

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE

# Socialist Voice

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## BRITISH MINERS



## HELP FREE THE JAILED PERUVIAN MINERS

**INSIDE** ▼ Second Edition of Scheme Workers' Voice

**Europe / Argentina / Josef Pinior and Poland**

# TROTSKYISM IS GROWING



Over 3,500 attended the rally of the Brazilian Section of the IWL (FI), *Convergencia Socialista*. This meeting preceded the highly successful Brazilian Congress.

## THE WORLD CONGRESS OF THE IWL (FI)

The International Workers League (Fourth International) made its contribution to some of the most momentous months in history when it held its Second World Congress in July.

The May Days in China, with millions of people in the longest and widest mass mobilisation ever seen; the treacherous massacre of Teinenman in June; the upsurge of Siberian and Ukrainian miners in July: these told the world once again that it was in an epoch of transition from capitalism to socialism.

These historic months were marked by other great events: the June, in Rosario and other Argentine cities, the frustration at hunger and increasing misery exploded in spontaneous mass expropriation of necessities. Argentina moves rapidly to revolution. And it goes headlong along this road with one significant feature.

Firmly planted in the midst of the Argentine working class is a revolutionary trotskyist party - the Movement to Socialism - with mass influence. Further, it is connected with

a world organisation dedicated to the struggle to overthrow capitalism and the bureaucracies in the Labour Movement which serve it. That organisation is the International Workers League (Fourth International).

All countries of Latin America, together with the United States, Europe and Australia were represented at this Congress. The Polish Socialist Party (Democratic Revolution) sent one of its leading members who participated in the discussion as a fraternal observer.

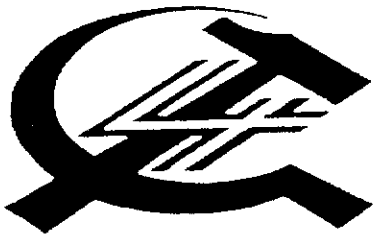
The Congress could truly claim that its proceedings followed Trotsky's advice to the Fourth International in 1938 - that trotskyism should turn to the tasks of the mass movement.

The central document of the Congress proclaimed that in the period before the Congress, the world revolutionary situation had made a great leap. There was "the opening of a revolutionary situation in the workers' states and the deepening of the independent mobilisation of the masses in

the backward countries - the highest peaks being the Palestine Intifada and Latin America, with Argentine in the lead."

The Congress confidently declared that this was the hour of trotskyism and that the world would now witness "new Octobers", that is to say, proletarian internationalist revolutions of the type of the Russian Revolution.

"The leap in the world revolutionary situation" said the central resolution before the Congress, "has steadily tipped the balance in the relation of forces in favour of the masses, who are delivering colossal blows against the counter-revolutionary front headed by imperialism, the bureaucracy, and the semi-colonial bourgeoisies. The masses are confronting the imperialist counter-revolution and defeating the austerity plans in backward countries, shaking "perestroika" and the semi-colonisation plans of the workers' states, as in China. At the same time their actions step over agreements, negotiations, democratic govern-



ments and controlled openings, like "glasnost" in the workers' states."

The Congress pledged the international leadership and the sections of the IWL to a systematic campaign inside the workers' movement to win the workers' organisations to the task of solidarity with the Argentine revolution and assisting its victory.

We must emphasise that this campaign is central to our work in the English speaking imperialist countries as well as in the countries of Latin America. The success of a new October revolution in Argentina would be an enormous conquest of the masses of the whole world. It would open up great possibilities of resolving the crisis of world working class leadership.

Neither finance-capitalists, stalinist bureaucrats, bourgeois nationalist nor social democrats have an answer for the masses who are driven into struggle against all of them.

The Congress opened up the immediate prospect of a real world organisation of the principled internationalist trend in trotskyism - the IWL. In grasping such a prospect, the Congress was reflecting objective developments in the crises of imperialism and stalinism. Imperialism now passes to increased exploitation of the workers in its European heartlands. The multi-nationals and banks are preparing that in the Common Market and the stage is set for explosive class struggle in capitalist Europe, while, in the East the bureaucratic workers' states are shaken by mass movements.

The leap of the world revolution must mean the possibility of a mass world party of proletarian revolution in all the continents. That was the stage which was prepared for by the World Congress.

There was agreement with the PPS(DR) on the necessity to support all revolutionary working class currents appearing in the countries governed by stalinist bureaucracies. The Congress decided to support the formation of a workers' revolutionary united front on the basis of a minimum common revolutionary programme with the objective of coordinating and giving impulse to the struggles against imperialism and the bureaucracy.

The Congress of 1989 was a landmark in the fifty year development of the Fourth International. It was permeated with revolutionary optimism, registering, as it did the great advance of trotskyism in the mass movement in Argentina and Brazil and the possibilities opening up in the rest of the world.



## "OUR COMMON STRUGGLE AGAINST STALINISM AND IMPERIALISM"

JOSEF PINIOR spoke at a meeting of several thousand in Argentina, which included delegations of workers from many factories, on the 12th August. His speech, frequently interrupted by applause and singing, he said:

"We do not believe there exists the possibility of Socialism in one country at all costs we want to co-ordinate workers struggles not only in the eastern block but throughout the world for this reason the Soviet miners strike was so important to us. These miners in the soviet union and you here in

Argentine are struggling for socialism. Not Gorbachev.

"The task of the united front of revolutionary left is the common struggle against stalinism and imperialism. We think that at this time the need is for co-ordination of the forces not only within the eastern block but with left revolutionaries of all the world. For this I come here to Latin America.

"Until a short time ago we spoke of common struggle against stalinism and imperialism as only dream to day following my stay it is not a dream it is a reality."

**TROTSKYIST LEADERSHIP  
and the  
POLITICAL REVOLUTION:**

By Bill Hunter 50p  
A criticism of Enest Mandel's book-  
"Beyond Perestroika. The future of  
Gorbachev's USSR"

"The most important task for revolution-ary leaders is not to speculate about develop-ments in the bureaucracy...but to thoroughly study the mass movements that develop, seek ways of intervention and developing revolutionary leadership and developing the slogans and tactics of struggle which can assist all independent movements or the masses."

"The method of Mandel covers up the crisis of the bureaucracy and softens the the firmness of the struggle against it. A victor-ious political revolution will only be real-ised with a leadership that is educated and hardened in the consciousness of the neces-sity of complete independence of workers' organisation; with its theory, programme and practice completely freed of any illusions of bureaucratic self-reform."-This is the con-clusion of the pamphlet.

The pamphlet takes a firm stand in support of the twin Trotskyist principles of inde-pendence and international of the working class in the struggle to give leadership to the developing political revolution in Eastern Europe, China and the USSR.

**IWL VIDEOS**

The International Socialist League now has available two unique videos in the English language.

**TROTSKY AND THE IWL(FI)**

Archive material of Trotsky in the Rus-sian Revolution and his subsequent fight against stalinism is shown in this video. Anyone with an interest in trotskyism will want to see this video. Price £10.00

**WORLD REVOLUTIONARY SITUATION**

The video describes in a popular form, using film footage of the important struggles of the worlds working masses, how imperialist that tries to impose misery and hunger on the debtor nations has led to a world revolutionary situation.

