

# RED WEEKLY

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## Solidarity with the Portuguese Working Class

A first-hand report on the Lisbon events

SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER, 7.00 p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

NO TO MILITARY DICTATORSHIP!

DEFEND THE STRUGGLES OF  
THE PORTUGUESE WORKERS!

BUILD THE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN!

# SAVE OUR HEALTH!

The National Health Service is bleeding to death. Three quarters of Britain's hospitals were built before 1918. Two thirds of the mental hospitals were built before 1891. A chronic shortage of funds—in 1975 £75 million was lopped off the NHS budget—means that its equipment is becoming ever more outdated. Over half a million people are on its waiting lists.

## Suffering

Next year the NHS will get a 10 per cent increase in its budget—but inflation is running at 25 per cent. The savage cuts of the Labour Government mean pain and suffering for millions. For thousands of others they will mean premature death. And now the £6 pay norm—introduced to slash living standards—has goaded the Junior Hospital Doctors (JHDs) into open conflict. The JHDs had no choice but to operate an emergencies-only service to win their demand for proper overtime rates.

Meanwhile the pampered consultants have stuck their knife in to defend their own selfish interests. Last Monday the casualty departments in 22 London hospitals were forced to close as the consultants' work-to-rule began.

Labour's wages policy has worsened the living standards of the majority of health workers and driven many of them into the private sector. By failing to grant the legitimate demands of the JHDs and other health workers, the Government has rejected all those people who could defy and break the consultants' strike.

In such a situation the workers' movement cannot afford to stand idly by. Its health and its life is threatened. No hope can be placed in the Government. Its record of cuts and its willingness to allow the creation of a two-tier health system show only too clearly where it stands.

## Fight Back

But the National Union of Public Employees' decision to deny all but emergency services to private patients shows how a fight back can be begun. The task now is to extend the ban. The trade unions should put an embargo on all private facilities both inside and outside the NHS. In every area support committees should be built to give strength to the fight of the JHDs and to help to keep the wards running wherever they are threatened with either Government closures or the action of the consultants.

The National Coordinating Committee Against the Cuts in the NHS—already supported by bodies like the Welsh Miners, the Hull dockers, London NATSOPA, the South West Region of the TUC and NALGO, as well as by thousands of other trade unionists—must go onto the offensive. Its task now is to rally the maximum forces to fight to save the health of the working class.

Bob Pennington

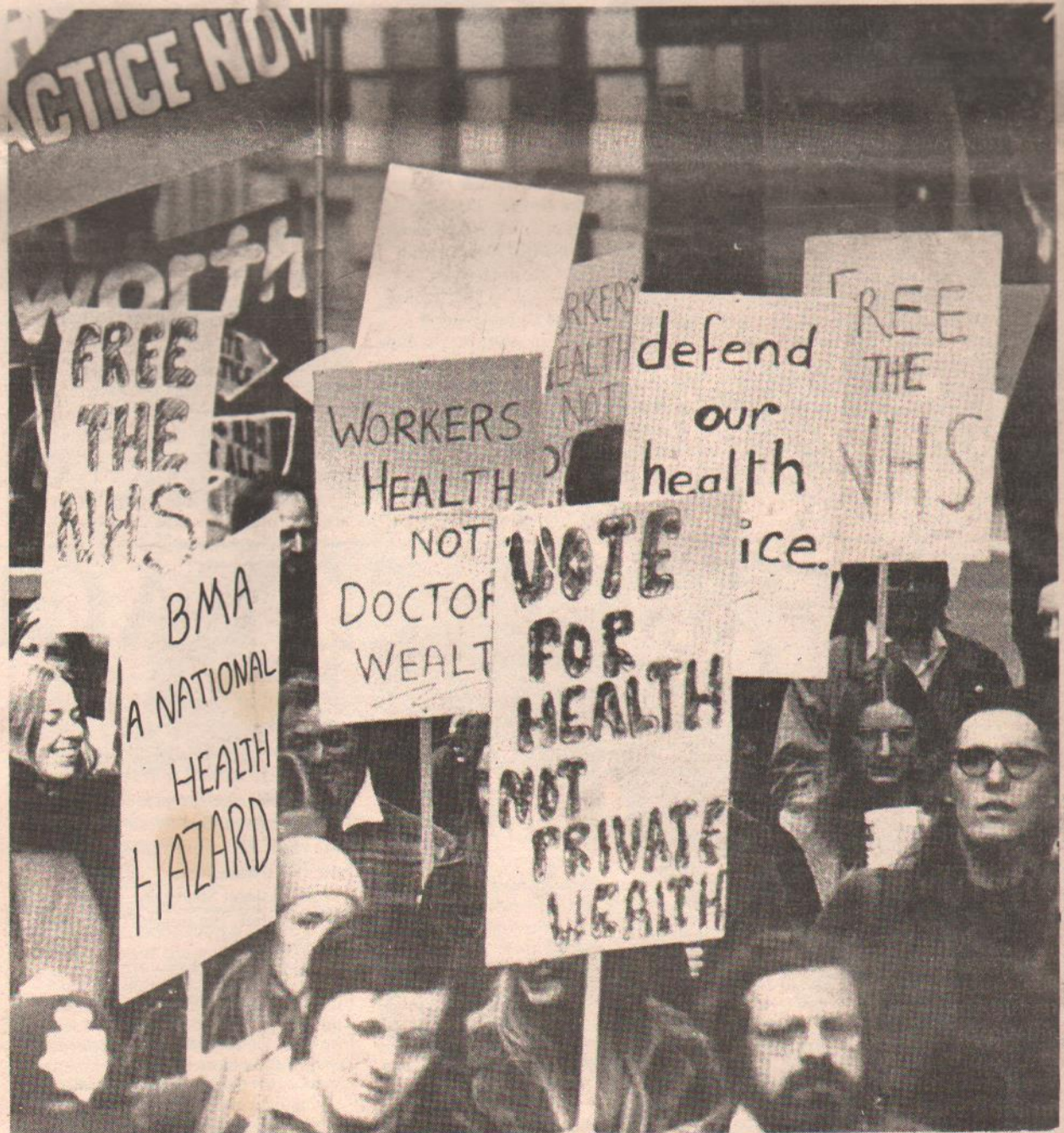


Photo: MIKE SHERIDAN (IFL)

- \* BAN ALL PRIVATE PRACTICE
- \* GRANT JUNIOR DOCTORS' CLAIM
- \* BUILD ACTION COMMITTEES TO DEFEND N.H.S.

