

by MANDY WILLIAMS

## MPs call for public inquiry

# BLUE MURDER SIXTY TIMES OVER

DESPITE THE rejection by Home Secretary William Whitelaw of the call for a public inquiry into the death of Jimmy Kelly while in the hands of Merseyside police earlier this year, demands for a wider inquiry into recent deaths in police custody have continued.

Michael Meacher MP has now called for a tribunal to consider about 60 'non-natural' deaths in the last ten years. Martin Flannery MP (chairman of the Tribune Group) has backed the call, adding that investigation into the Directorate of Public Prosecutions is also required: 'In practically every case the directorate made a statement that there was not sufficient evidence to prosecute'.

### Beaten

The chief constable of Merseyside, Kenneth Oxford, called in a West Midlands assistant chief constable, David Gerty, to investigate Kelly's death and other allegations of violence against the Huyton police force. The investigation began twelve weeks ago and has not so far reported on Jimmy Kelly's death.

Until it does so, Oxford refuses to commit himself any further over the possibility of an inquiry, promising only to send the report to the DPP. No police officers have been suspended.

Several eye witnesses have given accounts of how Kelly, walking home after an evening out drinking, was beaten and kicked by police to whom he offered no resistance, and thrown in the police van when he was evidently badly injured.

The first Home Office pathologist recorded that Kelly died of a heart attack, and failed to note the extensive bruising, a crushed vertebra and the jaw broken in two places.

### Burial

The family, shocked at the state of Kelly's body when it was released for burial, got an independent pathologist to examine it. He noted the injuries above, and stated that they were consistent with being kicked, punched and kneed.

This post mortem was interrupted and stopped by the police, and the body returned to the original Home Office doctor.

Since then, a third forensic pathologist has made a report which backs up the independent one.

The belongings returned to Kelly's relatives include shoes ripped apart by the treatment he was given, and a tobacco tin bent almost double.

Friends and relatives have formed an action committee which is calling for an indepen-

dent inquiry into this and other recent local cases, such as that of Michael Cavanagh.

Cavanagh was arrested and later convicted of gaming and fined £10. After being badly kicked by police and refused medical attention during his three hours in custody, he had to have his spleen and one kidney removed later that night.

Predictably, the DPP has, after reading Gerty's report, found that there is 'insufficient evidence' to prosecute.

Sir Harold Wilson, as MP for Huyton, has backed the call for an inquiry, though he recommends a tribunal. The Knowsley Borough council and other MPs have also given their support.

The Merseyside Task Force of 1974-5 was notorious for its brutal methods, and when Ox-

ford was put in charge he reorganised the force as the Operational Support Group and moved its base. Methods have not changed, however.

Although the area has a lower rate of violent crime than similar urban areas there is an exceptionally high number of police per head of population. Last year they received 1,543 complaints.

### Killers

Jim Jardine, chairman of the Police Federation, has dismissed all the demands for an inquiry in a speech to police officers: 'I can tell you that there are signs of a technique in which police forces are being picked off one at a time. The idea is to get together examples of one or two cases

and build up a picture of a brutal police force'.

And John Alderson, chief constable of Devon and Cornwall, says that 'suggestions that the police should be brought under some form of democratic control must be resisted if the service is to avoid becoming a political tool'.

The police are determined to protect their killers and to reject accountability for their methods. They are substantially aided and abetted by the DPP, whose apparent scrupulousness over sufficiency of evidence is reserved for cases against police officers. For defendants (and even for two of the witnesses) at the Southall trials, being black and living in Southall is apparently sufficient evidence for conviction.



Three dead at the hands of the police: Jimmy Kelly (top), Blair Peach, Liddle Towers.

## Tories strike a new blow for racism

BY PUTTING new immigration rules through Parliament on Tuesday 4th, the Tories have given another boost to the most sordid racism.

Since the 1971 Immigration Act came into force, it has been practically impossible for black people to enter Britain except on the grounds of a family connection with people already settled here. For black husbands and fiancés of women settled here, there are already long queues, bureaucratic delays, insulting inquisitions, and frequent refusals. If and when they get in, it is 'conditional' for 12 months while the immigration authorities check whether the marriage is 'genuine'.

Now the Tories have introduced even more vile discrimination. Husbands entering for what the immigration authorities reckon are arranged marriages or marriages of convenience will definitely be banned. Apart from that, British women citizens born here or with a parent born here — i.e., mostly, white women — will have a right to have their husband join them, other British women citizens (mostly black) will have to take their luck with the immigration authorities.

The Tories don't deny that the European Commission of Human Rights may say this rule contradicts basic human rights. The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants this week made public a 1973 ECHR report which said that the 1968 (Labour) and 1971 (Tory) Immigration Acts were already racist. The following day a doctor protested that a patient coming to him for treatment had had her name passed from the hospital to the immigration authorities for arrest and deportation: with such things going on, he said, "immigrants would be well advised to steer clear of our hospitals for the moment if their papers are not in order".

End all immigration laws!

## Shah, CIA: yes, there's blood on their hands

ACCORDING TO the professional diplomats of the United Nations, the seizure of the US Embassy in Tehran by militant students "threatens the conduct of international relations". What makes them more furious still is the fact that the students are backed by the authorities in Iran.

In the Western press, the daily marches to the Embassy, the flag-burning scenes and all the other examples of organised and unorganised anti-imperialist sentiment are contrasted to "the conduct of international relations" by the imperialist states.

But while the Western press

continues to misrepresent "the conduct of international relations", the Iranian masses want to expose it. They don't want to put the ex-Shah and senior Embassy officials on trial simply to get their own back after years of oppression. They want to use these trials and the publication of secret documents reportedly discovered in the Embassy to show the reality of the relations between imperialism and one of its semi-colonies.

Is this wrong? Not at all. Holding innocent hostages, however, won't help tear the mask off imperialism's lying claims to civilised conduct. On

the contrary, it tends to make bloodsoaked imperialism look like a defender of human life and justice.

But the ex-Shah and most probably the senior Embassy officials are quite another matter. The Shah held on to power by means of the most extreme repression, by murder, torture, and terror; the US Embassy and the CIA staff helped him and kept him in power. The US should extradite the Shah and the Iranian people have every right to try those who have committed crimes against them.

Iran's ex-Foreign Minister Bani Sadr has claimed in an

open letter to Americans that the Embassy "had been the actual centre of rule over Iran in the days of the ex-Shah... a centre of rule and espionage". According to the open letter, when the Shah fled Iran, the Embassy staff worked in a three hour frenzy burning thousands of documents and destroying computer memories to cover up the real role of the Embassy and keep secret the agents of US imperialism still in Iran.

While it is a bit exaggerated to claim that the Embassy was "the actual centre of rule" — the Shah and the circle round him sometimes quarrelled

with the US on how to plunder the Iranian people — Bani Sadr's picture is a lot nearer the truth than the idea that Embassies are just there to stamp visas, help travellers, and supply business people with information.

Imperialist embassies — the British, West German and French as well as the US — are certainly centres of counter-revolutionary conspiracy. In Iran the US Embassy was no doubt working to subvert all those trends that it thought might endanger its interests.

A recent issue of the Fedayeen newspaper Kar (Labour) drew its readers' attention to

the role of the US Embassy in Chile, now well-known to have been a centre of counter-revolutionary organisation and espionage.

Kar supports the anti-imperialist demands of the masses, but it warns that others are exploiting the mass movement. "We must understand", says a special mid-November issue on the Embassy siege, "that it is only the working class and other toilers who really militantly fight against imperialism... We must understand that others talk of supporting the

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## Shah, CIA: yes, there's blood on their hands

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struggle against imperialism only for tactical reasons".

They accuse Iranian capitalism of trying to "exploit the progressive, democratic, and anti-imperialist movement for their own ends". In particular they accuse the authorities for using the Embassy occupation to create an atmosphere in which the constitutional proposals produced by the Council of Experts would be endorsed uncritically.

The Fedayeen see in this and some of Khomeini's recent statements a danger for the Left and all the working people of Iran. "If conditions had been normal", they say, probably a bit optimistically, "it would have been impossible to get people to agree with the constitution. This would have been a very big setback for the reactionaries."

"They used this movement that has sprung up around the seizure of the US Embassy to get people to agree to the decree setting up Vilayat-e Faghi [i.e. giving Ayatollah Khomeini, as the head of Shi'a Islam, dictatorial powers in Iran].

Thus they hope to win the people's 'yes' vote. And it is obvious that they are doing everything to rush the constitution through while the people's attention is focused on the anti-imperialist struggle. When it is all over, we will see how they put these laws to use. That is why they are supporting the anti-imperialist movement of the masses. If the authorities were wholeheartedly anti-imperialist, if they were not cynically manipulating the mass movement (insofar as they can), they would be publishing the treaties made between the Shah and imperialism, and they would be publishing the names of those who by their activities in SAVAK collaborated directly with the CIA and the US military. But they are silent on the treaties and they cover up for the police and army criminals, employing them in the forces of the Islamic Republic.

Against the hue and cry in the capitalist press, so ready to rattle the sabre of military intervention, we fully support the desire of the masses to go beyond the overthrow of the Shah and confront US imperialism, irrespective of whether the Embassy siege is the most effective way to do that.

We support their desire to unmask "the conduct of international relations", with its weapons of economic strangulation, reactionary conspiracy, and brute force. Imperialism, which wages war over the entire surface of the globe, cannot call itself civilised simply because its inhuman assaults are preceded by some overpaid flunkey delivering a harsh diplomatic note to a minister. Napalm bombing, nuclear weapons, germ warfare — this is how 'international relations' are really conducted by imperialism.

Just as we condemn the holding of a handful of innocent hostages in Iran — those clearly having no espionage or other hostile role — so we condemn the American government's making hostages of over a thousand Iranian students in the US.

In many other places in the Muslim world, the hatred of masses of people against imperialism has shown itself. Certainly the hands of reactionary governments could often be seen in these movements. Still, socialists should see in the widespread hatred of imperialism, not a threat to civilised conduct, but a progressive and justified revolt against barbarity.

ANDREW HORNUNG

THE GREAT majority of the people in the capitalist world live in poverty, and often deprived of the most basic democratic rights.

As long as the people of Latin America, Africa and Asia endure that poverty and repression passively, the leaders of the rich countries liberally propose plans for economic development and human rights. But when the masses start to move, the reality becomes clear: that the riches of the rich countries depend on the poverty and repression in the 'Third World'.

Nicaragua was a case history of that poverty and repression. For 45 years the Somoza family and the National Guard ran the country, guaranteeing good profits for American companies like United Fruit, and enriching themselves too.

In Nicaragua under Somoza the life expectancy was 53 years. There was one doctor for every 1,720 people. Schooling was patchy and illiteracy was 43%. Half the population got only 15% of the national income. Malnutrition was widespread. All political opposition was brutally suppressed.

The USA actively supported this regime, training, supplying and financing the National Guard, though in recent years, as the majority of the Nicaraguan bourgeoisie turned against Somoza, it began cautiously to distance itself.

In July this year the Nicaraguan people overthrew Somoza.

The Nicaraguan workers and peasants are still poor, and will continue to be so, for some time. The civil war in which Somoza was overthrown took a terrible toll. Over 50% of industrial capacity was destroyed. The cotton crop is expected to be 70% down next year, and agricultural production 40%.

In addition, the revolution has not yet geared all the limited resources that are available to the needs of the workers and peasants, for, although it has broken Somoza's power, it has not broken with capitalism and imperialism. Yet everything the revolution has done in its struggle against Somoza's regime, has been a gain for the freedom and the welfare of the masses of Nicaragua.



Somoza, butcher of Nicaragua

## Against US-sponsored intrigues and pressure

# Solidarity with Nicaragua

SOLIDARITY groups for the Nicaragua revolution have been established in most major capitalist countries.

Before July this year, they collected money for the Sandinistas' armed struggle.

Since then,

■ They distribute information about the achievements of the revolution;

■ They collect funds, especially for medical supplies;

■ In countries where Nicaragua has large debts [Britain is not one] they campaign for a freezing of those debts;

In Britain, the Nicaragua Coordinating Committee was set up in May this year, though informal Nicaragua solidarity activity had been going on for some months already. It has about 20 local groups, mostly based on the Latin American community in Britain.

Currently it is making a special drive for medical aid, contacting CoHSE, NUPE and the Socialist Medical Association for this purpose.

Trade union branches and Labour Parties can get information or speakers from the Nicaragua Coordinating Committee at 20 Compton Terrace London N1 [226-6747]

Socialists cannot identify with the present petty bourgeois and bourgeois leadership of the Nicaraguan revolution, but they side with the revolution, even under that leadership, against imperialism.

\* The huge landholdings of Somoza and his associates have been confiscated and distributed to the peasants or reorganised as cooperative farms.

\* Health facilities are being expanded.

\* The firms owned by Somoza and his associates, and, in addition, the banks, the insurance companies, and the foreign-owned mines, have been nationalised (the Somoza property, without compensation).

\* The right to unionise and the right to strike have been established.

\* A huge literacy campaign is being prepared, to start in March 1980. 200,000 people will be drawn in as teachers for 700,000 illiterates, and the aim is to teach everyone over ten years old to read and write within a year. This, in a war, sums up what the revolution against Somoza means for the people of Nicaragua. As an official of the Ministry of Education put it, "Those who learn to read and write will not only learn letters and words, but they will gain a new political and social consciousness".

This drive for liberation does not get the same generous response from the US as Somoza's tyranny got. Mass-

ive aid is needed in Nicaragua just to feed the population. But the USA is only giving very limited aid — from the USA, it would be better called reparations, for the US armed the National Guard which devastated Nicaragua.

US ruling class strategists openly say that the only reason why they give that limited aid is to strengthen the position of the bourgeois members of the Nicaraguan government, who can then contest any radical anti-imperialist or anti-capitalist measures on the grounds that they may lead to the cutting-off of US aid.

Cuba is giving substantial aid, but the other bureaucratic workers' states are doing very little. Some trade union organisations in the USA have decided to help organise aid for Nicaragua, but that is very limited too.

Aid needs to be expanded. More generally, the Nicaraguan revolution needs international working class solidarity against any attempt to reverse it or to push it back. The political awakening of millions in the Third World over the last decades has made it difficult for the US simply to send troops in without a second thought, as it did in Latin America in the 1950s.

But intrigue, sabotage, or indirect intervention via support to Somozaist counter-revolutionaries, are all quite possible. Against such machinations, the cause of Nicaragua is the cause of all the world's oppressed.

## PORTUGAL: WILL THE RIGHT GO ALL OUT AGAINST LAND REFORM

MANY of the surviving gains of the 1974-5 revolution in Portugal are in serious danger after the electoral victory of the Right on 2nd December.

The Democratic Alliance — uniting two major right wing parties, PSD and CDS, and the small monarchist party — got 42% of the vote and a small but clear majority of seats in the national assembly.

Their main target is likely to be the Alentejo, a district where large areas of land were seized by agricultural workers in 1975 and transformed into cooperatives.

The cooperatives have been under almost continuous attack since 25th Nov-

ember 1975, when a right-wing coup finally broke the momentum of the revolution in Portugal. But no government has yet dared to make an all-out attack on the agricultural workers.

The Democratic Alliance, too, will not be free of all constraint. The big loser in the election was the Socialist Party — which, governing alone or in coalition for most of the period since 25th November 1975, had been responsible for a substantial cut in workers' living standards for the sake of capitalist stabilisation.

But the Communist Party strengthened its vote, including in the Alentejo. The CP has had a passive policy over

recent years, but a major right wing offensive could goad it into a fighthack.

