

SOCIALIST VOICE

Journal Of The International Socialist League
British Section Of The IWL (FI)

Trotskyism is Growing

20,000 Celebrate in Argentina



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Stand By The Seafarers

The God fearing, law abiding 'teddy bear' McCluskie has encouraged the courts to outlaw effective picketing in calling off the national strike and has faced increasing anger by his own members.

We sympathise with the seafarers leader Tony Santamara who said in Liverpool that; "defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory". It is incredible that McCluskie replies; "the labour leadership has done everything in its power to highlight the cause of the seamen".

Just as the Dover seafarers strike was beginning to bite, drawing support nationally and internationally, as public opinion began to develop sympathy for the seafarers, the bureaucracy betrayed the membership.

The two fires that have wrecked the engine rooms of a Sealink and a P&O ferry show just what is facing the seafarers and the travellers if the new working conditions are forced through.

The fight is not over yet, the next step for the seafarers in Dover is to demand from the union a shop stewards conference of rank and file members to overturn the sell out and make the strike a national strike.

INDEPENDENT MOVEMENT

What frightened the NUS bureaucracy into capitulating to the Tory anti-union laws was the fear of losing control of an independent movement as up and down the country seafarers took action in support of their sacked colleagues in Dover.

On the Humber, Tyne, Mersey and the Tees walkouts, stoppages and occupations broke out independently of the bureaucrats.

The Financial Times, written as a warning to the ruling class, admitted that; "even though the traditions of the NUS is one of a centralized union the Dover men are discussing, taking decisions and informing their leadership."

The question of support for the seafarers comes down to whether you support the capitalist anti-trade union laws or whether you support the working class in struggle using whatever methods they need to win.

We support the call of seafarers' leader Jim Slater for a blockade of all incoming and outgoing trade on the Tyne and proposals to set up "new bodies" and committees to carry out this task.

But this is only talk if it is not matched with action, if no campaign is launched to win backing from coach drivers and the rail unions and other transport workers.

Negotiations that the bureaucrats plead for with Sterling and P&O are a deception, what is there to negotiate? The reinstatement of all



Safe Ferries ?

sacked workers and the rejection of P&O's new conditions are not negotiable points.

The negotiations between Sealink and the NUS are a fraud too. Sealink are not allies of the workers, this is just back door scabbing that they propose, taking on 450 of the 800 sacked men for the summer season. They intend to break the P&O men and monopolise the cross channel market. Against P&O and Sealink and the proposed channel tunnel project we call for the nationalisation of all sectors of industry involved in cross channel transport. The bosses are not fit to operate, they put profit before people and safety.

Only a central plan under the control of those who know the trade and how to sail the ferries without putting lives at risk should manage the industry.

Nationalisation under workers control would be far better than the present anarchic system, but it would have to be a different type of nationalisation.

Any seafarers dispute is immediately an international dispute and the immediate cause now is the channel tunnel and transport to the continent. This links all seafarers from Northern Spain to Sweden.

If P&O win, reciprocal attacks will be seen in France, Holland and Belgium. It is in the interests of the workers in these countries that the seafarers get immediate class action in support of their strike.

It is true that this strike could have been and could be won within days. If all ports are closed they would only have air transport left.

All the leaders of the unions that participated in the Wembley conference in 1982, who lined up at the rostrum to declare they would fight the Tory anti-union laws have capitulated, with the exception of the

National Union of Mineworkers.

The working class cannot wait for the return of a Labour Government to repeal the anti-trade union laws when the right to strike is under attack.

The strike can still be won if steps are taken amongst the rank and file to organise delegations in each town to visit the docks, bus depots and rail depots to speak to workers there to convince them that the cause of the seafarers is their cause too.

There is today, following on from the miners strike, and the printers a greater realization that the bosses and the Tories will succeed if a section of the working class is left to fight alone. The spontaneous strike of dockers in Liverpool is a small but powerful reflection of this.

All workers meetings should discuss the seafarers strike. Steps should be taken in every town to develop the workers and women support groups already in existence.

* **FOR A NATIONAL SHOP STEWARDS CONFERENCE**

* **BUILD WORKERS SUPPORT GROUPS IN EVERY TOWN**

Kevin Townsend

Hands Off The N.U.S.

Louise Cerevecki and
Sue Wilson in Dover

Maureen, a sacked P&O worker told us what she thinks about the dispute;

"P&O keep lying, they say the new rule book is 'ACAS agreed'. When they say there are 600 odd seamen not on strike it is not true, they are keeping the yellow (employment) cards of those on strike and counting those in too!"

We asked Maureen about the cause of the strike and what lies behind it;

"I think they've engineered the strike, they want it. This is a new trend in management tactics. I think P&O is being advised by the Department of Trade. If P&O get away with it they'll all do it."

Maureen explained that the women's support groups are not only providing essential meals and hardship funds but are a vital link between the strikers, their families and the community.

She explained that information is passed on, contacts made, and the strike kept solid

through gatherings at the support group kitchens and halls. This is especially important for strikers isolated in outlying districts who cannot be regular participants in picket rotas.

We asked Maureen about the lorry drivers blockade which had been a moral boost to the strike even though no formal connections had been established with the NUS. She and others explained that P&O treats drivers as second rate people and this has caused a lot of resentment. The drivers are well aware that their trips earn huge profits for P&O

Maureen and others believe the blockade was not lifted because of lack of solidarity but because the drivers were threatened with court action by the Harbour Board.

The drivers initially rejected Sealinks offer to clear the backlog of lorries. This important development could have been built on but the NUS has so far not tried to broaden the action.

Rank and file militants in the strike are fully aware that McCluskie and the NUS leadership would like to do a behind the scenes settlement on almost any basis, they

know it is only their determination and solidarity that has so far held the leadership in check. McCluskie talks with Sealink have been condemned by most of the rank and file.

The return to work at many ports is certainly a blow, the NUS leadership justified the instruction to return as necessary to safeguard NUS funds. Even if more fines are avoided the funds will not be released by the courts who are acting on behalf of Tory policy and P&O interests. Moreover, as many rank and file activists recognise, union funds, even when available, go to cover organisational costs and leadership manoeuvres. They have not, so far, been placed at the disposal of the strike itself, nor are they likely to be.

This raises the vital question of the role of the union bureaucracy, whose union is it?

Support for the P&O seafarers from workers organisations both in Britain and abroad is increasing, yet instead of building on this support to corner P&O and win the strike McCluskie and friends are intent on clutching at any straws willing to dangle concessions to persuade P&O merely to talk.

was strong between rank and file members of both unions.

The strikers pointed out that there is no union without members, there is still a union despite the loss of bricks and mortar. But what the leadership were more interested in was the assets and their own privileges.

The seamen were particularly keen to highlight that they wanted no deal with Sealink. The vague proposition of 450 temporary summer jobs was something the NUS rank and file would never agree to and as the Manchester Seamen said; "a Sealink boss is no different to a P&O boss!"

RO-RO'S

On the strike itself, the seamen made it clear that one of the major issues was safety. "40 roll-on-roll-off (ro-ro) ferries had sunk since they came into operation and this is conveniently hidden by the media."

The use of a scapegoat in the Zeebrugge ferry disaster, putting the blame on one seaman for the bow doors being open was condemned by the NUS membership.

The reason for leaving the bow and stern doors of ro-ro's open when sailing out of port was to remove the car and lorry fumes from the vehicle deck to prevent pollution (and poisoning) of the passenger decks.

NUS members on ro-ro's had been arguing for years for extractor fans to be fitted to fulfill this task - but this was too much for the ferry companies - lives lost are cheaper than such costs.

Because of the timetable the ferries had to keep in the companies ever greater drive for profit there was never enough time to clear the vehicle deck of carbon fumes.

The strike was against new working conditions that would make ro-ro's even more unsafe as workers would be forced to work shifts of seven days on and seven days off or 24 hours on and 24 hours off.

Part of the reason for the attacks were seen as the hiring of cheap, Phillipino, Taiwanese and Bangladeshi labour which the British seafarers demand should be paid British rates of pay if sailing for British companies.

