

ZAIRE

'MASSACRE' COVER TO PROP UP STOOGES DICTATOR

workers' ACTION

No.104

May 27-June 3, 1978

10p



Two thousand people were reported killed in the Idiofu region of Zaire just four months ago. No headlines about 'massacre' appeared in the Western press. The governments of Belgium, Britain, France and the USA made no 'humanitarian' offers to airlift out further potential victims of the violence there.

It goes without saying that none of those killed were white and that the murderers were soldiers of the Mobutu regime which imperialism has propped up with escalating financial and military assistance in the last two years.

Last week, of course, the white community in the copper-rich province of Shaba was threatened by rebel forces, as were the copper mines. Whatever the circumstances surrounding the apparent deaths of 100 or so Europeans — and we can in no way trust the lurid accounts in the press of 'mutilations' and 'mass graves', two things are certain.

The stories were cynically used as pretexts for direct foreign military intervention in Zaire; and if European civilians have been killed in anger it is because Zairans see them as agents of oppression and ruthless super-exploitation.

The Shaban rebel organisation FNLC (Congolese National Liberation Front) made this quite clear in a statement issued in Rome last week. "The FNLC forces, together with the insurgent population opposed to the Mobutu dictatorship, will do everything possible to protect the foreign citizens in Kolwezi. But we make a serious warning that if the intervention by foreign troops continues, this will have grave consequences for

IMPERIALISTS OUT OF AFRICA!

these citizens." According to civilians escaping from the major town of Kolwezi, the rebels were at first friendly to them. Some of these civilians, and also the Socialist Party in Belgium (which has the Foreign Affairs ministry) have suggested that it was the news of French military intervention which provoked the killings.

One refugee, Roger Rossignol, told the *Guardian* what he thought: "This was revenge. We knew they were going to come back after what happened last year (after a similar invasion).

"What the government did to the population down there after that was unbelievable. One whole village was massacred, even the Moroccans (ferried in by France to help Mobutu) were disgusted..."

Some other facts are clear. The townspeople supported the rebels, rather than regarding them as agents of the USSR, East Germany, or Angola. Many more blacks than whites got killed in the fighting — though the press, with sickening racist bias, shows no concern for report-

ing these deaths and finding out how they happened, still less mourning them.

The Belgian and French interventions have not just been operations to save lives. On the French side, this is openly admitted: official statements speak of "an operation to re-establish order" and "a short, sharp demonstration of support for the Mobutu government."

As for the Belgians, the facts speak for themselves. They have taken the town of Kolwezi, and half their invasion force of 1200 paratroopers is staying on there.

There are unconfirmed reports that six whites were actually shot by French paratroopers. But in any case the casualties — black and white — in Shaba are the victims of the efforts of the great capitalist powers, notably France, to prop up the unpopular but firmly pro-imperialist government of President Mobutu. They are victims of imperialist intervention carried out — as the French government stresses — in close collaboration with other NATO governments, "notably the British".

Imperialist troops out of Africa!

The massacre that didn't make headlines

THERE have been no tears in the press for the black victims of the fighting in Zaire or of Mobutu's brutal dictatorship. And the massacre, by troops of the dressed-up white supremacist regime, of over 50 black people in Rhodesia, also earned nothing more than a routine 'objective' report.

According to official Smith government accounts, 52 people — 11 children, 36 women and five men — were shot dead on Monday 15th May when a security patrol opened fire on a meeting breaking curfew regulations. Other witnesses put the death toll at 94.

The official account says that there were eight guerilla fighters there who returned the troops' fire, but admits that the troops opened fire first. Other witnesses say there was only one guerilla

fighter present, and no return fire.

There were about 200 people at the meeting, apparently one of many secretly organised by the national liberation forces in Zimbabwe [Rhodesia] to explain their political ideas to the people.

In short, even if the official account is accurate in every detail, this was an unprovoked massacre of mostly unarmed people, almost all of them women and children, at a perfectly peaceful meeting.

The regime responsible for these massacres in the regime which the Labour government hopes to do a deal with. It is time the labour movement said clearly:

- No deals with Smith and Vorster!
- Full support for the Zimbabwe resistance!

PROTESTS CONTINUE TO ROCK SHAH'S REGIME

SINCE January this year there has been a continuing cycle of mass protests in Iran, every 40 days.

40 days is the traditional mourning period for Muslim. Every 40 days thousands come out on the streets to mourn those killed in the previous round of protests. And each time the army and police open fire again and claim more victims.

The cycle started with a massacre of hundreds of demonstrators in Qom, early in January. There have been fresh upsurges in mid-February, after that at the end of March. The latest outbreak of defiance of the Shah's regime began on May 9th.

Once again the protests have met with bloody repression. It is reported that 100 people were killed or wounded when police shot down a crowd of people as they came out of a meeting in a mosque in Tebran on May 11th.

On May 15th a general strike went ahead in Tebran and was partly successful. Tanks had to be brought onto the streets in an attempt to stop it. Tebran and many other cities were said to be in a state of siege, and the Shah had to postpone a visit he was due to make to Europe.

At the same time, police were launching an attack on the university, where students are demanding an end to the military occupation of the campus.

One wing of the ruling [and only legal] party is organising "Resistance Corps" vigilante squads to beat down the workers' and students' protests. But another wing — according to press reports — is saying that it recognises the need for reforms.

Clearly the Shah's 25-year-old dictatorship is having increasing difficulty in dealing with the apparently unquenchable opposition.



Tanks in Tehran

AT the end of March this year, the last of the officers involved in the 25th April 1974 overthrow of the dictatorship in Portugal still holding a top military position was sacked. General Vasco Lourenco was removed from the command of the Lisbon military region and deprived of his rank as general.

The reason was that he had failed to discipline junior officers who publicly denounced right-wing agitation in the army.

In a balancing act, the right wing General Vasco Rocha Vieira left his general's rank and his post of army chief of staff at the same time. But the obvious strengthening of the right wing in the army has raised once again the prospect of a military coup.

There have been two attempted coups in Portugal since April 1974: in September 1974 and in March 1975, during the early period of a rapid shift to the left in Portugal after the 46-year old dictatorship fell.

General Spínola, who was closely associated with those coups, has been let back into Portugal and (earlier this year) reinstated into the army. He was recently the guest of the Defence Minister, Col. Firmino Miguel, at a special dinner party.

Another boost to the right wing was given on May 11th, when President Eanes announced that Admiral Tomas, president under the pre-1974 dictatorship, would be allowed to return to Portugal and would have his bank account unfrozen

Pledge

The right wing generally is becoming more and more vocal. The biggest opposition party, the PSD, calls itself Social-Democratic and voted in 1976 for a constitution which is supposed to pledge Portugal to 'socialism'. Yet it has more and more become the spokesman for demands that the gains made by the workers and peasants in 1974 and 1975 should be rolled back quickly and completely.

In contrast to the CDS, which

Is Portugal facing a rightist coup?

represents the big bourgeoisie, the PSD is based more on the middle class.

The PSD's leader Francisco Sa Carneiro, representing the northern-based right wing of the party, has recently succeeded in forcing the resignation of the party's more moderate Lisbon-based political committee.

Major Melo Antunes, a leader of the April 1974 uprising and close to the Socialist Party, has warned that "Today the threats against democracy and the Socialist project for our society are numerous" (*Guardian*, 25th April).

Despite all these indications, the odds are against a military coup in the near future. The working class movement in Portugal, although it is on the defensive, is still strong. The May Day celebrations this year were bigger than any year since 1974. And left wing influence is still alive in the army: 1000 officers demonstrated in commemoration of the 1974 uprising on 25th April this year.

For the Portuguese ruling class, a coup would probably be too risky — especially at a time when they need to prove their stability in order to get loans from the IMF, to get into the Common Market, and to try to attract foreign investment back into the country.

Whether or not it remains satisfied with the present Socialist-CDS (Conservative)

government as its agent, the Portuguese ruling class is certainly set for a vigorous drive against the workers and peasants. The economy was shaky in the last years of the dictatorship and has been in chaos ever since the revolutionary struggles of 1975. Portugal has lost the profits it used to draw from its African colonies; a lot of the foreign capital invested in the country was withdrawn during the revolutionary struggles and now that Portuguese wages are not as low as they were under the dictatorship, it is not coming back.

Production did increase by 12.8% between 1976 and 1977; but unemployment stands at 15% and inflation at 30% and they are increasing.

Price

The government's policy has been a systematic economic counter-offensive. Wages have been frozen while prices and taxes are increased. Workers' control in the factories has been outlawed, and the workers' commissions reduced to the function of shop stewards' committees.

Some of the factories seized by the workers and nationalised in 1975 have been returned to their former owners; most remain nationalised (because the old owners don't want them back) but compensation is to be

paid.

Some of the land seized by peasants in 1975 has been returned to the landowners, though at present the government is marking time on this.

With the Socialist Party pursuing such a determined policy of making the workers and peasants pay for capitalist reconstruction, the Communist Party has consolidated its hold on the workers' movement, and gained in strength. On May Day the SP tried to hold an alternative to the CP-controlled trade union federation CGT-Intersindical's May Day rally, but got very few people to it.

But the CP's strength is not used for a determined fight-back. Its policy is for a 'broad democratic front', a coalition government representing all parties and all classes — and severe measures against 'terrorism'. In short, the anti-'Eurocommunist' Portuguese CP has exactly the same line as the 'Eurocommunist' Italian CP, except that Portugal's prime minister Mario Soares is not so willing to accept an alliance with the CP as is Italy's prime minister Giulio Andreotti.

However, the revolutionary left, paying the price of its extreme confusion in 1975, is much reduced in strength. The PRP (the biggest of the far-left organisations during 1975) recently joined with the FSP (a split-off from the CP, now red-

uced to a shadow) and Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho to form a movement called the OUT — United Workers' Organisation.

The programme of the OUT is basically the same as that of Otelo's election campaign for president in 1976 and the platform put forward by Copcon (the military police, then led by Otelo) and the most radical sector of the armed forces) in 1975: nationalist, oriented to an alliance with left-wing officers rather than a breaking-up of the old army and its replacement by workers' militias, and coloured by general prejudice against political parties.

It is an attempt to appeal to memories of 1974-75, when the "Armed Forces Movement - People Alliance" seemed to be carrying all before it. But such memories provide no answer to the cold realities of today; and they don't draw the lessons from the crucial setback on 25th November 1975, when right-wing officers decisively crushed the revolutionary effervescence in the armed forces and in the working class.

The strength of the Portuguese workers' movement is steadily being sapped by the Soares government's policies and the CP's failure to fight. There is still time for a fight-back. But without that, it is only a matter of time until the conditions for a military coup do exist.

