affair, while doing nothing to ensure the release of the four Irishmen whom Lennon confessed to having tricked into jail.

What also could be expected from this 'humane' and 'progressive' Home Secretary who has urbanely permitted the torture of the four Irish hunger strikers?

The Government is trying to stifle the publicity which would be created by the publication of the report while interest in the affair is still warm. It wants questioning of the report to be minimised.

And no doubt it will be highly questionable. Already the National Council for Civil Liberties which exposed the whole slug-heap in the first place, has complained that Scotland Yard did not ask for information from them.

CONFERENCE BOOST

The growing realisation within the labour movement that the Special Branch is knee deep in intrigue against industrial militants, as well as Irish organisations, has boosted interest in the conference on the British Army and repression in Ireland and Britain, called by the Troops Out Movement for this Saturday.

Applications for credentials have flooded in from trade union branches up and down Britain. There is every indication that the conference will be a turning point in convincing broad sections of the labour movement, the left, and civil liberties organisations, that the one sure way to nip repression here in the bud is to force a British withdrawal from Ireland.

WORKERS' ENQUIRY

But there is one specific task that the conference can carry out. It will represent those sections of the British population most vulnerable to provocations like in the Lennon affair. It ought to take steps to ensure a proper enquiry. Such an enquiry will have to trace the connections of the Special Branch with the SAS, British Intelligence, and the Army in Ireland. The Littlejohns must therefore figure in the investigation.

If the TOM conference can help to set up a labour movement enquiry along these lines, it will do more in one day to defend the working class than Roy Jenkins has done in his 70 days at the Home Office.

The Troops Out Movement conference on the British Army in Ireland and its projected role in Britain will be held at the Collegiate Theatre, 25 Gordon Street, London WC1, beginning at 10.15 am on 11 May. A crèche is available, and there will be a social in the evening.

FORCE FEEDING — DOCTORS PICKET THE BMA



Dr Dominic Costa addresses the picket outside the BMA offices on Monday

A group of doctors and medical students picketed the headquarters of the British Medical Association last Monday, demanding that the BMA's central ethical committee make a statement on the force-feeding of Irish political prisoners in British jails.

The secretary of the BMA, Dr Stevenson, refused to come out and speak to them. He had earlier, in

a reply to a letter from Dr Berry Beaumont, declined to answer the points raised by the doctors.

They claim that force feeding is contrary to the Declaration of Geneva, which lays down medical ethics. They also state that there is a deterioration in the physical condition of the prisoners, including weight loss, loosening of teeth, loss of hair, and damage to jaws and throat from the force feeding. There is a constant risk of suffocation

from inhalation of vomit.

The picket showed the growing opposition in the medical profession to force feeding. It followed a letter sent to the BMA on 13 March, signed by 38 doctors, ranging from general practitioners to professors of medicine.

IPHC ACTION

The Irish Political Hostages Campaign has scheduled a new plan of action in solidarity with the prisoners. A big demonstration is being called

for Sunday, 9 June, and a demonstration at the Albany jail, Isle of Wight, will take place at the end of June.

There is to be a picket of Transport House, Smith Square, WC2, at 6 pm this Wednesday (8 May), and on Sunday there will be a picket in solidarity with Pat Arrowsmith, who is being held in Holloway prison on charges under the Incitement to Disaffection Act. It will assemble at 2.30 pm at Finsbury Park Gates, Seven Sisters Road.

The British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign will picket the Old Bailey when Pat's trial starts there on Monday, 13 May.

The hints that Roy Jenkins may transfer the Price sisters to Durham jail have prompted action on Tyneside. Eddie Milne MP, and Jim Murray, a local AUEW convenor, will be addressing meetings calling for the repatriation of the prisoners to Ireland, and for an end to force feeding. This is the start of a campaign within the labour movement in the area, to mobilise opposition to the transfer of the sisters to Durham.

'Black goods' — call from Chile demo



A strong contingent on the demo came from ITT-Maclaren's, Glasgow

'This is the beginning of a mass campaign in solidarity with the Chilean resistance,' said Tariq Ali, addressing the Chile Ad Hoc Committee demonstration last Sunday.

He called on the Labour MPs who had opposed the coup before the last election and had since taken Government posts to resign.

The 8,000-strong demonstration was dominated by the revolutionary left. The International Marxist Group and International Socialist contingents made up 60 per cent of the total. There was a fair sprinkling of trade union banners. Labour Party, Communist Party and local Chile Solidarity Committee contingents were also there.

Among trade unionists on the demonstration was a contingent from the Glasgow ITT factory, Maclaren Controls, the scene of a militant 19-week strike and site in which adopted the slogan: 'We are here to stay — We won't go the Chile way!'

One of the Maclaren workers, Bill

Service, told *Red Weekly*: 'We came on this demonstration because we could see the tie-up between ITT and the coup in Chile.'

'The trade union movement should black all work on goods for Chile,' said Robert Gunn, another of the workers, 'and it should break up the frigates before they can be delivered.'

A group of actors—members and sympathisers of the IMG—performed a play about Chile during the rally in Hyde Park and raised over £50 for the Chilean resistance. Over 30 actors marched behind the Equity banner, despite the refusal of the union's executive to back the demo.

Among the other speakers who addressed the rally were Jack Collins of the RMT Mineworkers, Ken Costas of the Institute for Workers' Control, Eric Roberts of the AUEW, and Stan Newens MP.

All stressed the importance of mobilising against the sending of the frigates to Chile. As Tariq Ali said, the next task of the solidarity movement is the preparation of an even bigger demonstration on the anniversary of the Chilean coup in September.

ARRESTS IN GLASGOW OVER IRISH SLOGANS

broke through the crowd and tried to arrest a comrade selling *Roxe Catha*, the Clann paper. IMG members intervened on his behalf, and the police let him go, but arrested Stewart McLennan and Peter Campbell, two IMG building worker militants.

Over a hundred comrades from IMG, IS, Militant, the Scottish Workers' Republican Party, and Clann picketed the police station where the comrades were held. After a great deal of activity on the phone, the police let the comrades go without bail, but told them they would be summonsed. A defence campaign is already under way.

Two members of the International Marxist Group were arrested when police attacked an Irish group at the May Day rally in Glasgow's Queen's Park on Sunday.

The main speaker at the rally was Harold Wilson, and he was drowned out by chants for the scrapping of the Chilean frigates and the release of the Shrewsbury pickets. When a group from Clann na hEireann started to shout about the Irish political prisoners and call for troops out of Ireland, IMG took up the slogans and moved to support Clann when the police began to threaten them.

After about 30 minutes the police

COWLEY

Drivers suspend action

The strike of 150 Internal Transport drivers at the Cowley Assembly Plant in support of shop-steward Alan Thornett has been suspended.

They returned to work on Thornett's recommendation, pending a mass meeting of members of the 5/55 branch T&GWU, ordered by the regional Secretary, to vote on whether to call for official backing for the strike.

VULNERABLE

The drivers were vulnerable to victimisation themselves if they continued the strike without official backing. The regional office refused to recommend official backing without a call from a meeting of the entire membership. (The AUEW has been likely all along to give the action official support as soon as the T&GWU does.)

But the mass meeting has not yet taken place. It was first fixed for Oxford Town Hall which was too small for the 2,500 who turned up. Moss Evans, the national officer responsible, then postponed the meeting to the following day.

But that evening the T&GWU drivers met Evans. They sharply criticised the officials for leaving them without official backing for three and a half weeks and for proposing to give a vote to the entire membership of the branch on whom the drivers were to have as their shop-steward.

The mass meeting was then postponed indefinitely, although the real reason was not honestly explained to the membership. It is now likely that the T&GWU will give the company five days' notice of official strike action by the drivers, unless a last-minute meeting with

the company on Tuesday works out a compromise settlement.

At the same time a union enquiry into Alan Thornett's conduct is going ahead. The regional committee of the T&GWU originally decided to hold an enquiry into the charges against Thornett (which have been decisively refuted by the 5/55 branch committee.) But the regional secretary, Brian Mathers, has now broadened the terms of reference to a general 'fishing expedition' into Thornett's conduct. Hearings are being held in the factory and employees are being given time off (with pay) to give evidence. So there is a danger that right-wingers in the union will try to turn the enquiry into an extension of their witch-hunt against Thornett.