The video goes on to explain that this is the hour for the political movement of trotskyism because it is the political cur-rent in the world that fights for workers self mobilisation and supports all the struggles of the workers. Price £8.00

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# AMBULANCE CUTS CAUSE CHILD'S DEATH

Pete Windeler

DRASTIC CUT-BACKS in the ambulance service are being imposed throughout the country. In many areas services are down to the bare minimum. "Socialist Voice" spoke to a shop steward at Stockport Ambulance depot.

"We are suffering cut backs, cut backs, everywhere you look! In 1985 there were 7 ambulances, each with fully trained crews available during the day. Now there are just 5, sometimes only 4", he said.

To work within insufficient budgets, the Stockport ambulance service has got rid of qualified staff. Crews with only a minimum knowledge of first aid are being used for non-emergency work, for ferrying out-patients. The trouble is that if there is a spate of emergency calls there are too few trained crews to deal with them.

A tragic case of a Stockport boy, Jason Smith, illustrates the problem. The three year old died after suffering a catastrophic haemorrhage at home whilst recovering from an operation to remove his tonsils. His mother told the "Stockport Times" the family had given up waiting for an ambulance. "We rang three times" she said, and eventually they took Jason to hospital in a private car.

An inquiry revealed that the ambulance assigned to pick up Jason had been dispatched to a road traffic accident and, before a replacement arrived, the child had already gone to hospital.

According to the shop steward, staffing is now down to the absolute minimum. On the notice board of the Stockport depot there is a cutting from a local newspaper highlighting the disgraceful standard of some of the ambulances due to cut backs in cleaning staff.

A further bone of contention amongst ambulance crews is the well below inflation pay rise of 6.5% offered by their employers. The shop steward told us that the government is only interested in property. "They won't spend money on saving lives, that's why police get over 9% and we are only offered 6.5%", he said.

When discussing who the "Socialist Voice" was, the ambulance crews were told of a radiographer who had recently stayed in Stockport and was a member of the MAS in Argentina. In the hospital where he worked in Argentina there was a broken waste pipe in the floor of the operating theatre which regularly flooded the floor with sewage, because there was no money to repair it.

"It's going to be just like that over here before long" was one ambulance man's reaction to the conditions in the Argentine health service.

**THIS ISSUE OF  
SOCIALIST VOICE WAS  
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signed articles do not necessarily  
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# RE-BUILD THE MILITANT LEFT

THE TUC meets this month. It would be foolish to expect the real problems of the working class and the trade union movement to be faced in the conference hall.

Will it give a real answer to the question: why, in ten years, have British unions lost almost thirty per cent of their membership?

One of the major reasons for the drastic decline has been the trade union leadership itself.

In mining and the docks, in particular, trade union leaders opposed and even sabotaged the resistance of workers defending their jobs.

In the month preceding the congress, two pits were closed in Wales and the last pit was closed in Kent.

Betteshanger was a pit with a militant record. Working class fighters wept as their pit was closed and they saw no prospect of a struggle. The TUC opened the road to the present decimation of miners' jobs by its betrayal of the great miners' strike of 1984-5.

Also in the month of August, Liverpool dockers returned to work. The national dock strike against the abolition of the Dock Labour Scheme was collapsed by Ron Todd.

Increasingly, we have witnessed the sorry spectacle at the top of the British trade union movement of "left" and right propping each other up. Willis and the right wing capitulate to and collaborate with the transnationals and the state whilst the Todds and other self-styled 'lefts' cuddle up to them, secure in the knowledge that the so-called 'Broad Lefts' will support them, selling their policies to and controlling the rank and file on their behalf.

Now, we have trade union leaders complaining that the unions have lost the legal right to strike. They will tell us that the only thing we can do is to wait for a Labour Government to return our trade unions rights.

The Labour Party leaders have openly stated that a future Labour Government will keep basic Tory legislation. They will continue to outlaw secondary action - an attack on the class solidarity that is the heart of real trade unionism.

Workers' organisation and strength were built in a struggle against legal shackles. We're not just talking here of the unions of the last century - the time of Tolpuddle. It is also a fact of modern his-

tory - of the period since the war. At the beginning of that period the struggle for the rights of workers to organise went together with a struggle against the union bureaucracy.

Immediately after the Second World War, the Labour Cabinet and the encrusted trade union bureaucracy collaborated with the capitalist state in order to maintain war time regulations curbing union struggle. Rank and file working class battles, with the dockers in the vanguard, smashed the war time legislation.

**The new leadership must be built on a programme of the independence of working class organisations and mobilising workers' initiative and democracy. That is what built the unions - it is what has preserved them - and it is what will prevent their destruction.**

As trade union organisation increased and the ranks further shook up the trade union bureaucratic structures, the capitalist state prepared new legislation.

The instrument for the new legal attacks on the unions was the very organisation which the unions had formed at the beginning of the century as their political expression. It was the 1964 Labour Government which attempted to carry out the attacks on the unions which the capitalist state officials had been preparing and drafting.

The Bevanite, former left, Barbara Castle, was Minister of Labour and made the statement "Power lies on the shop floor". She and the Labour Government set about tackling the job of undermining that power. Eventually they produced the notorious White Paper "In place of Strife" outlining proposals to curb union power.

The resistance of the rank and file broke up this plan of the Labour Government. The tremendous and widespread movement of opposition eventually split the Labour Cabinet.

The working class continued the fight for the defence of their unions under the following Tory Government and eventually their struggle brought it down.

The Labour Government of 1974-79, however, continued to serve capitalism's desire to undermine the strength of the working class. It held back wages under the notorious "social contract". It upheld the

criminalisation of picketing by refusing to release the Shrewsbury building workers' pickets' Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson, despite protest and demonstration from all sections of organised workers.

The Tory Government was returned. Their economic policies towards the basic industries in Britain were determined in a large measure by their aim to break up the traditional strength of British unions in engineering, mining and shipbuilding. The leadership made one retreat after another, undermining and splitting up the workers' struggle against redundancies and closures.

Encouraged by the surrenders of the trade union leadership, the Tories proceeded with their class legislation designed to destroy the unions.

The Tory Government has since been using the law to change the balance of class forces and to steadily increase the polarisation of wealth in Britain.

The trade union and Labour Party bureaucracy would rather have the legislation than encourage a mighty upsurge of the working class to remove it.

The crying need is for the building of a militant wing in the unions. That means a break with all opportunist practices in the "Broad Lefts". No real alternative to the bureaucracy, which is assisting in the destruction of the trade unions, can be built centred around manoeuvres which cover up for them.

You cannot now fight for trade unionism unless you fight against the law and against the state. There is no way to avoid it. All the ducking and weaving of Ron Todd in relation to the dockers' struggle did not remove the use of the law against it.

**The new leadership must be built on a programme of the independence of working class organisations and mobilising workers' initiative and democracy. That is what built the unions - it is what has preserved them - and it is what will prevent their destruction.**

From the stirrings among workers in recent weeks we can see that this is what is retaking the stage in Britain as part of the world wide movement against oppression and opportunist bureaucratic leaderships.