The pro-Socialist Party faction round Melo Antunes still has a majority in the armed forces' Revolutionary Council, and that could be another problem for the Democratic Alliance. Also, the Alliance's own internal cohesion is not too strong.

Another general election is due for October 1980, so the Alliance has to take care to keep its popular support. These difficulties for the Right mean that the left still has a chance to rebuild its support. But the chances will not stay around for ever.

COLIN FOSTER



Fitt [right] wants to talk to Paisley on the Tories' terms: but the SDLP says no



## Police and army at loggerheads as Irish talks go under

by Mike Foley

THE Tory government's proposed Northern Ireland conference, due to open on 3rd December, has been postponed — not surprisingly, since both the Official Unionists and the SDLP had said they would boycott it. Indeed, the conference never had much credibility.

Th *Observer* in an editorial on October 28th commented that a fresh initiative 'is not likely to impress anybody, anywhere. The only impression it leaves is that, as far as Northern Ireland is concerned, this government does not yet know what it is doing.'

Pressure had come from a number of sources for Thatcher's government to make some initiative. Irish-American politicians of some prominence have been calling for some British political action. And southern prime minister Jack Lynch of Fianna Fail is pushing for Britain to make some moves towards a political settlement.

(In a recent survey of his electorate, 70% said they saw Irish unification as the only solution.)

The proposals around which the Tories called their conference are for a measure of devolution for northern Ireland on a system of regional councils. The conference wasn't meant to concern itself with the constitutional status of the six-county state or 'province', nor with its relations with the rest of Ireland in unification or confederation, nor with independence.

Nor was any discussion planned on 'power sharing', a system with built-in minority representation within the Northern Ireland executive which existed for the first five months of 1974. It wasn't proposed that the Catholic minority should share power even formally, but rather 'its interests are to be safeguarded'.

It should come as no surprise, therefore, that Ian Paisley accepted and welcomed the conference. In doing so he has emphasised again his importance as a major political figure in northern Ireland. The Official Unionists, who rejected the conference, have been upstaged by Paisley's Dem-

ocratic Unionist Party.

The Catholic SDLP, which was formed in 1970, oppose the conference. Gerry Fitt, who wanted to attend the conference, has resigned from the party. Without even the prospect of a power-sharing cosmetic to sell to their electorate the SDLP saw endorsement of the Tory initiative as fraught with danger. It wanted the basis for talks to be widened if it was to accept the invitation. The SDLP feels the pressure from its base in the Catholic community, as hostility to British military harassment becomes more and more bitter.

The army and the RUC are now aware that they cannot defeat the IRA in the foreseeable future. This has resulted in mutual recrimination between the army and the RUC.

The military want to be allowed to take overall control of security and to introduce some form of internment again.

The current solution to this dispute has been to bring in a new security chief, Maurice Oldfield, who has to coordinate the squabbling forces of the army and the RUC. This means a halt for now to the 'Ulsterisation' previously attempted by Britain — a policy of reducing the Army's role in favour of a beefed-up RUC.

Army harassment of the nationalist population has been stepped up, while the Protestant majorities on 14 out of the 18 local councils in the north have passed resolutions calling for search and seizure operations and a curfew in Republican areas.

When Sir Kenneth Newman, current head of the RUC, leaves for England this month one of the most forceful advocates of 'Ulsterisation' will have gone and the military pressure will probably increase.

The sectarian state of northern Ireland still faces a political impasse. The continuing resistance of the nationalist population still thwarts the manoeuvres of British imperialism and the compliant Irish politicians. As a united campaign for political status for republican prisoners gets under way, the British ruling class could face further setbacks in their attempts to impose a British solution in Ireland.

## The Great Fake Robbery

MANY of the leaders of the labour movement — including the left wingers — always prefer a search for the mythical 'national interest' to a fight for class interest. The Dublin EEC summit showed them in full cry.

First they pledged full support to Tory leader Margaret Thatcher in her efforts to get Britain's EEC budget contribution reduced. Then, when she failed, they tried to prove that they were better chauvinists than the Tories, making calls for Britain to stop paying EEC taxes or to withdraw from the EEC altogether.

The £1,000 million which Thatcher wanted knocked off Britain's contribution is about £40 a year for each working person in Britain. But if she had got her way, it is not likely that we would be £40 a year better off. The extra money could go to the Tories' favourite purposes of building up the armed forces and the police or it could disappear into companies' profit figures or

into the maw of the Tories' management of the economy.

In contrast, something like £60 a week is squeezed out of each working person in Britain in profits, interest, rent, taxes and all the other forms of income of the capitalist class and its state. (All value is produced by the working class; but take-home pay is less than half of it.)

Some of that £60 comes back in the form of education, health services, social services and so on, but the bulk goes towards building up the wealth and power of the top 5% who own half the wealth in Britain.

So why all the fuss about the £40 a year? It only serves the interests of the exploiters to pretend that the problem is 'Britain' (City bankers and the lowest-paid workers alike) being exploited by 'foreigners' (multinational magnates, French peasants and European workers all combined).

Socialists have no brief to defend the EEC budget and the EEC's irrational system of agriculture. But we have no reason to go along with the crude nationalism of the official Labour left either.

**EEC bigwigs cold-shoulder Thatcher. A blow to everyone in Britain, or a squabble in a thieves' kitchen?**

## Is US coal the enemy?

WOULD banning coal imports from Scotland and Wales into England be a good way of fighting the rundown of the English

pits? Obviously not.

Is it any more sensible to think that stopping US coal imports, as Newport dockers did on 3rd December at the request of the miners' union, will help defend the jobs and conditions of British mineworkers?

US coal, too, is mined by workers whose jobs and conditions are under attack — workers who showed in their tremendous strike in the winter of 1978 that they have no interests in common with the US mine-owners and the US ruling class.

British miners should be seeking unity with those US mineworkers, not trying to compete with them for markets for coal.

The answer is an international united fight for hours to be cut, not jobs, when the coal industry slows down or when new techniques allow greater productivity.



## Right wing tries to blackmail the Labour Party

by Bruce Robinson

AT LEAST one leading Labour right winger is clear about the implications of a thoroughgoing democratisation of the Party. William Rodgers, a member of the Shadow Cabinet, has threatened a split if the left does not come to heel in the next year. Rodgers realises that if accountability becomes a reality, the Parliamentary leadership will no longer be able to ride roughshod over the decisions of local parties and the Party conference.

Rodgers is trying to blackmail the NEC into changing the composition of the Inquiry, and the Inquiry, whatever its composition, into reversing or neutralising some of the measures proposed to make the party more democratic. He hopes that the left will back down when faced with the threat of a split.

Rodgers is no stranger to these manoeuvres. He helped organise the Gaitskellite Campaign for Democratic Socialism, which reversed the 1960 conference decision for unilateral dis-

armament by getting several major unions to switch their votes. His statement that "Our Party has a year in which to save itself" is obviously keyed to the next conference. He hopes to see a repeat of what occurred in 1961.

Rodgers argues that a split in the Labour Party would leave the left wing as a rump. There is little evidence for this. At the last election, many workers deserted a Labour government precisely because it represented the 'moderate' policies Rodgers is arguing

for. No doubt the right will be able to count on the support of the press and the party apparatus. Yet the Labour Party depends above all on the activists who, as the CLP votes at recent conferences show, overwhelmingly support the left and accountability.

The left and the NEC should not be stampeded by talk of 'splits'. Rodgers is right: accountability in the labour movement is incompatible with the continuation of the openly pro-capitalist policies of the Labour leaders. In the long

term, coexistence with people like Rodgers can only be based on the left agreeing to drop its own politics, as the Tribune left did when it failed to fight the Labour leadership during the last government.

A fight to democratise and renovate the labour movement cannot be separated from a clear anti-capitalist programme and a fight to deal with the right wing. Whether Rodgers is bluffing or not, the left must be prepared to take the logical consequences of the battle now going on.

## FALMOUTH CLP'S SPLIT

# Right wing revolt fizzles out

LAST WEEK the press splashed the news that the Falmouth and Camborne Constituency Labour Party had voted to break away from the Labour Party because, it said, the Party had become too left wing. Several activists quickly declared that they would keep an official Constituency Labour Party going whatever the right wing splitters did, and within a couple of days the 'revolt' seemed to have fizzled out.

Obviously a few right wingers had been caught up in Fleet Street's current search for any news that can be used against the left wing in the Labour Party.

The press statement announcing the split said: "We had in this constituency during the general election a parliamentary candidate who expressed in the press and at public meetings many of the Left-wing views which we heard at this year's conference". The candidate, Peter Tebbutt, explained to *Workers' Action* why the right wing objected to him.

They objected to his joining the picket at Grunwick with the party banner. They refused to be drawn into discussion on Chile:

"What's it got to do with us?"

They refused to support anti-apartheid campaigns or the Anti-Nazi League, or to back objections to the South African Barbarians recent rugby tour which included a match in Cornwall.

Even the GMC managed to steer clear of any political matters: meetings were taken up with discussions on fund raising, premises, summer fêtes or Christmas fairs. And they didn't like being addressed as "comrades" or hearing jokes about the Royal Family. Only three members joined a local march protesting about unemployment.

The chairman consistently made sexist remarks to women under thirty who joined the party and when an industrial militant came down to speak, the women were sent to make the tea "as they won't be interested in a discussion on unemployment".

A local Labour councillor publicly opposed the Homeless Persons Act, saying that homeless people arriving in Cornwall should be put on a train back to where they came from — including a

battered wife whose case Peter Tebbutt took up.

The local GMC was particularly sore because its delegate to the Labour Party Conference was a YS member, Kim King, who consistently voted with the left wing at the conference. The GMC which delegated him (but subsequently refused to pay his expenses) failed to mandate him as it had the more important business of the summer fête on its agenda.

Peter Tebbutt has meanwhile moved to Birmingham, where the notoriously right wing and slanderous *Evening Mail* describes Peter Tebbutt as a playboy, on the basis of his supposed ownership of a Jaguar with personalised number plates.

The number plates are a figment of the *Mail's* imagination: the Jaguar, an ancient model recovered from a dump and renovated by his uncle, and then left to Peter Tebbutt in his will, is real.

"But", said Tebbutt, "I'm glad to hear that the Birmingham *Mail* disapproves of personalised number plates"

Isobel Kemp

## Red-baiting? Not to worry, says 'Militant'

TWO SUPPORTERS of the Campaign for YS Democracy (Neil Cobbett and Stephen Slater, WA and Clause 4 supporters respectively) moved a resolution at the meeting of the YS London Regional Committee on 30.11.79 opposing the right-wing's counter-offensive against the decisions of the Brighton conference. If condemned Callaghan's attempts to create a witchhunting atmosphere in the party, and specifically his remarks that the Inquiry should consider the findings of the notorious (and discredited) Underhill Report and his remarks on TV attacking the 'Militant' tendency.

John Bulaitis, YS National Committee member, and supporter of 'Militant' put an amendment deleting specific condemnation of "The remarks attacking the 'Militant' tendency made by James Callaghan in a TV interview with Shirley Williams" and replacing it by vapid generalisations.

This was rejected by the movers on the grounds that behind it lay the mistaken conception that we witnessed the culmination and not the opening of the struggle for Party Democracy at the Brighton conference. Callaghan's remarks on TV were not the snide 'compliments' Militant took them to be but the prelude to a possible attempt to really clamp down on the left.

The amendment was carried with two against, the resolution was passed unanimously.

Militant is unable and unwilling to defend itself from witchhunting. Instead they just try to keep their head down, waiting for the great day to arrive when the leadership of the labour movement falls into their laps.

## A WEALTHY WITCHHUNTER IN OXFORD

FOLLOWING a Sinn Fein demonstration in Oxford on the 20th October, supported by the Workers' Socialist League, a well-funded but so far anonymous right wing group has organised a witch-hunt of five of those on the march, including two well-known British Leyland Cowley militants.

A poster has been produced, with pictures of Alan Thornett, Pat Lally, Peter McIntyre, Tony Richardson and Dave Simpson (the Provisional Sinn Fein organiser in Oxford). It identifies the men by name, home address, telephone number, place of work and trade union position held, asking "Do you know these people?", and denouncing them as "IRA sympathisers".

The posters have been mailed to everyone in the streets where the five live and distributed outside factories by people paid £10 a time. The posters are marked "Distribution: 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment, Aldershot; Limbley ex-servicemen's association; Major companies, Oxford; General public, Oxford; Other interested groups". The *Oxford Mail* has taken up the story on its front page.

The postmark is South London. The posters have no printers or publishers address on them but the

organisers of this calculated appeal for a witch-hunt, if not for actual physical violence, are obviously both wealthy and well-organised.

The timing, so soon after the sacking of Derek Robinson and warning of other BL militants, means that BI in Oxford could well use the occasion to rid themselves of their militants.

The Tory government, the press, and the bosses between them are trying to brand any radical opposition to their state and their system — whether it be the IRA or trade union militants — as criminal.

Since the appearance of the posters, Alan Thornett has held a meeting in his section at Cowley which, though initially hostile, was later prepared to consider his position. But counteracting the effects of the witch-hunt in one section only goes a short way towards addressing the huge number of people who have received the poster.

The witch-hunt also comes shortly before this month's annual elections of convenor and senior shop stewards in the Cowley assembly plant, where many WSL members work.

Defending political free speech is closely linked in this case with defending trade union organisation.

*Stop the witch-hunt!*

## 'Vice chancellor must resign', say Manchester students

LAST week the administration of Manchester University showed their determination to smash the campaign against the increases in overseas students' fees. The vice-chancellor and other top administrative staff tried to incite campus workers to attack students and, failing in that, decided to assault the students themselves.

While explaining to campus workers that the student occupation of the university telephone exchange

was an official students' union action, the Overseas Students' Officer, Osman Kavala got racist abuse (why don't you buy a one-way ticket and go back home). Numerous witnesses say that he was then attacked physically by vice-chancellor Sir Arthur Armitage.

It was the latest in a number of attempts by the administration to defeat the campaign. Although they claim to support the general aims of the Student Union,

they have used courts, police and now violence against us. They have tried to discredit our campaign as the action of isolated lunatics who are preventing university workers receiving their wages. (In fact, none of the student actions has interfered with the wages in any way).

The University Union has now occupied the administration building four times since term started, as part of its campaign to stop the increases in fees for overseas

students and the cuts in courses and facilities which will follow.

The next stage in the campaign will be to force the Vice-Chancellor to resign. His protestations that he "doesn't want" to increase the fees and "doesn't like" racism are now shown to be a fake.

Osman Kavala is pressing charges. It is important that the court case is seen as a way of gaining publicity and support for the campaign,

and is not seen as an end in itself.

It is crucial that the students win the active support of the campus unions. With the exception of NALGO, all the campus unions support us in principle. The government's attack on Overseas Students and on education must be fought through joint militant action by students and workers.

CLIVE BRADLEY  
ANNE LITTLEBOY

## MANCHESTER

# The plans behind the pose

CLAIMS by Manchester Labour council leader Norman Morris that Manchester will defy the Tories on council house sales are ringing as hollow as his claims on fighting the cuts.