"If P&O win, other companies will do the same and we must build on our most recent experience for the future fight".

Sue Gwyer

Future Fight

Members of the Manchester NUS, speaking at Stockport Trades Council on Thursday 12th of May outlined their anger at the NUS leadership for calling off the national action that day.

What they termed as a capitulation by McCluskie to the anti-union laws had highlighted the necessity for a change of leadership in the NUS.

The strikers were instructed to return to work by 12pm on Friday 13th of May so that the NUS could purge the latest round of fines imposed in the courts.

The speakers made it clear that despite the sequestration of the assets the union was functioning more like a union than ever before. In Manchester they had moved into the regional HQ of the TGWU and the unity

Socialist Voice

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The Last Bastion

On May 16th 1988 a mass picket was held outside the studio of TV/AM in support of the 229 sacked ACTT technicians. The picket signified not only the continued defiance of the sacked workers but also the crucial importance of this issue to trade unionism in the entertainments industry.

On November 24, 1987, the 229 were locked out by management. This action by TV/AM's managing directors, unprecedented in the history of British broadcasting, was followed on December 11 by the issuing of a non-negotiable document to the union.

This included the demand that ACTT give up all rights to negotiate on the allocation of work or staff and that they avoid all industrial action on these issues. It also called on the union to accept several further points without negotiation eg roster changes across the board, no TV/AM technicians involvement in overseas productions, unmanned regional studios and a 15% cut in annual leave.

Needless to say these conditions were rejected by the workers and two months later, in mid February, all 229 were sacked. Since the lockout the remaining ACTT staff have also been threatened with dismissal unless they follow management instructions to the letter.

TV/AM have used ex-ACTT members and clerical staff together with a small number of special recruits to carry out sacked workers jobs and have been heavily dependant on overseas facilities and staff. In fact the only way the company has kept its show on the road is by ignoring the basic standards laid down by the IBA (Independent Broadcasting Authority).

To this day the sacked workers have held a round-the-clock picket, their demand being simply a negotiated return to work.

The TV/AM dispute is not some isolated incident. It is part and parcel of the drive by Thatcher and her lieutenants in the board rooms of ITV to destroy what she herself described as "the last bastion of restrictive practices" i.e. the entertainments unions.

ITN have announced massive job cuts and 'rationalisation', revealing plans to introduce one-man camera crews, remote control cameras etc. Granada have followed a more 'softly-softly' approach with golden handshakes for virtually every technician over the age of fifty. It is LWT (London Weekend Television), however, who are now leading the charge against not only ACTT but other unions like Equity and the Musicians Union (MU).

In March they announced over 200 redundancies coupled with massive changes in working practices and had an entire reserve



T.V. AM Picket

programme service standing by to broadcast from Holland if the unions took action. But it is not just the technicians who are in LWT's firing line.

BETTY

On Friday 10th April LWT announced the cancellation of the musical drama series 'Betty'. The fact that the networks' chiefs made this decision despite having already spent £2 million on the programme shows how far TV bosses are prepared to go in order to drive down workers pay and conditions.

The dispute that led to the cancellation started when Eagerwerth, the production company running (although not actually financing) the show and the M.U. failed to agree terms. Eagerwerth, clearly at LWT's behest, insisted on using the minimum terms of the TV film agreement while the M.U. said a show wholly controlled and financed by LWT should pay ITV rates. One of the basic principles of TV is that a performer is paid a repeat fee for repeat showings of a programme in which they appear so for instance, when each 'Fortunes of War' was broadcast twice weekly last year each actor received their fee twice over. This contractual obligation applies to repeats of any TV programmes abroad and thereby prevents TV companies showing free repeats in place of new productions. This principle is a cornerstone of all BBC and ITV contracts.

Next Equity were brought into the ring, they "indicated support" for the M.U. but then made a dangerous concession. The union leadership agreed to accept the TV film contract as long as members employed would not be substantially worse off as a result! The Equity leadership described this as a 'peace initiative'. In fact they were already conced-

ing the basic principle of repeat fees to LWT's management. However, it proved a fruitless concession. LWT insisted on the minimum terms of the TV Films agreement or the production would not go ahead. Within twenty four hours of the Equity concession the show had been cancelled.

These attacks by LWT, TV/AM etc carry vital lessons for all entertainment workers:

- 1) The companies are not just singling out technicians for their attacks.
- 2) Like MacGregor and Murdoch before them the TV tycoons are not just looking for a few concessions; they are out to run TV studios as sweatshops destroying wholesale workers jobs and living standards.
- 3) ACTT, Equity, MU and other unions must not allow their disputes to be kept separate but must call on their leaderships to support members of fellow entertainments unions in struggle.
- 4) The entertainments unions leadership have been, this far, cautious to the point of near impotence. Carefully cultivated media "nice guy" attitudes will not win the coming battle in the TV industry. The power that TV workers have to control the presentation of news, popular culture, sport etc is immense. It will have to be used in order to prevent TV becoming a non-union industry.

The call must be renewed: for a single entertainments union! Actors, musicians and technicians must unite to defend our industry. Support the TV/AM picket.

Jim Jardin
Member of
Entertainments Union.

No To Restructuring

"The crucial issue is the attempt to control the money of the union and the ability of the local associations to organise", Howard Roberts, national executive member of the National Union of Teachers for West Yorkshire, told Socialist Voice prior to the Special Conference in June.

"It is a political argument over resources. The cash crisis is at headquarters and the political crisis is 'New Realism', he continued.

"A significant minority of the union, 40%, is opposed to the restructuring and many are undecided, we have to push for the majority which is within real striking distance.

We want a majority not just for one conference but a lasting majority for the future.

The Campaign for a Democratic and Fighting Union has had a good start and is a broadly based campaign. We are concentrating on the issue of democracy at this particular moment. We will be concentrating, in future, on other issues that concern the membership such as pay and conditions.

We have been criticised for concentrating on a single issue but it is far more than that, this issue is of central importance to every member."

BROAD 'LEFT' FACES RIGHT

The fact is the broad left has taken control of the NUT, it is a broad left based entirely on the outlook of "New Realism".

They think that they can run the union best if it is out of the control of the membership. At the same time their experience teaches them that they will have to control the membership.

The question of loss of members and finance worries them as it is one of the main concerns of the bureaucracy. As with the amalgamations that have occurred within the TUC this is what moves them. No real account has yet been given to the membership of the financial state of the union, when it comes to the attacking the London leadership money is no problem.

For a long time the secret plans of those leaders have been under discussion. Parts of the plan surface from time to time as they prepare and also test the waters.

A circular sent out last August to local secretaries set out one of their objectives:

- a) The size of conference to be reduced by changing the current level of representation, and
- b) Conference to be held on a biennial basis with an extended meeting/conference of

divisional secretaries and Executive members held in the intervening year.

This has been left out of the union or organisation and development but it is one of their aims to reduce the control that the membership have over the leadership and take away accountability.

They intend to reduce legal coverage for members and this has already been approved by a majority of the executive leadership.

To apply new realism means policing the membership. Keeping them in line and stopping any real challenge to a government that has taken away the rights of their union and hammered the teachers with legislation and directives such as the Baker Bill and the Education Act

The opposition to the changes include the rural areas as well as the big cities. The disquiet is touching many teachers who feel outraged at a small group within the union that can take control in this way.

As with other sections of the working class there is a developing movement that is fighting to maintain all aspects of state education. As the attacks deepen the movement will increase.

Jim Stead

'Nil' Fight From Leadership

The National Union Of Civil And Public Servants annual conference was a struggle against the newly acquired "new realism" of the leadership of the union. The last year has seen a rapid retreat by the executive on the defence of pay jobs and conditions. Twelve months ago the current National Executive Committee called off the pay campaign and agreed to accept changes in working practices such as direct recruitment, casuals, consultants and job losses from new technology.

Since then the Government has given the go ahead to a plan to break up the Civil Service into a series of "Agencies" which will make it easier to bring in regional pay, cut jobs and break up existing conditions of employment and prepare the way for competitive tendering and privatisation.