# Public squalor, private profit

WHY is Merseyside Council going to put 100 newly qualified nurses on the dole when 363 Merseyside patients have been waiting for an operation for more than two years?

WHY is Brent Council in London paying £345 a day to keep a site empty on which a new comprehensive school was going to be built?

WHY are as many as 150 old people's home, children's homes and hostels for the mentally handicapped to be closed – or, if newly built, to remain unopened – for the next few years?

If you want to find out the answer to these and similar questions, the latest report by Counter Information Services, *Cutting the Welfare State\** – produced in conjunction with the National Community Development Project – is gripping reading.

## New Phrase

In recent months a new phrase has come into fashion – the 'social wage'. According to Chancellor Dennis Healey, it is worth £20 a week to every man, woman and child in the country. It is the value of this social wage, we are told by right wing Labour ministers, that is threatened if the £6 limit is broken. If normal wages go up, the social wage will be cut. This despite the fact that as early as the second quarter of this year real earnings had already fallen by 3 per cent as against prices.

## 'Social wage'

But just what is this 'social wage'? Some of the £1,000 a year spent for 'our' benefit in 1973 went as follows: £91 in interest on money borrowed; £126 on Defence and External Relations; £112 to Commerce and Industry in hand-outs; and £27 to Justice and Law just in case anyone questioned this allocation too forcefully. Compare this with £69 on Housing, £129 on Education and £116 on Health and Personal Social Services, and you begin to get the idea that the social wage doesn't exist just for our benefit. Particularly so when you realise that most of it is paid for by working people's taxes and insurance, and taxes on company profits extracted from the workforce in the first place.

## Mick Gosling

It is the 'social' aspect of the social wage which is being slashed at the present time. The Wilson Government won't welch on the moneylenders; private industry



Blaming public problems on personal 'failings' – a lucrative business for the drug companies.

will continue to get its subsidies as the 'regeneration of British industry' takes place; and the boys in blue and their hangers-on won't go short.

No, it's the health, housing and education of the working class which is under attack as the Labour Government tries to make good the deficit between what it is spending and its income. This deficit is known as the 'Public Sector Borrowing Requirement' and it is raised from the financial sharks of national and international capitalism.

For the financial year April 1975–March 1976, this deficit is estimated at £9 billion out of a tot-

al public authority spending of £54 billion. 'It's when you look at one major element of this deficit that the implications of this borrowing begin to sink in. For of the £9 billion deficit this year, the Government expected that no less than £5 billion would go to paying interest alone on previous and present borrowings.'

Even with the proposed Healey cuts of £3 billion by 1978–79, debt interest will then be running at a rate of £11 billion or more – meaning that the Government will be borrowing around £20 billion a year. CIS calculate that even to keep borrowing steady at £12 billion a year will mean cutting welfare spending by £5½ billion in real terms by 1977–78.

## Dismantling

Put in simple terms, what this means is that the £6 limit and the Healey measures are only the beginning of the attack on living standards of the working class. If the Labour Government is successful in this attack – thanks to the collaboration of the trade union bureaucracy – the way will be opened to further massive cuts which will mean the virtual dismantling of the welfare state.

In all likelihood this will be carried through by a future Tory Government, which will have no compunction about returning the working class to the Thirties once it has been sufficiently demoralised and derailed by the traitors in the Wilson Government and the leadership of the TUC.

## Rainbow

But every storm produces a rainbow, and every rainbow has a pot of gold at the end. Even in the present crisis the good fairies of capitalism manage to collect their rake-offs from the crisis of the welfare state.

In 1970 UK doctors wrote 5½ million prescriptions for valium – meaning that the NHS was paying £10,000 a day for tranquillisers from the Roche monopoly. Produced for as little as £20 a kilo,



Photo: JOHN STURROCK (Report)

valium was sold for years to the NHS at £1,962 a kilo. Forty and 50 per cent profit margins are common for the drugs firms.

No wonder the NHS is crumbling, starved of state funds – capital expenditure will have been cut by 28 per cent in real terms between 1972 and 1977 – and milked for private profit. And of course, when the NHS can't provide the service there are a growing number of private medical schemes and top doctors who are prepared to – at a price.

dole; when you can't get into hospital for years when you need an operation; when you're a woman and you go mad because your kids are round your feet all day because there are no nurseries to send them to; you know what to do.

## Organise

Organise and fight back against the Tory policies of the Wilson Government which are destroying the welfare state. Because in a few years time you won't even be able to 'take another valium.....dear'.

Hospital Waiting Lists, Private and Public		
Condition	Length of waiting as private patient	Length of waiting under NHS
Hysterectomy	2 weeks	4 months
Vasectomy	2 weeks	2 years
Gynaecological operations	1 week	12 months
Cataract operation	2 weeks	Over 1 month
Tonsillectomy	2 weeks	18 months

Source: Expenditure Committee

So when you can't get a home because interest payments now mean it can cost £216,000 to build a council house; when your kids are in classes of 40 and more while thousands of teachers are on the

\* *Cutting the Welfare State (Who Profits)* – CIS-CDP Special Report, price 45p plus 15p postage from 9 Poland Street, London W.1. Bulk orders of 15 or more receive 25 per cent discount free of postal costs.



Children in Newham, London. Lousy schools, bleaker future.