The T&GWU rule-book says: 'Shop stewards shall receive the fullest support and protection of the Union.' But what comes out clearly from the present confused situation is that the regional and national officialdom of the union have stalled and dragged their feet at every stage. The decision to back the drivers who are defending this basic principle of shop-floor organisation of the union should have been taken a month ago.

THREAT TO UNION

The victimisation of Thornett is not just an attack on an individual, but is a threat to the very existence of an effective union. The T&GWU officials' stalling has already encouraged the company to pursue a complaint against John Underwood, deputy senior steward for the AUEW, identical to one of the charges against Thornett.

If the fight to defend Thornett is not won, then the company will feel free to move against any steward or militant in the factory who resists their plans for speed-up.



Women's meeting votes overwhelmingly for Thornett's reinstatement

Union women send strike-breakers reeling

Carol Miller's 'break a strike mob' were sent reeling at their meeting last week, called to set up an association of Cowley car workers' wives.

Women trade unionists from the Maxi trim-shop and the works canteen, supported by workers' wives and other militants, including a group of London nurses, outnumbered Mrs Miller's supporters and decisively put them to rout.

Two votes were taken at the meeting. There were overwhelming majorities in favour of the reinstatement of Alan Thornett, and for the defence of basic trade union rights! This was a blow not simply at Mrs Miller but helped to disrupt the plans of the management and its allies.

OXFORD JOURNAL

From the beginning Miller has received lavish support, not least from the *Oxford Journal*, a 'free' advertising paper which hands out 20,000 copies each week. For several weeks this sheet carried sensationalist attacks on the unions at Cowley, and put Radio Oxford on to Miller, which then gave continuous publicity to her demonstration. The 'neutral' chairman of her first meeting was none other than the editor of the *Journal*.

An active supporter of Miller is Margaret Butler, Liberal candidate for Oxford. This worthy appeared at the first demonstration as the wife of a laid-off car worker, yet she is hardly likely to feel the economic pinch since she is a landlord of substantial property in Oxford. Her husband works in the Technical Publications Department which never suffers from lay-offs. No doubt Mrs Butler thinks an ongoing organisation in which she played a prominent role could be a useful vote-getter.

Other forces have attempted to exploit the 'women's revolt'. This is the group led by Eileen MacGibbon, wife of a car worker, who rang Radio Oxford with a vitriolic attack on Thornett and the union, and was cordially invited to run a series of 'phone-in' programmes.

It was then that she put forward

the 'Reg Parsons peace plan'. This was for the recognition of Thornett on a pro-tem basis to be followed by an 'independent' inquiry. Parsons, a leading demagogue for the right wing in the factory, suggested that when the men returned to work they should throw out Thornett.

Parsons is a former member of the Socialist Labour League, now known as the Workers Revolutionary Party, and in his more militant days as deputy senior steward he led the fight against Measured Day Work. Now in alliance with the regional and national bureaucracy he has set his sights on replacing Bobby Fryer as senior steward for the T&GWU.

This unholy alliance represents a much more serious threat than the forces grouped around Miller. Mr MacGibbon, a dedicated right-winger, has proposed a march to Wilson or Jack Jones. He is also working with Parsons to divide the T&GWU 5/55 branch, splitting off the sectors where the WRP has any base. If they succeed this would leave Parsons in charge of an assembly plant branch.

It was the MacGibbon-Parsons forces who started the petition for a special branch meeting where MacGibbon intended to put a vote of no confidence in Thornett. Radio Oxford—devoted as it is to the 'democratic' cause of opposing outside interference in the unions—made frequent announcements of the time and place where T&GWU members could sign this petition.

UNION LEADERS

The use by the management and the media of the wives' discontent, and the way that the right wing has plugged into this, deals a sharp blow to the policies of 'pure trade unionism' and 'wages militancy'.

The backdrop to the present situation lies in the alienation of many workers from the union leaders in the assembly plant. Since the defeated struggle against Measured Day Work three years ago, the work force has suffered a series of minor defeats. The culmination of

this was the defeat inflicted by the management's breach of the industrial engineers' agreement.

Workers have suffered considerable losses in earnings with no tangible returns, and the undemocratic and manipulative methods of the WRP stewards have further fuelled this discontent which the management has been delighted to seize on and direct against Thornett.

Workers' wives have experienced a period of considerable hardship ever since the end of the three-day week. There has been a series of never-ending disputes as workers have fought against the company's ruthless and constant breach of agreements.

Workers can often be won to the defence of the union—despite their mistrust of their leaders—by workshop experience. However, their wives are isolated and fragmented into family units and often identify the union with loss of earnings.

The short-sighted union leaders have made no attempt to involve workers' families in the struggles. No meetings have been arranged for their wives in order to win their support.

ORGANISE WIVES

This was further complicated at Cowley because the strike-breaking force came from the wives of laid-off workers. These women therefore came under the pressure not only of the employers and the press, but also from their own husbands, many of whom were irate at being laid-off.

Although a fight back was organised by militant women workers, the trade union leaders and the WRP in particular played no part in this. Many of the male workers opposed the Miller/MacGibbon forces on the most reactionary grounds, saying that women should not 'meddle' in the factory.

This argument perpetuates the divisions between the wives and the militants. In fact what is needed is to involve wives in the issues at the factory so that they identify their interests with those of the workforce.

Cowley serves dramatic notice that the struggle against the oppression of women is not, as some 'revolutionaries' consider, a diversion which weakens the struggle. The struggle will be weakened by failing to make this a central issue within the working class.

JEFF KING



Woman car worker puts Mrs Miller in her place

NALGO leadership bends to TUC pressure

The national executive of the National And Local Government Officers association has started to give way to TUC pressure to call off its London Weighting Campaign.

Last Friday, it decided to let the TUC negotiate with Michael Foot to persuade the Government to guarantee publication of the Pay Board report on London pay on 18 June and the backdating of any settlement.

If these paper guarantees are made then the NALGO leadership proposes to call off all action. Nearly 2,000 union members at present on strike in London will be brought back to work, and the Government will be let off the hook.

In the unlikely event that Foot will turn down such a surrender by the bureaucrats, the NEC promise to 'escalate' action once again. Just how serious an 'escalation' the

NALGO leadership would propose can be seen from the minimal extension of strike action since the Islington branch came out at the beginning of April. The vote of Tower Hamlets branch to strike has been sabotaged by the majority of the London weighting panel and the national executive, who have consistently refused to bring the branch out.

A mass lobby of the union headquarters by 500 NALGO members before the NEC meeting last week demanded that Tower Hamlets, Hackney—which also voted to strike—and LEB branches be brought out immediately, and the action extended rapidly to the rest of London.

In spite of the delaying and fragmenting tactics of the 'leadership' this shows that enthusiasm and the desire for a real fight is still spreading.

Islington branch, now increasingly assuming the role of organising centre and leadership of the struggle, is still solidly out. It holds between two and three full branch meetings a week, and has attempted to bring other branches into action.

While no other large branches are on strike, the danger of its isolation causing some demoralisation still remains. But at the Islington branch meeting on Monday no move was made to go back, and demands were made to bring in other branches immediately.

With the possibility of a sell-out by the leadership in the next few days, the widest possible unofficial action must be developed, especially in areas just starting to come into the campaign.

Islington and the London Boroughs' Joint Computer Committee branches must be given the fullest possible support and encouraged to stay out. The best way possible to do this would be through the rapid extension of strikes in other areas.

It is now absolutely necessary for a mass rally of all strike committees, campaign committees, and other militants in London. The rally would be able to plan a strategy to give leadership to the campaign, deal with the sell-out of the bureaucrats, and start to build the necessary links with other unions in struggle against the social contract.

ALAN BENNETT

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)



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PORTUGAL WAS THE ONLY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD TO greet the news of Hitler's suicide in a Berlin bunker by proclaiming an official day of mourning.

Today Portugal's fascist regime, after a brutal and bloody history stretching back more than 40 years, shares the same fate as Hitler's 'Third Reich'. It was destroyed in less than four hours by the country's armed forces, under the leadership of a little known team of junior officers.

The ruling military junta are all men recruited and educated by the old regime. Their leader, General Spinoza, fought as a volunteer with Franco's army during the Spanish Civil War, and was an observer with Hitler's armies in Russia during the Second World War. As commander in the Portuguese colony of Guinea, he was the architect of a Vietnam-type strategy (bombing of civilian population, use of napalm, uprooting and imprisonment of civilians in 'strategic hamlets').