They are proposing:

1. Recurring temporary contracts of a few months to a year.
2. "Nil" hours contracts whereby a pool of reserve labour would be retained to be called in at moments notice to meet peaks in workload. Such workers would have no employment rights and no guarantees

of employment for any period.

3. Annual hours contracts. Such contracts mean a minimum number of hours in a year rather than a week or month. Together with a review of the flexible hours agreement so that management determine when you work.
4. A big increase in part-time working to undertake "monotonous or repetitive tasks where high levels of productivity can be sustained by short bursts of activity".
5. Period contracts to employ people with specific experience - thus enabling management to opt out of its responsibility for proper training.

The crunch question here is can these plans be fought with the policies of the existing leadership? The answer to this must be a resounding no. They have limited the fight against job cuts to ritual calls for more resources and campaigns aimed at "public opinion". This year the executive proposed no campaign for an increase in national pay and agreed to the Government's pay offer being subject to their recommending it to members although regional pay is already being introduced without agreement.

This capitulatory line of the executive is in marked contrast to the mood of the members

who have been taking industrial action against the employment of casuals, against compulsory transfers and direct recruitment.

This fighting mood was mirrored in the large number of delegates who opposed the executives recommendation to accept YTS and the new Adult Training Scheme and the growing number of motions from Branches critical of the executives increasing use of undemocratic practices to enforce its policies on the union. They particularly attacked the calling off of last years pay campaign without any consultation and before the CPSA held their ballot on all out strike.

The big discussion amongst delegates was how could this opposition be organised. What is clearly needed is a programme to unite the opposition.

Such a programme must include:

- * Total opposition to regional and merit pay.
- * No acceptance of casual labour, MSC slave labour schemes or "flexible" working.
- * A common claim and campaign with CPSA for defence of conditions nationally.
- * For a merger with CPSA now.
- * For a democratic union, all full-time officials to be elected and accountable.

Peter Money

Yankees Given Ground

On 24 March 1988, only 10 days after the Contras were on the point of military defeat, having been forced out of Nicaragua by the offensive of the Sandanista army, the Nicaraguan government signed an agreement with the counter revolutionary guerrillas conceding everything they had been demanding.

Under the agreement, for the first time since the revolution, the Contras will be allowed back into Nicaragua as a legitimate, legal force. They will be granted 5 "free zones" where they will have full control of the land and the right to carry out military training.

They will be free to participate in elections and will be allowed to receive direct funding from the US.

But the agreement goes further. It includes the release of all the Contras jailed during the 7 years of war and the freeing of the 1,837 supporters of the Somoza dictatorship who were jailed in 1979.

As for the Contras, all they have done is to "promise" to disarm their forces in Nicaragua remaining silent about their main military forces in Honduras.

SO CALLED "PEACE"

To maintain this so called "peace" the agreement will be policed by "independent forces". But who exactly are these forces? None other than Soares Baena, General Secretary of the OAS (Organisation of American States) and Cardinal Obando y Bravo.

The first of these two was described by Fidel Castro as "the USA's minister of colonies" and the second was denounced as a traitor by the Sandanistas in 1986, in their paper 'Barricada'.

Many left groups have described the agreement as a resounding success for the Nicaraguan government and the masses. In fact it is the opposite. It will only serve to bolster Reagan's counter revolutionary policy for Central America. It will weaken the country and will encourage imperialism to greater excesses.

Reagan, while having some doubts (perhaps we could have taken more, he thinks) has said he's satisfied.

Meanwhile, the ex-Somosist Colonel, Enrique Bermudez, the main military leader of the contras said the agreement



Fighters Against Yankee Imperialism

was "a political success for the rebel force".

At this year's Mayday rally President Ortega said that the contras should be thankful because "we are talking with them and we offered them a political place instead of the guillotine or the firing squad they deserve".

Sometimes fighters and countries are forced to make an agreement with



imperialism, a temporary retreat in order to preserve and develop forces.

ROUTING

But the Nicaraguan Government were not in this situation, the offensive of the Sandanista army was routing the counter-revolutionary guerrilla army. The situation held the possibility of a new offensive, it did not necessitate retreat.

The agreement was not accepted by everybody in Nicaragua. The Organisation of Mothers of Heroes and Martyrs, whose sons and daughters died in the revolution against Somoza and the US aggressors are demanding no amnesty for the murderers and torturers.

At the same time as doing deals with imperialism the Nicaraguan government are refusing to talk with trade unionists in Nicaragua from four unions who are demanding wage increases.

The signing of the so-called "peace" agreement marks a new stage in the capitulation of the Sandanista government to imperialism and can do nothing else but lead to the weakening of the revolution in Nicaragua.

As Lenin once said; "those that make revolutions by halves are the gravediggers of revolution".

Angolan Danger

A meeting has recently been held in London between representatives from Angola, Cuba, U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and South Africa over the issue of the continued South African occupation of Namibia and the support given by Lebanese soldiers and volunteers to the Angolan government in repulsing repeated South African invasions in collusion with the UNITA rebels. Since these talks there has been a meeting in Brazzaville between South African foreign minister Pik Botha and Angolan officials and one on the same subject between U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. in Lisbon where the U.S.A. was represented by Lester Leroche of the State Department.

In the run up to these talks the South Africans have suffered a severe setback in their plans to destabilise the Angolan government when their forces failed to take the southern Angolan town of Quito Quanaival after several months of siege. Their army has suffered hundreds of casualties and four mutineers involving conscripts who thought that they were being sent for duty with the occupation forces in Namibia.

It is also reported that the leadership of UNITA is in complete disarray as they de-

Frank Fitzmaurice

pend entirely on support from the U.S.A. and South Africa.

In addition to this the upsurge of the workers organizations in S.A. and Namibia continues in spite of the utmost repression.

Given these circumstances it is obvious that the object of these talks is to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for the South Africans and gain for them at the conference table what they had failed to achieve in battle, namely the removal of Cuban troops from Angola in exchange for some nominal independence for Namibia (SWAPO were, significantly, not represented in the London talks).

The removal of Cuban troops is seen as removing a big obstacle to this type of "arse-kicking" which has also been taking place in Mozambique, also unfortunate enough to have signed a treaty with South Africa.

It is clear that the talks are part of a process of attempting to keep southern Africa safe for imperialist exploitation, with South Africa as the policeman of the regime.

Why then do Cuba, Angola and the U.S.S.R. take part in these talks? As far as the

Angolans are concerned it is a legitimate striving for peace and a chance to rebuild their shattered economy, while the Cubans are being pressured intensively by the U.S.S.R. into falling into line with its foreign policy by the use of the economic dominance over Cuba which Russia enjoys.

The crucial role is played by the U.S.S.R., which the October revolution made into a beacon for the worlds oppressed. Now, the reactionary caste which has usurped power is concerned only with preserving its own privileges. To do this it is selling out the interests of the oppressed masses all over the globe.

All the more so now that, under the slogans of Glasnost and Perestroika, it is offering up the gains of the revolution in the U.S.S.R. to exploitation of the imperialists.

The tremendous upsurge of the masses in southern Africa, with the workers of South Africa and Namibia in the vanguard, will consign these talks to the dustbin if the lessons from them are learned, as we have every confidence they will be, as part of the experience being made in the region.

No To Evren

General Evren, the man responsible for the imprisonment and torture of thousands of political activists, has been invited to the United Kingdom by the Queen for a state visit in July.

In order to break up the Kurdish community new legislation has been introduced allowing the resettlement of whole villages in new areas of Turkey. Today these Kurdish areas of Turkey are open prisons, even the village schools are being used as military bases and one third of the Turkish army is in 'Turkish' Kurdistan.

Trade union leaders and activists are under constant threat of being sacked and imprisoned. Thousands of intellectuals, writers, journalists, educationalists and artists are being suppressed and prevented from expressing their views.

We call upon the working class in the United Kingdom, socialists and all people committed to democracy to

join us in preventing this visit taking place and to show solidarity with the working class in Turkey and Kurdistan. Reproduced from a statement of the Organising Committee to Prevent General Evren's visit to the UK. Members of the Organising Committee are as follows; an Italian cultural centre, Enternasyonal, the Kurdistan Workers Association, Left Unity, Revolutionary Path Rizgari, a Turkish community centre (halkevi) Vatan party.