Socialists can do nothing less than support and aid the development of the fight for true workers democracy and accountability in the organisations of the working class.

# HELD UNDER THE PTA

THE "Staffs Miners' Wives" singing group were held under the Prevention of Terrorism Act at Manchester airport as they were returning from Belfast on the 14th August. They had gone over for the march that marked the anniversary of British troops going into the north twenty years ago.

On the 12th Debbie Grew, Chair of the Manchester Martyrs Committee and others were held for seven hours under the PTA as they were travelling to Ireland. Police confiscated film and refused toilet facilities. True to form they also asked questions about trade union activities and why one person had Poll Tax leaflets!

The PTA is used continually to harrass people who support the struggle for a united Ireland and who are also connected with the trade unions.

## SUPPORT THE 35 HOUR WEEK

SOCIALIST VOICE talked to Graham Parker and Fred Feber, two workers from Eccles, about the 35 hour week campaign of the Engineering Union.

FF: "The AEU has accepted what they have been given for at least ten years but this time they are making a stand over something. We were told that if the AEU won a 35 hour week, our factory would also work it, the shorter basic working week would give us better conditions and would mean some could earn more money. But whether we will get the shorter week here if it is agreed nationally we don't know. We have worked for H. Clark & Company for about ten years, it is an old traditional family firm and it may not concede easily."

GP: "Our conditions now mean a 38 3/4 hour week. We work 5 in 4, that is we work a full week between Monday and Thursday but it means that we don't finish work until 5.45. Many are now working an average of 50 hours a week to make up their wages."

"Although the union is mainly Transport and General in the factory we have followed the AEU national agreements for years. Last year because the national wage campaign took so long the boss gave us a 6% wage increase and said he would top it up if the final agreement was bigger but he never did."

## READER'S LETTER

Comrades,

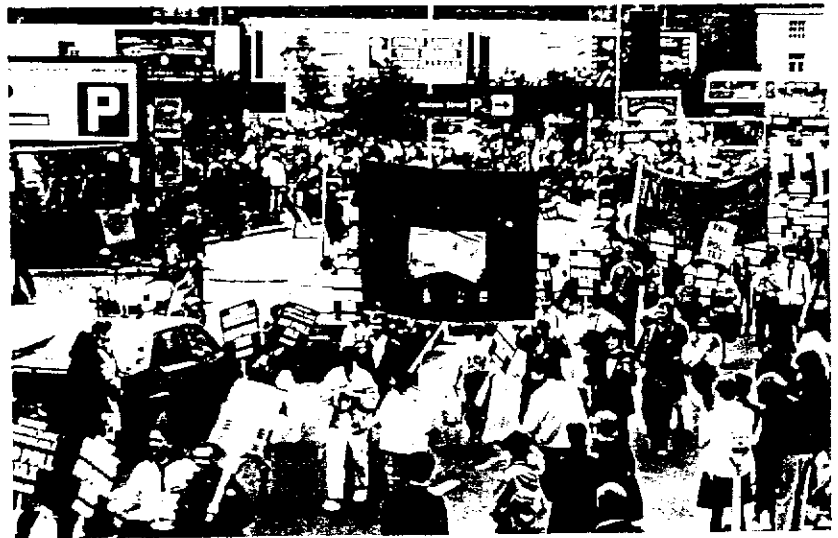
The editorial on page 1 of issue 17 of "Socialist Voice", and the article on the present NALGO dispute on page 2 of the same issue misses an important point.

The editorial rightly points to the failure of the trade union leaders and politicians to give a lead in fighting the Poll Tax, but makes no mention of how the present NALGO dispute is disrupting the implementation of the Poll Tax in England and Wales.

In Brent, for example, the Poll Tax department was one of the sections balloted on indefinite strike over the pay claim. They walked out as soon as they got the result of the ballot. This is not a unique situation, but one that's being repeated around the country.

Socialists must link the fight over pay with the struggle against the Poll Tax. Whilst we must welcome and be part of the fight back in the community, NALGO workers are showing where the power to smash the Tories' rotten Poll Tax really lies.

Yours fraternally  
B. Hennessy  
Liverpool



*Many NALGO branches were represented on the Anti-Poll Tax Demonstration in Manchester*

Editorial comment

We agree that it is important to link all these struggles together in a common fight against the Tory's attack on local authorities and communities. As far as we know not one local authority has developed a public campaign with the aim of mobilising the communities and the trade unions.

Many NALGO banners were on the march against the Poll Tax in Manchester which showed the willingness of the rank and file to mobilise against the Tax. Obviously its effect will stir increasing numbers of workers as services deteriorate, cuts are made and jobs are threatened by its application.

At each stage this movement faces the overcoming of the leadership of the local authorities, the leadership of the trade unions and the leadership of the Labour Party.

The linking of the movement to defend jobs and services in the trade unions with the movement outside the unions remains a perspective that is central to a successful campaign.

# ITV: PLAYING FOR PROFITS

FOR DECADES actors have been paid not only for acting in a TV play or series but everytime that it has been repeated on television or has been sold to other countries. The leadership of EQUITY, the actors union, has made a compromise with the ITV television management that will mean a drastic cut in fees and also the possibility of endless repeats on television and therefore fewer jobs for actors and bored viewers.

Socialist Voice interviewed James Quinn, a member on the actors union EQUITY, over the current ballot over repeat performance fees.

SV: "Which way has the EQUITY leadership recommended its members to vote?"

JQ: "The EQUITY council has recommended to its members that they should vote to end the repeat programme fees agreement and replace it with a royalty system.

Actors get 100% of their original fee for all programmes that are repeated. This was won in the 1950's, it was a historic struggle. In East Enders, Brookside or Coronation Street which are automatically repeated, your basic fee, which is negotiated, is paid twice. The companies hate it because it means that if they ever want to show the programme again they have to pay again.

The reason it was fought for was that it makes companies make new programmes. If companies do not have to pay a full repeat fee then you could find yourself being repeated for the rest of your life.

The owners are saying its just for the overseas market but, of course, it is a test and the companies are in competition with cable television. In the early 1990's they will be competing to buy their own companies which are being put up for auction. They are trying to save money and that means driving down costs of production, wages and getting rid of the 100% repeat fees.

It is something that, I think that members of the union will fight for. It is not like a perk, actors really understand that it is there to stop them spending the rest of their lives seeing themselves come up on the screen and thinking: "God I'm not getting a penny for that" and knowing that it is possibly replacing a new programme.

Repeat fees can vary themselves from 200% for some American agreements to 40% for other countries.

What the companies want is to base fees on a 17% share of the programme sale. So, for example, if Granada television sold a programme for £10,000 to an Australian company the actors' share of that will be 17% that is £1,700. All the actors who were involved in that programme will get an equal share of the £1700. With a large cast each one would receive a much smaller fee.

Even worse, it could be exchanged for a programme and there seems to be no guideline in the agreement for what happens if a programme is exchanged: what are you going to get if your series is exchanged for "Neighbours" for instance?

The Equity leadership have said they will monitor the problem, but it means nothing because this leadership has no history of leading a fight. The strength of the industry is in the TV and film industry but it has got to be organised."