# TEACHERS - STOP THE ROT!

Figures collected by the National Union of Teachers show that there are already at least 4,000 teachers unemployed. Estimates for next year range from 8,000 to as many as 19,000! Yet despite being forced to take some faltering steps in the right direction, the position of the NUT leadership – in the words of its General Secretary, Fred Jarvis – is that 'the union is not looking for a fight'.

What the NUT Executive has done is to promise support for any refusal to cover for staff absent for more than three days. But although this is a step forward, the conditions which have to be satisfied before this sanction can be applied rule out any action in traditionally militant areas such as London. The Inner London Education Authority, for instance, will argue that it is not reducing its staffing standards as a matter of budgetary policy (one of the conditions) but because of falling school rolls – with the result that 500 fewer teachers will be employed in the New Year.

## Cutbacks

Although some school rolls are falling, this has become an excuse to make large cutbacks in public spending instead of using this situation to reduce class

sizes and improve conditions in schools. The NUT, however, accepts this – just as it has accepted that rates should be increased to pay for the crisis, while wages are held back within the £6 limit. Rather than placing the responsibility where it belongs – on the backs of the capitalist class and its agents in the Wilson Government – the NUT bureaucracy accepts that the working class must pay for the crisis.

It is this failure to give a lead in the struggle to defend the education service against the attacks of the Wilson Government which has resulted in a victory for the right wing in the recent elections for President and Vice President of the NUT – posts Labour and CP members hoped to win.

But sections of teachers are now beginning to wage a fight-back independently of the bureaucracy. A sub-committee of the Inner London Teachers Association which met last week passed a resolution welcoming the proposed sanctions but calling on the NUT Executive to extend them to all areas implementing cutbacks in education of any kind. The ILTA has already adopted the policy of a sliding scale of wages as a means of combatting inflation, and called for a recall of the South East Region TUC Conference against the cuts.

An effective fight in defence of education spending will mean teachers organising themselves together with the broad labour and trade union movement to conduct their own investigations into the cutbacks. It will mean demanding that local authorities open the books and reveal their plans for education and other public services.

## Fight back

Support for committees like the one set up from a recent London meeting called by the Socialist Teachers Coordinating Committee on unemployment, where a group of unemployed and employed teachers are meeting each week to organise meetings in colleges of education and schools on unemployment, will also be an essential part of the fight back.

A struggle to defend the public services which can involve broader sections of the labour movement is essential if we are to overturn the policies of the Wilson Government. It is on this platform that two candidates in the forthcoming elections – Hilda Kean for ILTA General Secretary and Bernard Regan for NUT Executive member – will be actively campaigning. Carole Regan

Photo: ANDREW WARD (Report)

# SUPPORT JUNIOR DOCTORS

Junior Hospital Doctors across the country are taking action over their claim for a 40-hour week and realistic overtime rates.

The Labour Government is offering them a miserable 10 per cent of the basic rate for 'on call' duty and 30 per cent for overtime actually worked. No wonder the junior doctors are up in arms about this miserable offer.

Castle claims that if she gives the JHDs what they want then it will break the £6 pay limit. So hospital workers are once again struggling for decent pay and conditions against Government wage restraint - just like the ancillary workers in 1972 and 1973, and the nurses in 1974. Each time the argument has been that if we hold back on wages then we can improve on the social services.

What has happened to the promises? The NHS has never faced such a severe crisis in the 27 years of its existence. Secret documents obtained by the National Co-ordinating Committee Against Cuts in the NHS spell out that the cuts are going to be made by reducing the amount of money that is allocated to new buildings and the renovation of existing buildings and equipment.

Staff cuts are also planned. The labour-intensive NHS spends 70 per cent of its budget on wages. To 'save' money nurses are being made redundant, and when ancillary workers leave their jobs they are not being replaced.

The JHDs are drastically overworked, and this of course affects the patient care that they are able to give. Even if the junior doctors win their claim for a

basic 40-hour week this bad situation will not change. They will continue to work 80 hours or more a week, and patient care will continue to deteriorate. All that will change is that the JHDs will get paid more for this overtime.

If the JHDs are to win their claim and improve both their own conditions and those of their patients, they will have to take up the fight to extend the NHS and ensure that more doctors are employed in the health service.

There is no shortage of doctors. The policies of the Labour Government, however, are creating a deliberate shortage in the NHS. The racist policies of the Government prevent immigrant doctors from Pakistan and India practising in Britain. Of the 13,000 men and women who applied for places in medical schools, only 3,240 were accepted because insufficient funds are allocated to training.

The working class movement has a vested interest in the fight of the JHDs. It must give its support to their struggle for better conditions. But the labour movement must also insist that such support is conditional on the JHDs fighting to defend the NHS and having no truck with the consultants, whose policies are geared to bring the NHS into total collapse.

Support from the labour movement can guarantee victory for the JHDs. At the same time it can show the JHDs that their future, and the future of the NHS, lies in an alliance between them and the labour movement.

Janet Maguire

## But smash consultants' sabotage

Last Monday hospital consultants all over Britain started industrial action (emergency treatment only), in what the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association (HCSA) described as 'the final confrontation with the Government' over the issue of private practice.

Behind a smokescreen of mock-heroics and hypocrisy about 'defending freedom and democracy', the consultants are putting the whole NHS at risk. They are doing this simply to maintain their ill-gotten 'right' to exploit sickness for their own gain.

The proposals of the Labour Government, which have provoked such fury from the consultants, are that the private beds at present in the NHS (nearly 5,000) should be phased out, while the growth of private medicine outside the NHS should be limited to the replacement of such beds. But a close look at these proposals shows that they hardly amount to an attack on private practice at all. In fact, Barbara Castle has publicly stated that the present Labour Government will defend the consultants' 'right' to practise privately!

### TO THE BONE

Indeed, Labour's proposals entail no cut in the number of private beds. While Castle is busy closing down NHS hospitals and slashing the NHS hospital building programme to the bone, she is also proposing to license the building of the equivalent of up to 20 major (500 bed) private hospitals!