New bans in South Africa

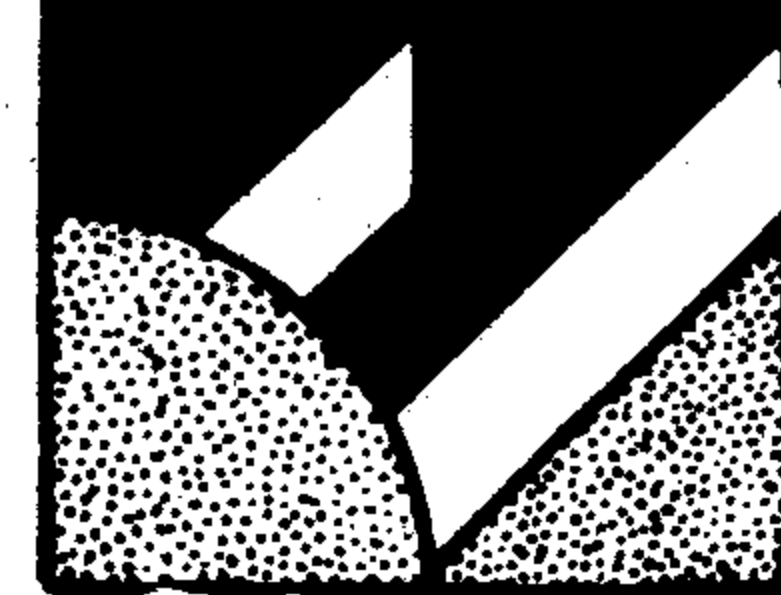
Virtually all the prominent opponents of the regime in South Africa who are not in prison are under 'banning orders'. Under these orders, the banned person is confined to one place — not necessarily their home — and barred from all political activity.

Among other things they are forbidden to take part in 'gatherings'. Up until recently it was assumed that this meant that a banned person could only meet with one other person at a time.

Now a Supreme Court ruling has tightened it even further, by finding that a banned person who met a friend for lunch was guilty of breaking the banning order. From now on, banned persons are in virtual solitary confinement. And that is without them being charged, let alone tried or proved guilty of any legal offence.

A programme to beat the National Front

Editorial



AFTER THE tremendous turn-out for the Anti Nazi League Carnival, now is the time for thinking out perspectives in the anti-fascist movement.

The national network of anti-fascist committees is holding a conference on June 3rd-4th, and the Anti Nazi League promises to have a conference soon.

What have been the main developments since the level of racist violence in Britain took a sudden leap in the summer of 1976?

Specially since the Lewisham events last August (where 7,000 socialists and young blacks sent the fascists scurrying), more and more people outside the organised militant Left have been ready to act against the fascists.

Hard core

Thus despite the continued high unemployment, social decay, and disillusion and demoralisation caused by the Labour Government's wretched record, the growth of the National Front fascists has been contained. Now they are declining electorally, and probably in real strength too.

However they seem to have consolidated a fascist hard core. Both their opponents and their supporters are more conscious of the National Front being a Nazi organisation. Two years ago the NF would not have shouted slogans like 'The National Front is a fascist front, join the National Front', as they did on May 1.

In some areas, like East London, fascist violence is now a constant and real danger for the black communities. The fascists have also come out more openly against the labour movement.

We are not yet anywhere near the stage where the fascists will launch a frontal assault with the aim of smashing the labour movement. Their main thrust continues to be directed against the black communities. However, there have been bombs at the headquarters of the National Union of Public Employees and the communist Party, and arson at the premises of **Socialist Worker** and **Socialist Challenge**, as well as dozens of attacks on black bookshops.

From some areas — East London, Leeds, the north west — there is now news of fascist attacks on the

labour movement regularly every few weeks or so. In those areas it is not safe for the labour movement to organise anti-racist or pro-Irish meetings, or to organise election canvassing, without taking precautions against fascist attacks.

Probably the biggest setback for the labour movement and the black communities since 1976 — and it is important not to lose sight of this by focusing exclusively on the NF — is the stepping-up of **state racism**.

Racist state

Taking the rise in racist violence as proof that there is a 'race problem', leading politicians of all parties have clamoured for stricter immigration controls.

There have still been many on the left who have called on this racist state to deal with the ultra-racists of the National Front. The results by now should be clear enough. The NF were able to mount a show of strength, with police connivance, after their demonstration in Tameside was banned last October; but on April 29th in Leeds 2,000 police were sent in to stop the Trades Council May

Day rally because it broke a ban on marches imposed after the NF had planned a demonstration.

Any slight inconvenience the police bans cause to the NF is minor compared to the sapping of the labour movement's democratic rights and the increased power given to the police — those same police who in some areas are almost as notorious as the fascists among black youth for their racist violence.

The state does want to subdue the NF — and substitute its own controlled racism for the NF's uncontrolled racism. This 'official' anti-fascism, expressed most boldly through papers like the **Daily Mirror** and the **News of the World**, played a big role in preparing the rapid rise of the Anti Nazi League.

But just as official racism becomes transmuted into something wilder and more savage when it fuses with the bitter frustration and discontent of the NF's supporters in the slums of East London, so also official anti-fascism can become transmuted into something more militant when it sets thousands of working-class youth into motion.

The problem is to give those working-class youth clear perspectives enabling them to throw off the limitations imposed by the Establishment sponsors of the ANL — perspectives which deal adequately with the totality of the situation.

Against fascist violence, we must continue to argue for **labour movement assistance to black self-defence**. But with increasing white working-class participation in the anti-fascist struggle, and increasing fascist attacks on the labour movement, the time has come to call also for **workers' de-**

fence squads, organised by labour movement bodies.

The first task of such squads must be to protect labour movement events, the second task to cooperate actively with black self-defence groups. And they should also play their part in giving an organised character to the struggle to **deny the fascists a platform**.

There must be **no call for state bans**. On the contrary, the time has come to launch the call for labour movement/black community commissions to **inquire into and expose police racism** and connivance with the fascists. Scrap the 'Sus' laws! Oppose police harassment of the black communities!

On the streets

These perspectives for labour movement/black community cooperation in the struggle against racism will be empty unless **fascists are kicked out of the unions and racists are purged from all positions in the labour movement**.

The keystone to the fight against state racism is still **opposition to immigration controls**.

On this platform, working class based anti-fascist committees and Anti Nazi League groups can be built which bring thousands on the streets, not just to listen to music but to send the fascists running and roll back state racism.

Inside that movement **Marxists must argue for a revolutionary answer to the overall social crisis; and if we do that adequately, a militant movement against the fascist and racist results of capitalism can give a major boost to the struggle against the roots of these evils**.

Mobutu's crisis

THE OPERATION which began on May 11th was the second invasion of Shaba province by the Congo National Liberation Front [FNLC] in 14 months.

Their previous invasion, after making quick successes against Mobutu's corrupt and inefficient army, was thrown back by a massive foreign military intervention by French planes and French-organised Moroccan ground troops.

The present invasion will inevitably suffer a similar fate.



Mobutu & Tshombe in 1960

The rebel forces, including former Katangese gendarmes and erstwhile supporters of the imperialist-backed secessionist regime of Moïse Tshombe, have no real following within Zaire outside of their own region. They do receive support from Angola and Cuba, but for military reasons rather than political ones.

The Neto regime in Angola views them as a weapon to keep the Zaire-backed FNLA out of Angolan territory,

but is also aware of the fact that their secessionist aims are unpopular with Black capitalist states in Africa.

Cuba's speedy dissociation from the invasion is due to similar reasons.

Although the Shaban rebels won't succeed by themselves in overthrowing Mobutu, they will still be a problem for the regime in years to come. They are just one of the regional armed oppositions to the dictatorship throughout Zaire which have caused Mobutu to strengthen his repressive forces and call in imperialist military advisers and paratroopers.

Although it is a regional movement with a secessionist background, the FNLC says it is fighting for the overthrow of the Mobutu regime throughout Zaire.

The fall in the world price of copper from \$1.40 a pound in 1974 to \$0.55 in 1975, an inflation rate of 70 to 100% and a general decline in production in other Zairian industries — clothing, agriculture, and cement — has also led to a growth in urban discontent as unemployment in the cities has soared.

Massacres, show trials, and executions of his opponents have been Mobutu's standard responses.

But the increased repression caused by the economic crisis, because it has forced the regime to rely more heavily on imperialism, has consequently made it go back on its project of providing a

stable social base for the regime by encouraging the development of a numerous Zairian bourgeoisie.

Foreign military aid has improved the effectiveness of the Zaire armed forces to the extent that they have not suffered such a humiliating military defeat in Shaba this time round. Similarly the rescheduling of foreign debt payments, the \$235 million credit the regime received from the IMF alone in 1975, Belgian support for hydro-electric projects, and so on, has kept Mobutu's head above the waters of economic disaster.

But this has also meant denationalisation of certain Zairian industries, increased foreign control over the running of those still nationalised, a fresh influx of European technicians, advisers, managers, and administrators, and harsher terms on the repayment of foreign debts from private sources.

All this can only increase the oppression and exploitation of the workers and peasants, and at the same time decrease the opportunities to give muscle to the feeble native bourgeoisie.

Mobutu's state is increasingly becoming the isolated defender of foreign domination in Zaire, and whatever short term advantages the new phase of imperialist involvement has brought, it can only lead to ruin for the regime in the long run.

BAS HARDY

Strikes hit Brazil dictators

A massive strike wave has broken out in Brazil. The latest to walk out are 9,500 workers at the Ford factory near Sao Paulo, where the last week has seen strikes by workers at Saab-Scania and Mercedes-Benz. The workers are fighting the wage cuts which have been imposed by the military dictatorship since it abolished collective bargaining in 1965.

The strikes began with the 2000 workers at Saab-Scania, who demanded a 20% increase. They later went back to work when management agreed to negotiate. But they made it quite clear that if the bosses don't come up with the goods they will walk out again. It was the same story at Mercedes-Benz, where 500 tool-makers followed the lead of the Saab workers. Here, management gave in after 2 days, promising a 15% increase to be implemented over the next few months, full-rate payment for the period of the strike, and no victimisation of the strikers.

The Ford management is more intransigent, and is refusing to

negotiate until the strike ends. However, this has not convinced the strikers, who have stayed out. They have been joined by the workers on the production line at the Phillips electric bulb factory in Sao Paulo.

This is the first major challenge to the Geisel dictatorship since 1968. Then, student demonstrations were brutally suppressed, and death squads composed of army and police began a campaign of assassination of worker and student leaders.