SV: "What do you think about this type of ballot?"

JQ: "It is really a referendum. You have got a statement in favour and statement against, then you have to try and work it out for yourself.

It is a very difficult way for people to work things out rather than sitting in a meeting and listening to the arguments which allows positions to be weighed up. The Equity leadership have used the secret ballot for many years because it atomises, in the name of democracy, the strength of the membership. They say it is easier for members but actually the complex questions need the fullest discussions and the chance to here the views of other rank and file opposition.

'Opposition' has come from people in the leadership who are saying that they are against royalties but one of them is known to have said: "... well I'm against royalties but how about making it a 25% cut for the actors in stead of a 17% cut". Hardly a very principled position.

SV: "Is there an organised left in the union that is campaigning for a no vote?"

JQ: "There is Equity Left Alliance. It is an amalgam of various left wing groups and has campaigned against the cut in repeat fees.

It is calling a meeting in September which will also discuss the threat to the closed shop in Equity. The changes in the law mean that by law employment to those not in a trade union cannot be refuse. At the moment Equity has a closed shop. But it is a pre-entry closed shop which means that you have to be a member to get a job. It is a position large numbers of the union disagree with, particularly the left of the union, because we think that it should be a post-entry closed shop - if you are offered a job then you have to join the union.

It is a very protectionist measure: "we cannot have too many members because there are not enough jobs to go around". It goes together with a leadership that will not fight to get more jobs in the union or protect jobs.

## "Don't go back until I come out"

BEFORE AND during the last war, Kent miners were drawn from all the mining areas of Britain. Many of the miners who came to this expanding coalfield had been victimised for their activity during the General Strike of 1926. This was one of the main reasons for the militant record of this area.

The Kent coalfield was one of the most bombed mining districts in Britain. During the Battle of Britain, the miners of Kent were praised by the Government for their bravery in working under fire.

Some time following this, at Betteshanger Pit, there took place a struggle which deserves an honoured place in Labour history.

In January 1942, there was a strike of miners at Betteshanger against a cut in earnings. Ernest Bevin, T&GWU leader and Minister of Labour, issued summonses against the 1,017 strikers under the Essential Works Order which legally curbed strikes.

A magistrates' court sentenced the secretary of the union branch, William Powell, to two months hard labour. The chairman, Tudor Davis and a member of the branch committee - Isaac Methuen - were given hard labour for a month. The other strikers were individually fined.

The conduct of the branch officials was in sharp contrast to that of our present complacent and crawling trade union leaders, capitulating to the Tories' legal attacks.

Tudor Davis, putting the case for the men at the court said: "we are fighting for something we hold sacred and which we have achieved only after years of struggle." Before being taken down, William Powell shouted: "Don't go back until I come out". And the miners didn't - by unanimous decision!

Other miners in Kent, in Wales and Yorkshire struck work in sympathy. The movement began to spread and the Government beat a retreat. The demands of the men were accepted with back payment, the leaders were released and the fines quashed.

### Equity Left Alliance

Public Meeting  
Drill Hall, London  
2.00 to 6.00 pm  
Saturday  
23rd September

CONVERGENCIA SOCIALISTA, Brazilian section of the IWL(FI), is making great inroads to the working class and is growing rapidly. In July the Brazilian Party had their Congress. It was a congress the type of which has not been seen in Britain for many years. It was a vibrant congress, a congress with many workers eager to take part in all the discussions.

This interview with Zezoca Wecmowicki, one of the founders of the party is longer than normal. We are not apologising for this because these articles show the developments of trotskysts and workers. The CS started in 1975 with four students as this interview shows. Under the leadership of the international headed by Moreno they made a continuous turn to the working class. As they stress, none of their considerable achievements for world trotskysm would have been possible outside of the struggle for the international.

One example was their contribution to the resolution that came from the ISL in Britain on South Africa. They immediately gave focus to the resolution by saying that a campaign over the BTR strike in South Africa would begin in Brazil and that direct links between the struggle in South Africa and Brazil would be taken up.

SV: "Why was the Brazilian Congress so powerful?"

ZW: "The party was built in a very close relationship to the rank and file of the workers movement in Brazil. The growing militancy of the working class was reflected in the congress and at our rally. Ninety percent were metalworkers, teachers, bank workers and students. Many delegations came from workers struggles and from the factories.

In the rally we saw the force of the party in the new revolutionary direction of the leaders. This reflected the many years we have spent in the working class. In the congress the maturing strength of the party was shown, because in the mass movement we had built a current of cadres on the basis of the trotskyst programme.

Only at our congress did we see the full strength of our development."

SV: "How was the cadre of the party constructed?"

ZW: "Moreno insisted on two big lessons from Trotsky: always be in close relation to the struggles of the class and be an integral part of the international current. Moreno also stressed the need to develop a good leadership team in the party.

The discussion on the election of the new leadership at the congress was very important where some of the leaders were changed. We tried to give the leadership a better balance but it did not mean that those that were

# BRAZIL AND



*The platform at the Brazilian rally. There were so many on the platform because all the party activists who had been leaders of recent strikes, trade union leaders or council leaders were invited onto the platform.*

no longer in the central committee were not capable. This was a synthesis of our rapid growth and the development of team work.

Ten years ago we had a crisis in the leadership because comrades thought of themselves as individuals and more capable than others. Now we elect the leadership as a team without subjectivity.

One international comrade was astonished at the maturing of the leadership. He had been in Brazil ten years ago and he said to us: "what you did in ten years took us forty years in Argentina". We made such an advance because of their forty year development but also because we made a great effort to learn from Moreno.

We have to continue building in the mass movement in Brazil to maintain this advance."

SV: "What role did the growth of the workers' movement have in the development of the party?"

ZW: "A central aspect for our party is the growth of the working class in the last twenty years because of the so-called Brazilian miracle. A great increase of industrial expansion with increasing exploitation of the working class gave rise to a new growth of the working class. For example in 1962 there were 3 million industrial workers in 1980 this number reached 10 million. Many of the young workers. Lula (the leader of the Workers Party), for example, came from the country. There was also an influx of immigrants. These forces formed the new working class, they were inexperienced, but it was this working class that generated the Work-

ers Party. We are part of that process.

The organisation of workers grew rapidly. The upsurge of the movement against the dictatorship found this new layer of workers prepared to fight with great strength.

We already had gained experience in the building of the student movement. After 1977-78 the working class began to move. We started gaining experience in 1976, we went to Minas Gerais and then to Sao Paulo where we played a role in the first strikes. The strikes began in 1979 and we were in the leadership of some local ones.

We also proposed the formation of the Workers Party and we proposed the foundation of the CUT (the Trade Union Federation).

The strength of the party at the congress was the result of 15 years of work of fighting to go to the working class."

SV: "Where are the main strengths of the party now inside the working class?"

ZW: "The main sector of workers are the engineering workers and they are organised in very large unions. In Great Sao Paulo state, there are 1 million. In the whole of Brazil there are more than 700,000 bank workers and there are more than 800,000 teachers. After this come the public employees particularly the workers of the universities and 200,000 health workers. The print workers are the seventh main sector. We have leaders in these unions. Until now we did not have connections with the farm workers, but now that is changing.