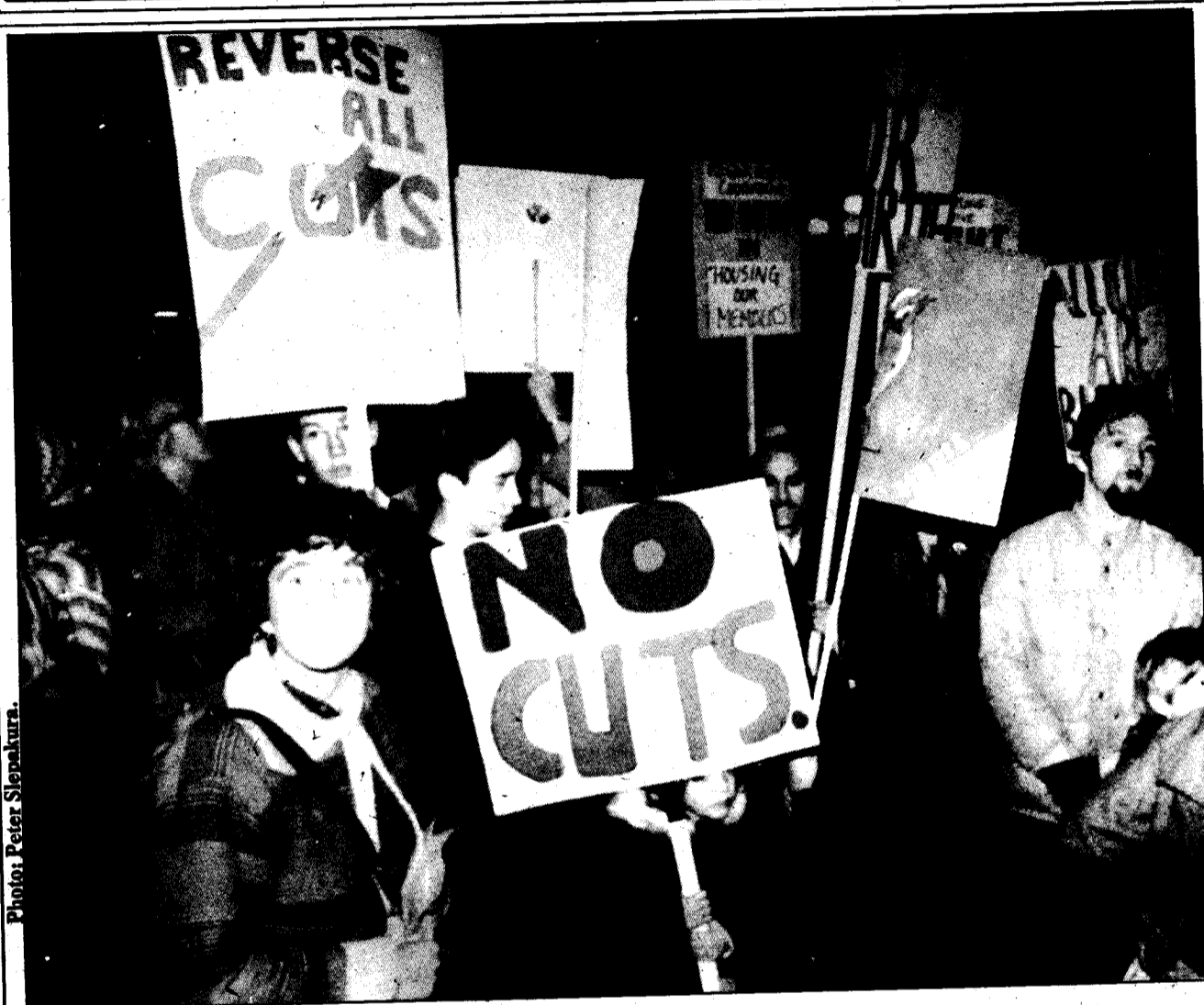
Stan Kuckalowicz (NUPE housing branch secretary) sent on to Manchester Trades Council a letter he had received from the Housing Department administration, which stated that as the legislation on council house sales is to be enacted early next year, negotiations should take place as soon as possible between the department and NUPE as to how the sales should be carried out.

It is the policy of NUPE, the trades council and the city

Labour Party to oppose the sale of council houses. Yet the Labour majority on the council's policy committee when it met on November 26th voted for the setting up of contingency plans to start selling council houses.

NUPE have been told that if they refuse to process sales then it will be a breach of discipline and management would take action.

A campaign should be set up to stop all council house sales and for all Labour Parties to make Labour councils accountable to their policies — uniting with trade unionists, trades councils, council workers and tenants associations to block the sales and demand housing for needs, not for profit.



Photos: Peter Shephard.

## Islington Council postpones new cuts decision

In the face of massive opposition, Islington's cuts-happy Labour council has been forced to make another small retreat. A council meeting on December 4th was originally planned to decide on rent rises and cuts in services for next year — but the Labour group deferred all decisions to the January 29th council meeting when it realised protests were mounting.

A lobby of the council meeting, called by Islington Campaign Against the Cuts, went ahead — to keep up the pressure on the council — and 1,000 people turned up.

The largest contingent on the lobby was from the NALGO branch in Islington and other NALGO branches in London, but many tenants, Labour Party members and other local people turned up.

Speakers at the lobby outside the Town Hall included representatives of NALGO and the Islington Labour Parties' Local Government Committee, local tenants' leader Rosie Dale, left-wing councillor Valerie Veness and Cuts Campaign convener James Ryan.

In contrast, the local ratepayers' group 'CUT', which calls

for keeping the rates down by making cuts, could only muster 20 people.

The Islington Campaign Against the Cuts is calling another lobby for the January 29th council meeting.

Two people in Islington have complained about a poster in the window of the council's Information and Participation office. The offending poster is from the National Abortion Campaign.

Complainant no.1 is local NF organiser Sid Chaney. His fellow-complainant is one of Islington's two Tory councillors, Neil Kerr. Kerr submitted a question to the last council meeting asking why they had 'permitted this council to be publicly associated with one of the abortion lobbies'.

The answer should be obvious. All three of Islington's Labour Parties support NAC, and Islington Council is overwhelmingly Labour. However, the Labour Group on Islington council is no friend of the Participation office — it has in the past stopped it displaying ANL posters, and now plans to close the office down altogether because of its provision of facilities to community groups clashing with the council.

Islington NAC is supporting the Islington Campaign Against the Cuts and opposing the closure of the Participation Office.

## Will 18,000 teaching jobs be cut?

THE AVON (Bristol area) Education Authority decided to save itself money by sacking 406 teachers. Even after backing down from that, it now says it will cut more than 300 teaching jobs in its area.

Trafford Education Authority is out to sack 100 part time teachers, and promises more sackings to come.

Overall, the Tory government's education spending plans — a cut of 5% in 1980-81 — indicate that 18,000 jobs will be lost in teaching. Overcrowded classes will stay overcrowded. Children will no longer be allowed to start school before their fifth birthday. Nursery education will be cut. School maintenance will be reduced.

All sorts of mean minor economies will be made, like cutting swimming lessons.

This prospect has pushed the National Union of Teachers (NUT) Executive into calling a

special delegate conference on education cuts, in Blackpool on December 8th.

The union's previous strategy of piecemeal opposition to cuts carried out by the Labour government, only sanctioning industrial action in a few areas with the worst cuts, and ignoring cuts, carried out by 'good' Labour authorities such as the Inner London Education Authority, is now clearly seen by many members as inadequate.

Yet the Executive document and motion submitted to conference is quite as inadequate. It proposes no general, united fight against all cuts and against the Government's efforts to make the working class pay for the capitalist crisis; instead it pleads a special case for education spending as 'essential to ensure national recovery and a prosperous future'.

The major effort of the union campaign is to mobilise public opinion to seek a reversal of present government policies.

Industrial action gets a mention, but it's left vague, obviously to avoid tying the Executive's hands: 'action on the scale appropriate, which may include the withdrawal of members from schools, or any other steps which may be necessary in order to protect members from enforced redundancy'; no-cover action 'where appropriate'.

The record of the NUT's right wing Executive leaves no basis for believing that it will use this vague mandate for an effective fight. In any case, the Executive statement argues that 'areas which may well have a valid case for action... may be unable to take action, as the union's resources may be fully committed elsewhere'. The reasons given are the threat of retaliation by local authorities, and the low level of the union's strike fund (together with a policy of sustaining strikers on full pay).

No other motions will be

allowed, but several local associations, including Lambeth and East London, have managed to submit amendments. These propose united action with other unions, and demand that the union urge the TUC to call a national one day strike. They call for refusal to teach oversized classes or cover for absences of more than one day and for opposition not only to sackings but also to other forms of job loss such as re-deployment.

The Executive is at a loss in fighting cuts of such magnitude, and it has no idea of what to do in the likely event of the Clegg Commission failing to fully restore the real value of teachers' pay.

But a real fightback now is urgently needed, or else the union will suffer a massive loss of morale and see both its members and the education service cut to ribbons.

CHEUNG SIU MING  
PETE FIRMIN

## NO CUTS! LOBBY THE LABOUR COUNCILLORS!

9.30am, Saturday 8 December, Pool Meadow, Coventry  
Delegates from Labour councils and minority Labour

groups will be meeting at the call of Coventry Council to discuss the cuts.

Coventry District Labour Party and local unions have called a demonstration to say: No cuts!

## Only 16 came to college

'OUR college was empty on the afternoon of the big cuts demo.'

The teachers wanted to take action — but their union didn't back them up, so it was the students who made sure the college was closed.

Karen Brodie, an O-level student at City & East London College [Jubilee Street] describes how they did it.

'The week before the march four or five of us called a meeting in the college about the cuts. Sixty people came, out of 250 at Jubilee Street including part timers and day release.

'Then the day before the march we had a 'reminder meeting'. We went round all the classes telling people about the meeting and that the college would be closed for the 28th. Derek Edwards, a head of department, followed round

after us saying the college would be open — but no-one took much notice of him.

'On the day, 60 people turned up at college to go on the demo, and only 16 people came to go to classes. They did hold two classes in the morning — but there weren't any in the afternoon.

'Everyone who went on the march was keen to do something about the cuts. Our contingent was really lively and made more noise than a lot of the others put together.

'Going on the march has started a lot of people at college thinking about what to do to fight the cuts here. People are angry about how much the dinner prices are going up and about the fees increases for overseas students here.

'We've got to organise, not just for one march, but for a real fight'.





## 500 MARCH AGAINST NAZI HQ

Three coffins and a banner commemorating the victims of racist murders in London's East End headed a march against the National Front's headquarters in Great Eastern Street, Hackney, on December 5th. 500 marchers were demanding the removal of the NF on the eve of a planning

inquiry into their use of 'Excalbur House'. Police prevented the marchers from going past the fascist HQ. The NF must have decided to stay safely locked up inside, not even putting up token opposition to the march.

Photo: Peter Slepakura.

## INDIAN TEENAGERS EXCLUDED

### A victory for Thatcher's culture

HOME OFFICE Minister Timothy Raison has announced that Mrs. Manju Patel's three sons (aged 10, 13 and 16) are not to be allowed to return to Britain. The Home Office believes that it has discovered and foiled a plot to bring a family of five into Britain bit by bit, circumventing immigration laws and rules.

Imagine the glee in Whitehall! Three young Indian boys kept out of the country, and a sinister plot to reunite a family foiled. Now we know what Margaret Thatcher meant by protecting 'our culture' against the threat of immigration and what sordid culture she wants protected.

The Patels have had to go to degrading lengths to prove that they are really divorced. Mr Patel has sworn an affidavit that he seeks neither custody of the children, nor entry to Britain.

But despite the fact that Mrs. Patel had been supporting her sons financially while they were in the care of Mr. Patel's parents, the Home Office has stated that "the Minister is not satisfied that Mr. Patel has ever given up parental responsibility for his children, or that Mrs. Patel has ever had sole responsibility for them".

Soon after the Patels left Kenya for India in 1971, their marriage broke down. After repeated applications to enter Britain, Mrs. Patel came as a visitor in 1975 and was eventually allowed to stay. Early this year she visited her children, and

found that their aging grandparents were no longer able to look after them properly, so she brought them back to Britain with her.

Not content with the suffering already caused to Mrs. Patel, the Home Office tricked her into leaving her home, job and friends here to return to Bombay (where she and her children are living in a Salvation Army hostel) and to reapply. Mrs. Patel was given to understand that she would gain entry legally and quietly for herself and her children by returning. She was even offered money towards the air fare.

Mr Bob Bean, former MP for Rochester, who has been advising Mrs. Patel, said that the Home Office had "duped" her. "They begged me to get them off

the hook and encourage her to return to Bombay. I saw they didn't want a precedent set so I agreed. I thought they were doing it in good faith."

However, the campaign in Oxford and elsewhere to prevent the deportation of seven year old Ayesha Khatun, who lives with her adoptive parents in Oxford and has only her father, an itinerant priest, to return to in India, has succeeded. The Home Office has allowed her to stay, although she "failed to follow the correct entry procedure".

A campaign must continue to get the decision on the Patel boys reversed and to extend the fight against all immigration laws and all deportations.

MANDY WILLIAMS



20,000 marched on November 25th for the Patels — and all other victims of British state racism

## Women's Voice: SWP slams the door

THE DECISION at the recent Socialist Workers' Party (SWP) conference concerning Women's Voice has made the position of that organisation quite clear.

WV is to become a women's section of the SWP. It will consist of SWP members and close sympathisers and will be based on the politics of the SWP.

Socialist Worker also stated that "the groups will make their own day-to-day decisions; the Steering Committee will make tactical decisions within the ambit of SWP politics, and neither will be politically independent."

In fact, the Steering Com-

mittee has in effect been dissolved, and WV has now become nothing more than an expanded women's fraction of the SWP.

At the WV conference the main resolutions said clearly that WV was to become a periphery group or women's section of the SWP, and that the SWP had rejected the idea of building a broad-based women's organisation. However, resolutions pointing a different way were also passed so that, although it had the politics of the SWP, WV would have some organisational independence. At least it would not be under the direct control of the leadership of the

SWP.

WV Conference elected a Steering Committee and decided that "Women's Voice" should be the only imprint on WV magazine and WV posters. This has been overridden by the SWP, and the words 'women's magazine of the SWP' still appear on the WV title page. So, the SWP has blatantly flouted the decisions of a conference which included people not in the SWP, many of whom had joined WV on a basis completely different from the present one.

The only organisational form that the SWP can see for a fighting women's movement is

as part of the SWP. Instead of trying to win other women through joint work and political discussion they attempt to dictate the politics. And, because of the political flabbiness of the SWP, the only way they can ensure that WV is 'based on SWP politics' is through direct rule by the SWP Central Committee.

The SWP cannot just override decisions because they happen to have decided a different strategy. Women in WV who took the last WV conference's decisions seriously should demand to discuss the decisions that have been taken over their heads.

PAT LONGMAN

## Strip show defended by police with dogs

THE MARKETING SOCIETY at North Staffs Poly organised a strip show in the Students Union bar on Tuesday 27th November, but not without angry opposition.

The repeal of a ban on sexist entertainments by the students union executive had allowed the show to be staged, but 30 protesters organised by the Poly Labour Club and local women's groups were there to picket it.

One student union executive member, Kevin Hilton, responded to the picket by kicking one woman and shoving her child hard against a door. Tempers flared and Hilton was only saved by another executive member getting between him and the picket.