Strikes have been illegal in Brazil since the military coup in 1964, but in the face of the latest revolt the government is reluctant to fight the strikers head on, for fear of provoking a bigger strike movement — this time against the dictatorship itself.

So Geisel and his fellow gorillas have discovered that there is not really any strike going on at all. In fact all that is happening is a 'work paralysation'... and whatever that may be it is not illegal, so Geisel can sit it out for the moment.

Although the CIA had maintained sporadic contact with Angolan nationalist forces before the April 1974 coup in Portugal, Washington's overall policy was to back continued Portuguese colonial rule in Angola, as well as in Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.

This included extensive military loans and financial assistance to the Lisbon regime. Washington generally looked the other way when the Portuguese forces used NATO-supplied arms in Africa. Stockwell notes that during the colonial wars "American bombs and napalm fell on the Angolan nationalists..."

At the same time, at least during the 1960s, the CIA hedged its bets by establishing a few contacts with the Angolan nationalists, especially with the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA — Angolan National Liberation Front) headed by Holden Roberto.

Coup

But the April 1974 coup in Portugal, which eventually led to the collapse of the Portuguese colonial empire in Africa, "caught the United States by surprise, without graceful policy alternatives and out of contact with the African revolutionaries."

With little direct knowledge about the three main Angolan nationalist groups, the FNLA, the MPLA and UNITA, the CIA scrambled to get back into the picture, to gain some leverage to influence the course of events.

Because of its earlier contacts with the FNLA, and because the FNLA was backed by Washington's ally in Zaire, President Mobutu Sese Seko, the CIA started by renewing its relations with Holden Roberto.

"In July 1974" Stockwell writes "the CIA began funding Roberto without 40 Committee approval, small amounts at first but enough for word to get around that the CIA was dealing itself into the race." The 40 Committee was a high-level intelligence coordinating body with the responsibility of overseeing all covert operations abroad. At the time, it was chaired by Kissinger.

One factor in this CIA funding may have been concern over the growing Chinese influence with the FNLA, which began in 1973. By May 1974 the first contingent of 112 Chinese advisers arrived in Kinshasa to assist the FNLA and by September the FNLA acknowledged that it had received 450 tons of Chinese supplies.

It was only after this infusion of American and Chinese aid to

Despite all the pious indignation in the press about Russian and Cuban involvement in Africa, the intervention of French troops in Zaire, in Chad and in the Western Sahara is only the latest example in the imperialist powers' continued attempts to keep a grip on Africa.

A book published in the USA two weeks ago — "In Search of Enemies" by Joseph Stockwell — exposes the CIA's intervention in Angola in 1975/6. Stockwell was himself a CIA official until resigning in April 1977, and he was involved in the Angolan operation.

Although disillusioned by his experience, Stockwell still supports the existence of the CIA, and he has no objection in principle to the sort of intervention it made in Angola. He says only that it was ill-advised and unsuccessful, and the CIA should be reformed. This attitude of his makes it all the more difficult to discount the hard facts he gives.

The following summary of Stockwell's book, by Ernest Harsch, is abridged from 'Intercontinental Press/Inprecor' (May 22nd)

the FNLA began that Moscow renewed its backing to the FNLA's traditional rival, the MPLA. (Stockwell says that the previous Soviet support for the MPLA had been ended in 1973.)

In January 1975, just before serious fighting between the FNLA and MPLA began in Luanda and northern Angola, the 40 Committee authorised the CIA to pass \$300,000 to Roberto, says Stockwell.

In July 1975, the Africa Division of the CIA drafted an options paper on behalf of the 40 Committee calling for increased covert assistance to Roberto, as well as to the UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi.

Covert

Stockwell notes that the options paper did not postulate a victory for the FNLA and UNITA, but rather laid out a holding operation that would achieve a military balance between the three groups and prevent a "cheap" victory by the MPLA, headed by Agostino Neto. Stockwell adds, "Such covert financial assistance, it continued, would prevent the quick and cheap installation in Angola of what Mobutu and (Zambian President) Kaunda would regard as a pawn of

Moscow on their borders".

There were, however, important figures who favoured the MPLA over its two rivals. According to Stockwell, Tom Killoran, the American consul general in Luanda "believed the MPLA was best qualified to run Angola and that its leaders sincerely wanted a peaceful relationship with the United States". Similarly, as the civil war progressed, the CIA station chief in Luanda also concluded that the MPLA was "the best qualified to run the country" and that Washington should halt its actions against the MPLA as quickly as possible.

Kissinger and the CIA tops faced opposition to their Angolan policy from other directions as well. Nathaniel Davis, the assistant secretary of state for African affairs, opposed any covert military involvement in Angola on the grounds that such an operation could not be kept secret. When Kissinger rejected his recommendations that Washington press for a negotiated accord among the three groups, Davis resigned.

From a more hawkish standpoint, the deputy chief of the CIA's Africa Division pushed for a policy that would have allowed the FNLA and UNITA to quickly win the civil war. He suggested introducing a flying gun platform, called "Puff the Magic Dragon", that had been



White mercenary paid by CIA supervising the battered remains of the FNLA

Angola CIA's si

employed by the American forces in Vietnam.

The planes, rigged with several machine guns programmed to aim and fire simultaneously, were capable of peppering an area the size of a football field with 8,000 rounds a minute. "There was no doubt whatever," Stockwell writes "that in August, September and October 1975 a pair of these gunships would have completely broken the MPLA".

Overruling this suggestion, as well as the criticisms from those who favoured a "hands-off" policy or support for the MPLA, Kissinger, CIA Director William Colby, and other top government officials pushed ahead with their policy of stoking the fires of the civil war.

On July 16th 1975, President Ford approved the CIA's covert action plan for Angola, which was later code-named IA-FEATURE.

One factor that determined the CIA's attempts to keep its intervention in Angola as secret as possible was the widespread anti-war sentiment in the USA.

As Stockwell points out, "Our secrecy was designed to keep the American public and press from knowing what we were doing — we fully expected an outcry should they find us out."

Out of the initial allocation of \$14 million for the operation, the first planeload of arms for the FNLA and UNITA left South Carolina for Kinshasa on July 29. To hide the direct American involvement, the CIA tried to make it appear that the FNLA and UNITA were getting their arms from Mobutu alone. It also provided stocks of non-American weapons, as well as old US arms from the World War 2 period that are available in many parts of the world. The arms included mortars, rockets, machine guns, antitank rockets and rifles.

Beef up

Stockwell reveals "From the first airplane loads in July, throughout the war, CIA officers supervised the transshipment of CIA arms directly into Angola."

Some 83 CIA officers were sent into the field to beef up the existing CIA stations in Kinshasa, Luanda, Lusaka and Pretoria. Stockwell himself visited FNLA positions in northern Angola and met with Savimbi in Silva Pôrto, a UNITA base in central Angola.

Despite public claims to the contrary, the CIA sent advisers into Angola itself to assist the FNLA and UNITA forces.

"From the outset" Stockwell reports "we were deeply involved in managing the war from Washington, from Kinshasa, and from advance bases inside Angola, and this was reported daily in the flow of cables to and from the field. For cover purposes vis-a-vis the working group (an interdepartmental coordinating body) we called the advisers we placed inside Angola 'intelligence gatherers', although their intelligence effort was always subordinate to their advisory

YES! OUR BODIES, OUR OWN!

THIS WEEK in a Liverpool court a new threat is being mounted to women's right to control their own bodies. William Paton is seeking a court injunction to prevent his wife having an abortion.

If he is successful a major new obstacle will be added to the already numerous problems in the path of any woman seeking an abortion.

Liverpool BPAS, who were due to perform the abortion, say that Paton has no chance of success and they would be justified in going ahead without awaiting the court hearing. It has been pointed out that when the 1967 Abortion Act was going through parliament all amendments seeking to give a husband or boyfriend

the legal right to force the continuation of a pregnancy failed to get through.

Despite Paton's weak case in law, the pressure he has been able to put on — with the help of the anti-abortion group SPUC and heavy press coverage — is shown by the fact that BPAS is waiting for the outcome of the hearing.

Booster

Paton says that if he loses he will appeal if necessary to the House of Lords.

The case is being used as a big booster for the anti-abortion campaigns. To counteract this influence, the National Abortion Campaign have organised a picket outside the

court hearing.

"A woman's right to choose" is a slogan which is usually directed against the state. Here we have a case of a husband claiming rights over a woman's body. But the same ideas underlie both: of women as primarily dutiful wives and mothers.

Behind the sentimental garbage splashed over the front pages of the Sun and the Mirror lies a simple assertion of property rights. "The baby she is carrying is half mine, and I want them both home with me."