We have the leadership of the post office workers in Sao Paulo. In the telecommuni-



# TROTSKYISM

cations and the construction workers we have some people. We are also growing in the transport workers. We are in the leadership of the engineering workers in Minas Gerais and fighting for the leadership in Rio De Janeiro. We have the leadership of five city bank workers union and in their last national congress we had 30% of all the delegates.

We are growing in San Bernardo the principle workers area of all Brazil, this is where the workers party was founded and where Lula, the President of the CUT began.

fight for the leadership of them in several factories such as Ford and Volkswagen. Volkswagen have 35,000 workers and Ford has 20,000 workers."

SV: "What is the economic situation and its effects on workers in Brazil?"

ZW: "All the economy has been paralysed by the external debt which is now \$150 billion. Since 1981 the economy has been declining. There has been increasing speculation; this year there has been \$30 billion

per month, in Sao Paulo it can reach \$250 or £300. The average bank workers wage is now \$100. Teachers, after a great strike of several months, have increased their wage to £300 per month for forty hours teaching.

SV: "What programmes do you have for the struggles?"

ZW: "We always try to give a programme and a plan of struggle, for all struggles. It is common for us to develop a plan of struggle for say the engineering workers or the teachers and put this plan to the whole CUT for support. The general strike was a result of the movement and our proposals. We are now an objective force in the struggles. Others in the CUT tell a joke that we are always the fanatics of the plans of struggle.

The plan of struggle is to get different sections of workers to co-ordinate and fight against the government. For example, we call for a unified wage campaign. The bank workers of Rio, the teachers at their national conference and the metal workers of Minas, adopted the plan.

The programme was easier to get adopted, for example we proposed the non-payment of the external debt to the CUT, the nationalisation of the financial system, the workers control of industry and socialism. It was a very good programme that was adopted by the CUT when it was formed. Now they are trying to change it but they are finding that difficult. The Workers Party leadership is also moving to the right and changing the programme, but it is harder in the CUT.

SV: "So the working class is strongly resisting hyperinflation?"

ZW: "The Brazilian working class will act in the same way as in Venezuela and Argentina but here the workers are very strong. They are stronger here than in those two countries and with a powerful organisation of workers - the CUT, with trotskysts in a very powerful position inside the unions. This means that hyperinflation will mean not only sacking of super markets for food but also a general strike or some great strikes which would produce more combined forms of class struggle.

If a great movement arises in Rio because of hyperinflation we will have great possibilities for the leadership of the mass mobilisations and it is same in Sao Paulo. Within this we will be fighting for the leadership of the mass organisations.

We now have 2000 militants. Around us we have 4000 sympathisers.

In a recent poll the union institution came out as the second most respected in the country, the government is the most respected but the CUT is the second. Workers have confidence in their unions. The unions may play a great role in the Brazilian revolution."



A large demonstration led by bank workers of Rio De Janeiro, calling for a financial plan controlled by workers. Bank workers are one of the three most militant sections of the Brazilian working class

In the teacher's union we have the leadership in the state of Santa Catarina and in Parnambuco, the most important north eastern state we are now fighting for the leadership.

We had 16% of the CUT last year and now we are the second current in the CUT. In Rio we have 30% and in Minas we are more than 35%.

In San Bernardo we were nothing, then we had a few comrades, now we find that workers are looking for us. We do not know them but they know us and since the last strike are asking for us. Some of them asked for help, it is the heart of the workers in Brazil.

Some workers on strike in San Bernardo asked the leadership of their union, which is bureaucratic, to go and help them. But the leadership did not go. The workers were accused of being members of Convergencia Socialista but they were not. When they met one of our comrades they said: "We want to know CS." After this when the leadership finally said they were going, the workers replied that now it was not necessary as they already had the CS comrades.

There are factory committees and we will

taken out by the capitalists.

As in all countries, the working class suffers and in Brazil is very poor. There is very strong resistance this year. Plan after plan of the capitalists has been defeated by workers. Workers are making their experience of bourgeois democracy in struggle.

In the last five years we have had the largest struggles in the whole history of Brazil. The two day General Strike in March and the wave of strikes that followed it in July this year were the biggest in its history. The General Strike had two central demands: immediate wage increases and the non-payment of the external debt.

There is a tendency to hyperinflation, Cigarettes increased by 36% in July, milk products increased by 80%. The government is completely discredited and the only plan of the bourgeoisie is to wait for the elections. We think that a revolutionary crisis will develop, as in Argentina early this year. The CS says that the rising leadership of the working class has to be revolutionary leadership, against the older bureaucratic leadership that is moving to the right.

The average wage in Brazil is about \$100

ARGENTINA

# NO AMNESTY FOR TORTURERS

Menem's government now intends to grant an amnesty to the military leaders who committed human rights crimes during the military dictatorship which the Argentine people overthrew in 1983.

Four Argentine army officers, a Lt Colonel and three majors, were returned to active service last month. They had been removed for continuing to support Colonel Aldo Rico who led the attempts at an army coup in April 1987 and again in January 1988. At the same time, Rico with Colonel Seineldin, who attempted a third rebellion, was freed from detention in barracks.

We appeal to trade unionists, members of the Labour Party and socialist organisations; members of all Latin American support groups and all human rights groups: all your organisations should protest at Menem's amnesty and campaign against it!

## CALL OF THE MAS

On the 12th August the MAS (the party of the IWL(FI) in Argentina) issued a statement denouncing the proposals for Amnesty for those responsible for torture and death of thousands of men, women and children and declared:

"The Government pardons the 'genocidists' and develops an economic plan which brings great hunger, misery and unemployment but also great workers popular struggles.

"The MAS proposes to the human right organisations, to political parties to the unions, to the factory committees, to the student centres, political personalities and to the neighbourhood organisations to have a great demonstration through the streets expressing our demands. NO TO PARDONS. NO TO AMNESTY. JUSTICE AND PUNISHMENT FOR THE GENOCIDISTS.

"We propose to workers, teachers, professionals, intellectuals, students and housewives to take up this struggle let us make petitions, hold meetings, obtain statements from unions, community centres and personalities. That let us put our efforts to the task of rapidly organising a great mobilisation to stop the 'Genocidists' retaining their liberty."



Ricardo Mesa, a spokesperson for the Committee for Human Rights in Argentina - a group based in London - gave Socialist Voice the following statement on the Amnesty that Menem is proposing to the military in Argentina for the crimes they committed under the dictatorship.

Mesa told us that on the 20th August many groups in Argentina went to Menem to ask him to stop the Amnesty. The groups included the Mothers of the Plaza De Maya, the Families of the Disappeared and the Subsecretariat of Human Rights. After listening to them Menem said: "I will think about it."

"We are campaigning here for justice. There were so many young people who disappeared, 30,000 in all. They never had the chance of a fair trial and they were just killed. They were never charged and never had a proper trial.

"We still want justice, at least democratic justice, so that normal channels should be used and the military should be punished.

We will continue to campaign against the Amnesty proposed by Menem. They are not like the people they took, who were isolated, who did not have food, they were handcuffed most of the time and often had their faces covered.