STOP THE VISIT

A storm of protest greeted the Turkish regime's ban on Mayday celebrations. In Istanbul 84 were arrested and several beaten up including at least one journalist. Similar scenes were repeated in many Turkish and Kurdish cities. Following General Evren's speech defending the regime's stand and threatening even more repressive measures fears are spreading that

another military coup is planned.

The brutal record of the military regime and its bloody suppression of protest is being whitewashed by western powers who are seeking closer economic ties with Turkey within the ambit of the common market.

The proposed visit of the Turkish dictator is an affront to the working class of Turkey and the UK and must be opposed by all class conscious workers. The campaign to stop the visit should receive the full support of the trade union and labour movement.

Louise Cerovecki

"A Real Workers'

Chanting, whistling and singing, with flags and banners flying, firecrackers exploding and drums beating, some 16,000 workers, celebrated May Day with the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

The throbbing, vibrant rally which at one stage erupted into a spontaneous dance across the whole of the Ferro football field by nearly 1000 teachers who had just ended a 37 day national strike was organised under the central slogan of "Against the Austerity Plan of Alfonsin (the Radical Party President) and Cafiero (the leader of the Peronist Party).

Two huge banners hung in the main pavilion, one saying; "On the anniversary of the 4th International long live the world socialist revolution" and the other saying "For a new leadership of the workers movement. The workers should decide."

The powerful and fast growing movement of Argentine workers against the government was vividly expressed when the teachers marched into the stadium to a tumultuous standing ovation. The chant; "Viva the teacher's strike" was met with a roar of "Viva!"

As they ringed the field the teachers and the crowd joined in one of the most popular chants of the strike; "Let us see who decides the wages - the teachers or the IMF" (International Monetary Fund). If the translation does not do justice to the rhythms of Spanish it still contains the notions that are beginning to be grasped by sections of workers across the country - that the rank and file must decide, not the trade union bureaucracy on behalf of Alfonsin and his imperialist masters.

The stadium fell silent on only two occasions; when the crowd stood for a minutes silence in memory of comrade Enrique Broquen who died on April 28 at the age of 80, and again for Abu Jihad, a leading member of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) who was assassinated in Tunis.

A fighter for socialism for 60 years, Broquen was a founding member of the Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST) in 1972. During the dictatorship Broquen, a lawyer, was the only public figure to defend the PST, which was made illegal.

Bringing greetings to the rally from the PLO, Sujuil Akel said; "This year is the 40th anniversary of the Zionist invasion of Palestine which drove Palestinians all over the world."

All Palestinian families could tell a similar story to his own; his father was born in Haifa in 1914 under Turkish rule, his mother in Jerusalem in 1925 under British rule, he



Over 1000 teachers at The MAS Rally

himself in Jerusalem under the Zionists and his brother in Argentina.

Akel attacked the Zionist regime as terrorist, citing the 1985 bombing of the PLO offices in Tunis and the gunning down of Abu Jihad.

"But his blood will not be shed in vain, it will flow into the land and out of it will grow a beautiful flower - Palestine."

To chants of "Olay, Olay, Palestine will conquer", Akel vowed the Palestinian people would continue to struggle to recover their land, no matter what terror the Zionists inflicted.

He said the colours of the Palestinian flag summed up the history of the people: "the red for the blood that had been shed, the black a sign of mourning for the martyrs, the white the purity of our children and the hope for our future, and the green "the free lands of Palestine".

Speaking on behalf of the International Executive Committee of the International Workers League (Fourth International), Alberto Franceschi said: "We have travelled thousands of kilometres to this powerful rally of workers and internationalists and to greet the MAS, the vanguard party of the IWL."

All across the world, from Panama to Palestine, the oppressed masses are struggling against imperialism, and in Poland and Armenia workers are raising the banner of the political revolution against the bureaucracy, the main supporter of imperialism.

This struggle required an organised expression; "That is why we must build the MAS and the IWL, the party which is fighting

under the banner of the Fourth International."

Pointing out that 1988 was the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Fourth International, Franceschi said that since 1938 workers had been fighting to build a new leadership. In Argentina this was now beginning to emerge and this meant that the MAS had to go forward to the socialist revolution.

A revolution in Argentina would be a victory of the world working class because the revolution would not remain within the frontiers of Argentina.

"The main duty of the revolutionist is to build the revolution in his own country and the first duty of a Marxist is to build a party steered in internationalism," Franceschi told the cheering rally.

The growth of the IWL was shown in the rally itself and in the recent bankworkers election in Brazil where members of the Convergencia Socialista had received 17,000 votes to 5,000 received by the Communist Party.

"Moreno you are with us - you taught us to fight across frontiers in the fight to build the world party," Franceschi concluded as the crowd chanted: "We are going to remember comrade Moreno, building the MAS and the international."

Speaking from a podium draped with a portrait of Nahuel Moreno, the founder of the MAS, the party spokesman Luis Zamora said that earlier in the day Alfonsin had been applauded in Congress when he had given a speech saying that things were getting better and then announced new austerity measures. Zamora continued: "Argentina is falling

Celebration"

pieces - there are power shortages, hospitals and schools are being run down, and in some provinces the banks are closed and workers can not collect their wages."

While big business is evading millions of dollars in taxes, the government is raising taxes which will hit workers and is paying back the foreign debt to the IMF.

"Alfonsin was discussing moving the capital, but if they do not know where the capital is, we do - it is in Washington. But our capital does not have frontiers - it is with the masses fighting in Palestine and it is with the 20,000 workers fighting the bureaucracy in Poland," Zamora said.

The exploiters are taking the people to despair but there is a way out and there it is in the middle of the field - the 600,000 teachers in 37 days of strike showed us the way out.

For years the bureaucracy had prevented teachers uniting but now there are rank and file meetings everywhere and this demand (the demand to let the rank and file decide) is being raised by workers everywhere.

"The teachers got together with the students and parents and they went to the factories and forced the CGT to declare a general strike to support them.

A few years ago we were alone in saying that Cafiero and Alfonsin are the same and that we should not pay the foreign debt - now this is one of the main slogans raised by the teachers.

"The exploiters tell us that we could not run society, but the railway workers know how to make the trains run that are now broken down. Do bank workers know how to run the banks? Couldn't shop stewards committees stop the bosses from plundering the profits of factories in speculation? Don't the teachers, maids, nurses and doctors already do everything anyway?"

Zamora said that the parliamentary leaders tried to scare workers with talk of a military coup but this was nonsense: "The army that is advancing is not dressed in green but in the white coats and blue pinafores of the teachers - that's the army that is terrifying the exploiters."

Warning that the struggles ahead would be hard, Zamora pointed out that the teachers' strike had been betrayed by the leaders, who called it off without consulting the rank and file.

Bigger struggles would come in the future and "we need a new union leadership and political leadership because it's impossible to struggle with Alfonsin and Cafiero and the union leaders who support them."

The rally erupted into cheers and chants as the teachers began their dance and interna-



PLO Delegation At The MAS Rally

tional delegates left the platform to join in. With darkness falling the stadium was lit by pink flares from the crowd.

Standing alone on the floodlit podium Zamora surveyed the jubilant crowd on the field and said: "Since in this party it is the rank and file that decides, I am coming to join you."

The crowd roared it's approval and the teachers rushed to lift Zamora shoulder high and march him around the field.

When he returned to the microphone Zamora welcomed the delegates from other left-wing parties such as the Communist Party who had come to the rally and appealed for a new electoral front against Alfonsin and Cafiero.

Zamora urged all those at the rally to return to their factories and districts and build bases against the bureaucracy.

"Tell everyone that there is a way out, that the MAS is a party that will support every struggle of the workers unconditionally and that we can go forward to a workers' and popular government that will build socialism."

The reaction to the rally was summed up by Vladimir Diaz a 21-year-old electrician who travelled 1800 kilometres from Sierra Grande. His face broke into a huge smile as he said "It is the first big rally I have ever attended - it was very impressive."