But Spinoza and his fellow Generals are balanced delicately on the edge of a volcano. Within this volcano the forces of popular struggle are mounting steadily, ready to explode into the light of day and remake the landscape

of Portuguese life from top to bottom.

WORKERS' MOVEMENT

Despite the long years of repression under the dictatorship, the Portuguese workers' movement burst onto the scene within hours of the coup.

The most spectacular demonstration of working class unity and readiness to struggle so far has been the massive May Day demonstration.

General Spinoza's first response to the requests from the left-wing parties for an official celebration of May Day was a flat refusal. 'Now is the time to get back to work', is reported to have been his reply. However, faced with spontaneous preparations throughout the working class for a May Day general strike, the junta was forced to beat a retreat and try to

bring the celebrations under its own wing.

REBUILDING UNIONS

For over 40 years the only workers' organisations allowed to operate openly have been the 'sindicatos'—'trade unions' strictly controlled by the Government.

The 'sindicatos' were kept deliberately weak and fragmented. Their leaders were Government-appointed, they did not have the right to strike, and they were not allowed to cooperate, or even communicate with one another.

Two years ago, relatively free elections were permitted in the 'sindicatos' for the first time, in an effort to stop the growing rash of spontaneous strikes. However, the Government was dissatisfied with the outcome of this new policy, and promptly removed most of the newly-elected union leaderships from office.

A few unions resisted this crackdown. The bank employees, among the best organised workers in the country, were successful in this fight until the eve of the coup.

The first task for many workers, therefore, was to begin the rebuilding of genuinely independent and

democratic trade unions.

Workers from seven different unions (including the shopworkers) started the job by physically seizing their union headquarters immediately after the coup. They then took on the task of restoring the democratically elected leaderships, or electing new leaders.

The Government-run workers' social centre was similarly taken over. Now re-named the 'May Day Association', it was the site of the first major political meeting in Lisbon after the coup.

WORKERS' COMMITTEES

Over the past few days mass meetings have been taking place in factories across the country. Workers' committees are being elected, and lists of demands drawn up for presentation to the management.

Typical of such meetings was one held in a factory belonging to the Dutch electronics monopoly Philips. A mass meeting of 1000 workers—almost the entire work force—gathered early in the morning. Rejecting all requests from the management for discussions until they had concluded their own deliberations, the workers

PORTUGAL

Area: 34,500 sq. miles (England = 50,000 sq. miles).

Population: 8½ million.

Capital: Lisbon (pop. 780,000).

National income per person—£394/year (Britain—£800).

MAIN PORTUGUESE COLONIES

Guinea-Bissau

Area: 14,000 sq. miles.

Population: 500,000.

Angola

Area: 488,000 sq. miles.

Population: 5.7 million.

Mozambique

Area: 300,000 sq. miles.

Population: 8.2 million.



PORTUGAL

AFRICA - THE STUMBLING BLOCK

To those who planned it, the Portuguese coup may have seemed at the time to be rather a simple, open-and-shut job. In the event it has come more to resemble Pandora's box, unleashing repercussions whose effects could be world-wide.

Elsewhere we look at the consequences the coup could have for the balance of forces in southern Africa. Brazil too—which as a former colony still has close trade, diplomatic and cultural links with Portugal—could also be affected. But above all the coup will have an immediate and wide-ranging impact on the situation in Europe.

RISE OF STRUGGLE

In the past few months we have seen dramatic evidence of a new rise of workers' struggles in Western Europe. The miners' strike in

Britain, the Lip occupation in France, the massive public sector strikes in Germany, the big Fiat struggle in Italy, the Swedish and Belgian dockers' strikes, the mass upsurge in Greece last November—all have demonstrated a new working class militancy and forced the bosses back on the defensive throughout Europe.

Now the weight of a mass workers' movement in Portugal has also been thrown into the balance. At the very least the European capitalist class will have to tolerate the presence of a Communist Party in the government. And such is the strength of the present workers' offensive in Europe that it may well have to prepare for a similar situation in France and Italy before very long.

The capitalists, of course—aided by the politics of the Communist Parties—will do their best to ensure



Portugal's conscript army celebrates the downfall of the dictatorship

that this is simply a 'holding operation' while the capitalist forces regroup. But for the workers' movement it will offer unparalleled opportunities for building a new revolutionary leadership in struggle.

SPAIN

Nowhere will the impact of the coup be greater than in Spain. Faced with the problem of the succession to Franco, and still recovering from the assassination of Carrero Blanco last December, the regime can only maintain its hold through greater and greater repression.

Now the fall of the Caetano regime removes an essential prop from the Spanish dictatorship's side. If Mitterrand were to be elected in France, the Franco regime could well find itself caught in a pincer movement. The Spanish workers—who have launched struggle after struggle in the last few years—would not fail to take advantage of such a development.

The Portuguese coup will not simply change the balance of forces between capitalism and the workers' movement, however. Just as important will be its role as a crucible in which various political ideas and

strategies will be tested for their usefulness in advancing the power and self-organisation of the workers' movement. We will see in Portugal which groups in the workers' movement have learnt the lessons of the Chilean defeat, and which choose to ignore them.

Already such questions are being posed by the actions of the workers themselves. Should they go ahead with the seizure of factories and the ousting of management—or should they 'exercise restraint', as the Communist Party advises?

Should they concentrate on developing their own organisations, or should they put their trust in a provisional government with the junta? Should they actively attempt to win the support of a section of the army for the workers' struggle—or should they rely on its future 'neutrality'?

These questions have a relevance far beyond the borders of Portugal. The workers of the world will not be slow to draw the lessons from their own struggles from such a practical test of different strategies. And certainly the revolutionaries will not be the ones to shrink from such an experience.

EUROPE RIPPLES OF THE PON

Just as it was the African wars which finally led to the downfall of the old regime, so too they may well decide the fate of the new one.

Certainly it is the one question on which widely differing views have been publicly expressed by the junta's supporters.

RAW MATERIALS

The importance of the colonies dates from the recent past, however. Only under the Salazar regime was their potential as suppliers of cheap raw materials for Portugal's ailing manufacturing industry recognised.

Their economies were then deliberately distorted in line with this need, subsistence agriculture being replaced by agriculture for export. Mozambique became a major producer of cotton, Angola of coffee and cotton, and Guinea-Bissau of groundnuts.

The advantages for Portugal were obvious. To take but one example—in 1955, when the price of a kilo of cotton on the world market was 27.12 escudos, Portugal was paying only 14.08 per kilo!

But the last ten years have changed all that. Armed resistance was swift to develop in all three colonies following the 1961 uprising in Angola. The guerrillas have now succeeded in wresting two-thirds of Guinea-Bissau, more than a third of Mozambique, and a quarter of Angola from Portuguese hands.





continued their meeting until 4 in the afternoon.

Elected workers' representatives then went to present the workers' list of demands to the management. The meeting resumed again at 6 pm to receive a report-back from their representatives.

Immediately after the coup, workers in the Portuguese national airline (TAP) demanded the sacking of two top managers who had been involved in repressive actions which had resulted in the death of two workers last year. After a brief strike, the junta agreed to the workers' demand.

The most impressive display of the workers' power has come from the bank workers. Returning to work after the coup, they found that the management had shut the banks down. Concerned that a plot was underway to shift money out of the country they forced their way into the banks, uncovering evidence that confirmed their suspicions.

They then elected workers' committees and reopened the banks under workers' control. A limit was placed on the size of withdrawals, and only the workers' committee could authorise payments in

excess of this amount. All company accounts were frozen, with the exception of funds needed to pay wages.

The union has forced the management of the banks to accept this arrangement, and they now recognise the right of the workers' committees to carry out these functions.

Journalists have been taking action to force the replacement of newspaper editors and administrators connected with the old regime. The journalists' union has set up committees in all the papers, and radio and television stations, to prevent any attempts at censorship and to ensure the pro-democratic stance of the press.

They have also demanded the immediate dismissal of all the top officials of the Ministry of Information, and called on the Government to open negotiations with the colonial liberation movements.

Similar developments have taken place in the student movement, which has a long history of struggle against the dictatorship. All the University Faculties in Lisbon are now being run by elected six-man committees, with equal representation from students, lower-level teach-

ing staff, and university administrative workers.

WORKERS' POWER

This rise of the mass movement is a warning that General Spinoza and his capitalist backers will have great difficulty creating a 'liberal democracy' in which the exploitation of the workers can continue as before, despite the 'democratic' window dressing.