Inside the show there were

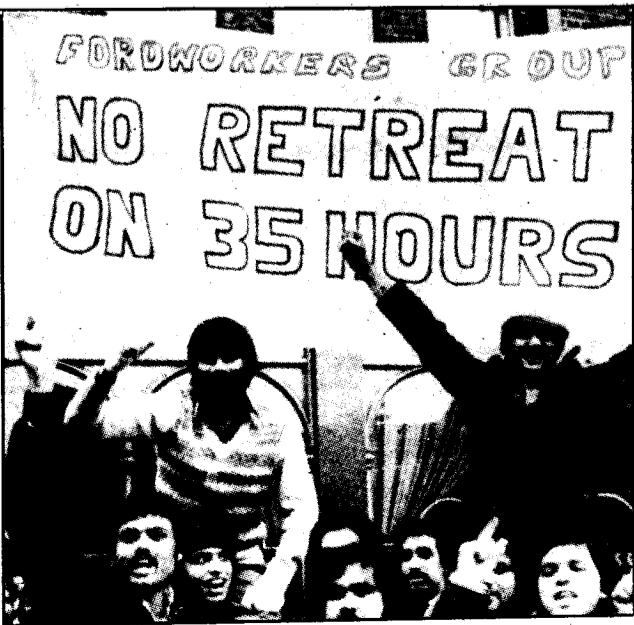
loud complaints and stink bombs. But the protest organisers deny that a brick thrown through a window was their work. They believe it was thrown by people supporting the show, who were out to get the left a bad name and provide an excuse to call the police.

The show did indeed get police protection. Four squad cars and a dog handler's van turned up after a call by the union executive.

These incidents are likely to be used as an excuse to witch-hunt socialists and women's movement activists at the Poly. But that will not stop the campaign against sexist entertainments.

PHIL JOHNSON

## Fords £15-plus rise: exception or example?



BY THE END OF last week, a large majority of the 59,000 Ford workers had voted for a pay offer worth 6% more than the deal they had managed to win after last year's 9 week strike. For Ford's 25,000 B Grade workers, the offer meant an increase of £15 a week, taking the basic to £89.52.

During negotiations the previous week, the Ford Motor Company had rapidly raised their offer from 16.3% to 21.5%. In sharp contrast to last year's hard-nosed attitude the Ford bosses' keenness to buy peace this year has come from fear of another strike.

With a dramatic decline in the US car market, and a more than usual dependence by Ford on profits from England and Germany in the face of a planned \$1,000 million loss this year, Ford needed to maintain their dominant position in the British car market. (They also did not want to

lose the opportunity presented by the possibility of a strike at British Leyland over the sacking of Derek Robinson). In any case, 21.5% still leaves Ford's British workers as some of the lowest paid in their European plants.

The Union side of Ford's national joint negotiating committee recommended management's offer almost unanimously (49-7 votes). In a number of significant ways, however, it was well short of the original claim. £30 a week (a 42% rise) was the claim put forward in order to restore the purchasing power of Ford workers' wages to their 1974 level, together with a threshold agreement to maintain their value against the coming year's inflation. Ford flatly refused the threshold agreement and got away with half the money rise. They also refused to consolidate the 'attendance allowance', insisting on leaving it as a

device that Ford can take away from workers for lateness, unofficial disputes, etc — effectively, a fines system. In fact, the 21.5% includes an increase of the 'allowance' from £3.52 to £5.00 per week for Grade B workers.

The Ford negotiators have claimed a significant advance on the question of working hours. The agreement involves a commitment to a series of union-management meetings "to consider changes in working arrangements necessary to achieve a negotiated reduction in working time, without reducing the Company's competitiveness, which would be effective from the commencement of the New Agreement to be negotiated in November 1980."

How significant this is will depend on the extent to which Ford workers can bring pressure to bear for a 35 hour week. For the negotiators however,

the agreement is for a reduction in working time, not for a 35 hour week, which was one of the demands last year. This year it was dropped, because of the 'problems' it would cause the Ford Motor Company, in favour of an equivalent reduction in working time, that is longer holidays, sabbatical leave etc. In these respects, Ford's British workforce are well behind their European counterparts.

Given the problem of getting a strike before Christmas, Ford's management was probably confident of buying a quick deal. It will enable their profits to remain high for the eighth consecutive year. It will also make them pretty much an exception among capitalists in Britain. What is important is that Ford workers' 21.5% does not remain an exception among workers.

JOHN BLOXAM

## 60,000 JOBS TO GO. STEELWORKERS MUST

# Unite or go under

STEELWORKERS will now "have to stand up and be counted, and I think they will stand up", declared a furious Bill Sirs after the British Steel Corporation's latest announcement of mass sackings.

They will have to do a lot more than that if they are to stop BSC gouging a further 55,000 to 60,000 jobs from the industry in the near future.

BSC's threat — there is as yet no clear plan — comes on top of last month's announcement of 15,000 job losses with the closure of the Corby works and all but the finishing end at Shotton in North Wales.

According to BSC, they are losing over £1 million a day as orders plummet following the sharp decline in demand, particularly for sheet steel.

Britain's steel industry is geared to produce 21.5 million tonnes (19 million if Corby and Shotton are not counted), though the plans the Tories drew up only five years ago envisaged a far higher output. Now 15 million tonnes is thought to be too optimistic a forecast of Britain's share of the market.

Several factors have created the international steel crisis — a crisis reflected in huge sackings in the US, long periods of short-time working in West Germany, closures in France. These include an increase in Third World production; a lower demand for car production as a result, among other things, of the oil crisis; and, in Britain in particular, the recession in the engineering, shipbuilding and construction industries.

### PAY

Bill Sirs, leader of the ultra-conservative Iron and Steel Trades Confederation (formerly BISAKTA), the largest union in the industry, is also flabbergasted at the Corporation's response to the union's pay claim. BSC is offering a miserly 2%.

According to one steel executive, Bob Scholey, there might be more in the kitty but that will have to be negotiated at plant level.

What the bosses hope for is precisely plant by plant bargaining, just as they want to see plant by plant response to the closure threat. The steelworkers' answer has to be: No, this is going to be a united fight — both on pay and on jobs.

Last month, Sirs failed to get any commitment from the TUC's steel committee, where the Blastfurnacemen's union as well as the GMWU refused to cooperate in a campaign to defend Corby. The same unions — as well as some of the craft unions — took a similar stance over the Shotton shutdown.

Then he said that if the other unions would not support the ISTC, then they would go it alone. This time there has to be a mass mobilisation of all steelworkers to push their leaders into a joint campaign to save jobs. And if the other unions still refuse, then the ISTC should go it alone.

Certainly the ISTC has got the strength. But it has never used it. It has been a

textbook study in complacency and bureaucratic paralysis so far. Instead of fighting, it has praised its involvement with the other steel unions in BSC's worker-director farce: something which hasn't helped it even get a clear statement as to where the closures will take place.

Of course, vagueness in the future plans serves a purpose. BSC hope to play one site off against another. This time, however, they



Bill Sirs

could come a cropper, because so far they have been unable to guarantee the existence of the biggest steelmaking centres, Port Talbot, Redcar, Lackenby (Teesside), Scunthorpe, Sheffield-Rotherham and Llanwern (near Newport).

Without the support of these big units, the smaller victims felt that no effective fight could be put up. But now every site is threatened by thousands of job losses even where complete closure is not foreseen.

With BSC's "death by a thousand cuts" strategy that has axed 44,000 jobs over the last five years — bringing the total workforce down to 186,000 now — unity was difficult (though by no means impossible). The enormity of the present threat could — and certainly should — lead to a united stand by all the workers against the Corporation.

The key demand steelworkers must organise around is that of cutting hours to save jobs without loss of pay. If there is less work they should work less, but they should resist all redundancies — whether "voluntary" or forced. Soon the Corporation will try to impose new rotas in line with its plans to cut back production. These new plans must be countered by the workers themselves working out new shifts and rotas in line with their interests and their need to keep their jobs.

### LINKS

The international nature of the crisis in steel means that links can be made with steelworkers in other countries. But the advice of people like the Communist Party could get in the way of this.

The CP's *Morning Star* blames the present crisis on steel imports — the logical consequence is: the fight should be to limit steel imports. Instead of declaring war on the bosses, we are advised to demand that the British state declares war on the steelworkers of France, Germany, the USA, Japan and — no doubt — the Third World too.

After a series of bullying ultimatums, Tory Foreign Secretary Carrington has announced another one: on Monday 3rd he said the Government would legislate a new Zimbabwe-Rhodesia constitution over the

heads of the Patriotic Front if the PF did not agree to ceasefire arrangements within 24 hours. BAS HARDY discusses why Carrington feels strong enough to make these threats.

## THE ARM-TWISTING BEHIND THE ZIMBABWE TALKS Pincer between Lonrho, S. Africa and Carrington

THE LONDON conference on the future of Zimbabwe is drawing to a close with a probable victory, on paper at any rate, for the British government and the Salisbury delegation headed by Bishop Muzorewa.

Agreement has been reached on a constitution with safeguards for white minority privileges, and on a British governor to supervise elections after a ceasefire between the nationalist guerrillas and the Salisbury regime.

The outstanding issues are:

■ The delay before the elections (the Patriotic Front wants a longer delay than Britain does: the British

schedule would not give the Patriotic Front enough time to establish proper public political organisation in the areas now under the control of the Salisbury regime).

■ The composition of the Commonwealth 'monitoring' force (the Patriotic Front wants more troops from African and Caribbean nations, instead of the heavily white-dominated force proposed by Britain; it is also pressing for a larger force).

■ The Patriotic Front objects to the British proposal to herd the guerrilla forces together in 'assembly points' while the Salisbury army remains in its present bases.

■ The Patriotic Front demands that South African

forces be withdrawn from the country. (On South Africa's own admission, 400 regular South African troops are active in Zimbabwe, and South Africa has a 'major role' in the air force. South Africa has also threatened to invade Zimbabwe if the Patriotic Front break off negotiations or win power after a settlement.)

Even if the Patriotic Front gets most of what it wants on these points, on all essential matters the deal will be one which protects white privilege and imperialist interests. A lot of arm-twisting has forced the Patriotic Front to stay at the conference table and agree these



terms.

The giant multinational company Lonrho has been pressuring Zambia to force the Patriotic Front to settle. The damage caused by Rhodesian raids on Zambia and Rhodesia's cutting off of Zambia's trade routes has also made the Zambian government exert strong pressure for a settlement.

The Tanzanian government, which was hailed by Margaret Thatcher for its 'statesmanlike wisdom' in securing Patriotic Front

agreement in the presence in the President Ny has already of a hundred from a consoling Britain and t year plan t Salaam into- ant port in th

For this, N to sacrifice Z In Mozam western- go starve the co

## South Africa: Ford goes all out to smash black unions

WORKERS in the Ford Cortina plant in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, are engaged in a hard struggle with the bosses. They came out on strike after the victimisation of Thozamile Botha, a leader of the Port Elizabeth Black Civic Organisation, a militant anti-apartheid community group with considerable local popularity and with wide support at Ford's.

The Ford bosses have responded by sacking the entire African labour force and then recruiting from the mass of unemployed and on its own terms from those who had been sacked.

The workforce at Ford had been organised by two sister unions: the African Auto Workers and the Coloured Workers' Assembly, both of which are members of the Federation of South African Trades Unions (FOSATU). The high level of shop floor organisation by these unions has won recognition from Ford: certain negotiating rights and concessions in the form of integrated facilities in the toilets and canteen. Ford, in turn, had the reputation of being one of the more 'progressive' multinationals.

The crackdown on the African and coloured workers is therefore all the more significant. The spark that set off this dispute arose from a backlash among white workers organised in the racist Iron, Steel and Allied Workers Union. Reacting against what they saw as a threat to their privileges, they demanded, on threat of strike, such things as an end to strike pay for Africans and the renewed separation of factory facilities.

When one of their supervisors spoke of "Africans abusing the canteen", the African workers demanded his dismissal and initiated a mass

boycott of the canteen. The sacking of Botha was clearly a management sop to the white workers' racist militancy.

It is not however the white workers who are the main cause of the crackdown. Rather, the government has a strategy based on the Wiehahn commission to offer registration to African unions but with stringent restrictions on their activities (e.g. no politics), their organisation (e.g. government financial auditing), their areas of work (excluding mines, agriculture and domestic labour), and their composition (for instance, granting differential rights to migrant and residential workers).

The principal opposition to these restrictions has been organised by FOSATU and a concentrated campaign by the bosses is under way to introduce weak 'parallel' unions in opposition to FOSATU (GEC and Leyland are trying this), or breaking the unity FOSATU has created by forcing individual unions to register on the government's terms as a condition for recognition. (Fords is taking the lead in this direction).

The Auto Workers' response was cautious and deliberately non-political as they tried to hold on to their organisation. The militancy of the workers, however, has gone further, forging direct links between their trade union organisation and their political organisation in the community, and initiating spontaneous strikes independently of the formal direction of the union.

Meanwhile, the dispute is spreading to neighbouring factories where the Auto Workers have now organised about 80% of the black workforce, all of whom have now also been sacked.

BOB FINE

## NAMIBIA: HOW UP SOUTH AFRI

by a member of  
the Namibia  
Support Committee

NAMIBIA does not get one-tenth the coverage in the British press that Zimbabwe gets. But the largest and most expensive UN military operation since Korea is planned for Namibia, and the British government, via diplomat Sir James Murray, is now in the chair of the "Western Contact Group" which is the moving force behind the plan.

The Western Contact Group was formed in April 1977 by the imperialist powers in the UN Security Council — the UK, USA, France, West Germany and Canada. In the Group, the Tory government is proposing that a 7,500 strong UN monitoring force (UN TAG) should clear SWAPO guerrillas out of Northern Namibia within two weeks of the operation starting, while the entire South African garrison will be left intact in 'selected locations' for three months.

Since 1966 Namibia has been officially designated a "UN trust territory", illegally occupied by the South African state. SWAPO is recognised by the UN as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people. But multinational corporations have important interests in Namibia. So negotiations which are supposed to be only about ways and means of handing over power in Namibia have become the scene for imperialist manoeuvres.

About 70,000 South African troops are still stationed in Namibia, a country the size of France and Italy put together and with only just over one million inhabitants. Under the Contact Group plan, they will stay there — only in 'selected locations'.

The notorious South African para-military police, other sections of the police (intelligence services, CID, compound prisons and railway police), bantustan tribal armed units, mercenaries and armed white settlers are all to be allowed a free hand

to influence what will supposedly be a "UN supervised and controlled" transitional period to elect a constitutional assembly.

The plans specify that South African police will "assist" UNTAG in patrolling a proposed "demilitarised zone" (DMZ) fifty kilometres either side of the 850 mile northern Namibian border. SWAPO forces, it is proposed, will have to group in specific bases in Angola and Zambia and will not be allowed to leave them unless they are unarmed and have definite "logistical" reasons.

There is no provision for UNTAG stopping South African air attacks against publicly known and vulnerable SWAPO bases in the neighbouring states — the huge Rooikop air base in the Walvis Bay enclave in Namibia will remain intact and unmonitored.

SWAPO rejected these plans after UN talks in Geneva several weeks ago. The plans were drawn up in two weeks of talks bet-

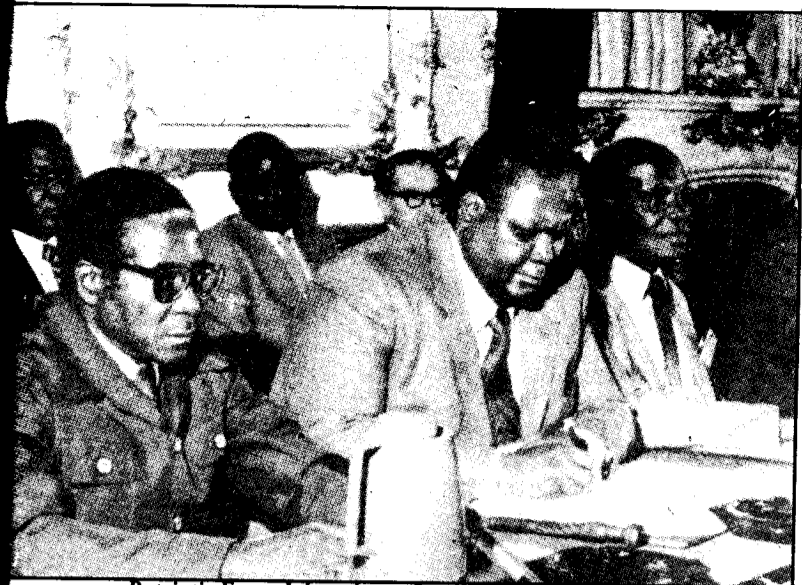
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LA

Meanwhile the most terr are taking law covers 80 ulation. Thou are in "dete outside the (2,700 peop children, w reported to arrested in the 26th June township, our ital, Windhoel The enti leadership ir is being he in detention ations with lawyers, coi



A miner at the US-owned Tsumbe mine in Namibia



Patriotic Front delegation at Lancaster House — under pressure

hold the con- first place, also ment quickly. ere is seeking tern aid and ined a promise billion dollars m headed by e US for a five- turn Dar es e most import- Indian Ocean. ere is willing ababwe. que, threats by ernments to try of aid until the regime knuckles under have made the government press the Patriotic Front to come to an agreement. Most of the Front's armed forces rely on bases in Mozambique and on support from the Mozambique government.