Phil Sandford in Argentina

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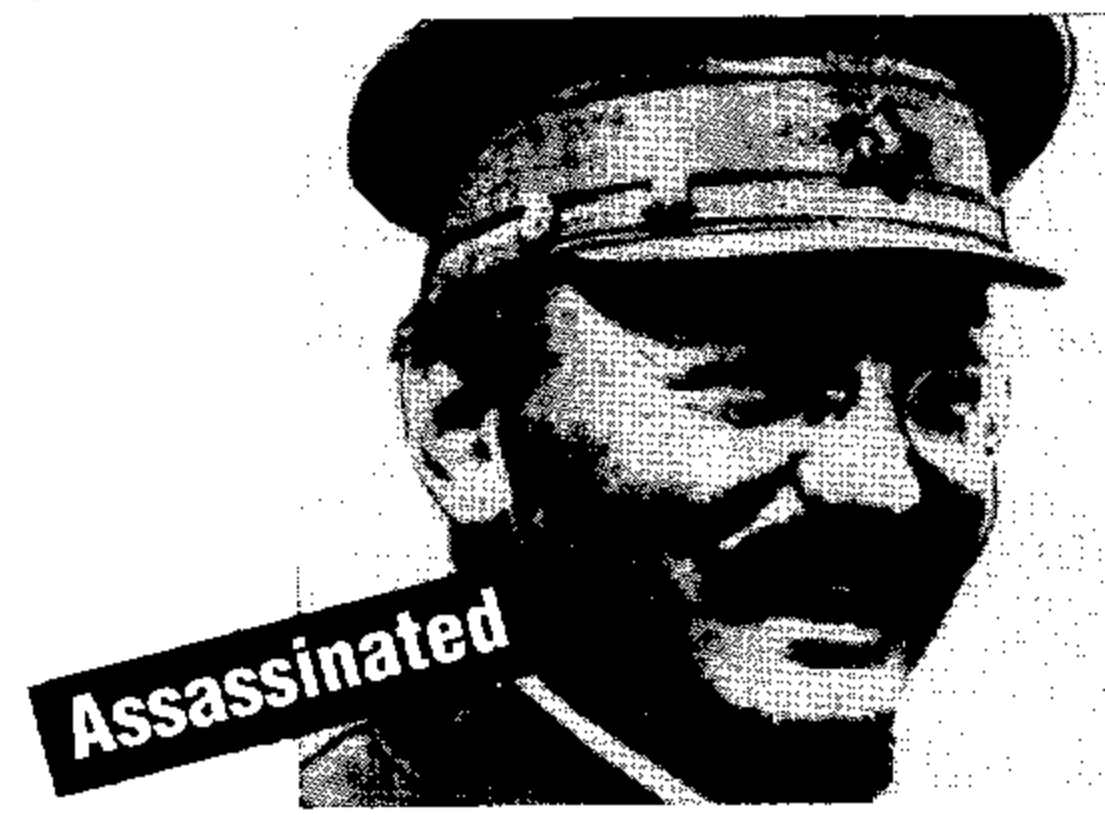
The Spectre

Clear The Names of Trotsky And All The Victims Of The Moscow Trials.

In 1987, thanks to the initiative of British Trotskyists, a world wide campaign aimed at forcing the Stalinist bureaucracy of the USSR to clear the names of all those falsely accused in the Moscow Trials in the 1930s has been launched. The International Executive Committee of our current, the International Workers League (Fourth International), adopted this campaign as its own, publicized it, extended it to the rest of the Trotskyist movement, the left in general, the workers movement and political personalities.

We fully acknowledge the fact that thousands of political activists from different currents, including members of Communist and Social Democratic Parties, and renowned intellectuals, union leaders and political leaders that do not belong to the Marxist movement, have supported this campaign. In February, it was announced in Moscow that many of the condemned, with Bukharin among them, were declared innocents. This development must urge us to continue the campaign demanding the clearing of the names of all the other victims of the Stalinist bureaucracy, like Trotsky, Kamenev and Zinoviev.

Space limitations prevent us for printing the names of all the signatories, but we would like to draw the attention of our readers to some of them: LUIS IGNACIO LULA DA SILVA, president of the Workers Party -PT- (Brazil); PIERRE GUIDONI, National Secretary of the Socialist Party (France); ERNEST GLINNE, Vice-President of the Socialist Group in European Parliament (Belgium); KEN LIVINGSTONE, member of the National Leadership of the Labour Party (Britain); ROBERT VERDIER, President of the the International Questions Commission of the Human Rights League (France); IAN MIKARDO, ex-President of the Labour Party (Britain); JIRI HAJEK, ex-Minister of Foreign Relations in 1968 (Czechoslovakia); FERNANDO E. CARDOZO, President of the block of the Democratic Brazilian Movement -MDB- (Brazil); GERT PETERSEN, President of the Socialist Popular Party (Denmark); ERIK SOLHEIM, President of Socialist Left



(Norway); FRANCO RUSSO, President of the Parliamentary Group Proletarian Democracy (Italy); OLIVIO DUTRA, General Secretary of the PT (Brazil); JAMIL HADAD, President of the Socialist Party (Brazil); SEGURO MENDEZ, General Secretary of the Revolutionary Left Movement -MIR- (Venezuela); PETRA KELLY, Green Party (Germany); PETER VON OERTZEN, member of the National Leadership of the Social Democratic Party (Germany); EDUARDO JORGE, member of the National Leadership of the PT (Brazil); FLORESTAN FERNANDEZ, Deputy, PT (Brazil); ROSARIO IBARRA, candidate for President of the Workers Revolutionary Party -PRT- (Mexico); JAIR MENEGUELLI, President of the Only Workers Union -CUT- (Brazil); MARTISALEN COVAS PONTES, vice-President of the CUT (Brazil); DAN GALLIN, president of the International Union of Food Workers (United States); BALA TAMPOE, General Secretary of the union CMIGWU (Sri Lanka); JACQUES YERNA, General Secretary of the FGTB (Belgium); MARGARITO MONTES, General Secretary of the General Union of Workers and Peasants (Mexico); HUGO BLANCO, member of the National Secretariat of the Peruvian Peasants Confederation (Peru); LUIS ZAMORA, Candidate for President for the Movement toward Socialism -MAS- (Argentina); ESTEBAN VOLKOV, Trotsky's grandson (U.S./Mexico); FERNANDO LOUREIRO, National Secretary of the CGTP (Portugal);

STELIO BABAS, member of the C.C. of the Greek Left (Greece); JOICE STEVENS E.C. of the Communist Party (Australia); JOSEF PINIOR, ex-member of the National Leadership of Solidarity (Poland); ERNEST MANDEL, internationally known economist and leader of the United Secretariat;...

Below we reprint the text of the petition which is being circulated in over 30 countries. We call on all of our readers to support this campaign. Anyone interested in adding their name to the petition, or donating to facilitate the publication of the petition in the commercial press, or collecting additional signatures, can write to:

Socialist Voice,
P.O. BOX 18,
Stockport SK6 4DH.

We congratulate the Militant, who are organizing a rally in this same way with the participation of Trotsky's grandson (who signed our petition). But we call on them to join this international campaign and not to exploit the feelings of the world left movement for their own propaganda, which would mean this rally taking place without an international campaign to pressurise the Soviet bureaucracy.

The Editorial Board

Of Trotsky

It is now over fifty years since the infamous Moscow Show Trials. It is astounding that at a time when the Soviet government is at pains to emphasize its concern with "human rights" and proclaims the need for "glasnost" -openness- the accused in these trials, with a few exceptions, are still considered guilty of being paid agents of Nazism, and other crimes.

Among these men were numbered several who played outstanding roles in the Russian Revolution of 1917. The reputation of founders of the Soviet State like Zinoviev, Radek, Trotsky and Bukharin were besmirched or expunged from the history books. Today no one doubts that the "confessions" at the trials

-The sole basis for the prosecution- were utterly false. Seven defendants in the third trial, Krestinsky and others, have been both judicially rehabilitated and politically exonerated. So have the military leaders, Tukhachevsky and others, whose military trial in 1937 was held in secret. But the admittedly false evidence against these men was inseparable from the charges against all the other accused.