Already one of Spinoza's main backers—the big industrial and banking monopoly Champalimaud—is set on a collision course with workers in the steel industry, which it controls. A general strike of steel workers could take place any day ever Champalimaud's refusal to meet the workers' demands.

Spinoza's only hope is that he can buy support for his policies from the main left-wing parties by offering them positions in the Government.

The Communist Party has already made it clear that it is willing to play such a part. At the same time as insisting on a place in the Government, it has called on workers not to engage in factory takeovers. Communist Party militants are already reported to be

urging 'moderation' in the mass factory meetings.

But no matter what manoeuvres the Generals and their reformist and Stalinist collaborators may engage in, it will be difficult to stem the tide of the mass upsurge.

The basis for a totally new form of power—a workers' democracy—is already emerging from the mass factory meetings, the workers' councils, and the university committees.

Most of the Portuguese army—including the officers—are conscripts. The level and intensity of debate inside the armed forces, especially the navy, is very high. There is already discussion of allowing political and social associations to be organised inside the armed forces.

A powerful mass movement offering radical solutions to the country's problems would have an excellent chance of winning support within the ranks of the armed forces. Nothing could then stand in the way of such a movement making Portugal the first country in Western Europe to break out of the capitalist system. Portugal could thus become the foundation stone of the United States of Socialist Europe.

IN REVOLT

the 'Democratic Commission'—who may well find the temptation of an immediate role in government too strong to resist.

UNSTABLE

In Mozambique, where the proportion of white settlers is less, and the FRELIMO guerrillas are well entrenched, the situation is much more unstable. Attempts are being made to build up a new pro-junta group called GUMO, but at its first mass meeting last Friday its spokesmen were shouted down by FRELIMO supporters. There is also a growing reaction among white settlers—5,000 of them took part in an anti-independence demonstration at the weekend, headed by a group called FICO ('I stay').

As for Guine-Bissau, which is economically the least important of

the three, it is possible that the Portuguese may need little persuasion to get out without more ado. The liberation forces have already advanced to the extent that their provisional government—declared last September—had achieved wider recognition than the Caetano regime by the time of the coup.

It should not be forgotten, however, that these forces—the PAIGC—stand for the liberation not only of Guine-Bissau but also of the neighbouring Cape Verde islands. And here it is likely to be a different story, as the naval and air bases here represent a vital African foothold for NATO.

SOUTH AFRICA

The impact in Africa of the coup will not be confined solely to Portugal's colonies, of course. A

shift here will mean a shift in the balance of forces throughout the southern half of the continent—a fact noted at the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in South Africa, where share prices plummeted at the news.

For South Africa, though, the immediate consequences may well be relatively mild. The value of the Portuguese colonies as 'buffer' states has declined sharply with the rise of the guerrilla movements, and any cooling of the situation will allow Vorster to concentrate on the other prong of his strategy—his diplomatic and trade offensive towards black States such as Malawi.

But for Rhodesia the prospects are ghastly indeed. Their supply routes from the Mozambique coast were threatened even before the coup—the rail link with Beira has

been cut every few days, while the main road to Lourenco Marques was also attacked for the first time just a couple of weeks ago.

These attacks are likely to be stepped up now, at the very time when the Portuguese are likely to be much more wary of involvement in mutual defence pacts. The Smith regime must also fear increased FRELIMO aid to and cooperation with the ZANU guerrillas operating inside Rhodesia. Its only hope now is a deal with the 'respectable' blacks of the ANC.

Certainly in Africa, as in Europe, things will never be the same again after the Portuguese coup. But the liberation struggle is still far from over, and solidarity action may well become even more vital as the junta attempts to isolate the guerrillas in order to try to do a deal with them.

ON
ND

Review

'Passports and Politics' is an account of what happened in Britain in the autumn of 1972 when the Asians were forced out of Uganda. It does not provide any serious political analysis, apart from the reflex reactions of 'bleeding heart' liberalism, but as a factual record of what occurred it is excellent.

What this record reveals is the depth of racist feeling throughout British society, how that racism can be manipulated by the right, and how pitifully inadequate was the response of the labour movement.

When the news of the expulsions reached Britain, there was a gut reaction from many local councils 'threatened' by the prospect of Asian families coming to live in their area. On Kings Lynn council, which owned 175 empty houses, Tory and Labour members voted together to offer none of them to the Uganda Resettlement Board.

'ASIANS OUT'

Areas of the country whose experience of Indians was limited to having seen Tonto in the Lone Ranger did the same. Street Urban Council in the Cheddar Valley was against any Asians coming there. One Honiton

councillor gave a hysterical speech demanding that Honiton, in Devon should not be turned into another Bradford. Such councillors found welcome allies in the Press. Both the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Express* waged a sustained, vicious and openly racist campaign to whip up feeling against the refugees. Enoch Powell delivered a series of denagogic speeches and in one of them identified Robert Carr, the Home Secretary, with Chamberlain at Munich and the Ugandan Asians with Hitler.

The major responsibility for the racist campaign lay with the Tory right-wing, and fascists were able to intervene on an issue that had been prepared for them. The National Front sprayed Asians leaving Heathrow airport with insecticide. Colin Jordan persuaded the airport porters not to handle the baggage of Asians and some taxi drivers not to pick them up.

NF TRUNCHEONS

The Union Movement (Moseley) and the NF helped in the organisation of the march of Smithfield porters to Downing Street to protest against letting in the Asians. Martin Webster, organisation secretary of the NF, circularised his branches with a call to action: 'The National Front is presented with a great opportunity. It is up to all of us to seize it.'

And seize it they did. A series of spoof letters were sent out on official notepaper informing people that Asians were to be hiliated on them.

The Monday Club rally in Central

Hall on 16 September was stewarded by NF men armed with truncheons. At this rally they also 'pepped up' the politics. When Harold Soref suggested airlifting the Asians to India the audience exploded into anger and scores jumped up to shout: 'Shoot them! Shoot them!'

The National Front ran a series of candidates in local elections, sometimes winning over 20 per cent of the poll. The momentum gained from the Ugandan Asians issue dramatically increased the strength of the NF and allowed Martin Webster to gain nearly 5,000 votes in the West Bromwich bye-election.

How did the left as a whole respond to the issue? It was symptomatic that the counter-demonstration to the Central Hall rally described above was attended solely by the revolutionary left—predominantly the IMG and IS. The Labour Party leadership just laid low.

Partly this was due to the fact that Callaghan, in 1968, had put through the Kenyan Asians Act that was even less favourable to the Asians than the actions of the Tory Government with regard to the Ugandan Asians. Concessions were made to racism inside and outside the Labour Party.

Renee Short, Tom Bradley, and Tony Crosland were particularly sensitive to the 'legitimate worries' of their constituents. The Labour controlled Leicester council placed advertisements in the Ugandan press telling the Asians to stay away. In some constituency parties, notably Basildon, members split away so

that they could campaign even more aggressively against the arrival of the Asians.

GUNBOAT WILSON

The Labour Party leadership managed to keep quiet on what was the key political issue for a month. When Wilson finally spoke he concentrated on attacking President Amin as a paranoid who should have been put down by a display of naval force. This grotesque performance, echoing that of Viscount 'Gunboat' Palmerston in the 19th Century, was Wilson's way of dodging the real issues involved.

What is shown by this whole episode is how successful the right was in diverting the legitimate anger of working people over bad housing, education and other social services into racism. All the 'respectable' public figures, whether moderate Tory or left Labour, identified immigrants as the cause of inadequate social services.

No counter-attack came from the Labour Party or the trade unions to point out the real culprits. The silence of the labour movement allowed the extreme right a field day. The failure to wage a hard, uncompromising, and class conscious fight against racism handed over thousands of workers to thugs like Powell and Webster. These are the lessons that emerge from 'Passports and Politics'.

ANDREW JENKINS

'Passports and Politics', by Derek Humphrey and Michael Ward, is published by Penguin at 35p.



White workers back Asians at Imperial Typewriters

A strike at Imperial Typewriters in Leicester which began on May Day with a walkout by Asians has now been joined by over a thousand workers, including those from the firm's auto plant, which is over 75 per cent white.

Imperial Typewriters is owned by the US-based Litton Industries, and discontent has been smouldering for years at the company's policies of low wages, speed up, and racial discrimination, all aided by union collaboration with the management.

It was 27 Asian women and 13 men who walked out at the Copdale Road plant on 1 May, and marched to the main factory in East Park Road.