Such an expansion of the private sector - doubling the number of beds for major acute treatment - will mean a further step towards the establishment of a private health industry in direct competition with the NHS. It will mean a further drain of staff from the NHS - already

by Colin Smith

drastically understaffed.

By separating private practice from the NHS, the Labour Government hopes to head off the struggles of health workers and other sections of the labour movement at a time when it is carrying out massive cuts in the NHS. However, the consultants are not used to tolerating even the merest hint of any restriction on their freedom to exploit their positions.

What they fear most of all is direct action by health workers against private practice and their control of medical treatment - something which has been forcibly raised in the campaign for free abortion on demand. In this they are correct. Such examples of action point the way forward to get rid of private practice once and for all and strike the first blows in a campaign to defend and extend the NHS.

### REACTIONARY

The consultants have deliberately chosen this time to take action. The refusal of the Wilson Government to grant the demands of the junior hospital doctors for a 40-hour week with adequate overtime pay has meant



Problem with jobs demo was its 'protest' character—it should have centred more on those workers already in struggle, like those from the Personna occupation, seen here passing the TUC

that they are being driven further into the arms of the most reactionary consultants. Already some sections of junior doctors are supporting the consultants' demands that the Government should refer their proposals on private practice to the Royal Commission.

### DEVASTATING

By winning the support of the junior doctors, the leaders of the consultants hope to repeat their victory over Bevan and the Labour Government in the late 1940s - a victory which allowed them to continue to practise privately. If they get away with this once again, yet another devastating blow will have been struck against the working class and the NHS.

# IN FOCUS

## RECALL THE TUC! BUILD RIGHT TO WORK COMMITTEES!

The 26 November demonstration against unemployment was a great step forward in the fight for the right to work. Despite the direct sabotage of the TUC, 20,000 workers marched against the policies of the Government. The fear that this put into the right-wing leadership was shown by Murray's hysterical attack on the 'co-operation' of 'extremist groups' and a 'handful of Labour MPs' who dared to 'take part in activities condemned by the TUC'. It confirms once again that the £6 pay limit isn't part of a policy to protect employment but is a pure and simple sell-out to the bosses.

But despite this first success there are still big weaknesses—most of which flow from the Communist Party's 'pressurise the Government' line. The demonstration had a 'protest' character and was not centred on the workers in the forefront of the struggle—for example those at Personna and Chrysler. Clear and vital demands and slogans were not put forward by the demonstration's organisers and no clear line was put forward for what to do locally and nationally following the demonstration.

### Mass resentment

What is needed now is clear. Mass resentment against the Government's policy is mounting. On the demonstration hundreds of militants came from each major area. Opposition is building up in the unions. The vital necessity is to organise these forces into a class struggle opposition to the Wilson-Murray policy and leadership. This means:

- Demanding the recall of the TUC to mount the fight for jobs;
- Building Right to Work Committees based on the trade unions in every area;
- Organising mass solidarity with all struggles against redundancy;
- Uniting all the unions opposed to the £6 limit and the Government's jobs policy;
- Fighting for the demands—work-sharing with no loss of pay, a 35 hour week, a ban on overtime, an emergency programme of public works, open the books, nationalisation of all firms creating redundancy;
- Drawing up a common jobs policy in every area and fighting for it through demonstrations, pickets, occupations and strikes.

The aim must be towards mass action—local, area and national strikes—capable of imposing a working class solution to unemployment. These are the tasks of the coming weeks.

### Support this move:—

Following Len Murray's attack on the 26 November march, Eric Heffer and over 60 Labour MPs put forward a resolution in the House of Commons criticising this outburst. The Tribune MPs who supported this motion have no solution to the crisis of unemployment—their demand for the implementation of the Labour Manifesto provides no answer and their demand for import controls is downright reactionary—but their attack on Murray is completely correct. Red Weekly urges all its supporters to move resolutions supporting this attack on Murray's and the TUC's sabotage.



### Bristol area forges ahead...

The campaign against health cuts is really moving ahead in the Bristol area. The South-West Region TUC - which has a delegate on the National Co-ordinating Committee - voted at its meeting in Plymouth on 22 November to adopt the resolution passed at the MCAPP conference and also to finance a local conference against the cuts in Bristol on 31 January.

As part of the build-up to the conference, the Bristol-based co-ordinating committee will be picketing the December and January meetings of the Avon

Area Health Authority to protest against the slashing cuts announced in all the Avon districts.

A further picket of the Bristol health district headquarters this Friday is also being organised by healthworkers who have voted for a two-hour stoppage on that day. One hundred and four nurses - the entire student intake for February - are having their places postponed for eight months, which means that there will be 104 fewer nurses at a time when three wards in Bristol Royal Infirmary alone are temporarily closed because of a shortage of nurses!

WANTED—A DESIGNER!  
Have you always thought you could make a better job of Red Weekly with your eyes shut and one hand tied behind your back? Well now's your chance to prove it. One of our designers is moving on to higher (2) things and we need a replacement URGENTLY. Applications immediately to the Editor—IMG members/sympathisers only.

Campaign Against the Cuts in Public Spending DEMONSTRATION in Birmingham, 13 December Assemble 10.30 in Victoria Square Speakers include: Tom Litterick MP; Ernie Roberts, Asst Sec AUEW; Jeff Rooker MP; Ken Barlow, UCATT; Val Coultas, NUS; Chris Adamson, NUPE; Gordon Green, NUT.

# FRANCO DEAD now kill the dictatorship

Statement of the Political Committee of the LCR-ETA VI,  
Spanish sympathising section of the Fourth International.

The departure of an individual can rarely have been more eagerly awaited and desired. All the photos of the grandfather at rest, all the glorious obituaries in the press cannot make the Spanish people forget that the life of Franco was covered in blood: the blood of Txiki and Otaegui, of Baena, Sanchez Bravo and Garcia Sanz; the blood of Puig Antich; the blood of all the murdered Basque nationalist revolutionaries; the blood of all the workers who have fallen under the bullets of the police; the blood of Julian Grimau and all the anti-Francoist militants killed during the years of terror; the blood of all those who fell in the civil war after the counter-revolutionary coup of 18 July.