"The military leaders who are in prison are not actually in a real prison, they have access to papers, television and can publish their ideas.

"During the military uprising in Easter we organised a campaign of letters through our contacts in the trade unions, the MEP's, MP's and churches who all condemned the uprising.

"If Congress passes the law we will show our disagreement with the law and we will ask our supporters to write to Menem and ask that justice is done with the military and that they should be put into prison. They should pay for their crimes. If that does not work we will get in touch with other human rights organisations back home and seek to continue the fight by international law."

# PERU

# FREE THE JAILED MINERS

70,000 Peruvian miners are on strike demanding national bargaining rights, the elimination of wage differences, a general wage rise and an end to police interference.

Since the strike began in mid August, over 40 strikers have been arrested and taken from their homes as the Garcia Government seeks to repress the strike.

There is a real danger that those arrested will be killed by the police or by a murder squad. The whole labour movement and those against repression must demand their release.

Peruvian miners supported British miners during their strike, now they need the biggest international campaign possible - it's literally a matter of life and death. The NUM must support them.

The majority of the strike is in areas where there are emergency zones. These are zones where a state of emergency has been declared and the army does as it pleases.

The army has the power to arrest without accountability, enter homes at will, restrict the movement of people and stop meetings. All the areas under a state of emergency, with the exception of the provinces of Lima and Callao, were, by April 1989, reportedly administered by armed force political-military commands (Amnesty International Report on Peru, 23 August 1989).

The police have also taken an active part in repressing the strikers, the first ones arrested where in Morococha, including the Secretary General of Sentromin Morococha (which is the union of the state owned mine), Asencio Casa, four other miners and a teacher.

In La Oroya 11 workers, who were all from the Sentromin company, were arrested on 14th August. Four days later, another miner, Enrique More Juarez, an organisation secretary for of the national Federation and a member of the PST, was arrested.

All these workers were taken to Cuartel Marca Valla in La Oroya. Five miners and two teachers were arrested in Casapalca and taken to Dircote, which is the anti-terrorist department in Lima. Another was arrested in Austra Duvaz. More followed, including the Secretary of Defence of the National Mining Federation, Aurelinao Vicente Carhuaz and Alfredo Aquino Parco. A national leader, Marcos Gutarate Huiza was arrested in Miootingo while asking permission for German journalists to film the strike. Then on the 16th a local union office of Mineros Peru Zinc refinery was raided.

Miners earn only £2.00 a week, and have a life expectancy of just 40 years.



*Peruvian miners protest against the low level of wages*

## STRIKES IN AUGUST

**On the 15th August National Health Service doctors had been out on strike for 78 days, with no prospect of early settlement.**

**Oilworkers started a national strike on 14th August. Strikes involving energy workers, peasants and teachers also took place in August.**

### WE ARE ASKING LABOUR MOVEMENT ORGANISATIONS TO SEND THE FOLLOWING LETTER:

We are concerned at the increasing reports of the arrests of the miners and other people in Peru. They are fighting for national bargaining rights and wage increases. We are also concerned to hear that many other Peruvians fighting for legitimate rights have "disappeared".

We condemn the use of the military, police and death squads against the miners who are exercising their legitimate international and workers rights.

We demand that the miners are released immediately and returned safely to their homes and unions.

Send letters to:  
Presidente Alán García Pérez  
Presidente de la República del Perú  
Palacio de Gobierno  
Plaza de Armas  
Lima, PERÚ  
Telexes: 20167 PE PALACIO

Companero Jorge Quesada,  
Secretario General,  
FNTMMSP,  
Jr. Apurimac 463, Of.301,  
Lima 1, PERU  
Telefax (5114) 326915 (Fax No. belongs to the Human Rights association which will forward all messages to the Federation)

Please send copies to: Embassy of Peru, 52 Sloane Street, London SW1X 9SP.

## THE WORST RECORD

Peru has one of the worst records of 'disappearances' in the world. This year many trade unionists including miners and teachers have been arrested and some killed.

Amnesty International reported in August: "Targets of extrajudicial execution over the past 18 months have increasingly come to include Peruvians from all parts of the country and broad sectors of society. Human rights activists have been threatened with "death squad" killings and had their homes and offices dynamited; many have fled the emergency zones but remain under threat in the capital.

"... Trade unionists have increasingly been targets for "disappearance" and "death squad" - style murders while crowds of demonstrating trade unionists have been attacked with gunfire..."

Peru's government is affiliated to the Second International, but over half of the country is forced to suffer under a military style dictatorship which acts like the early Pinochet Government in Chile. Yet the Labour Party in Britain is quiet - it has a duty to demand an end to this situation.

The pile of Amnesty International letters on those feared to be arrested, disappeared or killed is inches thick. So many people are known to have been killed or tortured that the whole labour movement in Britain should make an outcry at this situation.

Socialist Voice calls for a national campaign of unions but, in particular, the miners', teachers' unions should immediately join such a campaign.

**SOUTH  
AFRICA**

# NO PEACEFUL SOLUTION

Pete Money writes on the vital debate in the South African labour movement on the role of the working class in the struggle against Apartheid and for socialism.

The last few weeks have seen an upsurge of the black working class in South Africa and a renewal of violent confrontations with the police.

In the black townships outside Cape Town, street barricades were erected and crowds of black youth stoned police in, at least, seven communities. The renewal of mass action in South Africa, particularly in the townships, has coincided with the campaign of defiance launched by the ANC and various other anti-apartheid groups. However, it clearly went beyond what the organisers had intended. They had intended a campaign of peaceful protest and what amounts to little more than publicity stunts.

The fact that action can not easily be kept in peaceful channels is a sign of the massive class tensions in South African society. Tutu may want to mediate between youth and police but he got a rude awakening when police thanked him for persuading black youth to call off a march by firing tear gas at him.

The Soviet Union, the South African Communist Party and the ANC, have made it abundantly clear on numerous occasions recently that all talk of socialism must be dropped, or reinterpreted as a series of workers rights' within a mixed, i.e. capitalist, economy, for fear of upsetting the capitalist governments and big business men, who will put pressure on the South African regime "to negotiate" a transfer to majority rule. The new ANC constitution for the regime after apartheid drops talk of control of resources and talks vaguely of a system which "advances the well being of all South Africans."

However, the profound economic crisis in which South Africa is gripped means that a dismantling of the basic structures of apartheid and any real improvement in the conditions and living standards of the mass of the population is impossible within the framework of the existing property relations.

A recent NUMSA report by Alec Erwin, their National Education Officer, pointed out that the industrial base of South Africa was in rapid decline. There had been no new investment for the last 6 or 7 years. The growth rate of South Africa since the late 1970's has been less than 2% per year and sometimes has dropped to zero percent.

Of the 35 million people in South Africa less than 5 million have a living wage. There has been no investment in new production and only limited investment in existing fac-



ories and mines. The gigantic profits earned are used in a speculative manner or invested abroad. In manufacturing, growth rates have been low and employment has been dropping for the last 8 to 9 years. Part of the reason that there has been no internal growth is due to apartheid, which uses migrant labour and creates extreme poverty leading to underdeveloped urban areas in the form of townships.