By noon 500 workers were out. They held a meeting and elected a strike committee. The management has since written to each striker, threatening dismissal.

The workers are demanding that a 25 per cent increase in the guaranteed bonus be backdated to January 1973, and that the guarantee should be raised to 40 per cent above the flat rate from 1 May.

They also complain that in a factory where there are 1,100 immigrant workers out of a total labour force of 1,600, all the section leaders are white, and the management uses racism to divide the shopfloor.

They are angry that the shop stewards have refused to present their claim to the management, and that there is only one Asian shop steward - who was not elected and is unknown to the workers.

The factory convenor, Reg Weaver JP, has denounced the strikers as 'a disruptive element', and in statements to the press he has falsified the reasons for the strike.

The pay-packets of male workers at Imperial Typewriters rarely rise above £25, and women doing the same job

earn only £19. Under a Measured Day Work scheme accepted by Weaver and his cronies in the Transport and General Workers' Union, operatives have to process 25 typewriters an hour. Since each unit is timed at 2.5 minutes, they have 60 minutes to complete 62.5 minutes' work!

The Asian strikers have been joined by a number of white workers who recognise the need for a struggle against low pay, and that the union collaboration with the management has permitted redundancies in the past.

There has to be immediate action by the T&GWU to make the strike official, and clear out the nest of reactionaries who 'lead' the shopfloor at Imperial Typewriters.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to: Imperial Typewriters Strike Action Committee, 42 Hunter Road, Leicester.



Tom Bradley, local Labour MP, talking to the strike leaders at Imperial Typewriters. He was called in by the management to help get them back to work, before discussions of the claim. Quite correctly his 'scabbing' proposals were rejected 100% by the striking workers. With friends like this.....

COMMITTEE TO PICKET RACIST DOCTOR

A meeting of the NW London Committee Against Racism, on 7 May decided to take action over the case of Dr Cleghorn, Director of the North London Blood Transfusion Clinic, who refuses to allow the blood from black donors to be used for blood transfusions. This is completely against the policy of the rest of the Blood Transfusion service, and a committee of doctors in the Medical Practitioners Union have already begun investigations into the case, as reported in last week's *Red Weekly*.

The NW London Committee was set up a few weeks ago, by members of the International Marxist Group, the Revolutionary Communist Group, Workers' Fight, the Communist Unity Association, local radical feminists and independent trade unionists and socialists, to take action against racism and

fascism in the area. It has already waged a short propaganda campaign against the National Front in the local council elections.

Over the 'Cleghorn case' the Committee will be holding a picket outside the North London Blood Clinic in Edgware, every Thursday evening, from 6.00 till 7.00 pm. It is hoped that local trade unionists and socialists will support this action.

A statement will be issued, condemning Cleghorn's overtly racist policies, demanding a boycott of the clinic by local factories who give blood, until the clinic reverts to the normal National Health Service policy and Cleghorn resigns. This statement will be sent to local colleges, trade unions, shop stewards' committees and trades councils, including unions in the Health Service, asking them to endorse the statement, support the picket and take a stand against this open example of racism in the area.

CARL GARDNER
(Kilburn IMG)

LETTER

Dear Comrades,

Your review of 'The Exorcist' in *RW48* said that revolutionaries can take their stand on the highest levels attained by human knowledge.

True - but too often *Red Weekly* takes for granted the basic Marxist-Leninist-Trotskyist ideas about capitalism, the State, the Soviet bureaucracy, and so on - without arguing these ideas in a clear and convincing way.

Agitation on immediate issues shouldn't be rigidly divided from propaganda and theoretical exposition. John MacLean's pamphlet 'The War After the War' is a model of how the two can be combined.

At the last meeting of the International Monetary Fund, McNamara admitted that 40 per cent of the population of the 'free world' were living below the bare subsistence minimum. Tony Southall's article on the droughts of North Africa pointed out that crop exports

from the region have gone up 90 per cent during the famine.

Facts like these brought together in an overall analysis, can bring people to understand their enemy. Armed with this knowledge individual anger and isolated revolt can become a gut hatred of capitalism as such.

As Victor Serge said: 'The capitalist state of society is a system whose mechanism and functions which are controlled and actuated by fixed laws, must be known to us. The revolutionary requires nothing more than the simple statement of these laws, a resume of the facts, to be in possession of a superior armour, of an unshakeable foundation for his convictions.'

If you could do this and orient your paper more to working class readers, rather than the student vanguard, then the influence of *Red Weekly* would be greatly increased.

Fraternally,
J. Davidson,
Greenock.

ANTI-FASCIST TALES

Oxford

For the second time in six months the National Front is trying to hold a public meeting in the Oxford town hall. Last summer NF plans for a meeting in the town hall were upset when Oxford students took over the room in which the meeting was due to be held. This action was later endorsed by the Trades Council.

Despite repeated requests and formal representations from the Trades Council, Oxford's Labour-controlled city council has refused to follow the example of Hounslow council and ban the National Front.

As a result, the Trades Council decided to organise a mass picket of the meeting, together with plans for a 'campaign of explanation' in the town to put over the reasons for its action.

COUNCIL BACKS DOWN

But last week the city council announced that it was making it a condition of hiring the hall that the NF should employ two policemen to 'deal with trouble inside the town hall'. The local police then turned down the NF's request for their services.

It is clear that this manoeuvre by the Labour council is a disguised retreat in face of the stand taken by Oxford trade unionists and students. The council was embarrassed at the prospect of a confrontation between sections of the labour movement and students, including Labour Party supporters, and the 'strong stewarding force' promised by the fascists.

But this success must not lead to any let-up in the anti-fascist campaign. The NF will certainly not sit back and accept a situation where they cannot get a public platform in Oxford.

And it is equally certain that the police will not refuse their *unpaid* services to protect the Front if they obtain a hall. So the campaign must be followed up and the example of Oxford used in every town where the NF try to get a platform for their racist poison.

Leeds

At the NUS Conference a few weeks ago, the delegates felt so strongly about the growing influence of racists and fascists that they decided to stop the public activities of such groups.

But, according to that oh, so 'orthodox' revolutionary group, the Workers Revolutionary Party, the Conference was getting het up about nothing. At a meeting of Leeds Polytechnic students' union last week they put forward a motion which contained the following pearls of wisdom:

'The Leeds Polytechnic Union (LPU) notes the decision of NUS conference to take steps to halt the growth of fascist and racist organisations. However, the moves of sections of the middle class and backward sections of the working class towards such reactionary organisations can be directly related to the developing world economic and political crises. The LPU therefore recognises that mobilisations against fascist public activities, far from eliminating them, merely fuel the hysterical irrationality of their campaigns.'

'The LPU realises that, just as in Germany and Italy in the 1920s and 1930s, the real dangers of fascism can only emerge after the defeat and destruction of working class organisations and therefore pledges its support to the

struggle of the Young Socialist Student Society and the Workers' Revolutionary Party to form a new leadership in the working class that will fight for socialist policies as the only solution for the class in the crisis and the only way to effectively combat fascism.'

**NOW AVAILABLE:
2 PAMPHLETS ON THE
FASCISTS!**

**Fascists & Racists: Free Speech
Won't Stop Them**

- a pamphlet which argues why students should fight for the NUS Conference resolution banning public activity by racists and fascists on campus.

Available from Red Books. Price 5p.
Orders over 50, post free.

Fascism: Smash It Now!

- what fascism is, what sort of threat it represents today, and how to stop it.

Available from Red Books. Price 10p.

Red Books is now at 87 Caledonian Rd., London, N.1.
Open 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. including Saturdays.

Trotsky fought against the Stalinists in Germany who believed that because the influence of social-democracy was the biggest barrier holding back the working class, all revolutionaries had to do was fight the social-democrats and

build the 'revolutionary leadership'

He also stressed that fascism was the instrument which the ruling class would adopt when the time came for an outright showdown with the workers' movement. (Curiously, the WRP appears to believe that the workers' organisations were already destroyed when the fascists took over in the 20's and 30's.)

Trotsky therefore fought for a united front of all working class organisations against the fascists, even when the fascists were far from seizing power.

The WRP commits the very errors that Trotsky denounced over 40 years ago, counterposing the fight for 'socialist policies' to the fight against the fascists. For them the answer is: 'Support... the Young Socialists Student Society and the Workers' Revolutionary Party'

But the students at Leeds Polytechnic understood the need for action and organised self-defence (not surprisingly, since one union member has been physically attacked twice by local right-wingers, and several others threatened). That is why they throw out the WRP's motion and endorsed NUS policy, agreeing also to set up a joint body with the Trades Council to fight against fascism.