All these pressures are forcing the Patriotic Front leaders to settle, despite the feelings of its rank and file soldiers. But if the Front are victorious in an election, there may well be a coup against them by pro-Smith/ Muzorewa forces backed by South Africa.

If they lose the election because of biased electoral arrangements, intimidation or fraud, the guerilla campaign will probably be renewed.

So a settlement at Lancaster House does not necessarily mean a settlement in Zimbabwe. But it will, at the very least, mean a considerable demobilisation and dis-orientation for the Nationalist fighting forces.

## BRITAIN PROPS NAMIBIA'S COLONY

South African visitors. several major strikes at the lucrative multi-nationally owned mines have been brutally suppressed and indiscriminate South African army and police killings and torture of villagers are reported from the northern war zones.

At the US-owned Tsumeb copper mine, the South African army surrounded the workers' compound after hearing of a SWAPO meeting, and opened fire, killing four and wounding several others. At the British-owned RTZ uranium mine, the biggest in the world and the major source of British Nuclear Fuels uranium supplies (Tony Benn signed the contract in 1976, contrary to 1974 Labour Party Conference decisions!), the workers went on strike in December only to be all sacked and replaced by an entirely new workforce some weeks later.

Lord Carrington and "Her Majesty" are two important shareholders in RTZ. In fact, British companies are the major capitalist enterprises in Namibia if



one takes account of the fact that British and South African capital are often inextricably intertwined: BP, Shell, Barclays, Standard Chartered, Norwich Union, British Oxygen, and Leyland are all household names in Namibia, where profit levels are higher, wages lower, unemployment higher and prices higher even than in South Africa.

### CAMP

The most horrific incidents of torture are reported at a concentration camp near Mariental in the south. Two people released from the camp have testified that nearly 150 SWAPO detainees, captured after a South African raid on a camp in Angola last year, have had limbs severed, or eyes and ears removed, or have scar and burn marks all over their bodies. SWAPO's calls for an international team of lawyers to investigate this and other incidents have gone unheeded. Sir James Murray and the Contact Group admitted to not having attempted to investigate these incidents.

But the welfare of the Namibian people is, of course, the last thing that they are concerned about, as they wheel and deal to protect imperialist interests.

Films, books, pamphlets and copies of the bulletin 'Action on Namibia', from: Namibia Support Committee, 188 North Gower Street, London NW1. (388 5539). Details are also available on the Campaign to Stop the Namibian Uranium Contract, for which trade union support is particularly wanted.

Mass picket (6pm to 7pm) and SWAPO public meeting (7.30pm): Stop British and Western Government Pro-South Africa deals on Namibia.

Picket outside South Africa House, Trafalgar Square; meeting in the National Liberal Club, 1 Whitehall Place.

Organised by the Namibia Support Committee.

by  
Bas Hardy

SINCE its foundation the Republic of Bolivia has endured almost as many changes of government as seasons. Somebody keeping a score made Alberto Natusch's seizure of power on November 1st last the 201st military coup in 154 years.

After 16 days in the Presidential Palace, Colonel Natusch quit.

The fact that Bolivia once changed presidents three times in 24 hours leaves this 16-day rule far from a record low.

But the chronic instability of political life in Bolivia is nothing comic. More than 500 people — mostly trade unionists — died opposing the Natusch putsch, and his resignation will not end the political violence that has plagued the country for decades.

### Control

Last month's events are a passing episode in the long struggle of the Bolivian people to gain control of their country. They are also a product of the failure of the nationalist revolution of 1952 to move in a thoroughgoing anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist direction.

Socialists have talked about the possibility of the Nicaraguan revolution developing along Cuban lines. It is also possible that it might go the way of Bolivia.

Bolivia never really became a nation until 1952. Before then it was ruled by an oligarchy of landowners and tin mine owners. (About 80% of the country's exports are tin.) The Indians — most of the population — lived outside the money economy in conditions of serfdom comparable to the dark ages in Europe, only worse.

The development of the mining industry brought with it the growth of the middle and working classes. Both groups found a major expression in the National Revolutionary Movement (NMR) led by Victor Paz Estenssoro.

The catastrophic Chaco war (1932-3) and the decline in markets for Bolivian tin

## Right-wing coup in Bolivia fails

# A SECOND CHANCE FOR REVOLUTION

ie, it at no stage envisaged a break with imperialism and refused to countenance economic assistance from the Soviet Union and other states which had broken in one way or another from the international capitalist economy.

Because the MNR had not nationalised US assets (the foreign capital in Bolivia was British) the US government did not react to the new regime in Bolivia in the same way as in Guatemala and Cuba. The US government decided to subvert the regime from within.

Paz Estenssoro looked to the US for massive economic aid to restructure the country in the aftermath of military confrontations during the revolution, the regime being in a similar position in this respect to the Sandinist leadership in Nicaragua today.

The USA poured in aid, spending more per capital in Bolivia in the 1950s than in any other country. However, in return the US demanded that Estenssoro adopt an economic stabilisation programme for rationalising the Bolivian mines. This eventually led to conflict within the MNR and to its virtual dissolution as a political movement.

Paz Estenssoro was able to stave off the conflict for eight years, and in 1960 co-opted Juan Lechin, the formerly Trotskyist-leaning miners' leader, into the government by making him vice president. But attempts to use Lechin's standing as union leader to force through rationalisation in Comibol (the state run mining corporat-

While Paz Estenssoro was attacking the working class base of that regime with economic austerity measures the US government was quietly regenerating the Bolivian army. By 1964 it was a 20,000-strong, streamlined force — the best trained and equipped in Latin America for the task of internal repression.

After Lechin's split from the MNR, Paz Estenssoro chose General Barrientos as his running mate for the 1964 presidential elections. This decision, together with the widespread belief that the 1964 elections would be conducted on a fraudulent basis and with heavy demagogic manipulation of the peasant vote, produced a wave of indignation from the working class. Although Paz Estenssoro was returned unopposed the COB refused to accept his legitimacy.

### Army

Barrientos seized this opportunity to clear the MNR from government once and for all.

Victor Paz Estenssoro presided over the re-establishment of the bourgeois state in Bolivia but the armed forces never forgave him for assuming titular leadership of the popular movement which had pulverised the army of the possessing classes. The Barrientos coup of 1965 restored military pride and formed the mould for Bolivian politics from then until now.

In May and again in September 1965 the army



Natusch, 16-day wonder

disagreements in its ranks to take precedence over its existence as an institution guaranteeing preservation of the status quo.

The November 1st coup by two-week wonder Alberto Natusch is only comprehensible if the psychology of the Bolivian military is borne in mind. Natusch and his followers were worried about his predecessor, president Guevara Arze, not because he was radical (far from it) but because he was creating a democratic opening for the working class which would endanger the military. The only other opening for the working class (in the 1970-71 period under General Torres) brought the unions and peasant organisations into open military confrontation with the existing order.

Bourgeois rule in Bolivia exists virtually on bayonets alone. The armed forces are not so much the last line of defence as the only significant one. This expresses the weakness, rather than the strength, of the ruling class.

### Victory

Natusch has moved his belongings out of the presidential palace and will fade into political obscurity because the people of Bolivia are reasserting themselves and stating that they are not prepared to see total military rule over their country in perpetuity. Sections of the military realise this: Natusch only quit after a meeting of the military high command in order to preserve unity in the armed forces.

His ouster is a small but significant victory for the Bolivian working class, which has still to recuperate its strength in the aftermath of serious defeats. A policy to avoid mistakes like those made by revolutionary socialists in the 1952-64 period will aid this process.

A repeat of the Bolivian experience in Nicaragua, however, could reverberate through South America to demoralise and discourage the Bolivian working class and reverse the forward surge encouraged by the victory over Somoza in Nicaragua. And in Nicaragua itself such a repeat experience, with whatever local variations, would mean not just a failure to advance along the lines of Cuba, but a future plagued with the likes of Estenssoro, Torres, Banzer, Barrientos, Guevara Arze and Natusch.



500 died in the attempt to stop Natusch's short-lived coup

led to profound popular discontent with the oligarchic set up. After frequent attempts to repress the MNR the old order was overthrown in 1952.

The MNR government based itself initially on worker and peasant militias. It enacted a number of very radical measures in its first two years. These included the creation of the Bolivian Workers' Confederation (COB) and the nationalisation of all mines and a thoroughgoing land reform. It gave universal suffrage, including the illiterate peasants and women (in advance of Switzerland!).

But although Paz Estenssoro's nationalist regime made serious attacks on the landlords and the bourgeois-

ion) failed when Lechin refused to countenance 5000 redundancies in the mines.

After that Paz Estenssoro decided to rely instead on support from the army.

In 1952 the Bolivian army was smashed as an institution. In 1969 when one Bolivian politician was asked what was the most important political party in the country, he replied without hesitation — 'the army'.

### Time

What had changed in the intervening years?

The US government and the ruling class in Bolivia had been biding their time since 1952 to strike back and overthrow the MNR regime.

went into the mines and fought pitched battles with the miners. In those battles the miners lost because their leaders — including would-be Trotskyists — had failed to fight to carry the 1952 revolution to its logical conclusion — the total liquidation of bourgeois state power and a complete break with imperialism.

The Trotskyist POR (Revolutionary Workers' Party) led by Guillermo Lora and Hugo Gonzales Moscoso — an influential workers' party but never a mass party despite subsequent misconceptions on this point — played second fiddle to Lechin throughout the MNR regime.

When the MNR government fell the army pledged itself never to allow political

# LIBERATION STRUGGLE

Since 1973 the confidence and militancy of the black working class of South Africa has grown dramatically, while the other bastions of white supremacy in Southern Africa — Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia — have fallen or are clearly on the defensive. The strength and weight of the South African black working class indicates that the coming revolution in South Africa can take a clearly working-class character, and its repercussions can profoundly affect the whole of Africa. The apartheid regime, under the leadership of the new prime minister, P W Botha, is desperately manoeuvring to forestall revolution. But what of the necessary political leadership which the struggle against South African capitalism and its apartheid state will require? In this article, ROBERT DUPONT surveys, and finds wanting, the record of the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress.

THE RAPIDLY growing power of African unions has been a crucial feature of the upsurge in working class militancy in South Africa. The mass strikes in Natal in 1973, involving over 100,000 African workers, provided the major spark for this development.

In 1976, the political general strike centring around Soweto involved at least 100,000 Africans. Since 1973, the number of Africans taking part in industrial disputes has never fallen below 30,000 a year; in the previous ten 'quiet' years, the number never went above 10,000.

The struggles that have taken off from the Natal strikes have shattered the myth of apartheid's omnipotence as a weapon against the working class and of the impotence of the workers under the yoke of apartheid repression.

Since 1973, about 26 African unions, with a membership of well over 100,000 workers, and organised support far beyond that figure, have been established. This marks a major revival from the period following the Sharpeville massacre (1960), in which African unions were, with one or two exceptions, either repressed out of existence, driven underground with little organisational base, or brought under the dominance of state controls and a bureaucratic leadership.

The growth of trade unions and industrial militancy reflects the objective strengthening of the African proletariat, as the expansion of South African capital (especially in industry) in the 1960s, fuelled by foreign investment and the rising price of gold, produced, in addition to vast profits and the misery of the dispossessed Africans, its own potential grave-diggers in the African working class. On the subjective side, the industrial upsurge reflects the striving of African workers to establish their own organisations and their own leadership, freed from dependence on the white and coloured aristocracy of labour and on the black petty bourgeoisie.

This has meant a search by workers for independence from the dead hand of the Communist Party and of petty bourgeois nationalist movements.

The major union federation organising African workers today is FOSATU (the Federation of South African Trade Unions), which originated as TUACC in 1973 and has organised under its present title since 1978. FOSATU places great emphasis on rank and file organisation of workers round issues of immediate concern to them. It proclaims itself independent from any political alignment and particularly from the Communist Party and associated movements such as the African National Congress. This 'non-political' stance is certainly a serious mistake; but FOSATU is not a right-wing organisation, it does represent a live workers' movement, and an examination of the CP's history shows good reason for FOSATU's wariness. (A future article will examine the potential and the nature of FOSATU).

The South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), led by the South African CP, is now certainly much weaker than FOSATU. Yet the ANC (within which the CP is influential) is the strongest organisation of the South African liberation movement. It has a substantial apparatus and well-established international links, especially with the black African states. Although there is controversy over the importance of the ANC's role in the Soweto events of 1976, its powerful influence on black activists in South Africa is not in doubt.

So why, since 1973, have militant black workers been turning away from the leadership of the CP? An examination of three important struggles — the African miners' strike of 1946, the mass strikes after the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, and the ANC's turn to armed struggle in 1961 — will show why.

The historic strength of the CP among the workers lay in the fact that it had been one of the principal carriers of the flag of non-racial unionism, when a combination of state legislation, Afrikaaner nationalism, and the protective racism of skilled white workers was consolidating deep racial divisions within the South African working class. In 1925 the CP took over a leading role in the South African Trade Union Congress (SATUC), which organised white and coloured workers on an industrial basis and African workers in 'parallel' unions (in order to evade legal problems: this was immediately after the 1924 Industrial Conciliation Act, which reinforced racial divisions by banning pass-bearing Africans from belonging to registered unions).

However, these unions came under tight bureaucratic control. And the CP was not quite alone in supporting non-

# HOW THE C.P. HAS MISLED THE BLACK WORKING CLASS

racial industrial unionism. Solly Sachs, a leftist who was expelled from the CP in 1931, was leader of the Garment Workers' Union, which opposed the racially discriminatory provisions and bureaucratic controls imposed by the Industrial Conciliation Act, and managed for some time to hold on to both its Afrikaaner women workers (often poor women coming straight from the farms) and its African and coloured members. It too attempted to by-pass the law by setting up a 'parallel' union for African workers.

Sachs' union displayed a much higher level of militancy than most SATUC unions, but it largely succumbed in the 1930s, the victim of police repression, of a strident campaign of Afrikaaner nationalism, and of its own isolation within the trade union movement. SATUC survived the period intact. Thus when the upsurge of African workers' industrial militancy came during World War 2, the CP solidly dominated the field of non-racial unionism.

The CP (in conjunction with the ANC, which at that time was a petty bourgeois movement with little or no links with the African working class) had also set up the African Mineworkers' Union. During World War 2, the militancy of the African mineworkers reached a fierce peak. Most of them were migrant labourers whose families had to be left behind on the Reserves. The rapid decline in the productive base of the Reserves led to mass starvation of the miners' families, while the wages of the miners themselves were eroded by inflation and were only half the average industrial African wage.