The report points out that the turn of the apartheid regime to the world market has not been, and will not be, successful because of competition with other countries. Increasing the export of manufactured goods would mean greatly increased imports, because SA does not have the existing machinery or a machine tool industry. Its main exports are minerals and raw materials, so it constantly imports machinery and other goods used in production. It has an increasing balance of payments crisis.

Businessmen in South Africa are openly saying that the future of South Africa is a 30%, 70% society. That is only 30% will be employed with a reasonable wage with housing etc. The other sector will be casual labour living in rural areas: "They won't have formal housing as we know it, they won't have electricity and running water and other things as we know it. They'll live in squatter camps, upgraded shacks, site and service schemes, etc." says the NUMSA report.

Erwin declares, that because of the economic crisis, the reform and repression

plans of the state are essentially the same.

Then he tells us: "We can talk about the post-apartheid government, but the question is whether the post-apartheid economy is going to be identical to the present economy. And I think we should think about that carefully because there is no magic wand in the capitalist economic structure that can change the present socio-economic situation. The monopolies under an ANC government are not going to invest in housing, because it is not profitable, the monopolies under an ANC government are not going to produce products that are cheap enough for people to buy, because it is not profitable, and the production techniques don't allow them to produce products that are cheap enough."

"The monopolies under an ANC government are not going to expand into Africa on a gigantic wave of exports, because they can't compete with Taiwan, Korea and a lot of other countries. So there is little prospect that a change of government alone is going to change this economy."

These are the inescapable realities in South Africa. The current attempts by the ANC leadership and the Soviet bureaucracy to tie the working class to popular front type alliances and stages theories, must be condemned outright. The working class does need alliances, yes, but the type of alliance that it needs is first with all sections of workers, the youth, those in the townships and the organised workers in the unions. Above all there is need for an alliance with the international working class.

# EUROPE

# THE REALITY TUC LEADERS CANNOT FACE

The future of the trade union movement is bound up with the future of Europe and if the multi-nationals prevail in Europe it will mean misery for all European workers. What the TUC leaders should be doing is using every opportunity to build the European organisation of workers, to seek a common bond of workers that would stop factory production being switched from one country to another. This article makes it clear that the days of a national trade union movement are numbered. In many struggles workers instinctively reach across the channel for solidarity only so far the leadership has proved to be more formidable than the water.

To listen to European leaders like Thatcher and Koel, who talk about the "progress" made over the last decade, one would think that Europeans had never had it so good. But the reality is different. For example, despite growth rates of 3.5% in Italy and 3.4% in Germany, unemployment within the EEC has reached 10% as a whole.

A commission set up by the EEC to study the problem of poverty in the 12 countries of the EEC came to the conclusion that 14% of the population - approximately 40 million people - live in poverty. In Spain for instance there are more than 50,000 people roaming the streets or living in shelters and more than 1,500,000 people under the age of 25 are unemployed. There is much talk of the growth in the so called service industries. One of these industries is the employment agency business. In Spain more than 70 employment agencies make profits by keeping 40 or even 60 per cent of the workers wages.

The increase in poverty and unemployment is linked to the privatisation programmes which mean lay-offs and cuts in pay and conditions. In Britain 40% of state run enterprises have been sold off to private investors, in France 138 enterprises and in Italy 23 enterprises have also been sold off. In Spain the programme of privatisation is accelerating and the exploitation of the working class, as in other countries is increasing in preparation for 1992 when the EEC economies integrate.

In Portugal the labour Prime Minister, Anibal Cavaco Silva, announced his intentions to sell the public enterprises which cover insurance, banks, ports, railways, telecommunications and petrochemicals.

A recent survey of the effects in Europe of

the integrated market in 1992 commissioned by the EEC estimated that only two telecommunications companies will survive, of the fifteen boiler making companies only four will remain and of Europe's ten producers of turbine generators only four will remain. Only three or four out of the current sixteen engine makers will survive and out of fifty companies making tractors only three or four will be left.

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The European Commission directorate for external relations said that the "Europe 1992" report did not "accord with the dynamic, positive image of Europe which we are trying to present".

The Single Market will create 320 million consumers, the profit hungry multinationals like the food giant Nestle, will increasingly

dominate the market. The breakdown of national barriers will create the market conditions similar to those in the United States. But in the United States, typically, 4 large companies control 80% of the sector whereas, in Europe, at least 20 companies control the 80%. Therefore, 16 companies in each sector in the run up to 1992 will go out of business by going bust or being absorbed by larger concerns.

A sting in the tail is that the London Business School has recently stated that the forced reduction in the number of companies will reduce the world-wide competitiveness of European industry as it will be less diverse.

So jobs will go and at the same time and the market will shrink, meaning even more jobs will go in the long run!

Along with the industrial working class farm workers will also suffer. It is estimated that 440,000 out of 700,000 small farmers in France will go out of business and one out of two farms will disappear in Germany in the next 10 years.

Workers are struggling against the effects of the European carve up. But they will have to combine throughout Europe to defeat these plans. All the reports show that no sectors will escape the problems.

Workers need to struggle for a common European plan of struggle, linking of workers in factories against privatisation and unemployment.

# EUROPE

*Solidarność*

# GOVERNMENT IN

Bill Hunter

"We don't want a Prime Minister, we want bread" read a Polish students' placard among a crowd immediately after Mazowiecki became Premier.

Walesa has been making calls to the working class for moderation. However, every day in August there have been strikes. In mid August, Walesa was forced to call a one hour strike - on a Saturday - in order to keep control of the movement. Notably the Walesa leadership made an exception of the Lenin shipyard in their strike call. This had a significance as the yard is being privatised and they did not wish to upset plans for this.

Despite all the horsetrading and verbal clashes, there is a bond which unites stalinist bureaucrats running the country; Walesa, Mazowiecki, and their advisers, the Catholic Church, and the imperialist governments and their agencies. Whatever differences they have, there is this fear of any great workers' movement unleashing mass initiative.

The day after Mazowiecki became Prime Minister, railwaymen in Lodz went on strike for more pay. After an appeal from Walesa to support the Prime Minister and not to be led by "provocateurs", the railwaymen returned to work. Such illusions in the working class ranks of Solidarity, however, can only exist for an extremely brief time.

Solidarity arose as a mass reaction to the intolerable and worsening conditions under which working people were living. Now Walesa and his clique have a policy of bringing further catastrophe upon the population



with a programme of introducing capitalism.

With a demagogy meant to maintain his support among workers, Walesa, declares "we will build a system based on democracy and freedom. It will not be capitalism. It will be better." He proposes, however, to introduce a market economy, which is a capitalist economy in which the capitalists will benefit and the workers will suffer.

From Warsaw, Anne Applebaum, of 'The Independent' reported that on the first day of the new Prime Minister:

"Solidarity's daily newspaper - now the "official" government newspaper, to the chagrin of some of its editors - has quietly begun printing a "controlled shock" plan.

"The shock theory says that Poland can no longer afford a long slow, careful ascent to capitalism. Better to remove subsidies, free prices and stop printing money all in one fell swoop, rather than wait until Mr Mazowiecki's "honeymoon" has worn off."