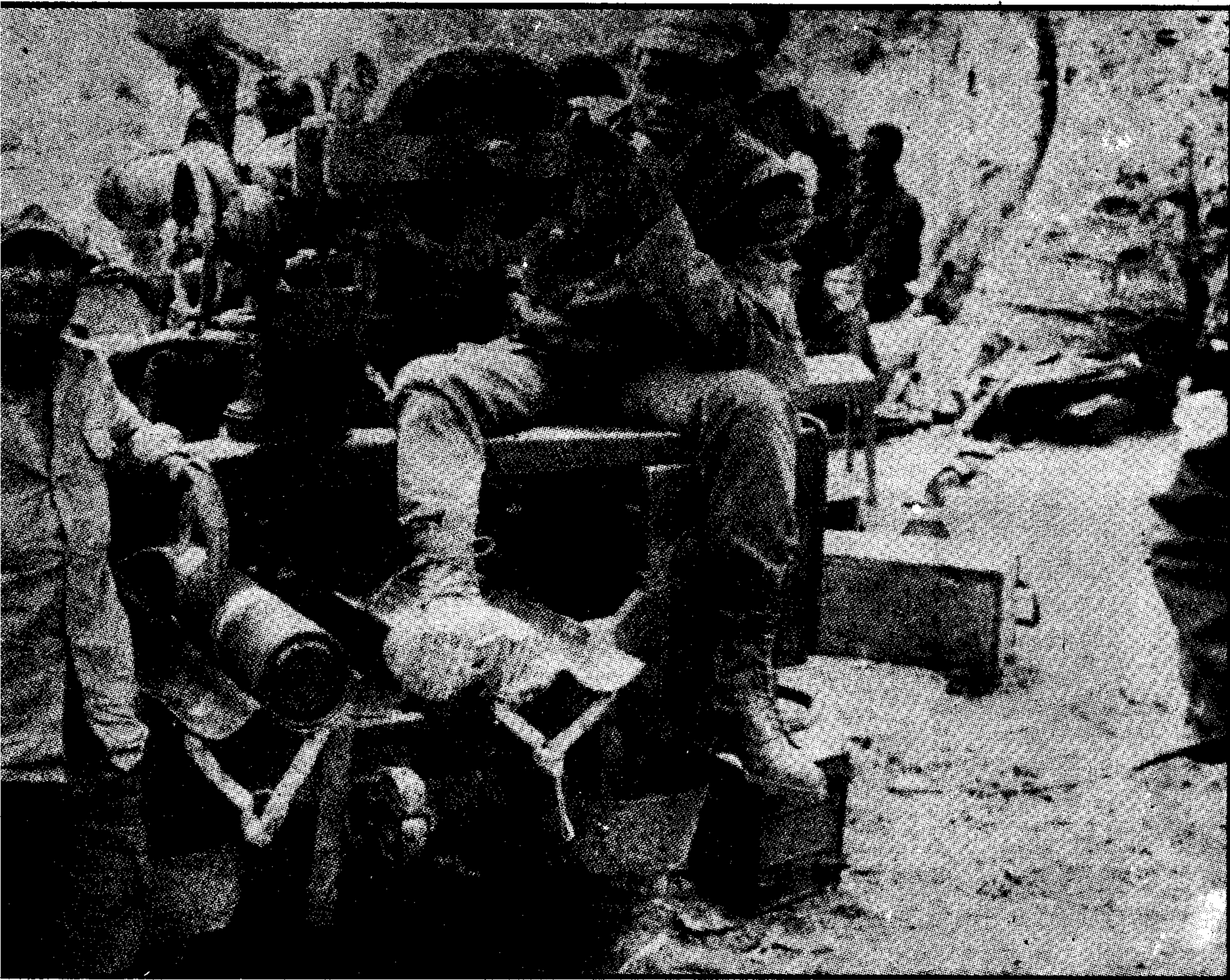
Paton's court application may well be used as a rallying point by right wingers campaigning for tighter state restrictions. It is also significant

because it represents a tip of the iceberg of the oppression exercised by husbands against wives.

Extreme

Paton's is an extreme case: his wife has left him and is seeking a divorce, and he finds himself having to resort to the law. But how many men achieve the same ends by 'private' economic, physical and psychological pressure on their wives? As long as women have to go through a red-tape rigmarole and face shortage of facilities and hostile moralising doctors, they will be vulnerable to this pressure too.

GERRY BYRNE



Forces in Angola.

and the feint war

activities." Stockwell cites some examples. Together with other officials, he discussed requirements for the battle of Lobito and for sabotage operations in Congo (Brazzaville), a nearby country that served as a transshipment point for the Soviet arms aid to the MPLA. CIA experts in Angola prepared the tactical

Fourth Commando battalions to the war effort in September 1975. The combined forces retook Caxito and began a cautious advance toward Luanda, the MPLA's stronghold.

Beginning in September, according to Stockwell, South Africans began to provide arms and training to FNIA and UNITA forces at Runtu near the Angola-Namibia border. By October, the apartheid regime had sent 3,000 troops and support personnel into Angola, some of whom linked up with a UNITA force and swept up the coast of Angola, capturing a series of ports and cities by early November.

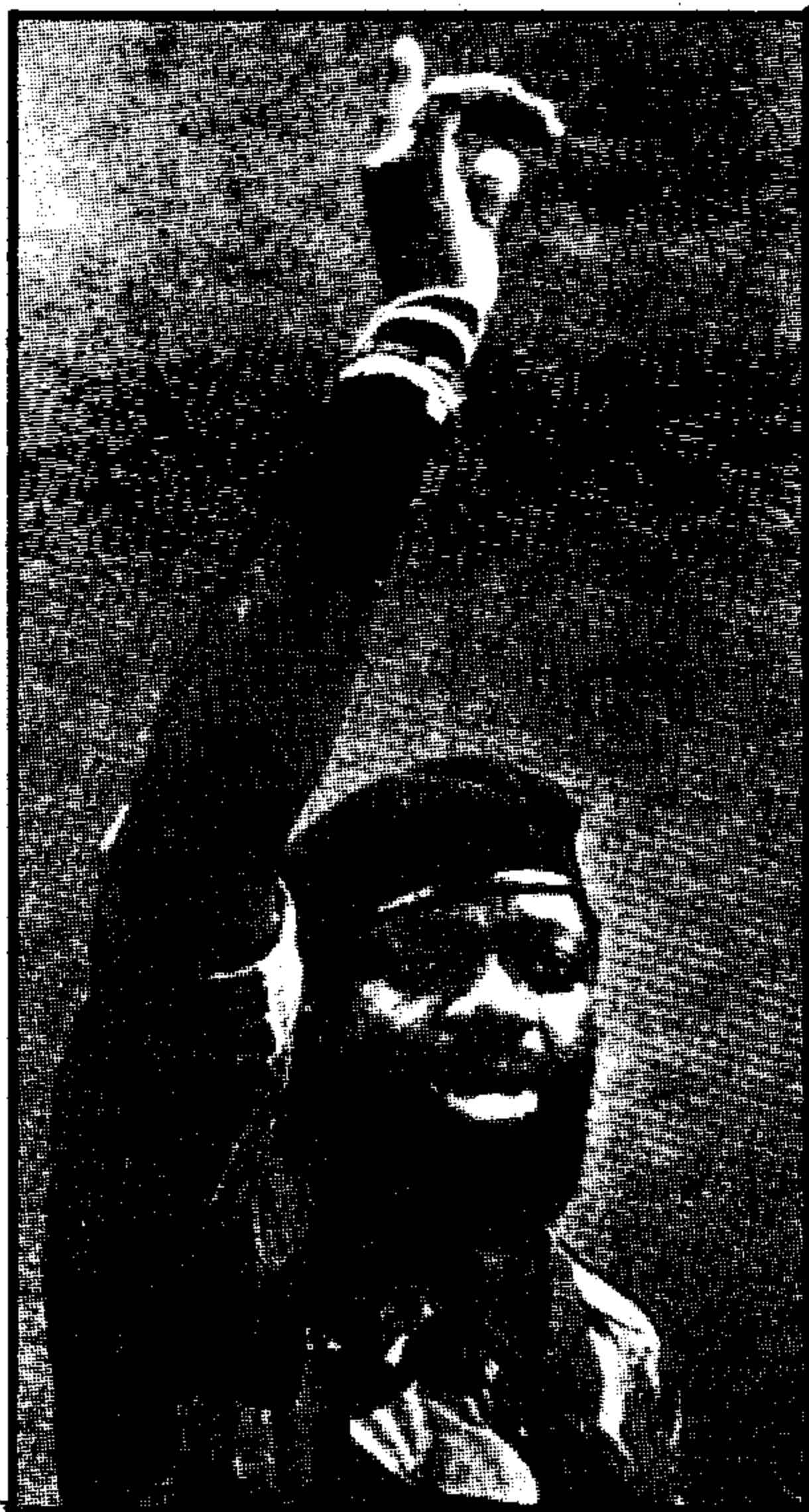
Some of the reasons for the South African intervention, Stockwell notes, included their desire to protect the massive Cunene hydroelectric dam project along the Angola-Namibia border and to strike out at the guerrilla bases in southern Angola of the South West Africa People's Organisation, which is fighting for the independence of Namibia from South African rule.

Moreover, the South Africans considered Savimbi the most favourable to establishing a regime that would be willing to collaborate with Pretoria.

Stockwell declares "I saw no evidence that the United States formally encouraged them (the South Africans) to join the conflict." Some top South Africa officials, however, have asserted that Washington did just that. Perhaps the CIA itself was not involved in conveying the encouragement.

Risky

In any case, the CIA greeted the South African intervention. CIA personnel and officials from Pretoria's Bureau of State Security (BOSS) jointly supervised the transshipment of arms to the UNITA forces. BOSS was fully briefed about the CIA's own activities and on at least two occasions the director of BOSS visited Washington for secret talks with the head of the CIA's Africa Division.



Jonas Savimbi

The shipment of American arms directly to the South Africans in Namibia was considered, but then rejected at that point as too risky (the White House maintained a formal arms embargo against Pretoria).

Noting that the "CIA has traditionally sympathised with South Africa and enjoyed its close liaison with BOSS", Stockwell sums up the relationship between Washington and Pretoria during the Angola civil war: "Thus, without any memos being written at CIA headquarters saying, 'Let's coordinate with the South Africans', coordination was effected at all CIA levels and the South Africans escalated their involvement in step with our own."

Following the South African intervention in Angola in September, the Cuban government stepped up its assistance to the beleaguered MPLA.

The increasing Soviet arms shipments — and especially the arrival of thousands of Cuban troops to aid the MPLA — infuriated Kissinger, Ford,

Collby and other American war-mongers. It completely disrupted the White House's plans to "balance" the three groups off against each other and it threatened to seriously set back Washington's overall interests in the region.

Their immediate reflex was to try to escalate the war.

The official CIA expenditures for the Angolan operation had already reached nearly \$25 million. On November 14th the National Security Council ordered the CIA to draw up a new option paper outlining a choice of \$30-, \$60-, or \$100-million military programmes. The old policy of seeking to just bolster the FNLA and UNITA and prevent an "easy" MPLA victory was dropped. The CIA was now told to find a way to win the war.

Feint

Opponents of the American intervention in Angola warned at the time that the conflict could quickly escalate into a Vietnam-type affair. Stockwell confirms this, pointing out the extent to which the White House, Pentagon and CIA were prepared to go.

Stockwell writes: "Sophisticated weapons were now discussed freely: Redeye ground-to-air missiles, anti-tank missiles, tactical air support, C-47 gun platforms. The working group considered major escalations: the formal introduction of American advisers, the use of American army units, a show of the fleet off Luanda..."

Also confirming the dangers of a new military attack against the Cuban revolution, as indicated by the many threatening statements from the White House, Stockwell notes that the working group likewise weighed "the feasibility of making an overt military feint at Cuba itself to force Castro to recall his troops and defend the home island."

The only thing that stopped these war plans was the deep anti-war sentiment among the American population.

With all but \$7 million of its covert operations fund depleted, the CIA was compelled to go to Congress for additional money. But many congressional representatives would soon have to face new elections and they did not want to take public responsibility for an escalation of the Angola war. Amendments were adopted in both the House and Senate barring the use of any funds from the 1976 defense budget for the Angola operation.

With only \$7 officially left, the CIA tried to continue its intervention as best it could, while looking for additional money elsewhere.