Nor can they make us forget the flower of the workers' and popular movement who are stagnating in jail, those who have been tortured, and those who have been exiled. Following the death of the executioner, our concern is for all the victims of nearly 40 years of dictatorship and as many years of terror and criminal repression.

For the working class, for all the oppressed, this is a time of joy. The death of Franco is a call to step up the struggle, to finish for ever with this regime of terror and misery.

The heirs of Franco — Juan Carlos, the ministers and bureaucrats of the regime, the chiefs of the army, the police, the civil guards, all the fascist vermin — will try to preserve their inheritance and maintain the Francoist regime.

But for as long as the anti-Francoist militants remain locked up; for as long as the borders remain closed to the exiles; for as long as the civil guards, the politico-social brigade and all the repressive bodies continue their reign of terror; for as long as the laws of the Francoist institutions remain in force; for as long as the fascist bands pursue their terrorist activities alongside the official repression — in a word, for as long as the dictatorship does not meet the same fate as the dictator, we shall continue the struggle against its bloody heritage.

A decisive period has opened up. The departure of the supreme leader has opened up an internal struggle between the different fractions of the bourgeoisie, of this ruling class

which for so long has relied on the Francoist dictatorship to enforce its exploitation of the workers.

For the exploited and the oppressed, the time has come to return to the offensive:

- For the liberation of all the political prisoners, for the right of return for the exiles!
- For the abolition of the Francoist legislation, and most importantly of the 'anti-terrorist law'!
- For the dissolution of the repressive bodies and the emergency tribunals!
- For a settling of accounts with all the authors of the crimes of Francoism!
- For freedom of expression, of meeting, of association, for the right to strike and to demonstrate!
- For the free self-determination of the oppressed nationalities!

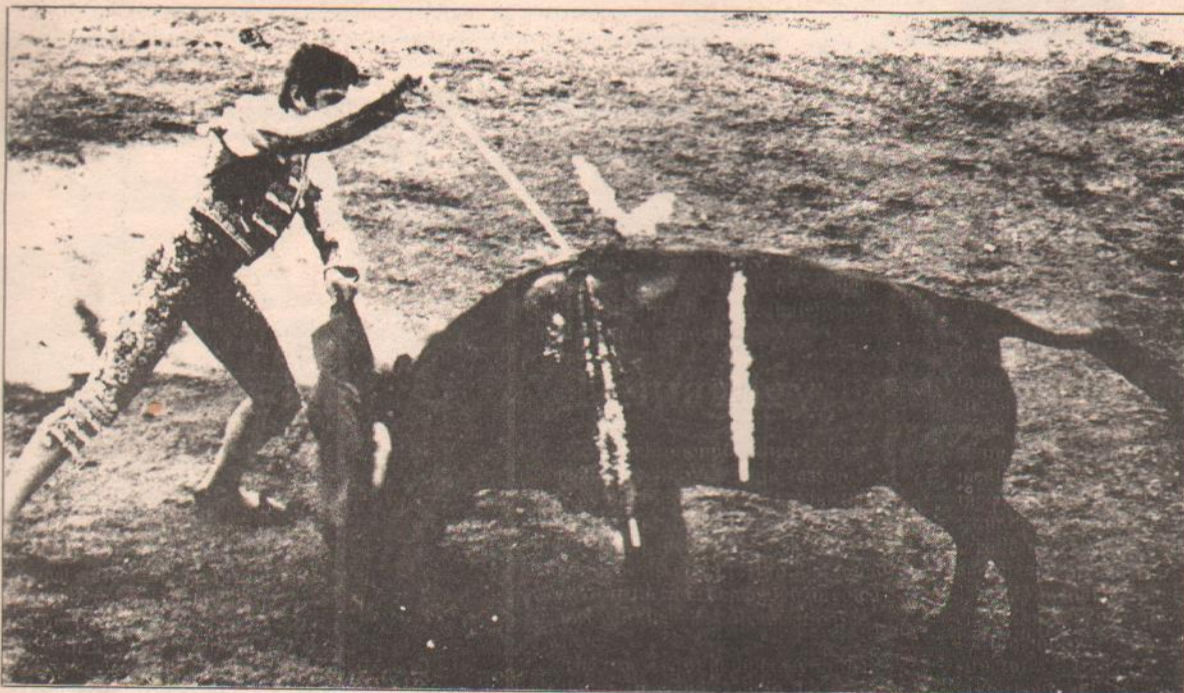
By installing Juan Carlos on the throne they hope to give continuity to the dictatorial regime and maintain the repression against the workers' movement and its vanguard. No 'concession' from this same Juan Carlos, who has sworn to respect the principles of 18 July — principles which have cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of working people — can satisfy the thirst for freedom of the broad masses.

*A complete amnesty, immediate freedom for all the political prisoners and freedom to return for all the exiles — these are the first objectives for which we must mobilise.*

These are objectives which we can attain by means of the largest possible mobilisation: demonstrations outside the prisons, mass meetings and strikes in the factories, the schools, the neighbourhoods. By this means we will be able to go forward to THE GENERAL STRIKE, following the example of Euzkadi [the Basque country], the example of those who have been at the head of the struggles of the masses against the Francoist repression.

**TOWARDS THE GENERAL STRIKE, WHICH IS NOT ONLY POSSIBLE BUT IS NOW MORE NECESSARY THAN EVER.**

Political Bureau of the LCR-ETA(VI)



## Political prisoners crucial question

The most explosive issue in Spain today is that of the thousands of political prisoners sitting in Juan Carlos's prisons. They are living symbols of the nature of the Franco regime — a brutal dictatorship pledged to crush every expression of independent action by the working class.

For that reason no regime in Spain can even make an effective pretence at being 'democratic' unless it first releases all these anti-fascist fighters. But at the same time the defenders of the old order

see the continued persecution of the prisoners as essential to upholding their cause.