There is no doubt that such a "shock policy" comes from the international banks and Thatcherite economists. Mazowiecki is going to institute an austerity programme of unemployment, further price rises and factory closures. We are witnessing the great betrayal by the Catholic, opportunist, pragmatic leadership of the Solidarity movement, capitulating to capitalist financiers. There is now a front of Solidarity, bankers and imperialist governments - all aiming to go along the fast lane toward the opening of Poland for a capitalist free-for-all.

The workers in Poland did not create Solidarity against the stalinist corruption and repression, for this. They did not create it, only so that they should be exploited by imperialist finance capital in the manner of the masses of the "Third World" and endure the shock programmes of capitalism, like those



# CRISIS

*Solidarnosc*

carried out in General Pinochet's Chile.

The bitterness at Walesa among those who were in the forefront of the struggle was shown in a statement by the chairman of Solidarity in the "Paris Commune" shipyards of Gdynia. It was given in "Socialist Messenger", the information bulletin of the Polish Socialist Party (Democratic Revolution) published in Britain.

The chairman, Edward Frankiewicz wrote: "I would like to remind these gentlemen (those loyal to Walesa) of the last eight years of conspiratorial activity by Solidarity, carried out while these gentlemen slept in their feather beds reading their bibles."

Last July, an article in the 'International Herald Tribune' shrewdly declared "Poland is Eastern Europe's Argentine". Among other things there is the fact that Menem, elected by the working class under the illusion that he would bring them relief from economic catastrophe, is now instituting a shock capitalist programme to impress the international bankers.

As in the Argentine; so in Poland; material reality makes it impossible for the working class to exercise moderation. Mozowiecki proposes referendums on his programme. Referendums have always been used as a device of dictatorial governments, from that of Napoleon the Third, to that of Hitler, and

Pinochet. The voters are restricted to answering the question put by the Government, there is no independent alternative and no discussion. This is a way of attempting to use "democratic" opinion against the strikes of workers. It is a class opposite to the continuous discussion and decisions of a living workers' democracy.

The new government, like the old, must be a government of crisis. Will the bureaucrats obtain loans from the capitalist governments? Immediately, the leading imperialist circles see no reason to rescue the Polish economy by the massive loans necessary. So they demand and await the carrying out of the "shock programme", putting in the Solidarity leaders first, to disrupt and weaken the working class. Their aim is an extension of imperialist power over Poland and the penetration of imperialist capital to achieve the "semi-colonisation" they want.

The choice for the working class grows clearer as a choice, not between stalinism and capitalism, but a choice of a most ruthless capitalism, or socialism freed from bureaucracy.

For the Polish working class, as for the British, and the workers of all countries, there is only one road - to build a global common front against imperialism and bureaucracy.

# TROTSKY IN OUR TIME

IT WAS reported in the middle of last month that the Soviet Young Communist League magazine "Molodoi Kommunist" had reprinted an article by Trotsky published in December 1923. The article was part of Trotsky's writings dealing with the dangers of bureaucracy in the Soviet Communist Party.

For the youth searching for the real history of the Soviet Union and seeking to understand democracy in party and state, Trotsky's writings of this period are a treasure house. They are collected in the pamphlet "The New Course" (New Park Publications).

It was here that Trotsky gave his definitions of a Bolshevik:

"A Bolshevik is not merely a disciplined man; he is a man who in each case and in each question forms a firm opinion of his own and defends it courageously and independently, not only against his enemies but inside his own party. Today, perhaps he will be in a minority in his organisation. He will submit, because it is his party. But this does not always signify that he is in the wrong. Perhaps he saw or understood before the others did a new task or the necessity of a turn. He will persistently raise the question a second, a third, or a tenth time if need be. Thereby he will render his party a service, helping it to meet the new task fully armed or carry out the necessary turn without organic upheavals, without factional convulsions."

It is significant that at this precise time of the publication by the young Communist magazine that another article on Trotsky should appear in Soviet News of August 19th. The article is by Ivan Vrachev a supporter of Trotsky and the Left Opposition. Ivan Vrachev is now 91 years old, was exiled in 1937, but fought in the war and was decorated several times. He was arrested in 1949, sent to a strict regime camp and was released in 1956, under Kruschov, and rehabilitated.

The first part of his article deals with 1923 and what he calls the "last hours of inner party democracy".

The significance of these articles is that serious intellectuals and students in the Soviet Union are taking advantage of the cracks opened up in the regime to study Soviet history honestly and increasingly disseminate the truth about Trotsky.

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# STOP VICTORIA'S DEPORTATION

Victoria Apetor and her 20 month old son, Stephen, are threatened with deportation to Ghana. She has taken sanctuary in her Manchester Council house - the first such community sanctuary in Britain - and an active campaign of support has grown around her.

In the words of campaign spokesperson Mary Murphy, they have gained: "...a lot of support from the community, the church, the City Council and Victorias' union - the TGWU." The last two, Mary explained, usually just give paper support, but in this case councillors and members of her Branch have been active in the sanctuary and have done a lot of back-up work on a day to day basis. Messages of solidarity have come from other anti-deportation campaigns and anti-fascist groups.

Victoria came to Britain four years ago with a man who was going to take her to Canada, instead he left her stranded in London although she spoke no English. She made a new life for herself in Manchester.

Socialist Voice spoke to Victoria about her case.

SV: "When were you threatened with deportation?"

VA: "I was arrested in January, but after the police interview I was allowed to go home to look after my child. The officials told me to report to the airport immigration office two weeks later.

"I went to the office the first time, but after that they sent me a deportation order. A solicitor helped me fight this.

"Actually I don't know much about the immigration laws, I didn't know about a law that would throw me out of the country. I was sent a deportation notice on August 10th. I decided to fight on, but before the deadline I collapsed,



I don't know what caused it.

"The home office said they had a doctors report which said I was not fit to travel and they say they are going to make a decision when Timothy Renton returns from abroad.

"I want to say that all this seems like a dream to me, I cannot believe what is going on. So it seems like a bad dream, I don't know what's going to happen at the end of all this."

SV: "On what grounds are you fighting the deportation case?"



Victoria's House as sanctuary

VA: "I am fighting the sanctuary fight on compassionate grounds. I have been here for three and a half years. If I am deported there is no way I can get a job and I don't have any relatives that can support me. My son can be taken from me by the fathers family.

"He may also be infected by a disease and die because he would not have resistance as he was born in England. I would not be able to afford the treatment because you have to pay before you see a doctor and then the medicine would be very expensive and is not easy to get."

Victoria's concerns are backed up in a report by an academic who has spent the last 20 years researching into Ghana. The report states that "...in Accra she might find menial labour that would be arduous, and that might, but only might, keep body and soul together. But to do even this kind of work she requires some kind of child care facility." It continues "...a very real option in these circumstances would be prostitution...I can even envisage a situation where Ms Apetor might freely, if reluctantly, hand over the child to the father just to keep it alive."

Victoria's fight to remain in the country is entering a critical stage, support is needed now. The local community, church, council and union Branch have responded but wider support is needed.

- \* Support the sanctuary
- \* Send letters to Timothy Renton condemning this callous action.

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