To stall for time, the White House sought to cut off one of the MPLA's major sources of revenue. The Gulf Oil Company — the largest foreign investor in Angola — wanted to protect its investments by striking a deal with the MPLA. It planned to pay the MPLA \$200 million in royalty and tax payments in December and January (it had already provided \$116 million in September). This would have been several times larger than the CIA's official assistance to both the FNLA and UNITA. The CIA and State Department pressured Gulf into temporarily halting these payments.

Level

In a similar fashion, the Boeing aircraft corporation was forced to delay the delivery of two commercial 737 airliners.

Meanwhile, the CIA turned its attention increasingly toward the use of foreign mercenary troops in Angola, hoping somehow to turn the tide back

against the MPLA. \$500,000 was allocated for a group of French mercenaries and the CIA tried to hire several hundred Portuguese mercenaries.

Roberto of the FNLA, apparently using money he got from the CIA, managed to recruit about 100 British "soldiers of fortune", as well as a few Americans. They turned out to have had little interest in actual combat and had no real impact on the course of the war.

According to Stockwell, "The French contributed more ammunition and four allouette missile-firing helicopters, which US Air Force C-141 airplanes hauled to Kinshasa in early January. Without pilots or ground crews they were useless, and the CIA desperately sought mercenaries who might fly them."

He notes that the CIA actually intended to deliver these helicopters, along with a US air force C-130, to the South Africans. But the war ended before pilots and crews could be found.

With Washington unable to escalate its involvement in Angola, or even to continue it at the same level, the South Africans chose to pull back



Kissinger

themselves. They withdrew from the front lines in January 1976 and by the end of March the last of them had left Angola altogether.

The FNLA forces were routed in the north and fled across the border into Zaire, along with a significant number of Bakongo refugees from the FNLA's traditional region of support. The UNITA forces in central and southern Angola abandoned the cities to the MPLA and Cuban troops, withdrawing to the countryside to continue sporadic guerrilla actions against the regime.

With the MPLA now the clear victor in the civil war, most African governments quickly recognised its regime. Washington allowed Boeing to deliver its planes to the MPLA and Gulf to resume its oil payments.

Shortly before his resignation, Stockwell was appointed to head a branch of the CIA responsible for seven central African countries. In September 1976 he attended a meeting at which the developments in Ethiopia and the rest of the Horn of Africa came up. He writes that the new deputy director of operations "commented that we should stay on top of the situation. The CIA might well be asked to launch a covert programme in the Horn of Africa."



communications plan for the battle of Lobito and helped set up the FNLA and UNITA communications networks. CIA paramilitary officers trained FNLA troops in Ambriz and UNITA forces in Silva Pôrto in the use of infantry weapons.

The use of CIA advisers in Angola was not the only sensitive aspect of the Agency's war plans. The CIA unsuccessfully tried to recruit several hundred Portuguese mercenaries for the FNLA. In direct collaboration with the French intelligence services, it later hired some twenty French mercenaries who flew into central Angola to help train the UNITA forces. These mercenaries were called "foreign military advisers".

Despite the large arms shipments, the CIA advisers and the foreign mercenaries, the FNLA and UNITA had considerable difficulty in holding their ground against the MPLA. The FNLA in particular was considered to be poorly organised. The MPLA on the other hand had been greatly strengthened by substantial Soviet arms shipments.

To help the FNLA regain the initiative in northern Angola, the Mobutu regime in Zaire committed its Seventh and

Atrocities of British rule in N Ireland

AT A MEETING of 250 people in Glasgow two weeks ago a campaign was formed to fight against British repression in Ireland. Speakers at the meeting included Peter Bain (a shop steward at Chrysler Linwood) and a speaker from the Relatives Action Committee in Belfast.

The Relatives Action Committee speaker itemised the macabre methods of repression by the RUC and the British army. The methods of interrogation at Castlereagh, said the speaker, have now reached far beyond the subtle techniques that left the sort of bruises that could be condemned by the European Court.

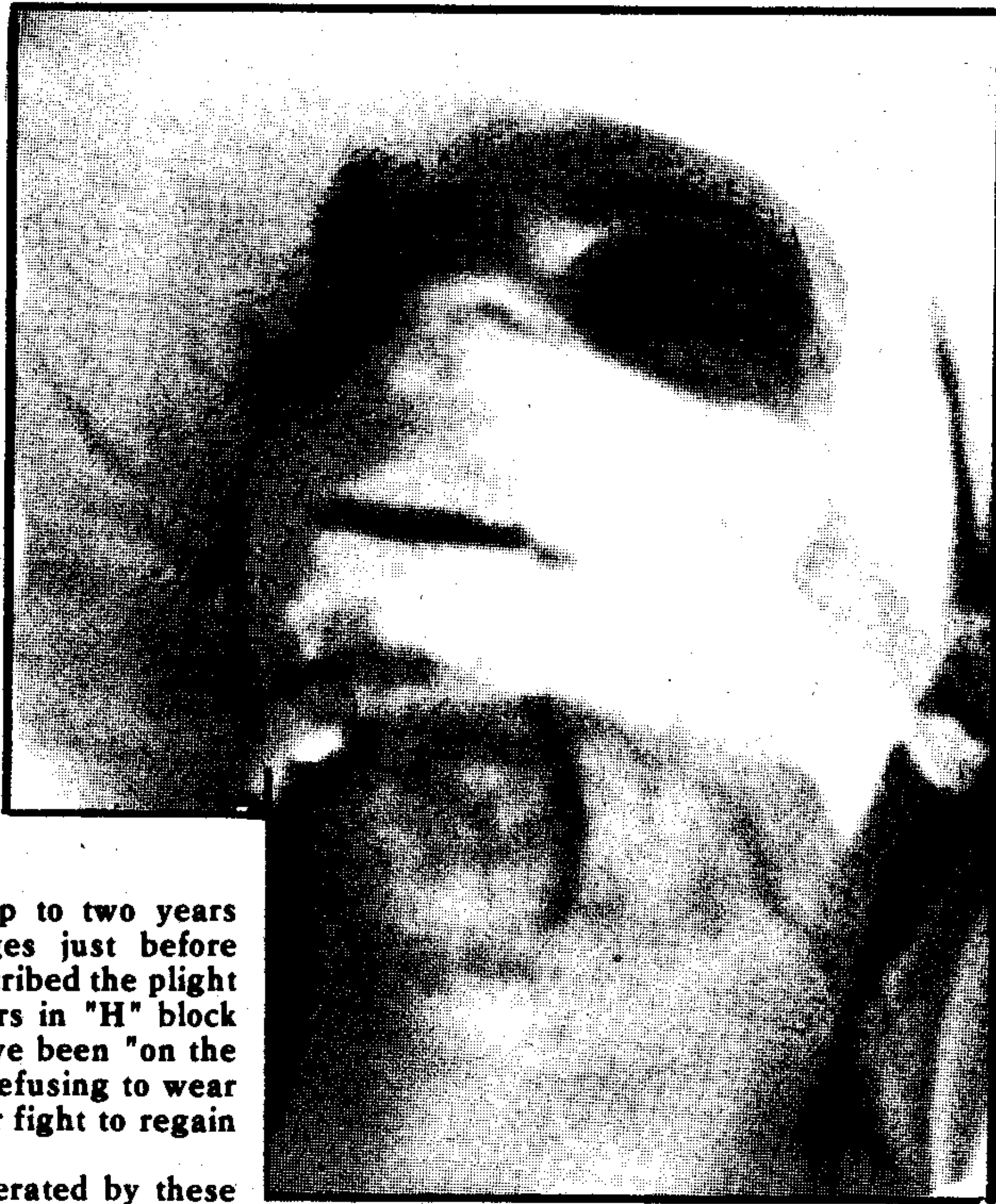
"Confessions", she claimed, are extorted from Republican prisoners by methods including chairlegs forced up people's back passages, simulated rape of women prisoners by RUC men, sex acts performed in the same room as detainees by RUC men and women, younger male prisoners being forced to lick the penises of RUC men.

These allegations can be backed up by the testimony (in *Republican News* of March 18th) of 17-year old Gerard Power, who was taken into Castlereagh on March 8th and released two days later without being charged. In addition to being beaten up and threatened with being shot dead, Power was also subjected to much of the treatment described by the RAC speaker.

The speaker quoted examples of mentally retarded and illiterate people having been forced to sign "confessions" which they could not possibly have understood, and teenagers being detained for days without their parents having the right to visit them.

Another common method is to de-

Victim of RUC at Castlereagh



tain "suspects" for up to two years and then drop charges just before trial. The speaker described the plight of Republican prisoners in "H" block in Long Kesh who have been "on the blanket" since 1976, refusing to wear prison uniform in their fight to regain political status.

The wash strike operated by these prisoners for the last three months has at last forced the issue into the capitalist press in Britain. Those who have managed to visit these prisoners report that friends and relatives are unrecognisable wrecks. It is probable that a number of prisoners will die before long unless political status is granted and the wash strike can be called off.

The new campaign will attempt to involve the labour movement in Scotland. Future initiatives include the picketing of Radio Clyde, who have been allowing large scale army recruitment broadcasts, and joint work with the recently formed Irish Solidarity Campaign in Edinburgh. The first major joint action will be the organising of propaganda on the tank parade through Edinburgh planned by the Royal Scottish Dragoons in July.

The Glasgow meeting concluded by passing a resolution in support of the Republican forces fighting against imperialism in Ireland, after a speech from the Provisional Sinn Fein in Belfast was read out.

A CORRECTION

In last week's *Workers Action* we carried an interview with a member of the Belfast Relatives Action Committee, and two women from the Women Against Imperialism Group.

Unfortunately the separate questions to the WIG and the RAC comrades were mistakenly run together in the article. In fact the first two questions were answered by the RAC; and the rest, beginning with 'How did you evolve? What are your aims?' by the Women Against Imperialism Group.

Further background on the development of the Women Against Imperialism Group, and the debates inside the women's movement in Ireland, is given by a note in the last issue of *Women's Action*, newsletter of the Belfast Women's Collective.

"Since we produced the last issue of *Women's Action*, some women have left the Belfast Women's Collective and formed a new group which is called Women Against Imperialism. The following are some extracts from a statement which they have produced to explain their reasons for forming a new group:

"There was support within the

Belfast Women's Collective for work within the Relatives Action Committee but the full significance of our work in the RAC was not understood. It was seen as only one campaign among many.

"In our view working with anti-imperialist women in the RAC is not just another campaign. Imperialism is the major dominating force in the lives of women throughout Ireland and specifically women in West Belfast."