The rank and file miners sought substantial wage increases to ward off starvation, and wanted to strike immediately at the mineowners and the state while they were made vulnerable by the war.

During the war there were over 60 unofficial and illegal strikes.

The CP and ANC leadership, however, persistently suppressed these movements, putting the national war effort and the demands of 'legality' before the interests and survival of the workers. For Stalinism, the Second World War was not an imperialist robbers' war, but a war of democracy (the Allies) against fascism (the Axis powers) — and South Africa, despite everything, was on the side of democracy.

It was the spontaneous action of the workers which finally initiated the massive mineworkers' strike of 1946, forcing the CP and ANC leadership to back them half-heartedly and without preparation, two days after the strike began. J B Marks, the president of the African Mineworkers' Union, warned the strikers "emphatically" against the use of violence. Otherwise all he did was to call on the industrial unions in CNETU (Council of Non-European Trade Unions, a reformed version of SATUC) to support the miners, but they, without any prior mobilisation or preparation, were totally incapable of following this call through. The strike was defeated, terribly and bloodily. The last-minute call for a CNETU general strike was a debacle.

South African capitalism was and is based on its own forms of barbaric racism, on the slave-like conditions of migrant workers, on the suppression of democratic rights for the mass of African workers. Strong sympathy for Nazism was expressed within the ruling class, especially among Afrikaaners. But the CP's disastrous 'leadership' of the mineworkers shows what Stalin's words really meant when he dissolved the Comintern in 1943: the dissolution would, he said, "facilitate the organisation of the common onslaught of all freedom-loving nations against the common enemy".

So the CP sought a "common onslaught" with the freedom-loving owners of the South African mines; with the freedom-loving state, whose police, it is estimated, killed 12 and wounded over 1200 strikers, and baton-charged the

miners as they staged a sit-down strike underground, driving them up "slope by slope, level by level" to the surface and back to their compounds; and with the freedom-loving courts who put on trial the entire executive of the CP and scores of officials from the ANC, CNETU, and other trade unions. This attempt seriously undermined the independent workers' movement for years afterwards.

The class organisation and mobilisation of the African proletariat, which peaked in 1945-6, soon declined. By 1950 66 African unions had become defunct.

In the wake of the defeat, a much firmer alliance was formed between the ANC and the CP, as the ANC turned from the patient and dignified expression of the grievances of an African elite to a strategy of mass action and passive resistance, on a programme of democratic and nationalist demands. The CP and its worker-militants turned eagerly to this alliance.

In the mid-'50s, the African working class began to recover its momentum. SACTU was formed in 1955, at the initiative of the CP and the ANC, out of some of the remnants of CNETU. It soon gathered strength, on a basis of non-racial industrial unionism and the inseparability of economic and political struggle.

In practice, however, the alliance between the organised workers and their petty bourgeois allies in the ANC meant once again subordination of the workers' struggles to the limits of the democratic and nationalist programme of the petty bourgeoisie.

Programmatically, SACTU supported the Freedom Charter, adopted in 1955 by the Congress Alliance, of which the ANC was a key element. The Charter, despite its commitment to transfer the mines, banks and monopoly industry to "ownership of the people as a whole", is a non-socialist document which envisages a South Africa where "the people shall govern".

The ANC theorised the South African revolution as a struggle for national democracy, for national liberation of the oppressed African people and for full democratic rights for the black people of South Africa — through the 'democratisation' of South Africa, and not through the seizure of power by the working class. Until the turn to armed struggle in 1961, this 'democratisation' was envisaged as a gradual process of reform.

The 'election strike' of 1958 was an example. From the ranks of SACTU workers the call for a national strike was raised on the basis of demands for £1 a day minimum wage, shorter hours, trade union recognition, and an end to the pass laws (which bound workers to their jobs at the risk of expulsion). Their main slogan was "Asinamali, sifunamali" — we have no money, we want money.

The response of the SACTU leadership and of the CP was to channel this militancy into mass action for the coming elections on behalf of the United Party — the official opposition party, solidly bourgeois, solidly white-supremacist, differing from the ruling Nationalists only in secondary matters arising from the fact that the UP drew support more from the English-speaking whites while the Nationalists were primarily based on the Afrikaaners. The stay-at-home was scheduled for election day, with the slogan 'Nats must go'. The CP's leading underground theorist, Michael Harmel, called on the United Party to "meet the people's leaders" and to recognise "the justice of their demands", the necessity of a "democratic revolution", and the "anachronism" of the "traditional type of despotism".

The General Election became the focus of the campaign; demands for £1 a day and the abolition of pass laws were submerged. Not surprisingly, the response of the workers was poor, despite their industrial militancy, though in areas where there was local organisation based around demands for higher wages (such as the Durban docks), mass action

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# IN SOUTH AFRICA

did effectively take place.

After one day, Oliver Tambo, secretary of the ANC, called off the stay-at-home, declaring that "the purpose of the protest had been achieved" and that "the country was engaged in the serious question of choosing a government".

The ruling Nationalist Party increased their majority, the United Party did not shift an inch, Luthuli (the head of the ANC) called on the Nationalists to "mend their ways", and they responded by increasing their armoury of repressive legislation.

Although SACTU had pushed, against the ANC leadership, in favour of economic strikes, it was dragged, with CP backing, into impotent protest campaigns.

The next wave of working class mobilisation came in 1960 in the aftermath of the police massacre of Africans protesting against the pass laws at Sharpeville and elsewhere. In Cape Town, for example, strikes spread in the following weeks from one factory to the next, until practically the whole of the city's docks and industries was crippled. The workers, often armed with sticks and other weapons, took to the streets in huge numbers.

This momentum towards a general strike was diverted by the liberal wing of the ANC (Chief Luthuli) into a call for a day of "solemn mourning" for the dead. He stressed that this was not to be a strike, and asked the government to "allow" African leaders to meet, lest a "further deterioration in race relations" should occur. The nationalist, Christian ethics of Luthuli were not capable of taking the largely spontaneous actions of the workers — pass-burning, strikes and demonstrations — forward. But neither were the CP or SACTU; they supported the day of mourning.

The workers, however, pursued the struggle way beyond the plans of their leaders. The stay-at-home spread over the whole country. In Cape Town alone, over 60,000 workers were on strike, and, despite the arrest of 12,000 people by the police, something like 30,000 workers marched to the city centre — at that time, a maze of narrow streets — and for a short time it was practically in their hands.

The inexperience of their student leader, Philip Kgosana, defused the action, when he instructed the workers to go home in return for the promise of an interview with the Justice Minister and an assurance that the police would stop using force. He was arrested a few hours later.

It was inevitable that the strike would be broken; it was ill-prepared, and the ANC, the CP and SACTU gave no adequate leadership. They were incapable of raising the perspective of seizing political power, rather than just demanding concessions.

A week later, the leaders of the ANC were in gaol, the workers were exhausted and demoralised in the face of an onslaught of police repression, and the pass-burning demonstrations had now turned into queues for reference books. At this point of downturn, the ANC called hopelessly for a general strike, a call the workers were by now incapable of meeting.

The political leadership of the CP and ANC, and their organ of working-class organisation, SACTU, had proved incapable of building on the spontaneous upsurge in class consciousness and militancy, and of leading it forward to a perspective based on the independent power of the workers, that is, towards a general strike and towards bolder and bolder demands based on the logic of the workers' struggle. A revolutionary orientation would start out with democratic demands, but with democratic demands linked to a revolutionary perspective of overthrowing the white racist regime, a regime organically incapable of serious democratic reforms; and it would see democratic demands as only the first stage in the workers' mobilisation, understanding that the development of that mobilisation towards socialist demands and towards workers' power would be necessary to really win the democratic demands. In short, the revolutionary perspective would be the one outlined by Trotsky: "On the basis of the revolutionary democratic programme, it is necessary to oppose the workers to the 'national' bourgeoisie. Then, at a certain stage in the mobilisation of the masses under the slogans of revolutionary democracy, soviets can and should arise... Sooner or later, the soviets should overthrow bourgeois democracy".

In fact, such an orientation was passively but systematically blocked by the CP/ANC leadership, at the cost of a terrible hammering for the working class as the forces of repression duly reacted.

In the official histories, the turn to armed struggle after Sharpeville appears as the major step in the development of a revolutionary stance by the liberation movement, as it finally broke the bounds of legalism and non-violent protest.

After Sharpeville the ANC as well as the CP had been driven underground, and many militants were in gaol. SACTU, though not formally banned, faced intense repression. As a leading ANC theorist, Ben Turok, put it:

"The shootings at Sharpeville marked a turning point... [They] broke the belief that a non-violent solution was possible... and they destroyed any hope that the legal system could be used to halt police repression... The foundation for the transfer from non-violence to armed struggle was being laid".

However, from the point of view of the working class, this marked the end of its forward movement, and the beginning of a period of weakness and defeat, not to be broken for a decade or more.

The CP took the initiative, calling for a sabotage campaign that was taken up by the ANC. Their conception was one of an escalating programme of sabotage which, through the force of its example, would draw the support of the masses, culminating finally in the general strike. The Pondo uprising, a violent rural movement, nourished the hope that something like the Cuban or Vietnamese 'model' could be applied in South Africa.

In the conditions of South Africa, guerilla and armed struggle is a necessary front of revolutionary action. The creation of armed detachments is vital if the regime is to be prevented from prevailing simply through monopoly of armed force. But the ANC's turn to armed struggle was

counterposed to, not linked with and subordinated to, the struggle of the black industrial workers. In typical Stalinist bureaucratic fashion, armed struggle was proclaimed as the only valid form of struggle.

The actual effect was to isolate the vanguard from the masses, to foster a passive, waiting attitude on the part of the working class. The power of sabotage to penetrate the state's fast-growing armoury of repression was vastly overestimated: the 90-day act led to a new wave of detentions, and the use of torture provided the state with information on resistance plans which led to the arrest of most of the experienced SACTU and ANC leaders.

By 1964, Umkhonto We Sizwe, the military arm of the ANC, had been routed by the political police. They had committed 193 acts of sabotage in this period, causing damage estimated at under £100,000. Since then, armed actions have continued in a very limited and sporadic way. The brave fighters of Umkhonto We Sizwe deserve our solidarity in their battles against the apartheid state, whatever our criticisms of their leaders. But the ANC's armed struggle

**A victorious revolution is unthinkable without the awakening of the native masses. In its turn, that will give them what they are so lacking today — confidence in their strength, a heightened personal consciousness, a cultural growth.**

**Under these conditions, the South African republic will emerge first of all as a 'black' republic; this does not exclude, of course, either full equality for the whites or brotherly relations between the two races — depending mainly on the conduct of the whites. But it is entirely obvious that the predominant majority of the population, liberated from slavish dependence, will put a certain imprint on the state.**

**Insofar as a victorious revolution will radically change the relation not only between the classes but also between the races and will assure to the blacks that place in the state that corresponds to their numbers, thus far will the social revolution in South Africa also have a national character.**

**We have not the slightest reason to close our eyes to this side of the question or to diminish its significance. On the contrary, the proletarian party should in words and in deeds openly and boldly take the solution of the national [racial] problem in its hands.**

**Nevertheless, the proletarian party can and must solve the national problem by its own methods.**

**The historical weapon of national liberation can be only the class struggle. The Comintern, beginning in 1924, transformed the programme of national liberation of colonial people into an empty democratic abstraction that is elevated above the reality of class relations. In the struggle against national oppression, different classes liberate themselves [temporarily] from material interests and become simple 'anti-imperialist' forces.**

**In order that these spiritual 'forces' bravely fulfill the task assigned to them by the Comintern, they are promised, as a reward, a spiritual 'national-democratic' state...**

LEON TROTSKY,

On the South African Theses, 1935.

Now obviously made no sense according to its original rationale: to rapidly provoke a revolutionary crisis. It made sense only as an effort to show, for the benefit of the ANC's diplomatic connections, that the ANC has a viable armed apparatus.

Since the 1960s, with the rise of independent black African states and the increasing isolation in Africa of South Africa, it has become possible for the ANC to see the road to success in terms of maintaining a political and military apparatus (often through great heroism on the part of its militants), establishing diplomatic links, and trying to bring about the collapse of the apartheid state through international pressure. Whatever the chances of success for this strategy in its own terms, it clearly leaves no room for the leading role of black working-class self-mobilisation and self-organisation.

After 1961, the turn to armed struggle hived off the best worker militants. Instead of organising workers at the point

of production, they were sent away from the factories for external military training. They ended up either in exile or, on their return to South Africa, in the hands of the police — and the workers ended up destitute of leadership or organisation.

It was SACTU's specific role to act as a feeder for this operation. This was the substance of the politics with which it sought to link its economic and trade union demands, and this was the tragedy behind the heroism of its militants.

While it is true that the state can only be overthrown by armed struggle, this struggle cannot be successfully conducted in isolation from the mass of the people; and the arming of the people in heavily-proletarianised South Africa requires the organisation of the working class. And for success in the armed struggle, the forces of reaction must be in disarray; that can only be achieved through the organisation of the working class and its mobilisation for industrial action and particularly for fighting mass strikes.

But after a few years of armed struggle, many of the most capable and militant activists of the ANC, the CP and SACTU were in exile, in prison, or dead. The political work of the ANC inside the country was virtually destroyed, after it had devoted its energies to gathering financial support for Umkhonto We Sizwe; and the trade union organisations sank to their lowest ebb for years. By 1968 the organised sections of the black working class numbered only about 8,000, the lowest figure for 40 years, and only 56 strikes were officially reported. Meanwhile South African capitalism enjoyed a period of tremendous expansion and foreign support.

The extent to which the CP failed to recognise or to attempt to rectify this situation can be seen from the major planks of its political programme in this period. It continued to believe, against all the evidence, that a "revolutionary situation" was present in South Africa in the '60s. It founded this belief on two assertions: the disillusionment of the masses with constitutional forms of struggle, and their readiness to respond to a call for violent struggle.

The evidence actually pointed to the contrary: demoralisation, disorganisation, disillusion with the armed struggle and scant eagerness to respond to the calls made by their leadership (witness, for instance, the failure of the call for mass protest made by the ANC in 1961 in favour of a 'National Convention' — a completely irrelevant demand — and then the failure of their call for a three-day strike in favour of a 'democratic' change of government).

The CP solved the discrepancy between their position and reality by the idea that *the armed struggle itself could actually create a revolutionary situation*, where none previously existed. The ANC stated, in 1969:

"Does this mean that before an actual beginning can be made by the armed challenge we have to wait for the evolution of a deep crisis in the enemy camp...? Certainly not! We believe that... the actual beginning of armed struggle or guerilla warfare can be made and having begun can steadily develop conditions for the future all-out war which will eventually lead to the conquest of power".

In the politics of protest dominant in the '50s, the working class was seen not as a vanguard, but as a mass resource used by the leadership to mount pressure for political concessions. In the period of armed struggle, the working class was basically left to fend for itself, as its leadership moved into exile or isolation. The tasks of building up working-class organisation, and of mobilising for fighting strikes, were put in the background.

This bureaucratic strategy has been responsible for the decline of SACTU's base among the African workers of South Africa. By its own admission, SACTU now possesses — with one or two exceptions — almost no organisational base inside South Africa. Even the African Food and Canning union, with its long history of CP leadership, appears to be drawing closer to FOSATU and formulating joint policies with it.

SACTU operates largely as an exile organisation, located in London, where it produces the paper *Workers' Unity*. Its lack of entrenchment in South Africa is shown clearly by the abstract character of the paper's articles.