The WRP revealed their profound understanding of the lessons of history by voting with the liberals and right-wingers against these proposals.

Birmingham

Anti-fascists in the West Midlands have prevented the setting up of a new National Front branch in Wall-send. Members of IMG, IS and the LPYS got into a meeting in the Old Grand public house on 23 April, and heckled so effectively that it had to be abandoned.

As the fascists left with their tails between their legs the publican told them that he would not let the room to them in future.

Earlier the police had tried to limit a picket on the meeting to six people

- a principle never applied to fascist pickets - with threats to arrest the participants. They did not, however, prevent the comrades from going into the meeting.

But the National Front is far from defeated in the West Midlands, as their votes in West Bromwich and Wolverhampton at the General Election showed. And despite the set-back they have suffered in Walls-end they will undoubtedly continue their attempts to broaden their base in the area.

NCTUAR ACTS

This expansion of NF influence has prompted the National Committee for Trade Unions Against Racism (NCTUAR) to take action. A meeting was called in Birmingham on 30 April, and was attended by over 30 militants from left-wing organisations, immigrant groups, and trade unions.

The meeting decided that a broad 'umbrella' organisation was needed, to co-ordinate anti-fascist activities in the area. An organising committee was elected, and it will co-opt delegates from trade union branches, shop stewards committees, and other organisations.

The committee's first task will be to mobilise against a National Front rally in Birmingham's Digbeth Civic Hall, on 17 May. The hall is owned by the Labour controlled council, and the committee will try to get the fascists banned.

On a previous occasion, Stanley Yapp, the Labour leader on the council, said that racists would not be allowed the use of the premises. This was after a Monday Club meeting.

But the committee is not relying on the council and is going ahead with preparations for the mobilisation, in order to begin to build a powerful anti-fascist force within the local labour movement.

EXTREME LEFT GETS HUGE VOTE IN FRANCE

The first round of voting in the French presidential election last Sunday has left the eventual outcome open. The run-off between Francois Mitterrand and Valery Giscard d'Estaing on 19 May will certainly be close.

But the results of the first round already allow one to draw certain conclusions about the state of the left in France.

The first thing which stands out is the truly staggering size of the vote for the extreme left. The candidates of the organised left, Alain Krivine (Front Communiste Revolutionnaire—Revolutionary Communist Front) and Arlette Laguiller (Lutte Ouvriere—Workers' Struggle) polled almost 700,000 votes between them, with Krivine getting 94,044 and Laguiller 593,370.

PRESSURE

In addition to them, however, 337,894 votes also went to Rene Dumont—an independent, but a leftist who rejected Mitterrand's

programme as insufficiently anti-capitalist. In other words, the vote of the extreme left was certainly more than 700,000 and may well not have fallen far short of a million. This in an election in which the pressure to vote for the Socialist leader Mitterrand has been truly tremendous.

What this shows is the tremendous extent to which the organisational—and to some extent, ideological—hold of the Communist and Socialist parties has declined.

The thrust of Mitterrand's campaign was the most left-wing seen in France since the days of the Popular Front in 1936. Yet even so, he was unable to draw in a very definite section of the population behind his campaign.

Similarly, the Socialist Party has not succeeded in creating any mass organisation corresponding to its new electoral weight. All this shows just how 'leftist' mass parties in Europe would have to be now to sweep the vanguard in behind them on the scale of the 1930s or 1940s.

The second thing which stands out is the very large vote for Laguiller. The campaigns of the FCR and LO showed very clearly the differences in character between the two organisations.

PROPAGANDA

Lutte Ouvriere is an organisation basically built through propaganda. Like the International Socialists in Britain, it therefore recruits most rapidly in periods of downturn in the struggle, when individual propaganda becomes the main form of activity; and it has a far lower weight in struggle than one would expect from its size.

The Front Communiste Revolutionnaire, on the contrary, is an organisation built chiefly through central campaigns. It is

mainly geared up to intervene in decisive struggles, and has grown precisely in periods of mass struggle.

This difference came out clearly in the campaigns of the two organisations. The FCR analysed that if Mitterrand were to win the political situation would move towards severe confrontations. In such a situation, it was necessary to raise the consciousness of the working class to the tasks of the coming period.

LESSONS OF CHILE

For this reason, a central part of the FCR's campaign dealt with the lessons of Chile, the role of the French army, etc; and it generally had a very 'hard' character. This led, among other things, to the accusation by the Minister of Defence that Krivine was inciting mutiny—an incident which lost the FCR a number of votes by scaring off potential supporters. The FCR were, however, satisfied overall by their campaign, and got about the vote they expected.

Within the political vanguard, certainly the FCR undoubtedly had a more important impact than Lutte Ouvriere. The sales of the daily paper put out by the FCR during the campaign have averaged 15-20,000 a day, and on the May Day demonstration in Paris the FCR's contingent was around 10,000 in comparison to LO's 6,000. At the big meetings of the campaign at the Palais des Sports in Paris, the FCR—with a local mobilisation—had 7,000 present, and LO—with a national mobilisation—had 6,000.

PERSONALISED

In contrast to the FCR's campaign, that of Laguiller and LO tended to become personalised and non-political. The front page of *Lutte Ouvriere* in its last issue before the election consisted of a big photograph of Laguiller with the slogan—'Vote for Arlette because she tells the truth'. She ran as 'a worker and a woman', avoided questions on Chile, and did not deal with the

problem of the army during her campaign.

All this is not of course because LO are 'betrayers'. It is because they have a wrong conception of the role of the revolutionary party.

They conceive of the party not as preparing the working class for the tasks of the coming period, but as organising the working class to go forward 'one step at a time'—regardless of whether the crisis, the objective tasks and the bourgeois are going forward one step at a time or in Seven League Boots.

This is why, for example, in May 1968 they stuck firm at economic demands when the tasks of the situation were clearly revolutionary ones. Their policy is disastrous in terms of a crisis situation, such as could develop if Mitterrand is elected. But in periods of relative calm it can undoubtedly reap short-term gains.

POLITICAL SUCCESS

But having understood what was wrong with Lutte Ouvriere's campaign from the point of revolutionary politics, we must also note its significance as a social fact. Laguiller's votes were not votes 'for Lutte Ouvriere in the same sense as Krivine's were votes 'for the Front'.

But Laguiller's votes were undoubtedly votes 'against Mitterrand from the left'. She succeeded in tapping to a relatively massive extent widespread dissatisfaction with Mitterrand. In that sense LO scored a notable political success, and it was greeted as such by the comrades of the FCR.

The situation on the left in France is now extraordinary. With nearly a million votes for the extreme left, the Communist Party has been forced to admit that the 'leftists' are even a force on the electoral field. Revolutionary politics is really in business in at least one country in Europe!

JOHN MARSHALL

What's On

SE ESSEX RED CIRCLE: 'The Cultural Revolution', Wednesday 15 May, 7.30 pm at 39 Kennel Lane, Billericay, Essex.

KILBURN RED CIRCLE: 'The Irish struggle—what's it all about?', Wednesday 15 May, 7.30 pm at Flat 7, 36 Canfield Gardens, London NW6. All welcome.

ARMSTRONG'S DEFENCE COMMITTEE public meeting: 'The Victimisation of Jean Japson', Wednesday 15 May, 8 pm in Sevedores and Dockers Club, Posterngate, Hull. Sponsors include Hull Docks unofficial shop stewards committee, Dan Suddaby (T&GWU Regional Committee—in personal capacity).

PRICE SISTERS: Picket outside Durham Jail to demand their repatriation to Ireland—not to 'E' wing, Saturday 18 May at 2 pm, followed by rally at Durham University at 3 pm—main speaker Jim Murray (AUEW Convenor, Vickers Elswick) plus speakers from Belfast, the women's movement, and IMG. Public meeting Sunday 19 May at 8 pm in Bridge Hotel, Newcastle—main speaker Eddie Milne (Independent Labour MP for Blyth). Organised by Tyneside Ad Hoc Committee for the Repatriation of the Price Sisters to Ireland.

SOCIALIST WOMAN FORUM: 'Lessons from the Cowley Strike', Wednesday 15 May at 8 pm in Roebuck pub, Tottenham Court Road (Warren Street tube). Speakers: member of Cowley group which distributed pro-union leaflet; Linda Smith (London Working Women's Charter Committee).