None of the accused, of course, is alive today. Many were executed immediately after their trials. Others died in prison or camps. Leon Trotsky, the chief accused in all three trials, was murdered in exile in 1940. However, families of some of the defendants

are still living in the Soviet Union. Some had also suffered imprisonment and exile. It is worth recalling that a review of all these cases was promised by Khrushchev, but this promise was broken.

We, the undersigned therefore call on the Soviet government to re-examine the cases against all these victims of perversion of Soviet justice, as took place with Krestinsky. We are confident that all those accused in the Trials of 1936-1938 will be shown to have been innocent. They should immediately be rehabilitated, their honour restored, their families compensated, and their graves marked.

Frightened Bureaucracy

Relations inside the Soviet Central Committee are degenerating into a civil war between supporters and opponents of perestroika, Yegor Ligachev reflects the fear of the bureaucracy for any change as movements from Poland to Armenia erupt to shake any calm transition.

Ligachev is against the emphasis on past mistakes and against the supporters of perestroika. The Central Committee is united on the necessity of maintaining the parasitic control and privileges of the bureaucracy. But how is that now possible?

As Trotsky and the Left Opposition foresaw, there is an increasingly sharp crisis of bureaucratic planning and parasitism. A major economic factor, which the Soviet planners can only try to suppress, is the expropriation of the political rights of the masses. The exclusion of workers' democracy, their involvement means that planning from above enforces an atmosphere of fear and dictatorship and it is this that causes the grotesque problems of production for these plans and not genuine need.

At Nowa Huta the police used gas, grenades, axes and truncheons. Part of these forces were "anti-terrorist" units; the hated 'Zomo'.

Every use of force against the working class exposes the contradictions of the degenerated workers states. What is frightening sections of the bureaucracy against perestroika is the developing opposition to the bureaucracy in general. Every attempt at suppression only encourages the new leaderships, as in Poland, to new challenges.

SPECTRE OF TROTSKY

The delving into history has the same problems. The spectre of Trotsky haunts

all the historical questions which they are forced to examine. The Soviet Central Committee is caught in the firm grip between the emerging struggles of the working classes and the nationalist struggles. Any attempt at resolving them pushes them to an historical precipice

The April 2nd issue of 'Soviet Weekly' was unable to escape this problem. It went further down the road of rehabilitating Fedor Raskolnikov, one of the leading Bolsheviks in the navy, a commissar of October 1917, a fearless man in action. Yet it could not refer to Raskolnikov's defence of Trotsky.

The article refers to two documents written in 1939 by Raskolnikov; "How I Was Made an Enemy of the People" and his death-bed open letter to Stalin.

The newspaper uses this to attack Stalin with the same methods as Stalin used himself.

The two articles have been circulating in the Soviet Union for years. Well informed Russian workers will know that the following passage is omitted;

As you know, I was never a Trotskyist. On the contrary I waged an ideological struggle against all the opposition both in the press and in the broad meetings. Today, as well, I do not agree with Trotsky's political positions, with his programme and tactics. While differing with Trotsky on points of principle I regard him as an honest revolutionary.

For the Soviet workers today what Raskolnikov does not explain and what they will increasingly ask is what was the programme and tactics of Trotsky.

The fact that Soviet Weekly is 'reluctant' to print the comment of a Bolshevik who did not submit completely to Stalin

shows the problem facing the bureaucracy: they cannot tell the truth about Trotsky.

OLD 'LEFT' SUPPORTED STALIN

Raskolnikov had a more principled position than most of the left in Britain at the time who had a habit of accepting the lies from Stalin. The bigger the lies the more bloated they became in support.

Fenner Brockway, who played a leading role in heading off a movement of workers towards Trotskyism, refused to support Trotsky's demand for an international enquiry into the Moscow trials.

This is one reason why his obituaries by Foot and Benn recently were so fullsome. Brockway at one time proposed, instead of an inquiry into the crimes and showtrials of Stalin, "an enquiry into the role of Trotskyism in the working class movement".

This explains why many lefts grasp at Gorbachev and perestroika. They hope to revive their historical tarnished images. They see in these developments a way to cover their own refusal to turn to the working class and for its independent mobilisation.

Yet Brockway signed the new campaign for Trotsky's rehabilitation. It is a further example of the weakness of Ligachev's position that internationally the current around him has little support.

They cannot return to Stalin, neither will they be able to publish all the archives, fill the libraries with the true history of the revolution or use the printing press to publish the writings of the left opposition. But that is what the working class and oppressed will be demanding.

Martin Ralph.

Scheme Workers Defeat Imposed Wage Cuts

After two and a half weeks on strike, forty community workers, employed by the Wythenshawe Agency for Community Service (WACS) defeated management proposals for a 20% cut in hours and wages.

WACS is a Manpower Services Commission (MSC) funded Managing Agency which runs seven Community Programme schemes at Wythenshawe, Manchester.

Brian Southern, director of WACS, arrogantly threatened workers on two of the schemes; 'Daycare' and 'Wythcare' with the sack if they refused to sign new contracts by April 18th accepting wage cuts of between £7 and £20 a week.

The workers, members of the T&GWU, came out on strike on Monday 18th April mounting pickets on all gates of the Managing Agency. Soon the action spread to other WACS schemes with the painters and decorators, members of UCATT, coming out at the end of the first week. They were only prevented from continuing their action after being told they would get no support from their union.

Brian Southern refused to negotiate with the T&GWU throughout the strike agreeing to meet only NALGO and NUPE officials neither of which had any members in dispute.

The strikers won support from other scheme workers and trades unionists in Manchester through their continuous lobbying of meetings and picketing.

The final backdown from management came when the strikers occupied the wages department of the Managing Agency on Thursday 5th May, when the building was being used as a polling station in the local elections.

Southern immediately agreed to meet with the union and after some discussion re-instated all the workers without victimisation and reduced the wage cuts to between £1.30 and £7 a week, with the majority receiving the £1.30 cut.

The strikers gained a victory which not only reduced the proposed wage cuts extensively but also resulted in the recognition of the T&GWU as an appropriate union for the purposes of

TGWU COMMUNITY PROGRAMME NATIONAL SHOP STEWARDS' COMBINE

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST WORKFARE

SHEFFIELD

WEDNESDAY 15 JUNE

STRIKE AGAINST WORKFARE

LIVE MUSIC

Protest at Government plans to force the unemployed to work full time for their benefits/dole.

MARCH ON THE MSC

Assemble: 1.30 p.m. Caborn's Corner (Off Spittal Hill, Sheffield)

Demo Starts: 2.00 p.m.

Rally: 3.00 p.m. outside MSC Headquarters 'Moorfoot'

Speakers invited include:

Ron Todd (TGWU)
 Tony Benn MP
 Clare Short MP
 John Edmunds (GMB)

In September the Tories intend to force the unemployed to work full time for their benefits/dole - a system known in the USA as 'Workfare'.

The new programme will mean no pay, no choice, no rights and no unions for over 1/2 million unemployed people - and that could include you.

We have defeated the Tories before - on JTS - and we can do it again.

CLOSE DOWN ALL EXISTING CP SCHEMES FOR THE DAY

Those opposed to 'Workfare' include: TGWU, GMB, NALGO, NUPE, MSF, Scottish TUC, NW TUC, SE TUC, NAT. CONFERENCE OF UNEMPLOYED CENTRES.

'collective bargaining' at WACS.

The WACS workers' victory should inspire all scheme workers to fight against worsening wages and working conditions, however small the scheme.

The strikers have won the first stage of the battle. The benefits-related schemes planned for September will mean that nationally 600,000 workers will be faced with the fight to prevent the government forcing them to work for little more than their benefits.

The unions have a responsibility to lead a fight against the governments new slave labour schemes but council after council meeting of the TUC deferred taking a decision until May 25th when

it gave its 'qualified' support.

The 'paper' position of outright opposition to the new scheme adopted by many unions after a hard fight from activists within have not been translated into any nationally co-ordinated campaign against these renewed attacks on the unemployed.