Caught between these forces — in this matter as in all others — the heir of Franco, King Juan Carlos, can do nothing. The *indulto* (amnesty) which he proclaimed on his accession is totally phony. It excludes anyone accused of 'terrorist' crimes (including belonging to a 'terrorist' organisation — i.e. every group to the left of the Socialist Party) and thus only affects a tiny proportion of the political prisoners.

The main beneficiaries of this 'democratic' gesture are those convicted of drunken driving offences!

What is more, everyone in Spain knows that his manoeuvre is not even Juan Carlos's own idea. It is letter for letter a move planned by Franco himself last March, but postponed because of the decision to step up repression against the workers' struggles in the Basque country.

At the very moment when Juan Carlos was being crowned and the heads of capitalist Europe were toasting his 'democratic' pledges, thousands of people demonstrating in Madrid, San Sebastian and Barcelona to demand the release of all anti-fascist prisoners were getting a first taste of this democracy — and it carried the same reek of tear gas and the same sting of police batons that has characterised the Franco dictatorship for nearly forty years.



The company he keeps—Juan Carlos is seen here chatting to Chilean dictator Pinochet

## EUROPE'S BOSSES BACK CARLOS

While Juan Carlos's police were brutally attacking demonstrators calling for the liberation of political prisoners, the King himself was being feted by the representatives of world capitalism who had turned up for his coronation.

President Scheel of West Germany, President Giscard d'Estaing of France, and Vice-President Rockefeller of the US were there, along with the Duke of Edinburgh representing the British Government. One head of state conspicuous by his absence was President Pinochet of Chile, who had arrived for Franco's funeral but was discreetly whisked away immediately afterwards — in order to avoid showing just whom the heads of 'democratic' Europe were lining up with (although even this did not seem to worry the Wilson Government, which readily sent Lord Shepherd to join the Chilean butcher at Franco's funeral).

Before leaving Madrid, Giscard d'Estaing — the most ardent advocate of Spain's cause in capitalist Europe — took the opportunity to state support for Franco's heir: '...As a great neighbouring country of Spain I want to testify to our desire to initiate and develop with Spain relations of a good neighbour and friendship.....'

### New epoch?

'Spain is part of Europe, I would even say that Spain, by its history and civilisation, is one of the founders of Europe... Finally, I am thinking of the new sovereign of Spain, of the young sovereign of Spain, who has, as he has said himself, the responsibility, but also the will to open up now a new epoch in the history of Spain.'

These views are not the exclusive property of Giscard or the French ruling class. Just a few days previously the Council of Ministers of the EEC issued a statement 'greeting the perspectives opening up for closer relations between Spain and democratic Europe'.

(At the same time they patted the Portuguese Sixth Provisional Government on the back for its efforts to crack down on the working class upsurge.)

The situation in the Iberian peninsula today terrifies the European ruling class, and they are eager to throw their weight behind those who are working to keep the Iberian working class down. The only thing holding them back is the danger that if they do this in too blatant a fashion it will provoke massive protests at home from the workers' movement.

### Not fussy

So while they are not very fussy about the nature of the regime that 'democratic Europe' is to welcome into its bosom, at least a few token reforms are required so that Juan Carlos and his Francoist clique can be dressed up as honest (if rather conservative) 'democrats' for the benefit of the European socialist and labour movement.

But neither Juan Carlos nor any representatives of the Spanish capitalist class are interested in or capable of destroying Franco's dictatorship. That can only be done by the sort of united and determined working class struggle that the European capitalists are working to prevent. All support for these capitalist elements in the name of 'democracy' is a total sham — it amounts to nothing more than underwriting the continuation of dictatorship in Spain.

One of the main tasks facing the European workers' movement today is to build a massive movement of solidarity with the Spanish working class which can expose the manoeuvres of the European ruling class and its agents and prevent them from bolstering up the heirs of Franco. Not the least responsibility lies with us here in Britain, where we have to show up the complicity of the Wilson Government in this reactionary operation and force it to break all links with the heirs of Franco.

## From a Spanish Jail

If it takes courage and bravery to fight against the Spanish dictatorship, then the struggles of the political prisoners can only be measured in terms of heroism. Those who continue to fight within Franco's jails are faced with the immediate presence of the most brutal repression without the immediate support of a workers' movement or political organisations to protect them.

The case of Eva Forest is typical. A psychiatric doctor, prominent in the women's movement and in the Vietnam solidarity campaign, she was arrested in September 1974 and accused of the Cafe Rolando bombing where 13 people died. As there was no evidence of Eva Forest's complicity in the bombing, she was then accused of taking part in the execution of Admiral Carrero Blanco in December 1973, for which the Basque nationalist organisation ETA(V) claimed responsibility.

As there is no evidence connecting Eva with this either, she has remained in prison without trial ever since. In jail she has been subjected to a whole series of tortures, from beatings and insults to mental torture and long periods of solitary confinement. For three months she was not allowed to wash and was kept in the same clothes in which she had been arrested.

Under the new 'anti-terrorist' law, Eva Forest can be brought to trial at four hours notice and sentenced with

12 hours of the death sentence being passed. Her plight symbolises that of all the political prisoners. And her book — the personal statement of a revolutionary in struggle — deserves the widest circulation for that reason alone.

\* *From A Spanish Jail* (Penguin Special 60p)



In the wake of the abortive revolt by left-wing soldiers in Lisbon last week, the Portuguese Government has been able to undertake repressive moves it had previously only been able to dream about.

The brunt of the repression has been borne by those militants in the army who have dared to challenge the holy principle that soldiers owe their unquestioning loyalty to the capitalist state. Up to 100 left wing soldiers and officers are reported to be under arrest — among them Diniz de Almeida, the popular commander of the far left Lisbon Artillery Regiment (RALIS), which bore the brunt of the right-wing 11 March coup. These prisoners are not being kept in the Lisbon area, where the Government still feels uncertain of its power, but have been moved to the Cusoiás barracks in the right-wing dominated north.