HAYES RED FORUM on 'The Labour Party', Friday 10 May at 7.30 pm in the Featherstone Arms, Featherstone Road, Southall (near Dominion Cinema). Further details from John Alderson, 848 4652.

WORKERS' FIGHT readers' meeting—Clive Bank on 'Portugal and the future'—Sunday 12 May, 7.30 pm in 'Golden Lion', Britannia Street, Kings X.

BENGALI FRIENDS in Europe and elsewhere, for Bengali books and Laral (Fourth International paper), contact: Bengali, Millvaden, Box 3274, 10365 Stockholm, Sweden.

LIVERPOOL RED BOOKS: Revolutionary literature—Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Eastern Europe, Third World, Ireland, Women's Liberation, 81a Renshaw Street, Liverpool. Tues-Fri 12.30-3. Sat 11-3.

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: Wide-ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month at 8 pm in the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

MOVE AS A COMMUNITY: The full inside story of the jailing of the Brockwell Park Three. Plus: Black people in jail; Asian workers' struggle in North London; interview with a Chilean worker. All in the June 'Race Today', 15p from bookshops or £2 annual subscription from 184 King's Cross Road, London WC1.

COUNTER-RALLY against Brian Faulkner, Unionist Party leader, who is speaking at Sheffield Memorial Hall next Monday 13 May. Assemble outside, 7.30 pm.



A central part of the FCR's campaign dealt with the lessons of Chile, particularly in relation to the future role of the French army.

Che Guevara's brother Juan is among those who have been arrested during the latest wave of repression in Argentina.

He was detained in Cordoba—scene of a right-wing 'mini-coup' in March—on Monday 29 April, and accused of carrying false documents and having propaganda put out by the underground People's Revolutionary Army (ERP).

Guevara's arrest is only one of many carried out recently by the police with the approval of President Peron. While suspected sympathisers of the ERP have been the main target of this campaign, they are by no means the only ones to be affected. Juan Carlos Coral of the Socialist Workers Party (PST), for instance, was also recently arrested for defying a government ban to speak at a rally in support of striking bank workers.

Now the repression has been openly extended to include members of the Montoneros, a 'left Peronist' semi-underground organisation which has pledged its loyalty to the president on many occasions. Among the Montoneros who have been arrested is one of the survivors of the 1972

Che's brother held

'Trelew massacre' of political prisoners by the military, Alberto Camps, who is reported to have been brutally tortured by the police.

The clearest indication of how far this process has already developed came with Peron's May Day speech in the capital, Buenos Aires. The Montoneros had once again made a special mobilisation to pay homage to their leader; and with their banners and placards, and beating their 'bombos' (Creole drums), they made up almost half of the crowd of 60,000.

Imagine their surprise and confusion when Peron began his speech by denouncing them as 'childish, stupid and corrupt'. According to the Paris daily *Le Monde*, 'each sentence contained an insult for his young supporters, and words of praise for their enemies in the unions' [i.e. the right-wing bureaucrats].

Firm believers in Peronism as the

means to social revolution, the Montoneros were dumbfounded by this sudden turn of events. Slowly their slogans died away, and then they formed up in columns, furled their banners, and marched sadly out of the square, as Peron's insults continued to echo around them.

In this way Peron openly concluded an operation begun immediately on his return to Argentina last June. The military dictatorship had been overthrown largely as a result of the mass support for the popular guerrilla groups such as the ERP and the Montoneros. But Peron had no intention of giving in to their demands for an anti-capitalist policy.

Instead, he used the fact that the 'left Peronists' regarded him as essential to their plans to play for time, persuading them to hold back on action while preparing a series of measures to isolate and then smash them. The absence of any organised resistance when the police took over Cordoba and kicked out the left Peronist governor was a sign of his success. Now he feels confident enough to openly disavow these elements.

Just how far Argentina has moved back towards the conditions that prevailed under the military dictatorship is shown by Peron's reaction when questioned about the reported torturing of Montonero militants. He declared that he had the fullest confidence in the local police chief responsible for the prisoners, Alberto Villar.

Villar was the hated federal chief

Greek Trotskyists report arrests

In a statement issued on 15 April, the Diethniko Kommunistiko Koma (Internationalist Communist Party, the Greek section of the Fourth International) reports that two of its members, Yannis Felekis and Yannis Nikas, were arrested, following the upsurge of students and workers last November.

The statement also notes the arrest of Sofronis Papadopoulos, who belongs to a different Trotskyist group. Among the other far-left groupings, fifteen members of the International

Workers Union, which is associated with the Workers Revolutionary Party here have been reported arrested. Only the following five names, however, have been released by the Junta: Theodoros Koutsoumpas, Konstantin Kardelis, Emanuel Sakakis, Angeliki Stavropoulos, and Iraklis Langothetis.

The total number of those arrested since the uprising, the statement continues, is about 250. In the revolt itself, it is estimated that about 800 people were seriously wounded and about a hundred killed.

of police under the Lanusse dictatorship. Now it is reported that he may once more be elevated to this post by Peron.

No clearer proof could be needed of Peron's real intentions towards the Argentinian workers' movement. Peronism obviously no longer has any use for its 'lefts'. The problem for the Marxist revolutionaries is to convince these thousands of young militants that they have no use for Peronism either, and that the only road to social revolution lies through arming the working class for independent mass struggle.

JOHN MARSTON

International Marxist Group



(British section of the Fourth International)

97 Caledonian Rd., London N.1.

I would like more information about the IMG and its activities

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ADDRESS

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CLAY CROSS Red Weekly CALLS NATIONAL MEETING

The Clay Cross Labour Party has called a conference in London on 8 June, and is inviting participation from all sections of the labour movement. The conference will take place at 2 p.m. in Westminster Central Hall.

The Clay Cross Councillors at present face fines and surcharges of £7,000, but there are rumours that this could mount up to as much as £100,000.

In addition the 400 other councillors, up and down Britain, who have been subjected to similar proceedings by District Auditors, could have surcharges of up to £1 million imposed on them!

The tenants in Clay Cross are still paying the £1 increase slapped on their rents by the Tory Government imposed Housing Commissioner, Anthony Crosland, Labour's Housing Minister, has refused to remove this

man from office, and has refused to remove the fines and surcharges on the councillors, or to lift the ban on their holding office for five years.

As David Skinner said in a letter to *Tribune* on 3 May: 'All this is under legislation enacted by the Tories, which Labour is pledged to repeal. We reject the arguments that the Government is powerless in face of the "law". We call on the Labour Government to take immediate action to repeal the Tory laws, and make such action retrospective in relation to all penalties enacted under it.'

'To those who accuse us of breaking the law we reply that we are keeping the only law accepted by this movement, the principles which stand for the interests of the working class. We would remind them that we are abiding by the decisions of this movement, the resolutions

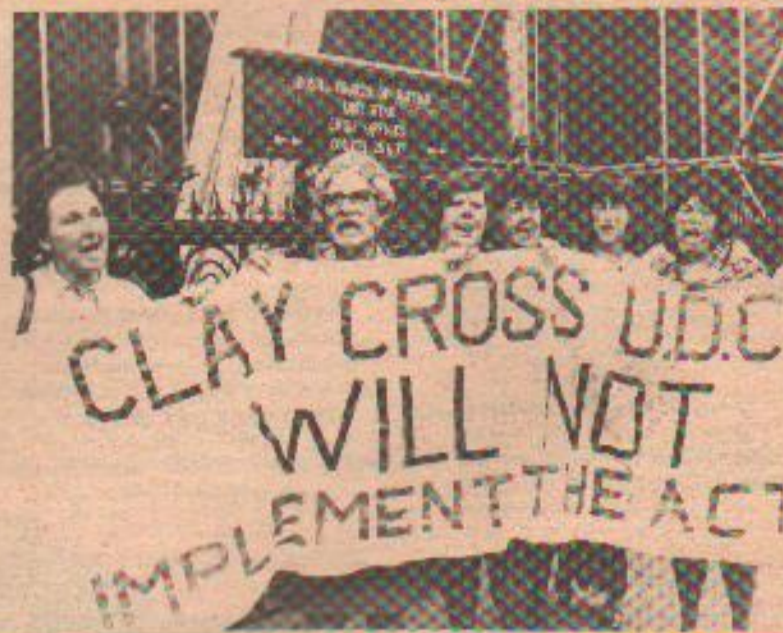
passed at the Labour Party Conference, and it is the leadership which is breaking that law.'