SACTU was driven underground under the weight of extremely severe repression, but, in spite of courageous work by individual militants, there is little evidence to suggest that its underground network has much bodily existence, and it appears to have played very little part in the growth of trade union organisation since 1973.

Its main impact has been a propagandist one through the newspaper: but its formally correct policy of combining economic and political struggles has stayed at an abstract level, avoiding the question of the *substance* of the politics.

SACTU's position has an obvious and immediate attraction for militants who wish to avoid the reformist pitfalls of non-political, economic trade unionism; it has indeed won over in the last few years the best elements of the solidarity movement here, and it has led many to a non-committal or even hostile stance towards the 'overground' unions, as inherently reformist and incapable of leading African workers forward in the overall struggle against apartheid. But the course of the class struggle and the increasing marginality of SACTU to it have sharply demonstrated that the actual content of SACTU's politics, subordinated predominantly to the CP, has not offered an independent way forward for the South African working class. Quite the contrary: it has subordinated the interests of the workers to those of the petty bourgeoisie. A failure to organise workers at the point of production around specifically working class issues, and subordination of the immediate struggles of workers to the national campaigns of the ANC and the CP, have contributed to SACTU's decline, as they contributed to the decline of workers' movements in the 1960s.

Militant African workers in the current struggles are beginning to grasp the lessons. So must activists in this country engaged in solidarity work.

# The Bolsheviks Stalin could not break

In the story of the heroic struggle of the Trotskyists in the 1930s against Stalinist repression, the most heroic chapter is that of the Trotskyists in Russia. From 1928 they had to operate in illegality. The conditions of illegality were soon far more severe than those faced by the Bolsheviks in Czarist Russia, and after about 1933 the Trotskyists no longer had what the Bolsheviks under Czarism had always had, more or less regular contact with publications and a political centre outside Russia. They had to fight on in a 'hell-black night' of repression. Yet Stalin finally managed to quell the Trotskyists only by physically wiping them out with machine-guns.

The Leon Trotsky Institute in France has recently — in preparation for the opening in 1980 of the Trotsky archives in Harvard University — compiled a dossier of the material available on the Russian Trotskyists. This article summarising that dossier is translated from the weekly paper *Informations Ouvrières*.

THE 'ILLEGAL' history of the Russian section began in December 1927, at the 15th Congress of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks), with the expulsion of the Unified Opposition and the capitulation of Zinoviev and Kamenev (\*). It coincided with the beginning of mass repression against the Opposition. The sentences to prison and exile, affecting hundreds of militants at a time, had the aim of smashing the Opposition by depriving it of its cadres. In vain. At the beginning of 1929, in clandestinity, the Opposition counted about 8,000 members, twice as many as in 1927, when it was semi-legal in the party.

The first sector of the Russian section, an illegal and clandestine one, was formed by the militants who were spared by the repression because they were too well known or not well known enough. Many found protection in the working class, which was trying to resist the rise of the bureaucracy. Thus at Bogorodarsk, the workers of the Glukhov factory hid one of their number, the Oppositionist Stukolkhin, among themselves for several days, and managed to get him out of town despite the GPU.

The bulk of the militants were concentrated in the second sector, probably the most important one: the 'legal' sector of the deportees' colonies and, soon, of the prisons — the famous 'isolators' — where the Oppositionists openly defended their ideas. On his arrival in 1930 at the isolator of Verkhne-Uralsk, the Croatian communist Ciliga found "a real university of the political and social sciences", "the only independent university in the USSR".

Some of the documents produced by the deportees were published at the time in the *Bulletin of the Opposition*. We can mention the *Critique of the Draft Programme of the Communist International*, written by Trotsky at Alma Ata, and Rakovsky's letter to Valentinov known under the title *The Professional Dangers of Power*. Others remained secret, except for the deportees: *A Centrist Agrarian Policy*, by Sosnovsky, works by Smilga and Preobrazhensky, *The Conquests of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat in Year Eleven of the Revolution*, by Rakovsky, *The Laws of the Socialist Dictatorship* by Solntsev, etc.

Without doubt there has rarely been in the history of Marxism a more fruitful and creative period, and those titles only reflect an infinitesimal portion of the work of the deportees, confronting the theoretical problems posed by the rapid degeneration of the State and the party.

This meant, at the same time, organised activity: texts circulated expressing a collective position. There was a sort of referendum procedure in the colonies and prisons, with democracy being exercised through signatures on opposing texts, for example one of Radek's got half a dozen as against several hundred for Trotsky's. At the cost of unprecedented difficulties, relations were maintained, at least until 1933, between the colonies and the isolators of the USSR, the few militants who remained at liberty, and, above all, with abroad, first with Prinkipo and then, as from 1931, with Berlin, where Leon Sedov and the Opposition leaders who published the *Bulletin* were established. They managed to construct a network into the USSR that only the Nazi victory destroyed.

The break between Stalin and Bukharin in 1929 led to a very serious crisis in the ranks of the Left Opposition. Trotsky in exile, and Rakovsky and others in the USSR, saw the 'Stalinist turn' as a bureaucratic zigzag, a leap into

\* Zinoviev and Kamenev, who formed a 'troika' in 1923 with Stalin against Trotsky, later came closer to Trotsky and 1926 they formed the United Opposition.

the dark in order to get out of the impasse resulting from the policy of concessions to the rich peasants and the capitalist forces. But some exiles, inspired by Radek, Preobrazhensky, and Smilga, argued that the Stalinist 'centre' should nevertheless be supported against Bukharin's 'right-wing'.

Stalin manoeuvred cleverly, 'negotiated' with Radek, and alternated promises and threats. On 13 July 1929, *Pravda* published a declaration of the 'three', countersigned by 400 deportees who renounced the ideas of the Left Opposition and approved the 'general line'. Worn out by decades of hard battles, ill-prepared maybe for the terrible conditions of repression, genuine old revolutionaries capitulated.

It was a heavy blow for the Opposition. From nearly 8,000 members at the beginning of 1929, it fell to a thousand. Those who rejected capitulation regrouped themselves in August 1929 around Rakovsky, Kosior, and Okudzhava, who managed to get 500 signatures to reaffirm the Opposition's fidelity to its ideas and its principles. The Opposition was then definitively tempered. Thereafter there were only individual capitulations. A new generation, which had come over to Bolshevism in the fire of the October Revolution, Trotsky's young co-workers during the civil war, took over from the old Bolsheviks. Now only death could break them. Stalin understood: with the execution of Blumkin in 1930, he drew a line of blood between the Opposition and the apparatus.

When he arrived at the Verkhne-Uralsk isolator, Ciliga found a prison with a majority of Trotskyists, led by a 'collective of Bolshevik-Leninists' whose members expressed themselves through two handwritten journals, *Pravda in prison* and the *Militant Bolshevik*, and were divided into three tendencies. The Trotskyists held proper meetings in the exercise sessions, with secretariat, agenda, and minutes. A 'post office' kept up, on behalf of all, internal and external relations, not only with the USSR but also with abroad. The Trotskyist deportees of Verkhne-Uralsk managed the feat of getting the *Bulletin of the Opposition* and pamphlets by Trotsky, until 1934 at least, for the detainees



STALIN, THE EXECUTIONER, ALONE REMAINS



From top:

1. Leading Oppositionists on their way to exile in 1928.
2. A demonstration by Left Opposition deportees in 1928, on the 11th anniversary of the October Revolution. The slogans on the banners are: 'Turn against the right, the kulak, the Nepman and the bureaucracy, not in words but in deeds', and 'Long live the dictatorship of the proletariat'.
3. Lenin's Central Committee of 1917. Apart from those who died early from natural causes, like Lenin himself, or Sverdlov, every single member was murdered on Stalin's orders or 'disappeared' — except Stalin himself.

were able to discuss what Trotsky said about the entry of Trotskyist militants into the SFIO (Socialist Party) in France.

The German catastrophe led to a furious discussion in the isolator, as elsewhere in the world, between those who were for founding the 4th International and those who thought that it was still necessary to maintain the old orientation of reform of the Communist International (†). The arrival of the *Bulletin* convinced them all to become fighters, no longer of the Opposition, but of the Fourth International. The split was ended by the fusion of the two groups and their decision to put out *Pravda in prison* jointly.

This resistance, broken only by death, allowed the membership of the Opposition to rise again, doubtless to some thousands, in the course of the years 1930-33. The majority were in the prisons and then in the recently opened camps. The Trotskyists were not content to maintain their convictions and their organisation until death. They fought. In 1931, the detainees celebrated May 1st and the anniversary of the October insurrection with portraits of Trotsky and banners bearing their slogans.

Starting in 1931, the most severe hunger strikes took place at Verkhne-Uralsk. The first was in April 1931, the second in May 1933, and the third in December, against the renewal without justification of expired sentences.

An Armenian communist tells us: "Then they began to force-feed us. It was an unforgettable spectacle. There were real battles between the strikers and the guards. Naturally, the strikers were beaten. Exhausted, we were forced with appropriate pumps. The pain was indescribable... On the 15th day of the strike, our strike committee decided to end the strike at midday, because many of the strikers were trying to commit suicide... The decision of the strike committee was unanimously approved by all the comrades".

In Moscow, during the years 1930-33, discontent was general, Stalin's unpopularity grew, and so did the prestige of the Opposition. Certainly it was in those years that Stalin came to the conclusion that it was necessary to proceed to the extermination of the cadres of the whole generation linked to the October victory, as the only way to wipe out once and for all the constantly reviving Trotskyist influence, which was shown for example by the fact that the old 'capitulator' I N Smirnov agreed to have political discussions with Leon Sedov and sent him bits of information for the *Bulletin*. Stalin set about repression on an unprecedented scale. The list of deaths grew longer. The calvary of the survivors continued. In 1934, the two most respected old veterans of the Opposition, Rakovsky and Sosnovsky, who had been savagely persecuted for years, finally collapsed and capitulated. With Rakovsky, Trotsky's last link with the leaders of October disappeared.

The Nazis' victory in Germany, Hitler's coming to power, gave the signal for the counter-revolutionary offensive which was to lead the world to the Second World War. They also meant the destruction of the communication network with the USSR carefully built up by Sedov; from then on, there was only occasional news from the Soviet Union.

Stalin struck ferociously. There were not only Trotskyists shut up in Verkhne-Uralsk, but also many who had been at the Kremlin in the '30s, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Shliapnikov, and Smilga for example. In the prisons and the torture chambers, the Oppositionists rubbed shoulders with the erstwhile capitulators and the Stalinists of yesteryear. At the Moscow trials, the only old Oppositionists who appeared and approved the confessions had capitulated long before. None of the Bolshevik-Leninists who had kept going during years in the isolator, from one extension of sentence to another, collaborated, not even under torture and the worst blackmail.

To stop the surviving Trotskyists extending their influence on the 'people of the camps' and the hundreds of thousands of youth sent to Siberia, they were grouped together and isolated. There were doubtless several thousand thus brought together at Vorkhuta, a jail beyond the polar circle, at the end of 1936, when they organised meetings and demonstrations against the Moscow trials while proclaiming their unshakeable will to defend the USSR and the conquests of October. On 27th October 1936, under the leadership of a strike committee made up of four Trotskyists, they began a hunger strike against repression which lasted 132 days.

The Leon Trotsky Institute's dossier closes with various accounts of the liquidation by machine-gun of the Trotskyists gathered at Vorkhuta in the 1937-8. Let us take Maria Joffe's remark on her comrade and friend Andrei Konstantinov, 'Kostia', who calmly remained himself, a Bolshevik, honest and fearless, until his assassination in 1943. All we know of him was that he was one of the leaders of the clandestine Bolshevik-Leninists. "Kostia's life was united with his objective. He would never abandon it and would never give in to the temptation of exchanging real living thought and a real sense of life for fakes and empty, senseless slogans".

'Kostia', the Bolshevik-Leninist militant about whom we know almost nothing, had the same tempering as those who founded the Bolshevik party (which he himself joined in 1916). It was men of that character who held aloft the banner of the Fourth International.

† IO is in error here: the decision of the Trotskyist movement in 1933 was not to found the Fourth International, but to start a struggle to regroup forces for a Fourth International. The Fourth International was not formally founded until 1938.

# Where profits come from

This article is the second of a series of four in the Magazine Section, giving a brief introduction to some of the ideas of Marxism and their importance for the struggle for socialism. It summarises Marx's argument that profits come from the unpaid labour of the working class — and that the existence of that unpaid labour is not in contradiction with capitalist principles of 'fair exchange', but actually flows from those principles.

The two articles yet to come will deal with Commodities and Money and with why capitalism is doomed.

All the quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from Marx or Engels.

IN EARLIER economic systems all, or a large part of, production is directly oriented towards consumption. The peasant, for example, produces his own food, makes his own clothes, etc., and his landlord confiscates the surplus product from the peasants largely in the form of goods (food, etc.) and labour services which are directly consumed.

But very early on, too, a certain fraction of production is oriented to exchange and not to immediate consumption. Some animals are bred, some tools are made, and some clothes are woven, not to be used by the producer or his overlord, but to be bartered or sold.

Capitalism is the stage where production for exchange dominates. In capitalist society, most goods are commodities — that is, they are bought and sold, before being consumed (\*) — and in particular labour power is also a commodity.

In most pre-capitalist societies, the workers are personally subordinate to some overlord (slaveowner, oriental despot, feudal lord, etc.) They have to work all or part of their time for that overlord, or give part of their produce to him, without receiving anything in return (except his supposed protection). This is usually justified by religious ideas of one sort or another.

In capitalist society, the worker is not tied to any overlord. True, he works for a capitalist. But the capitalist has to pay him wages. And this exchange — wages for labour-power — is apparently quite free and equal, just as free and equal as any exchange between buyer and seller.

*"The wage form... extinguishes every trace of the division of the working day into necessary labour and surplus labour, into paid and unpaid labour. All labour appears as paid labour. [In contrast] in the corvée [feudal forced labour] the labour of the worker for himself, and his compulsory labour for his lord, differ in space and time in the clearest possible way. In slave-labour... all the slave's labour appears as unpaid labour"*

Yet despite the fact that economic relations appear free and equal, and despite the fact that all labour appears to be paid for, the results are very unequal. Enormous wealth — far greater than the feudal lords ever dreamt of — is concentrated in the hands of the small capitalist class, while the working class remains relatively poor. As the American trade unionists' song put it: "We stand outcast and starving amidst the wonders we have made".

Why? The earliest working class militants generally thought that the problem arose from the capitalists cheating the workers. They pointed out that all wealth was created by labour (with the help of nature) and demanded that the worker should receive the full amount of the wealth s/he created, "the undiminished proceeds of labour".

This was a utopian idea — for if somehow it were carried out, then there would be nothing left for expanding the means of production, for reserve funds in case of accidents, and for provision for those unable to work. In a way it was reactionary, since really it demanded that capitalist society should be run according to the standards of the pre-capitalist individual craft worker.

But this crude idea played a progressive role in arousing the workers against the capitalists. And the bourgeoisie had no answer to it.

All the bourgeois economists of that time admitted that value was determined by labour time. If 20 yards of linen

could be exchanged for two ounces of gold, or one coat, or a bible or a bottle of whisky, the common element was not that they were 'equally useful' (how do you measure that?), but that they embodied an equal amount of labour time.

The early socialists complained that if each day a worker's labour produced 20 yards of linen, then the worker's wages should be the equivalent of 20 yards of linen — and not just 10 yards or so, as they actually were. The bourgeois economists protested that the worker had been paid the fair market rate — and in any case profits were necessary to maintain production.

When harder pressed, they worked out some other excuses, which still go round. In *Capital*, Marx tears these excuses apart.