There are reports that a number of civilian left-wing militants are among those arrested, including leaders of the PRP-BR (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat—Revolutionary Brigades) and the maoist MRPP.

The second focal point of the repression has been the mass media. After the army, this is the most important area where the right-wing forces need to reassert their control if Portugal is to be saved for capitalism.

## MARTIAL LAW

All Lisbon newspapers have been shut down and the radio and TV stations occupied by the army since the city was placed under martial law on Thursday. The Government has also ordered the purging of left-wing sympathisers from the editorial boards of a number of Lisbon and Oporto papers (but the pro-Socialist Party papers have been left untouched).

In the case of the independent worker-controlled paper *Republica*, the Government has meted out even harsher measures: its works have been occupied by armed paramilitary police, the GNR, and speculation is that it will be kept shut until it is driven into bankruptcy.

These actions are just the thin end of the wedge of repression. If the Government can get away with them, then much more will follow — the steady erosion of the gains made by the workers since 25 April 1974, and the repression of all those who speak out for the working class against attempts to guarantee the rule of capital in Portugal.

For the time being these measures are being perpetrated by the 'moderates' — pro-capitalist elements like the Soares leadership of the Socialist Party and President Costa Gomes. But once the repression gathers speed, political power will rapidly shift further to the right than even these 'gentlemen' desire. Already an extreme right-winger like Jaime Neves, head of the commandos who put down the revolt, is being widely feted as a national hero.

## VETERAN ENEMY

If the Portuguese working class is not able to regroup in the wake of this defeat, organising broad and united action to defeat this repression, the return of a new reactionary dictatorship is waiting not far around the corner — just behind that veteran enemy of the working class, General Spínola.

The international workers movement must now be rallied around our Portuguese comrades to stop this threat before it begins to gather speed.

End martial law in Portugal!  
Free Diniz de Almeida and all left wing militants!  
End the occupation of *Republica*!  
End military control of the mass media!

# END REPRESSION IN PORTUGAL



## LESSONS OF THE DEFEAT

The events involving the paratroops and military police in Lisbon last week have imposed a grave defeat on the Portuguese revolution. Today the right-wing commando regiment patrols the streets; the left newspapers are suppressed; for the first time since 25 April 1974 the Government has been able to impose a curfew in Lisbon.

This severe defeat comes only days after the reactionary Sixth Provisional Government of Azevedo literally went on strike because no-one would recognise its authority. What caused this abrupt ruling class victory — its most significant triumph to date? Was Lisbon an heroic uprising crushed by reaction? What is the depth of the defeat? These are the questions which must be answered to understand the new situation in Portugal today.

We must be clear first of all that what occurred in Lisbon was not an uprising of the workers. On the contrary, not one significant section of the Portuguese working class took part in the 'revolt'. Nor was it a last ditch struggle against fascist reaction. In fact, the preceding weeks had seen the anti-working class offensive of the Sixth Provisional Government rolled back by repeated mass mobilisations.

### No authority

The attempt to take over the radio stations had failed; the blowing up of the transmitters of Radio *Renascença* had aroused mass opposition going far beyond the revolutionary left and the Communist Party; the Government had been forced to abandon the attempt to set up the AMI special intervention force; the construction workers' strike and the 16 November demonstration organised by the CP and the

Lisbon workers commissions had left Azevedo with no authority — in fact, the Government had basically ceased to function.

### Transformed

In Spain, meanwhile, a revolutionary process was beginning to unfold which in a few months could have brought the Portuguese revolution support which would have transformed the situation.

These were the really significant developments preceding last week's events. Developments such as the sacking of Carvalho were tiny in comparison. What occurred in Lisbon therefore was not a heroic uprising but an insane adventure — something which would have been a farce had it not had such tragic consequences for the Portuguese working class.

There is not the slightest doubt where the responsibility for this act lies. Even if the actual pretext for the revolt was a govern-

ment provocation — which appears likely — the act which brought this severe defeat on the Portuguese working class was a product not of the capitalists, the fascists, or the Socialist Party but was prepared and carried through as a result of the line of petty-bourgeois left officers in the army and ultra-left organisations such as the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat (PRP) and the Movement of the Socialist Left (MES).

For weeks now, as *Red Weekly* has pointed out, these organisations have been calling for an immediate insurrection. We need only look at some of their statements:

- 'It is now time for the revolutionary forces and the workers to pose the problem of an insurrection' (Declaration of the PRP, 30 September).
- 'Armed insurrection is the sole way by which popular power can continue to advance' (Press conference given by Francisco Marquez, leading member of the PRP, 7 November).
- 'Only a national insurrection on the basis of armed power represents at the present time a way out of the contradictions of the revolutionary process in Portugal' (Declaration of the PRP, 10 November).

### Insurrection

Now these organisations have had their insurrection, and the balance sheet of this line is only too clear — as right-wing troops patrol the streets of Lisbon; the left press is closed; the revolutionaries in the army are

purged; left domination of the arsenals has been ended; and 30,000 guns in the main arsenal have been transferred from the control of the workers and soldiers to the right wing and fascists.