The collective believes that the Women Against Imperialism group, because of their emphasis on police and army brutality and the (RAC) campaign for political status, are presenting an over-simplified view of Imperialism and how it is related to the oppression of women.

While we recognise the RAC campaign as the most important one in which large numbers of working class women are at present involved, we do believe that it is vital for our group to work in as wide a range of women's issues as possible — including those which may not initially meet with a big response because they challenge traditional political and religious beliefs."

ALTARF fails to get to the roots of racism

In March, 2,000 London teachers attended a rally against racism in Westminster. The rally was organised by All London Teachers Against Racism and Fascism.

From this promising start, a conference of 350 last weekend set ALTARF firmly on the path of building a national Teachers Against Racism and Fascism.

So far so good. But the political basis on which ALTARF intends to grow went largely undiscussed at the weekend. After long workshop sessions, the final session of open debate was just not long enough to deal with

the problems raised.

The main document arguing for a national structure and affiliation to the Anti Nazi League was easily carried. The document contained policies of no platform for fascists, expulsion of fascists from the union and rejection of "racist" immigration controls. The trouble started when attempts were made to tighten up the document with various amendments.

The first set came from a group of Socialist Feminist comrades who argued for a clear understanding of the roots of racist ideology in Britain's imperialist past. Such an understanding of racism, they said, was necessary to combat it effectively.

In addition they argued for ALTARF also to oppose discrimination against groups such as the Irish, Jews and Cypriots.

The amendment was lost by a 3-2 margin, largely through the opposition of the International Marxist Group with such arguments as "we all agree with it but we shouldn't vote for it because what we are building is an anti-racist movement in education" (Anna de Casparis). As if the anti-racist struggle can be compartmentalised in this way!

By the time all this was over a mere 15 minutes was left for two major additional resolutions — one from Forest Gate School NUT, Newham (below) the other from Teachers Action Collective. These were "deferred" to the next public meeting of ALTARF.

The decision to defer discussion on the Forest Gate resolution effectively postponed debate on the key item missing from the conference: the class basis of the fight back against racism and fascism. This is something crucially missing from ALTARF's current

perspectives, and a debate on it in the organisation must be first priority.

THE Forest Gate resolution, supported by Workers' Power, Workers' Action and Newham Socialist Teachers, read:

"Conference recognises the success of the ALTARF rally and the Anti Nazi League Carnival, but believes that a permanent anti fascist organisation based upon delegations from the trade unions, shop stewards and workplace representatives, black organisations, women's groups, student union, Labour Parties, anti-fascist bodies and the ANL should be built. ALTARF will actively fight to build such an organisation and calls upon all other groups and bodies engaged in the struggle against fascism to do the same.

Conference recognises that while fascism represents a direct and immediate threat to blacks and to women, its fundamental aim is to break up the whole working class and its organisations. Therefore, we believe that the only effective working class programme to fight fascism would include:

- Drive all fascists out of the labour movement
- Fight for the eradication of racism from the labour movement and the workplace
- For total and practical support for black self defence
- Total opposition to all immigration controls and racist legislation
- No platform for fascists in any public place or arena
- No reliance whatever on state bans on fascists, and the labour movement to fight to defy bans that apply to it.

Socialist Challenge - apologists for ANL's lack of principle

SINCE the Anti Nazi League Carnival on 30th April, followed the next day by an unopposed 1000-strong fascist march from central London to Hoxton, an argument has been going on in the anti-fascist movement.

In *Workers' Action* of 13th May we printed a letter from some members of the Hackney Committee Against Racism which condemned the ANL for not organising opposition to the fascist march on 1st May. The latest *Socialist Challenge* (18th May) also prints the letter, with some new signatures from members of the Labour Party, the Communist Party, the Workers League, Big Flame, and the International Marxist Group (IMG, the organisation behind *Socialist Challenge*).

Socialist Challenge, these days, generally uses the mildest and most conciliatory language, leaning over backwards not to be 'sectarian'. (In the same issue, Robin Blackburn chides John Ross for being "carried away by his outrage at the many bad positions adopted editorially by the [Morning Star]"). To the Hackney letter, however, they respond with the fierce defensive sharpness of people newly 'converted' to the ANL.

The reply starts with haggling about the 1st May fascist demonstration. The ANL could not have organised opposition to it — so the *Socialist Challenge* editorial board says — because the details of the march were not clearly enough known. And in any case why didn't the people signing the letter organise something themselves instead of relying on the ANL to do it?

After discussing the detailed sequence of events, *Socialist Challenge* comments that "this isn't the real point". Indeed it isn't: we are in no position to say who is right on the details — what information was available to whom, when. But

Socialist Challenge leaves questions unanswered.

Suppose the East London activists who signed the letter could and should have organised something themselves: that still does not invalidate their criticism of the ANL.

More important: is there any reason to suppose that the ANL organisers would have mobilised against the fascist May Day march even if the information about it had been perfectly clear and adequate? Is there any reason to suppose that they used their considerable resources and contacts to seek clear and adequate information?

The ANL made no public comment on the fascist march. The Socialist Workers Party — the main body of militant activists within the ANL — mentioned it in their paper *Socialist Worker*, but expressed no regret about being unable to mount a protest against it. Instead they just congratulated themselves on the fact that it rained throughout the fascist march, and declared "even God has joined the Anti-Nazi League".

At no time has the ANL said it is willing to use direct action to drive the fascists off the streets. On the contrary, it has publicly welcomed police bans on demonstrations, and some of its leading spokesmen, like Neil Kinnock, have described it as "an alternative to street-fighting."

Socialist Challenge's quibbling about the information available for May Day is pure evasion.

Socialist Challenge says it wants to win the ANL to policies of mass action to stop the fascists by any means necessary; of opposition to immigration controls; and of support for black self defence. But *SC* finds it "disturbing" and "sectarian" when the ANL is criticised for not having those policies now!

Arguing against the East London activists' letter, *SC* resorts to

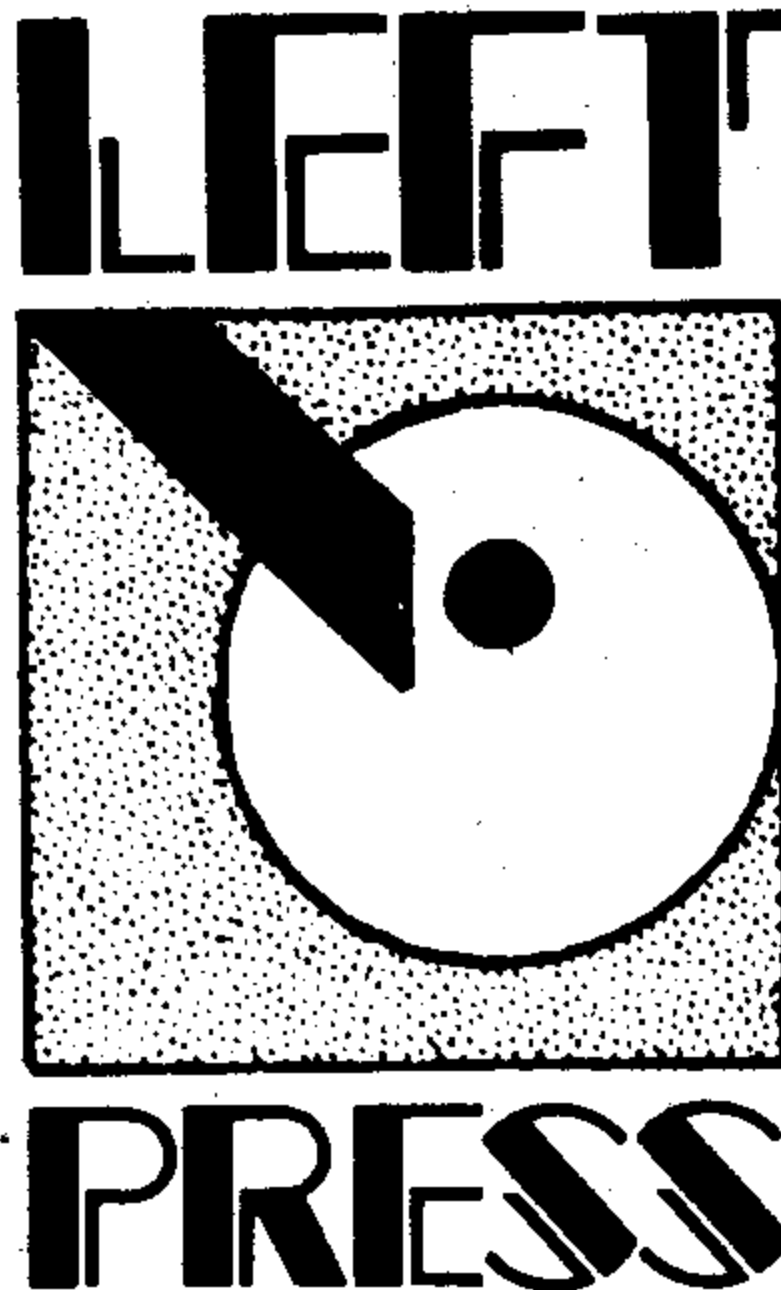
bluster. The Carnival was a great success, therefore anyone raising awkward questions is just 'sniping' and indulging in "political sour grapes".

It is true that there is an unhealthy disdain for the ANL as a brash, upstart movement among some long-standing anti-racist activists. It is possible that disdain influenced some of the people signing the East London letter. But their arguments still have to be answered!

Lecturing us on how successful the Carnival was is no answer. The critical letter recognises that the Carnival was "a great national success".

As we wrote in *Workers Action* after the Carnival, "80,000 on the streets against the Nazis is a tremendous step forward. 80,000 on the streets, but fed with the idea that a show unity with liberal celebrities, without clear aims or decisive action, is the way to stop the fascists: that's a recipe for misleading, demoralising, and dissipating the thousands of young workers who are now prepared to fight the Front."

Socialist Challenge, apparently bowled over by the size of the Carnival, is allowing itself to ignore the fact that the thousands of new, militant ANL supporters are being held quite tightly within limits acceptable to the bishops, lords, professors and so on at the head of the ANL. Just because of the size and importance of the ANL's support, the dangers of this attitude are very serious indeed — and criticism is not just 'sniping'.



workers' ACTION supporters' groups

exist in most major towns. For more information, or to subscribe to *Workers Action*, complete this form and send to the address below:

NAME

ADDRESS

- I want more information
- I want to subscribe for 25 issues/ 50 issues.

Subscription rates: Britain and Ireland, 25 issues £4, 50 issues £7.50. Rest of the world: Surface mail, 25 issues £4.50, 50 issues £8.50; Air mail, 25 issues £6, 50 issues £11. Cheques etc payable to 'Workers Action'.