The Clay Cross Councillors blazed a new trail in anti-Tory struggle. The massive vote of confidence won by the Clay Cross Labour Party at the recent local elections demonstrates the way in which militancy can unite the working class against the Tories.

This conference is an opportunity to rally all who are concerned with the struggle against Labour's continued inability to solve the basic problems of working people.

Red Weekly readers should get their trade union branch and other organisations, to send delegates. Further information can be obtained from:

Charlie Bunting, 7 Lynam Close, Danesmoor, Clay Cross. (Telephone: 0246 862756).



Labour corruption

How many Labour MPs and councillors have a Poulson up their sleeve? With the Tories lying low, hoping to keep their own skeletons securely locked in the closet, the press is seizing on every fresh scandal, with the immediate aim of discrediting the Labour Government.

Should militants, in this situation, try to expose Labour Party corruption? To dig out the dirt behind a building project could have national repercussions, which might seem far worse than the graft which greases a local contract.

If the Labour Government is threatened, might it not be better to wait until the press is off its back, and the danger of a Tory victory has receded?

No! This would only strengthen the hand of the right wing in the party. They would have more room for manoeuvre if they knew that militants were afraid to challenge them over their shady commercial interests.

This would also worsen the living conditions and amenities of the working class. More office blocks would tower over

slums. Fewer derelict schools and hospitals would be replaced. And meanwhile builders, property speculators, and corrupt politicians would continue to line their pockets.

The key question is: Who is doing the exposing and for what purpose? The bourgeois press wants workers to equate the Labour Party with the Tory Party, ('they're all in it together'). Their intention is to discourage Labour voters at the next general election.

But exposure by militants of the shady deals can stimulate action by the labour movement. It can win support for the demand to open the books, for occupation of empty office blocks and luxury flats, and for the blacking of work on buildings which do not serve the interests of the working class.

Action by militants to reveal the deals that are going on in the recesses of the council chambers and the corners of the Commons is the best way to mobilise the labour movement against capitalism. And it is the best way to keep the Tories out.

COUNCILLOR FIGHTS INTRIGUE

'Secrecy', says Stephen Evans, a young Nottingham Labour councillor, in an appeal to the local labour movement, 'is a danger to true democracy. The principle of "open the books" must be upheld in local and national administration as in industry.'

'Accordingly I maintain that any information that I receive as a Labour councillor should be available to the whole labour movement.'

Evans is at the centre of a storm which promises to reach Dan Smith proportions, and the actions taken by the Labour group in an effort to frustrate his enquiries indicate that they are well aware of the rocks which lie ahead for the city bureaucrats.

On 14 March, the Nottingham council planning committee voted for an application from Bentray Investments to build a huge office block for the use of the council on one of the most valuable sites in the city centre. It was supported by all the Labour members, except Evans.

HOMES NOT OFFICES

The Market Ward Labour Party of which he is a member, and which includes the site, had overwhelmingly rejected the office development in favour of building homes for some of the 8,000 families on the council's waiting list. Besides, over a quarter million square feet of office space already stand vacant in Nottingham.

'I'm against the office block', says Evans, 'because of the scarce resources of land, labour, materials and finance which

we should be using to relieve the critical housing shortage, overcrowding, and slum living conditions. And I'm against the involvement of private developers who make profits out of the community.'

The Labour group, which holds 44 of the 54 seats on the council, has other ideas. It was no coincidence that the planning committee had considered the application before the end of March.

Under the local government reorganisation scheme, Nottingham County Council, which is opposed to all city centre office buildings, was due to take over from the City Council on 1 April.

In fact, the Labour group was so anxious to rush the deal through that it asked Bentray Investment, a subsidiary of Associated Television, to backdate its application in order to allow the statutory 21 days' notice period. Moreover, by a secret agreement made in 1959, Bentray had been guaranteed the first option on the site.

EXPULSION

When Evans began to enquire into these matters, the reaction of the Labour Party was swift. They expelled him from it, after he had refused to sign a statement that he would not 'go behind the backs' of committee chairman to secure information. 'They wanted to stifle any more embarrassing investigations,' Evans explains. 'I've just been doing the job I'm supposed to be doing.'

Evans is not alone in being victimised for his interest in the proposed office block. Three members of the Market Ward LP who had attended the meeting which voted

against the development are employed in the council's planning department, and they were accused by councillor Carroll (the Labour leader, of revealing the details of the deal.

'Any discussion of a planning application in public before it's dealt with by the committee', observed Carroll, 'is an extremely dangerous practice which could have serious repercussions.' The three planners were called in and told that their promotion prospects were nil if they didn't keep their mouths shut.

Their victimisation has been taken up by NALGO social workers, because, as Evans says, 'they have to deal with the cases that arise from bad housing.'

Evans himself is appealing to the local labour movement to support his demand to be reinstated in the Labour group, that councillors fight for the policies laid down by the rank-and-file; for the opening of all government books; and the taking over of resources to meet urgent housing needs.

ACTION COMMITTEE

He also supports the action committee which is organising a campaign against the office block and calling for an enquiry.

'The action committee is a labour movement body', says Dave Packer, a member of the committee and of Market Ward LP, 'and what we want is a workers' enquiry.'

'We are taking the issue to the labour movement, and we are refusing this campaign to highlight the scandalous housing conditions and the need for the working class to defend its own on every level.'



The IMG Revolutionary Students Rally held in London last weekend. Over 500 students from all over Britain participated in a vital discussion on the world-wide crisis of capitalism and the struggle for socialism. The rally was the first of a series of events which the IMG is planning, to provide an organised focus for revolutionary students.

Essex students reinstated

A major victory has been won in the struggle at Essex University. Two of the expelled students, IMG militants Will Rich and Ronnie Munck, have been re-instated.

The appeal against their expulsions, which resulted from militant action during the NUS Day of Action in the Grants Campaign, resulted in their being reduced to 'suspended expulsions.' The appeal of the third expelled student had not been heard when *Red Weekly* went to press.

The next step in the struggle, the defence of the 105 militants arrested during the picketing at Essex, will be boosted by this victory. The authorities were undoubtedly worried that an enforcement of the High Court injunction against the expelled students might have led to even fiercer mobilisations in solidarity with them. Mass militant action pays—that is the message from Essex University.

IS attempts to block publication of Red Weekly

The International Socialists group have taken the decision to 'black' *Red Weekly* at SW Litho, the IS-controlled firm that has printed the paper for the past two weeks. This, they claim, is because one of their photographers was allegedly punched by a member of the IMG during last weekend's Chile demo.

The IMG deplors this decision, particularly at a time when the working class is under attack and the intervention of revolutionaries could have a major impact on the course of events.

We wish to point out the following facts:

1. Any scuffles that occurred between members of the IMG and IS arose out of the IS disrupting the order in which contingents on the demonstration would

march. 2. The order of march was determined at the Ad-Hoc Committee meeting before the demonstration. This was: May 5th Ad-Hoc Committee, Chile Solidarity Campaign, Chile Lucha; the IMG and IS to discuss who should follow them.

3. The IS refused to discuss this, on the grounds that 'we are the biggest, we are going first.'

4. Despite the IMG contingent being already lined up behind the leading banners the IS still refused to discuss the march order.

5. Given this refusal, it was inevitable that when the IS attempted to cut into the IMG ranks and place itself directly behind the lead banners, scuffles broke out. It is quite clear that the responsibility for any violence rests entirely with the IS leadership.

The sabotage of the IS by refusing to print *Red Weekly* (despite past agreements) underlines the continuing sectarian development of this organisation. Despite the fact that the IS had been completely inactive on Chile up until the calling of the 5 May demonstration, they seemed to believe they had some 'divine' right to lead the demonstration.

When that 'right' was challenged the IS response was to adopt administrative reprisals that serve only to weaken the revolutionary left.

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CASH PLEASE

The NIRC has at last provoked the leadership of the AUEW into action. This will also challenge the attack being prepared on the T&GWU.

The 'social contract' has been threatened—but to smash it would require firm and decisive leadership: the opposite of Scanlon's convolutions and wheeler-dealing.

Help *Red Weekly* to speak clearly during this crisis: send a donation to our Fund Drive NOW!

Send to Red Weekly Fund Drive, c/o 97 Caledonian Road, London, N.1.