While the WACS workers won, any initiative by one scheme to resist the new benefits-related schemes, should be supported by all unions and other scheme workers.

Facing all militants is the building of a movement that neither the state nor the trade union bureaucracy can stop.

E.T. Go Home !

On September 5th the Tory Government will introduce a new scheme into Britain called 'Employment Training' (ET). The scheme, pioneered by Norman Fowler is already in operation in 21 states of the USA and is known as 'Workfare'.

The scheme will force the unemployed to work 35-40 hours per week for their benefit plus £10. The penalty for refusing this 'offer' will be the loss of benefits for six months. ET will be overseen by the Training Commission, the government's new name for the Manpower Services Commission and will combine all existing schemes into one package.

The unemployed will be placed into private companies working alongside people in permanent jobs. The participants are set to undermine the conditions and wages of all workers, threatening to destroy all that the trade union movement has achieved. Its ultimate aim along with the anti-trade union legislation being to smash the organisations of the working class.

Ron Todd, general secretary of the T&GWU, was compelled to launch the "Charter Against Workfare" on December 8th 1987 in opposition to Fowler's proposals. The Charter outlined four basic principles which were to be the conditions of trade union support;

- * There should be no compulsion.
- * Participants should be paid the rate for the job.
- * Participants should have Employee status.
- * There should be trade union approval.

When Todd launched the Charter he stated; "I would certainly not continue as an MSC commissioner if these principles were breached. **My union policy is that we should actively seek for all unions to stop co-operation and involvement in MSC schemes**".

The TUC endorsed these principles and added that the scheme should provide at least 40% 'off the job' training.

In December 1987 the MSC established a working group which included four TUC commissioners to look into Fowler's proposals. This group voted unanimously to accept the new scheme on January 20th 1988. Despite what Ron Todd had stated on launching the Charter Against Workfare he voted in favour of endorsing the decision of the working group breaching all of the principles laid down in the Charter.

Rank and file members of the T&GWU, especially Community Programme scheme members, outraged at the positions taken by their leadership, organised a national CP shop stewards conference. Over 13,000 of the 25,000 CP members in the T&GWU were

represented. The conference condemned the decision of Ron Todd and the TUC and drew up a plan of action to campaign against the introduction of ET. A National CP shop stewards combine was set up to co-ordinate the action.

The first stage of the struggle took place on March 8th with a lobby of the new T&GWU 'so-called' left wing General Executive Council. Over 150 CP scheme workers demanded that the Executive uphold Biennial Delegate Conference policy of outright opposition to benefits related schemes. The GEC voted to uphold the decision although Ron Todd's position was to defer taking a position.

Activists have lobbied the TUC to demand they take a position of opposition to ET. On May 25th the TUC gave their support to the scheme voting 19-14 in favour. The General and Municipal workers union broke their unions mandate and voted in favour.

It is clear that the action needs to be broadened out to all trade unions and needs to involve not just the scheme workers or union activists but workers in main stream industry as well as the unemployed.

T&GWU members should now demand that their union along with NUPE & NALGO following Ron Todd withdraw from the MSC. A national campaign of opposition to the scheme. A mobilisation for a day of strike action by CP workers and a demonstration is being organised by the T&GWU CP shop stewards Combine for June 15th in Sheffield, headquarters of the MSC. This must have the full support of all socialists and activists in the Labour movement.

Tim Pearson

International Socialist League

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The Manchester Chief P.C.

I'm the man, the very big man, I'm Manchester Chief P.C.,
I like to lay the law down and say how things should be,
But if the public doubt my word and say I'm a crazy sod,
I quietly remind them I've a direct line to God.

Now if you are a man who's gay, your the lowest of the low,
Swimming around in a cesspit, its your own fault you know,
And as for lesbian women, they've no rights at all,
I'd make them face a firing squad, lined up against the wall.

The other night while I was watching telly on my own (I think it was the A-team)
The bell rang, yes, and there he was, God was on the phone,
He gave me strict instructions so I wouldn't get in a mess,
For you have to be bloody careful when your talking to the press.

I keep the Ten Commandments and I'm never out of church,
I think to keep the crime rate down we need the rope and birch.
I'd willingly flog 'em all myself, till for mercy they did cry,
And I know I've God's approval as he looks down from the sky.

Those lefties on the council want to see the end of me,
I should go, that's what they say, that's what they all agree,
But I'm not really worried, for if I get the sack,
With a little help from my Friend Above, I reckon I'LL BE BACK!!

Dorothy Fryman
Tune: The Sour Milk Cart

STATEMENT TO THE

The opposition of Benn and Heffer to the right wing of the Labour Party highlights the necessity for all those who fight for the independence of the working class and for socialism to develop a programme that can defeat the Tories. The question of leadership is being raised in ever sharper forms. The demand for the resignation of McCluskie by the striking seafarers is just an indication of this.

The Tories are hated for their unprecedented attack on the working class over health, education, housing and employment. They proceed from privatising the nationalised industries to privatising the main life supports of the working class. The Tories sit in the palm of the multi-nationals and completely re-organise industry at their behest, as part of the international plan for the super exploitation of the World working class. This re-organisation takes place due to the necessity for maintaining the dominance of the North American monopolies. It means the destruction of all the old traditional organisations of the working class in Britain and the wiping away of all of the remnants of the welfare state.

Fords refused a deal in Dundee yet they announced trebled profits to £317 million in 1987. They paid their parent company £209 million. Today the multi-nationals roam the globe for the most exploitable labour and the trade union and Labour leadership grovel at their feet.

The haste with which the Labour and trade union leadership forgot the Wembley Conference decisions and implemented the Tory laws in stopping their members from supporting workers in struggle, was matched by the speed with which they developed "new realism". This has been thrown into sharp relief by the long series of stubborn struggles, large and small, since Thatcher came to power. What has been gained by the Tories is due only to the servility of the Labour and trade union leadership.

For those who fight back for their legitimate demands the Tories now have an international shoot to kill policy equal to Israel's Mossad or the South African State. Today the SAS turn their guns on the Irish Republican struggle tomorrow it will be the British working class. The victories of the Tories are in no way decisive. They have been unable to inflict a definitive defeat on the working class. As is demonstrated in every strike the strength of the masses to fight remains undiminished. The aim of any class conscious fighter must be to aid all the struggles of the class: unity can be achieved in bringing down the Tories.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY IS A LIE

The Tories remain unsuccessful in their at-



tempt to undermine the combativity of the working class and restore the competitiveness of British industry. The Tory offensive attempted to overcome the historic and structural crisis of the economy. They hoped that the profits from North sea oil would stave off the crisis.

The stock market crash of last October showed that none of Thatcher's policies can resolve the economic crisis, such symptoms show that deeper World recession is on the way. The British economic structure resting on 100 years of relative industrial decline is least able to resist the new wave. That is why the Tories are trying to speed up their programme.

Many union members are under attack from their leaders. The fight for Benn and Heffer opens up one front for fighting the trade union and Labour bureaucracy. Hammond is signing single union 'no-strike' deals every month for the EETPU. He is being matched deal for deal by Jordan of the AEU. They have the covert agreement of the majority of the T.U.C. General Council. Fords at Dundee was a 'big issue' but what about the 'sweetheart' deals signed by the AEU with Delco Products in Dunstable, a subsidiary of General Motors and with Coca-Cola in Wakefield.

INCREASING DETERMINATION

It is often said, by the same people that concentrate on what they see as demoralisation and defeats, that the British working class did not rise from the defeat of the 1926 General strike until the end of the war. But in 1929, the British working class elected a Labour government, a development which signified their turn to continue the fight

politically. With the development of the World crisis, the working class began to move in a revolutionary direction.

Reg Groves, one of the original members of the Left Opposition in Britain and expelled from the Communist Party in 1932, described the feelings of workers in 1931; "A tremendous excitement, not known since the General Strike, was noticeable in all the indoor and outdoor meetings. Where there were usually scores, there were now hundreds, and on occasion a thousand or more. The upturned lamplit faces were serious, anxious, hopeful that the apostle of change, of class struggle of revolution, would tell them what to do" (The Balham Group. Reg Groves Plus Press).