Send to WA, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1.

from WORKERS' ACTION bulletins

From WORKERS' ACTION
Ford Dagenham bulletin:

The shop stewards representing all the Dagenham plants have agreed unanimously to recommend that foreign produced vehicles and components should not be unloaded from Monday 22nd May.

The reason given for the decision has been the company's policy of bringing in Cortinas and Flestas produced at Ford's continental plants. The stewards argued that this is at the expense of jobs locally, and the ban is meant to increase jobs in Britain.

How will it do this?

For a start, if we stop imports from Fords continental plants, why shouldn't they stop our imports to them, now or in the future? And the workers there would be using the same arguments that the stewards here are using!

Even if workers abroad didn't retaliate, then how can a cut in production and workers' jobs abroad help us here? It might get a few more jobs for a while, but at what cost?

At the cost of playing Ford's game of trying to put workers in different plants at each others' throats, the stewards policy can only lead to a dogfight between workers in different countries and the only people who would then be laughing would be Fords. For one thing it would put them in a stronger position to cut jobs in the future.

One of Ford's major weapons against us is to play off plant against plant, worker against worker. That's why, to oppose this, trade union links have been established with Fords factories abroad. But you can't ask for unity in one breath and then in the other demand that management cuts down on the same workers' jobs. That is falling straight into the bosses' trap.

The present stewards' policy of the ban must be changed. How then do we fight for jobs? Fight against Fords, not against other workers! One way, to begin with, is to fight for more work by cutting the hours. That should be in the pay claim.

That fight, as with other ones, can only be waged with workers in other factories here and abroad. Build strong links with workers in Fords continental plants! No to the bosses' game of divide and rule!

From the Workers' Action Long-bridge bulletin:

TOOLROOM STRIKE

ON JUNE 12th the toolmakers are calling a 24-hour strike to hold a meeting in the Town Hall on their claim for separate negotiating rights. We think they are going about this in the wrong way. When it comes down to it all they want is the same as the rest of us — decent wages.

What we should all be going for is a big united claim in November. But if the toolmakers decide to go it alone, then the rest of us must support them — and go for 'parity' with them!

PARITY

AFTER SIX months of stalling the management has finally agreed to honour its promise to pay us 'parity'.

But the actual cash involved is derisory — and will do little to bring us up to the wage levels of the better-paid plants.

The people in the lower paid sections — labourers, storemen,

etc — will be getting only £1.20 to £1.28. The toolmakers are being offered a bit more [£2.53] in the hope of averting another tool-room strike. But for most of us the Evening Mail's promise of £140 is going to look a bit sick — it'll actually be more like £40 [e.g. £1.50 backdated 26 weeks].

And there will be the usual 'strings', of course — 'Elimination of all conditions which prevent, limit or delay the attainment of planned levels of production', 'reduce over-manning', 're-negotiation of local agreements' — all the things that made us reject the incentive schemes!

FASCIST

One fascist shop steward has recently been rooted out at the Longbridge works of British Leyland. But others remain.

The May 16th issue of the WORKERS' ACTION bulletin at Longbridge reports:

READERS will be glad to hear that following our exposé of his Adolf Hitler birthday party in the last bulletin, National Front member Barry Phillips [Butterfly, West Body Shop] has resigned as steward.

He stormed over to the Works Committee office, threw down his stewards' card, and said 'give that to your commie friends'.

The Hitler birthday party was reported in the May 2nd bulletin:

The party went ahead on the Thursday night shift, during the 2 o'clock dinner break. The guest list was: NF organiser Harvey Stock [W9], Roy Cadwallader [W8 inspection], John Smallwood [W7 tip filler] and Roy Hammond [body shop inspection].

Dress was formal: Phillips wore his SS armband, while the others sported red armbands with Swastikas on. Stock is reported to have played his tapes of Hitler's speeches and two large cans of lager were drunk.

The May 16th bulletin also reported another incident concerning Stock:

Last Tuesday, he and two of his NF chums assaulted a woman who was distributing Anti Nazi League leaflets in Binnie Road, Selly Oak. These three brave men attacked the woman [a pacifist], held her against her will and tried to force her into a nearby house.

They claimed they were making a 'citizen's arrest' because the leaflets contravened the Representation of the People Act...

The police arrived but merely told the three fascists 'not to be so silly'. The woman concerned is pressing charges for assault.

As the WA bulletin says: Isn't it about time we drove this scum out of this factory and out of our communities?

Fleet St bosses want another pint of blood

CLARE RUSSELL LOOKS AT THE ISSUES BEHIND THE PRINT-WORKERS' DISPUTE AT THE 'OBSERVER'

LAST WEEK in Fleet Street, the NGA (National Graphical Association) openly declared itself willing to organise scabbing against its own members.

The 25 machine minders against whom the threats were issued have been taking unofficial action. They are casual workers for the Observer on Saturdays only.

The issue dates back to 1976, when the Observer persuaded all the unions to take a 25% cut in staff. The management mentioned that if the fortunes of the paper improved the staff numbers might be made up again.

Recently the US-owned Atlantic Richfield Oil group took over the Observer and pumped some money into it. The situation of the paper improved, and the machine minders demanded that their 1976 staffing levels be restored.

The Observer management decided to get tough. They were confident that the NGA officials would see their point of view.

For months there has been an orchestrated campaign throughout Fleet Street against industrial action.

In fact there is a fair measure of agreement between the management and trade union officials as to the cause of the 'anarchy and disruption' which is hitting Fleet Street: militant workers.

Sir Richard Marsh of the Newspapers Publishers Association said 'Fleet Street is in a state of near-total anarchy'. 300 newsagents paraded through Fleet Street a few weeks ago protesting at the damage stoppages were doing to their trade.

And NGA general secretary Joe Wade was quoted in the Sunday Times as saying 'We are determined, along with other printing unions, to bring anarchy in Fleet Street to an end wherever and whenever it arises'

Ever since union members in the print gave the thumbs down sign to the 'Programme for Action' (the document drawn up by union officials and management for the introduction of 'new technology') management have been trying for a showdown with the rank and file members. And the union officials are trying to reassert their authority.

The bosses are hell bent on implementing new technology, to remain competitive and break the control over the work process which printers have built up over a long time. To do this they are creating an atmosphere of panic, and issuing threats that total destruction of the newspaper industry is in sight.

The trade union leaders have gone along with this. They believe that the unions and the bosses have a common interest in seeing a profitable newspaper industry.

This is nonsense. In the cut-throat competitive capitalist world of Fleet Street the drive is always to reduce labour costs and to increase profits. The bosses will always be coming back for another pint of the workers' blood.

The NGA officials are sowing the seeds of their own destruction. By isolating and strangling any militant action, they are preparing the ground for a bosses' onslaught on the whole union.

Just how far the NGA is willing to go is shown by the Observer dispute. Only one member of the 31 strong NGA Council voted against the proposal that the 25 should be asked to give a written, legally binding, guarantee that they would cease action. If they did not, 'alternative staff' (scabs) could be provided and disciplinary action would be started against them.

In fact the NGA Council went one step further. They pledged themselves to provide workers, not only in this case but in any other unofficial dispute. It's the green light to every employer in Fleet Street to go on the offensive.

DISCREET
LINES

CURRYS FAVOUR USDAW

8 T&GWU drivers have been on strike at Currys central Birmingham electrical goods store since February 1st, when, after seven years the company suddenly withdrew recognition from the T&G.

Currys also reneged on a wage deal, which had been negotiated back in January.

One of the striking drivers, shop steward Dave Hephherd, told Workers Action that Currys had offered to pay the wage rise and give him a personal backhander if the drivers would join USDAW. 'I told them to go to hell', he said.

Mass pickets are being held outside Currys store every Saturday morning, with Birmingham LPYS members providing the bulk of the support.

The drivers have been in contact with T&G members at the Currys depots in Newark and Winchester, and are hoping to get deliveries stopped nationally.

Support the picket! Every Saturday morning at Martineau Way, Union Street, Birmingham.

SAFARI PARK

The long-running struggle of sacked keepers at the Windsor Safari Park, all members of the IGWU, has entered a new phase.

After being dismissed for joining a trade union, harassed on the picket line and intimidated by High Court injunctions, the keepers now face court eviction orders to leave their accommodation at the Park.

These were to have immediate effect, but after the judge pleaded for mercy (!) the management agreed to allow seven days' notice.

Yorkshire TV, subsidiary of the Park's owners Trident TV, came off the air briefly, after busmen in Leeds had struck and picketed the studios. And workers at BOC are refusing to deliver further supplies of bottled gas to Yorkshire TV.

This resulted in management agreeing not to proceed with the evictions if the sacked workers did not act in certain specified ways. This vague proviso is taken as a veiled hint to discourage further large-scale picketing.

Clearly, such an unsavoury offer must be ignored. Large scale picketing is vital for the successful outcome of this dispute.

This will be especially so at the Spring Bank Holiday.

Action will be necessary if the evictions take place, or if those named in the injunctions, including Brian Revell [IGWU District Officer] and Doug Cartledge [the strike leader] are arrested for continuing to picket.

Blackouts of Yorks TV and Tyne-Tees TV must swiftly follow and large scale picketing every weekend until the battle is won.

We can win this one, and defeat this arrogant employer who is determined to deny basic trade union rights.

Join the picket this weekend!
Send donations urgently to IGWU District Office, 36 Kings Road, Reading, Berks. For info. ring 0734-50311.

PETER HAWKER

ROVER SNOOPS

2000 assembly line workers were laid off at Rover Solihull on Monday 22nd, as a result of a strike by 480 paintshop workers which began on Wed. 17th.

The paintshop workers voted almost unanimously to strike after finding that they were being spied on by two foremen and two canteen women in league with the foremen. The foremen were preparing a dossier on the workers' timekeeping.

The workers demanded that the foremen be moved out of the shop — and when management refused, they struck, despite opposition from the Solihull senior stewards.

It seems that the foremen were trying to 'get their own back' after the recent foremen's strike, which was defeated after the rest of the workforce worked through the strike.

J.D.

Militant motions defeated at NUPE conference

LAST winter, the decision of the National Union of Public Employees [NUPE] leadership to accept a 10% increase rather than fight for the union's pay claim was one of the key factors in letting the firemen go down to defeat.

At this year's conference, last week, union leader Alan Fisher declared that NUPE would no longer be tied by loyalty to the Labour government. But at the same time the union leadership managed to defeat the militant resolution on wages.