*"Our capitalist... exclaims: 'Oh! But I advanced my money for the express purpose of making more money'. The way to Hell is paved with good intentions, and he might just as easily have intended to make money, without producing at all..."*

*"[Then] he tries persuasion. 'Consider my abstinence; I might have played ducks and drakes with the [money]; but instead of that I consumed it productively, and made yarn with it'. Very well, and by way of reward he is now in possession of good yarn instead of a bad conscience..."*

Then the capitalist points to the service he has provided by supplying the workers with the means of production.

*"Well, but has not the labourer rendered him the equivalent service of changing his cotton and spindle into yarn?..."*

*"Our friend, up to this time so purse-proud, suddenly assumes the modest demeanour of his own workman, and exclaims: 'Have I myself not worked? Have I not performed the labour of superintendence and of overlooking the spinner? And does not this labour, too, create value?' His overlooker and his manager try to hide their smiles..."*

The argument between the early socialists and the bourgeois economists was an insoluble argument. Marx's theory of exploitation resolves the argument in a scientific way. That is not the most important thing about it, however (no amount of scientific argument will convince the bourgeoisie to abandon exploitation). Marx's theory freed socialism from reformist and bourgeois limits.

Within the framework of the old argument, the bourgeoisie had an unanswerable case when they said that a certain level of profits was necessary for any industrial progress. And indeed, having established that point, they were often willing to concede that some profits might be excessive. "As you will see, I just make a fair profit; but my competitor Mr X really exploits his workers. And the financier Mr Y pockets a large fortune without even producing anything. They're the ones you should go for!"

So the trade unions came to demand (as they still do today) that profits should be reduced to a fair level, and wages raised to a fair rate.

Marx showed that this approach is utopian and essentially bourgeois. Utopian, because:

*"What is a 'fair' distribution?"*  
*"Do not the bourgeois assert that the present-day distribution is 'fair'? And is it not, in fact, the only 'fair' distribution on the basis of the present-day mode of production? ... Have not also the socialist sectarians the most varied notions about 'fair' distribution?"*



"All they think about is money"

*"To clamour for equal or even equitable retribution on the basis of the wages system is the same as to clamour for freedom on the basis of slavery"*

And bourgeois, because it accepts all the economic relations of bourgeois society and only wants to rejig them in favour of the working class.

Marx argued that:  
*"Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!', [the trade unions] ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wages system!'"*

Within a developed communist society, the rule will be "from each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her needs" — and in any case, once capitalism and the domination of production for exchange has been abolished, the very idea of the sum of wealth produced by the individual worker's labour becomes meaningless.

How did Marx analyse exploitation and reach these conclusions?

*"The pivot on which a clear comprehension of Political Economy turns"*, he said, is the two-fold character of labour in capitalist society. Labour is both specific useful labour — producing particular useful things — and general abstract social labour — the mere expenditure of a certain quantity of social-average labour power. And what the worker sells to the capitalist is not labour but labour-power. (This is explained very clearly by Engels in his introduction to 'Wage Labour and Capital').

Labour power — the worker's capacity to labour — is sold just like any other commodity. Its value is determined by the labour-time embodied in producing it: that is, the labour-time required for the various means of subsistence and enjoyment which the working-class family consumes. But something special happens when the capitalist uses this commodity, labour power, which he has bought.

When someone consumes food he has bought, or wears clothes he has bought, the commodities are used up and that is that. But when the capitalist 'consumes' his workers' labour power, the workers' life and energy is consumed, and new value is created. That value is more than the value of labour power — and the difference is the source of the capitalist's profits. The 1400 pages of volumes 2 and 3 of *Capital* are largely devoted to showing how surplus value ends up partly in the form of rent, partly interest, partly merchants' profits, and only partly as industrial profits. But basically all these (as well as the state's income) are derived from the surplus value created in production.

The fact that the worker and his or her family require for everyday living goods of a total value representing perhaps four hours of average labour-time does not stop the capitalist making the worker work eight hours a day. All those eight hours appear to be paid labour; but four hours are in a sense unpaid labour.

Thus capitalist exploitation is not cheating. It is perfectly fair and logical — according to the capitalist standards of buying and selling.

However, when we say that the value of labour power is determined by the quantity of goods needed to keep the working class family at an average minimum standard of living, it remains a fact that this average minimum standard of living is not fixed but can be pushed up or down by the class struggle.

*"The number and extent of [workers'] necessary wants, as also the modes of satisfying them, are themselves the product of historical development, and depend therefore to a great extent on the degree of civilisation of a country, more particularly on the conditions under which, and consequently on the habits and degree of comfort in which, the class of free labourers has been formed. In contradistinction therefore to the case of other commodities, there enters into the determination of the value of labour power a historical and moral element"*

*"An immense scale of variation is possible. [It] is only settled by the continuous struggle between capital and labour, the capitalist constantly tending to reduce wages to their physical minimum, and to extend the working-day to its physical maximum, while the working man constantly presses in the opposite direction. The matter resolves itself into a question of the respective powers of the combatants"*

So several political conclusions go together with Marx's theory of exploitation.

1. The workers' struggle for shorter hours and better pay should be pushed forward without any hesitations about leaving a fair profit or anything like that.

2. The working class cannot, however, achieve liberation just by fighting for such immediate economic aims.

*"A rise in the price of labour, as a consequence of the accumulation of capital, only means, in fact, that the length and weight of the golden chain the wage worker has already forged for himself, allow of a relaxation of the tension of it"*

3. In the day-to-day working class struggle, what is most important is not the immediate economic gains, but the growth of the organisation, self-confidence, and class consciousness of the workers.

\* This is not strictly correct. "Things which in and for themselves are not commodities, things such as conscience, honour, etc., can be offered for sale by their holders, and thus acquire the form of commodities through their price. Hence a thing can, formally speaking, have a price without a value... [There is also] the price of uncultivated land, which is without value because no human labour is objectified in it" (Marx).

While Duffy sells out at BL, these strikers say:

## We'll fight to the end

THE ADAMSON'S strike against victimisation entered its 15th week with the management upping the stakes. On Friday 30th one picket was arrested for threatening behaviour while a large number of police tried to intimidate the other pickets.

This followed an incident on Thursday night when a scab drove a fork-lift truck at two pickets, nearly taking one's leg off. The police took no action over this.

Though Adamsons has been on strike since August, Bernard Regan, the local District Secretary of the Confed is only now calling a meeting of stewards to propose to call for a day of action in Stockport engineering factories.

But despite the lack of official action — especially in other plants owned by the Acrow group — the management are rattled and have even tried sending anonymous letters to strikers' wives.

The strikers, however, face considerable financial problems. One worker is being threatened with eviction from his house on Christmas Eve though there are plans to resist the eviction. Six families have broken up because of financial problems and many workers have been threatened with gas or electricity disconnections.

Dave Smith, a member of the strike committee, told WA, "We've lost too much to give in now. We'll fight on to the end."

The strikers have put out the following appeal: "We appeal to everyone not to allow Acrow to spoil our families' Christmas. Acrow spoils our summer holidays; don't allow them to spoil our Christmas. Help us to withstand this attack on the Shop Stewards and Trade Union movement." All donations to: Stuart Robertson, Treasurer, Adamson's Strike Committee, c/o AUEW District Office, 125 Wellington Rd, South, Stockport. Picket Adamsons and Hatchett (another Acrow plant) in Dukinfield, every Friday morning, 7.30 to 8.30

MICK WOODS

## AUEW members say:

# Let's get rid of Duffy

FOLLOWING THE AUEW Executive's disgusting decision to abandon Derek Robinson and order AUEW members in BL back to work, demands are being raised for the whole Executive Council to resign.

Under Rule 15, Clause 5, 10% of the AUEW's branches can force a ballot on re-election of the Executive, and a two-thirds majority in that ballot can sack the Executive.

Northfield AUEW branch, Birmingham, has passed a resolution saying "We

believe the Executive Council have brought the Union into disrepute. We call on the General Secretary to order the re-election of the entire Executive Council by ballot of the membership as per Rule 15 Clause 5.

The resolution specifically censures the Executive for rejecting the decision of the Birmingham West District Committee (which unanimously called for the strike to be made official) and for instructing members to cross the official picket line of another union on strike (the T&GWU).

# WORKERS' ACTION

## BL: we're not beaten yet!

WHEN THE Executive Committee of the AUEW decided to order British Leyland workers back to 'normal working' on Tuesday 27th, many activists at Longbridge were reduced to despair. Stewards resigned, AUEW members tore up their cards in disgust and militants talked about leaving BL altogether.

The following day the T&G West Midlands Regional Committee suspended their official strike and ordered a return to work. Militants feared the worst. Towards the end of the strike foremen had arranged meetings of scabs at which Barry Iscander, the Longbridge Industrial Relations boss, had promised protection — for anyone who tore up their union card and a network of scab 'employee representatives' was established.

But it soon became apparent that all was not lost. For a start, the T&G made it clear when it 'suspended' its official action that, should any T&G steward be victimised, an immediate official strike would be reimposed.

The Longbridge Shop Stewards' Committee meeting on Saturday 1st December reaffirmed its opposition to both the Edwardes' plan and the Robinson sacking and many stewards stated their willingness to call the members out again in the New Year. The 'employee representatives' have crawled back into their holes, disowned even by the company.

But there is clearly a hard job ahead in reestablishing the old confidence between the membership and the stewards. Foremen are trying to tie stewards down

to their sections and to drive a wedge between stewards and members with tricks like going directly to workers with offers of overtime (normally this would need the agreement of the stewards).

But sharp conflicts between management and supervision on one hand, and the workforce on the other are ahead. Under the company's 85 page document massive speed-up and demanding are due to be introduced in the New Year, ready for the introduction of the Mini Metro in October 1980.

Shop stewards are already succeeding in winning back the confidence of the members for a campaign against the company document and for the defence of shopfloor conditions. The New Year must see a renewed campaign for all-out combine-wide strike action demanding (1) Reinstatement of Derek Robinson and withdrawal of the warnings to the other three stewards (2) withdrawal of the 85-page document (3) For the full claim of £24 plus inflation proofing and a 35 hour week by 1982.

### Anti-union purge at Manchester hotel

THE G&M shop steward at Woodlands Hotel, Timperley, Cheshire has been sacked by the management, along with the manager who supported him.

12 women workers walked out in support, leaving about 30 staff still working.

The strike is official and the hotel is being picketed every evening from 7.30 to 10pm, supported by Altrincham and Sale Trades' Council.

The management has moved in security guards who have been trying to intimidate pickets and one picket has been run down.

## Will the national stewards' committee give a lead?

THOUSANDS OF AUEW members were shocked and angered by the way their right-wing union Executive sold out Derek Robinson.

The recently-established National Engineering Shop Stewards' Committee should be playing a major role in organising that anger. But its only public statement so far on the BL dispute does no more than call on AUEW branches, stewards' committees and district committees to protest at Robinson's sacking and demand official action.

Talking to Workers' Action, an AUEW militant described the history and the problems of the National Engineering Shop Stewards' Committee.

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IN JULY, Sheffield AUEW Shop Stewards organised a national meeting of shop stewards at a time when morale was running high and the Confed/EEF negotiations had broken down and action was to come in support of the engineering claim.

300 people attended that first meeting, which decided to form a steering committee, but failed to decide on a political direction. The second meeting wasn't held until October 13th in Birmingham, after the claim had been 'settled' and attendance was down to 150. The atmosphere of this meeting was somewhat subdued; a few thought it was a good settlement, but most were disappointed.

Again, no resolutions were taken and consequently the question of political direction was shelved once more.

Instead, a steering committee of 28 was elected on a geographical basis without terms of reference.

This steering committee met on November 19th with 17 of the 28 there. Much of the meeting was taken up deciding what to discuss and the major questions ('Constitution and aims' including a political platform put forward by the Leicester delegates and the role of the Engineering Gazette) were shunted to a sub-committee.

The impetus for the meeting setting up a national organisation of engineering shop stewards lies in the fight over the annual claim. But behind this lies the decline of the Broad Left within the AUEW as its traditional leader Scanlon backed Labor's wage controls and was 'promoted' to the Lords. Also the bankruptcy of the Broad Left electoral machine became increasingly apparent.

During the old Broad Left leadership of the union, engineering workers slipped back in terms of wages and the 1972 dispute was disastrously handled. The claim was thrown back for the districts to fight for and settle individually. In Manchester, union organisation suffered a blow from which it has only just begun to recover. During its period of office, the Broad Left was disunited and confused over the Social Contract and reluctant to challenge Callaghan and Healey.

So the Tory victory and the strength of the right-wing on the AUEW Executive Council,

gave the Broad Left the green light to reorganise. Already, the EC has issued a statement in the union journal declaring the new Shop Stewards Committee unconstitutional.

Rightly, Ernie Walker, the Broad Left acting secretary of the committee sees the need to tackle the question of new technology and in particular, the way in which women are hardest hit by new robot machinery.

He also sees the committee as representing shop stewards who 'go back to their organisations and set up local committees' which are not restricted to AUEW members alone but attempt to break down sectional divisions between the various engineering unions

But, while the leaders of the Broad Left seem to have learnt that pure electoralism is a dead end, their reluctance to discuss a political direction does not bode well for the future. We need a fight to control the drawing up and conduct of the national claim to prevent a repetition of this year's bureaucratic sell-out. We need to ensure that the 35 hour week does not remain a closed question for the next three years, while the bosses continue to push through redundancies, closures and speed-ups.

The National Shop Stewards Committee can act as a real focus against Duffy and the Right. But to achieve this, a clear political direction and commitment to building on the shopfloor must be decided upon.



BL militants have not given up on the fight to reinstate Derek Robinson [above].

London Workers' Action meeting  
The National Left Wing Movement in the 1920s: Its lessons for today  
Speaker: Mike Foley. 8pm, Friday 14 December, at the 'General Picton', Wharfedale Rd / Caldonian Rd, N1.

FUND DRIVE  
Previous total £50.45  
Received this week:  
Sheffield £2  
Leicester jumble sale £12  
Bankers' orders £54.50  
Month's total £118.95  
Shortfall on £200 target £81.05  
For the December fund, send contributions to Fund, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD. Cheques payable to Workers' Action.

## 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, PO Box 135, London N1 0DD.  
FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER. Bristol Socialist Forum. 'Socialists and the Labour Party'. Speaker, Andrew Hornung (Workers Action EB). 7.30pm, Swan public house, Stokes Croft.

FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER. Spartacist public forum: 'Nicaragua: Another Cuba?'. 7.30pm, Labour Club, Bristol St, Birmingham. (For any further information ring 021-472 7726).

SATURDAY 8 DECEMBER. Picket of US embassy called by the Committee to Defend Democratic Rights in Iran. 'US Hands Off Iran!' 1pm, Grosvenor Square, London.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 8-9 DECEMBER. United Troops

Out Movement conference, at City of London Poly Students Union, Fairholt House, Whitechapel High Rd, London E1.

SATURDAY 8 DECEMBER. Working meeting to plan the 'Labour Movement Fightback for Women's Rights' conference. 1.30pm-3.30pm, Hemingford Arms, Hemingford Rd/Offord Rd, London N1.

MONDAY 17 DECEMBER. Picket of Barnet Magistrates Court, called by the Southall Campaign Committee. 10am, High St, Barnet. (High Barnet tube station).

'INTERVENTION' no.3 out now. Ernest Mandel in focus: critical reviews. Four essays on crisis, education, permanent arms economy, 'long waves', and much more. £1.20 including p&p from 'Intervention', c/o 60 Loughborough Rd, London SW9.

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