Although these struggles in the thirties were diverted from a revolutionary path by the leadership, the spirit of this movement forced the capitalists, at the end of the war, to implement the Welfare State, to avoid social revolution. With the intensification of the chronic crisis of World imperialism, the capitalists are impelled to try to take back these reforms. This will inevitably create tremendous class confrontations. It is for this situation that we offer the following programme.

PROGRAMME

Our programme calls for a thirty hour week with no cut in pay, combined with a massive national works programme paid for by the companies and the government - only such a programme would eliminate unemployment. All new jobs are to be at union rates of pay.

The corner stone of our programme is that only socialist solutions can resolve this crisis

SOCIALIST CONFERENCE

sis. Only the nationalisation without compensation under workers control of the basic industries can overcome the crisis of capitalism, the horror of its search for profit. Everywhere misery, destruction of the environment and death results from the control of our lives by capitalism.

No socialist solution can be successful outside of a greater cooperation and fraternisation with the European Economy. But unlike 1992, which will only create greater freedoms for exploitation, any revolution in one country must be a prelude to socialist revolution and therefore harmony in Europe and establish a Socialist United States of Europe.

We must demand that the union leaders and organised workers compel big business, the finance houses and multi-nationals pay for the training of youth under trade union control. The trade union movement must maintain for young workers what has been achieved only through the bitter struggle of the working class.

Defend the right to strike, the rights of picketing and the rights of solidarity action.

The brunt of the Tory attacks are met by the

most oppressed; working class women, youth and the black communities. We support all their struggles against oppression.

This means equal pay for equal work; the right to free abortion on demand; no discrimination against Gays and Lesbians and the immediate repeal of all immigration laws and the right of full citizenship for all immigrants. The right to organise self defense squads.

All those government measures that are now pressing down on the communities must be repealed - the poll tax, the housing act, education act and the local government act.

No socialist has a choice over the struggles they support. The true colour of any leader can be tested in the question: Which side are you on? All workers have a duty to oppose the aggression of their capitalist class. Two of the most naked acts of the present government is the occupation of the Malvinas and the north of Ireland.

This government is spending at least half a million pounds a day on manoeuvres and maintaining the British forces, yet they say they have no money for health or education. We say there must be an immediate withdrawal.

- ** Break all links with Apartheid Israel and Apartheid South Africa. Workers sanctions against both.
- ** Full trade union rights to all workers. Repeal all anti-trade union laws.
- ** No to British Intervention.
- ** For A Socialist United States of Europe.

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Selected Documents of the Bolshevik Tendency

June 1987 - February 1988
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Socialist Voice
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"Moral" Bigotry Legalised

Tuesday the 24th of May saw the passing of the reactionary legislation against Gays and Lesbians, Section 28 of the local Govt Act, the cream on the cake of Thatchers return to "Victorian values". As more and more people are thrown on the dole, and attacks are made left, right and centre on the Welfare State, the Tories hope to shore things up by outlawing any form of social relations that threaten the sacred institution of the "Family".

What the legislation actually means in practice is that local authorities will not be able to fund anything that is in anyway seen to promote homosexuality or Lesbianism.

Already some teachers have been sacked for declaring that they are Gay or Lesbian, or for daring to talk about Section 28.

This bigotted attempt to try and stifle feelings, suppress human nature and the whole of humanity's development, is the product of an outmoded system, that is culturally bankrupt, and should be overthrown.

The Capitalist class fear the erosion of so called "Family values", not out of a loving concern for workers and their families, but because they see it along with religion as the bulwark against rapid social change. They hope that by maintaining this most conservative form of organization, within

which women are doubly oppressed, they can hold on to political power, and blame all the ills of society on those who reject tradition.

The fightback against this law has to be taken up in the trade unions, where threat of strike action won one gay teacher his job back.

This attempt to straight-jacket, and stereotype people has to be fought where ever it is manifested. Oppression of minorities in society in an attempt to drive wedges into working class unity must be fought by all class conscious socialists.

John Owen



The Fight Continues

No Holding Back Victory Over Labour

In the local council elections on May 5th, Kirkby labour movement activists struck a telling blow against the right wing when Dot Quirk was elected councillor by a six vote margin on a Labour (Independent) ticket against the imposed Labour candidate, Francis Kneale JP, the previous councillor.

Dot told Socialist Voice that she hoped the result would make those who were disciplining and expelling good socialists from the Labour Party take stock and think about what they were doing.

She also spoke about the campaign itself: the reason she had stood as Independent Labour was because the suspension of the wards meant that candidates were imposed from outside the area. This was a denial of local democracy.

They also had to contend with the campaign of harassment, intimidation and smears from supporters of the official candidate, Kneale, including George Howarth, the sitting MP, who had also been imposed on the area. It became so vile that complaints had to be made to the returning officer and the police.

Dot also told how the selection panel from the District Labour Party had agreed that she was a suitable candidate but had decided to drop her from the panel because of her campaigning activities!

ROCK SOLID SUPPORT

It was these very campaigning activities which ensured her election through the enthusiastic efforts of over 30 regular campaigners and the rock solid support of those



Kirkby Leads

sections of the working class most savagely hit by this Thatcher regime and the lack of resistance to it by the Knowsley council.

Socialist Voice congratulates Dot on her election as councillor and on the principled way in which her campaign was run.

We would recommend the tactics adopted in Kirkby as a model to follow for all those suffering from the witch-hunts or likely to fall foul of the police regime now being installed in the Labour Party by the right wing dominated National Executive Committee.

The Kirkby activists have returned the attacks on them blow for blow. What they have achieved is a real slap in the face to the right, which is driven, not by strength, but by the knowledge that they have neither the will nor the policies to fight Thatcher.

These comrades still see the Labour Party as the vehicle with which to fight for socialism; as Dot said, she would much rather have done what she did inside the Labour Party;

but they see that any holding back from a fight, for fear of expulsion is only, in practice, unity with the right wing who are destroying any Party democracy.

DETERMINED FIGHTBACK

If these tactics had been followed from the first of the witch hunts, which, while aimed ostensibly at the Militant tendency, were in fact directed at all opposition to the rightward swing of the Labour leadership under the pressure

of Thatcherism, then there would surely have been a huge fightback generated by now.

The Militant tendency must take a large share of the blame for this (for acquiescing in the witch hunts). But not all of it. Those groups on the left who criticise Militant tactics seem to have a far too cosy relationship within the Labour Party and it would be instructive to see their reaction to the Kirkby events.

Nonetheless, it is by no means too late in the day for a determined fightback against the right wing witch hunts.

What is becoming everyday clearer to trade unionists and political activists is that the biggest obstacle to defeating the Tories is the leaderships which are entrenched in the bureaucracies of the Labour Party and trade unions and their apologists, no matter how left the latter may sound.

Frank Fitzmaurice

Militant Mobbed In Stockport

Kinnocks purge machine hit Stockport again in May as the well known witch-hunter of Militant, councillor Alan Mobbs, leader of the Labour group, revealed his sensational hit-list of alleged Militant supporters.

It is thought by local Labour activists that among the 60 on the list may well be Alan Mobbs' name as well! It is a list that is said to be somehow obtained from Gordon Ross. It is in fact an address book - which Gordon never lost.

Mobbs' comment on this was; "I have suspected that Militant have been trying to

establish a base in south Manchester and I believe Gordon Ross is the key to all this."

In fact the key to all this is the tradition the right wing have of hounding opponents. Last year ex-councillor Bob Boyd was the target. At that time they got their knuckles rapped by Walsworth Road because they had gone too far even for the bureaucracy in London. They had suspended Boyd on trumped up charges but his real crime was speaking out against the witch-hunts.

Mobbs is now searching again. Will he come clean and publish the 60 names? Will he say how he got hold of the list? He has gone too far this time even for the local

Labour machine, having contravened the rules of the Party by acting as a McCarthyist one man band.

Local activists are now saying: when you enter the local Labour club, don't sign in, just leave your address book!

What confidence can the working class have in the local Labour Party and the councillor they voted for in defending their interests? These are the antics of the leader of the Labour group in Stockport?

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