One composite called for a £65 minimum wage, consolidation of all previous increases, a 35-hour week, automatic cost of living increases, and

four weeks' holiday. It was heavily defeated in favour of a milder resolution for £60 minimum and 35 hour week alone.

The £60/35-hours will not be won without a fight, either. But in rejecting the militant composite resolution on wages conference also rejected a censure on the union leadership's lack of fight last year and a call to set up a special committee on pay this year, more accountable to the membership.

The other major debate at conference was on fascism.

Although the union has affiliated to the Anti Nazi League and had its HQ bombed by fascists just a few weeks ago,



THE UNIONS



it was an almost-exact re-run of last year's debate. Conference rejected a call to exclude fascists from the union.

The general temper of the conference was rather more sluggish than last year. However, a new left-wing caucus, the 'Campaign for Action in NUPE', managed to make a certain impact with frequent leaflets and caucus meetings.

T.T.

WORKERS IN

ACTION

EGA decides to defy Ennals

ON FRIDAY 19th staff and supporters fighting against the closure of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson [EGA] hospital blocked traffic in a sit-down in London's Euston Road. While patients applauded from windows and balconies, the heavy rush hour traffic was brought to a standstill for about 15 minutes.

"Sorry, I've got an emergency", said an ambulance driver who had to weave through the human barrier, so they parted and let it through.

The EGA is one of only two hospitals in Britain run by women for women. The workers' occupation there, which began

on Monday 15th November, 1976, when the closure threat was first made, is to continue with the official backing of the unions. NUPE, CoHSE, ASTMS and NALGO.

Social Services Secretary David Ennals has announced that the closure of the EGA is now definite for July 21st. The Action Committee at their weekly meeting on Tuesday 23rd decided to step up their picket line, to prevent a repetition of the breaking of the occupation at Hounslow Hospital, where Health Authority employees burst into the hospital and took patients out of their beds by force.

NUPE has committed itself to a programme of militant strike action against the closure of the EGA, and has called a special meeting of the London Division branch secretaries for June 5th to decide on the form of the strike action.

The Action Committee have issued appeals to doctors to ignore the closure warning and to carry on sending their patients to the EGA. They urge women preferring a women's hospital to continue to ask their doctors to refer them to the EGA.

David Ennals was forced to apologise to a Tory MP because of lack of consultation on the closure of the EGA. He said, "I am very apologetic".

It is a pity he isn't as concerned over the threats against the lives of the working class posed by the whole programme of hospital cuts of which the EGA closure is part.

Now, patients on hospital waiting lists with brain tumours only have a chance of getting into hospital if the tumour paralyses them and they can be admitted as emergencies!

At Kings College Hospital in London, one patient who needed intensive care because of the risk of cardiac failure was trundled along to intensive care to find there wasn't a bed. Staff at the hospital say patients have died from neglect caused by shortage of staff and facilities, and a heart surgeon said there should be a sign saying, "Take care, this place is unsafe".

All this criminal neglect, and David Ennals apologises to a Tory MP...



Garners' strikers' black bull emblem on the May 20 demo

Lansing Bagnall, Basingstoke

WHY WAS THIS STEWARD PURGED?

IN A CLEAR union-bashing operation, Lansing Bagnalls (Basingstoke) have forced the resignation of a Boilermakers' shop steward in the factory.

The steward involved was known as a militant, and had recently been agitating on safety issues in the factory. Management claimed that he had been seen with the Boilermakers' convenor in a shop while ostensibly out of the factory on union business.

Management immediately suspended the two men, and then suggested to the steward that if he resigned the convenor's job could be saved. The AUEW convenor and the NUSMW (Sheet Metal Workers) convenors were brought in on the case (the AUEW is by far the majority union in the factory) and were told, falsely, that the two men had a record of previous warnings.

The AUEW convenor then backed up the bosses' suggestion! Placed in this situation, the steward resigned, and the Boilermakers' district delegate reinstated, although he will lose two weeks' pay for the period he has been suspended.

When news of the case first reached the shop floor, workers were angry and ready to take action. They were persuaded not to by the AUEW and NUSMW convenors, and by the Boilermakers' district delegate (full time official), who had been called in on the case only after the resignation!

The district delegate is arguing that the case should be taken through an industrial tribunal, and direct action could prejudice the tribunal. Basingstoke town branch of the Boilermakers' Amalgamation has also defeated calls for action on the case.

In strict procedural terms, there should be a strong case at the tribunal. The management gave false information on the alleged previous warnings. Summary action of the sort they took is permissible under the local agreement only in cases of 'gross industrial misconduct'.

This description is not defined in the agreement, but it hardly fits the case.

But a strong case at the tribunal is never a guarantee of success, given the inevitable class bias. Only rank and file militancy can prevent this sort of victimisation.

As the Workers Action Bagnalls bulletin said, "It must be obvious to everyone in the factory that there is a purge going on at the moment. The reason that management think they can get away with it is because our leadership has shown them over the past few years that they are ready to ignore the membership for the sake of an easy life".



"Workers' Action" sticker: 'No Platform for Fascists; No to immigration controls'. Order from Merseyside Workers' Action supporters' group, c/o 8 Pearson Rd, Liverpool 15. All proceeds to the Workers' Action fund drive.

WORKERS SEIZE SURREY HOSPITAL

ON SUNDAY 19th workers overthrew the management and organised a workers' council to take over the running of the 900-bed Brookwood mental hospital near Woking, Surrey.

Two proposals were put to the members of the CoHSE union branch: to take strike action or to take over the running of the hospital. CoHSE branch secretary Joseph Fleming said "We did not want to put the patients at risk so we are not coming out on strike. But we no longer recognise the district management team and certain managers within the hospital".

The workers took this decision

after creche charges were raised. Management had made an agreement with the branch to consult before any rise in charges, but they failed to do so.

The newly elected secretary of the workers' council, Fred Stow, said: "The workers' council was set up because of complete breakdown between workers and management". The new council is also concerned about job cuts and plans to draw up a list of workers' grievances.

They are not operating a picket at present, but there are posters outside the Hospital saying, "Workers' council now in control at this Hospital".

Homeless women fight for Refuge

ABOUT 30 women are continuing their occupation of St. Monica's refuge for homeless women in Liverpool.

The home was occupied a month

Longbridge defies bosses' manoeuvres

WORKERS AT the Leyland car factory at Longbridge, Birmingham, have imposed a blacking on extra Mini engines being exported to the Leyland factory in Senefel, Belgium.

The action is a protest against demanning at Longbridge on the Mini assembly lines. One whole Mini line has been shut down, and hundreds of workers have been taken off the assembly lines and put into the 'pool'.

THEN management said Longbridge could not meet the expected demand, and 10,000 extra Minis would have to be imported from Senefel!

WORKERS ACTION supporters in Longbridge are arguing that the blacking on the extra engines should be supported — in fact, the Works Committee's proposal had near-unanimous backing from the shop floor — but stressing that it should be seen as a move directed against the Leyland bosses' manoeuvres, not against the Senefel workers.

As the WORKERS ACTION Longbridge bulletin said: "In the end only cooperation and solidarity between all Leyland workers [including those in Belgium] will guarantee us work".

ago to stop the Council, which is negotiating to buy it from the Anglican Church, using it for general family housing units.

Without St. Monica's, which last year was used by 416 women and children, this type of accommodation in Liverpool would be cut by half.

The occupation is being organised by a Housing Action Committee, composed of women staying in the home, social workers and supporters among local residents. They want the home to stay open financed by the Housing Committee and run by a management committee composed of the women using the home with representation from the council's Housing and Social Services committees.

Liverpool Social Services branch of NALGO has declared its support for the occupation. With more support from the labour movement it has a good chance of success.

At a time when Callaghan is vying with the Tories to defend the "sanctity of family life" these women are challenging the idea that when the family falls apart it should be the women who suffer.

Send donations and messages to St. Monica's, Croxteth Road, L1/pool.8 JANE SHAW

Advertisement — "INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST"

No. 8 now out •• The treachery of Lib-Lab anti-racism •• West Germany: the end of social peace •• Revolutionaries in the French elections •• What is 'Western Marxism'? •• IMG-I-CL debate on revolutionary unity •• Clara Zetkin on the social-democratic women's movement •• and reviews. 35p plus 15p postage from 98 Gifford St, London N1

EVENTS

Small ads are free for Labour movement events. Paid ads (including ads for publications) 8p per word, £5 per column inch — payment in advance. Send copy to Events, Box 1960, 182 Upper Street, London N1, to arrive by Friday for inclusion in the following week's paper.

SATURDAY 27 MAY. Day of action by the Aubrey-Berry-Campbell defence committee in Cheltenham. Assemble corner of Benhall Ave and Whittington Rd at 12 noon. Programme includes guided tour of Cheltenham's secret sights.

SATURDAY 3 JUNE. North West socialist feminist workshop on Ireland. 10am to 6pm at Bolton Institute of Technology, Deane Road, Bolton. Further details from Ros Makin, 69 Venice St, Bolton.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 3-4 JUNE. National anti-fascist conference organised by the London coordinating committee and the paper CARF.

Details: CARF, Box 53, 182 Upper Street, London N1.

SATURDAY 10 JUNE. Women's Voice rally. 11.30am at the Top Rank suite, Sheffield. Tickets 50p from WV, PO Box 82, London E2.

SATURDAY 10 JUNE. United Troops Out Movement conference on the Role of the British Army. 9.45am to 5pm at Acklam Hall, Acklam Rd, London W11 (buses 15, 52, 295; tube, Ladbroke Grove). Entrance £1 (non-earners 50p). Evening social: 70p (35p). All-in ticket £1.50 (70p). Speakers include John McGuffin and Ken Livingstone.

FRIDAY 16 JUNE. Anti-Apartheid rally on the 2nd anniversary of the Soweto events. 7.30pm at Westminster Central Hall. Adm. 20p.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 17-18 JUNE. National conference of the Working Women's Charter campaign, at Manchester Poly, Cavendish House, All Saints. Further information: Pat Cross, Flat 2, 49 Spring Bank, Hull. (telephone Hull 443 243).

PUBLISHED by Workers' Action, Box 1960, 182 Upper St, London N1, and printed by ANVIL PRESS (T.U.).

FUND DRIVE for workers' ACTION

£10 this week for the fund, from a reader in Nottingham: and that's all! Total so far: £1087.

Obviously our most active supporters are not in much of a position to fill up the fund, after the tremendous effort they made to set it off with a £1000 collection. What we have to do now is approach less active sympathisers, readers, and well-wishers, and ask them for contributions. We hope that each local Workers' Action supporters' group will fix itself a regular target for fund collections from WA readers in its area.