Continued on page 6

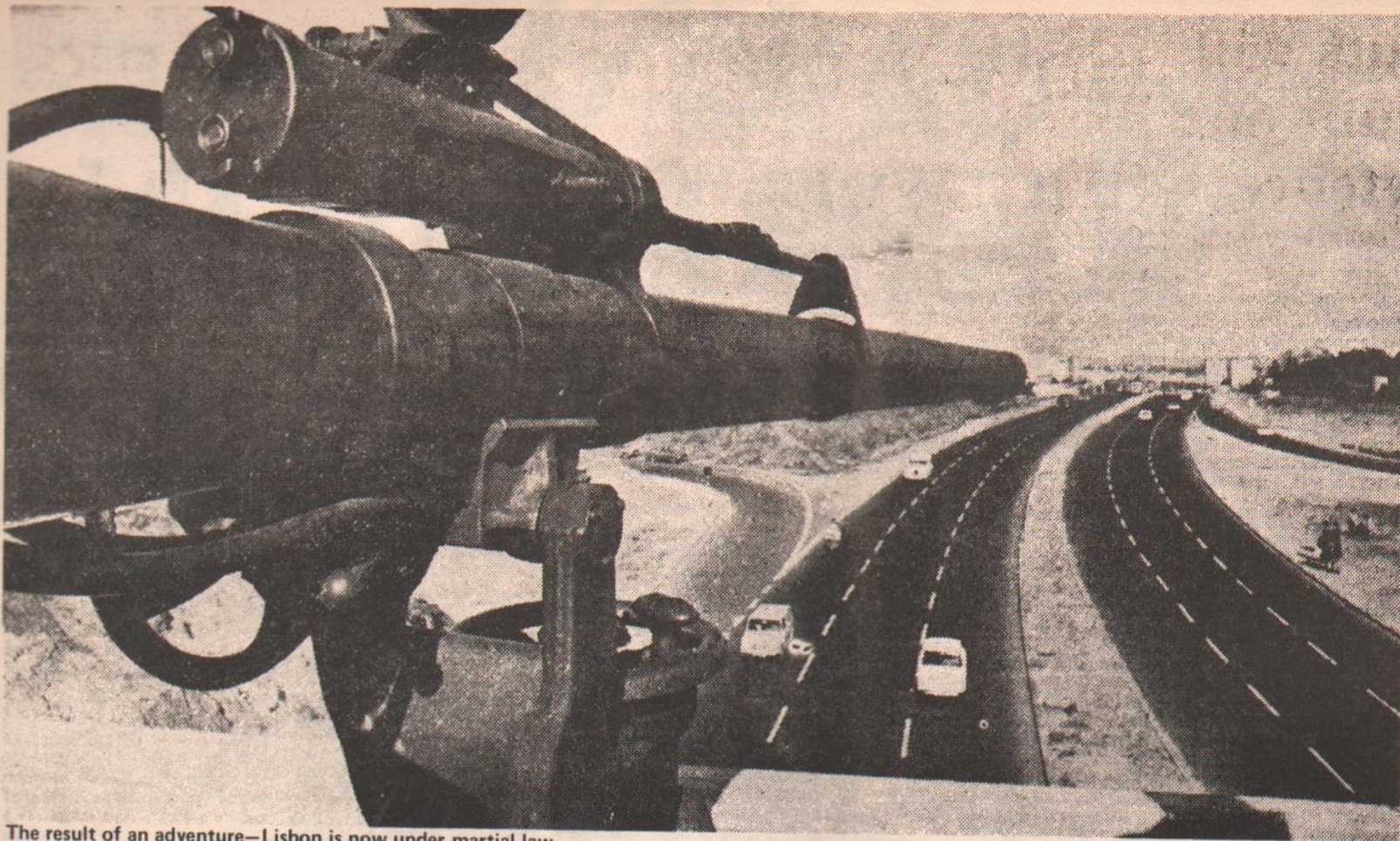
## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

A meeting in Paris last weekend put the final touches on plans for the international conference in solidarity with the Portuguese struggle which will take place in Paris on the weekend of 13–14 December.

Sponsors of the demonstration thus far include: in France, the LCR (Revolutionary Communist League — French section of the Fourth International), the PSU (largest far left organisation in France) and two Central Committee members of the Socialist Party; and in Britain, the International Marxist Group, the Portuguese Workers Coordinating Committee, the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation, ten Labour MPs, and Hugh Scanlon, President of the AUEW.

This conference comes at a crucial turning point in Portugal when every ounce of international solidarity is urgently required. It is important that a representative British delegation attends the conference.

For further details contact the PWCC, 12 Little Newport Street, London W.C.2.



The result of an adventure—Lisbon is now under martial law

## LESSONS OF THE DEFEAT

How deep is the defeat which has been imposed on the Portuguese workers by the events of last week? Two things stand out. Firstly, the political initiative is with the right. Secondly, and in a longer term sense more crucially, those whose line led to this outbreak have done one thing which the capitalists, the army hierarchy, and the Socialist Party could never have achieved — they have transferred military supremacy in Lisbon into the hands of the right wing.

### Crucial

Previously the bourgeoisie were faced with the crucial reality that if the right wing in Portugal had attempted a coup, then Lisbon and the entire south of the country would have been taken by the workers and left-wing troops. An attempted coup would have been a fight not against civilians but against the overwhelming bulk of the troops in Lisbon, including the best equipped regiments of the army, and with those soldiers supported by hundreds of thousands of workers — many tens of thousands of them armed. Such an attempt would have meant full scale civil war, with no guarantee whatever that the capitalists would win.

Today that situation has radically changed. As yet the Communist Party probably retains its apparatus in the army. But military domination in Lisbon and the rest of the country is in the hands of the right — and in many cases the ultra-right. With the disbanding of the left-wing regiments and the taking back of the arsenals, the workers are deprived of the obvious means of access to weapons — in particular, to heavy arms.

Whether even the CP will be able to hold its positions inside the army against the purge which will follow is doubtful. Certainly the SUV and the massive revolutionary presence in the army is largely finished. Attempts to disarm the workers will proceed apace. For the first time since 25 April, clear military supremacy has passed into the hands of the right and the bourgeoisie has the chance to create a semi-stable state apparatus.

### Grave

But the gravity of the defeat that has been suffered does not mean that the Portuguese masses are now finished. Fortunately last week's adventure in Lisbon coincided not with a retreat of the working class but with an advance of the mass movement. It is this upsurge which can limit the scope of the defeat.

There is no doubt that there will be repression against the vanguard. Inside the army the left will be purged. The worker-controlled newspaper *Republica* must be gravely threatened. For the first time there may even be an attempt to repress some vanguard workers' struggles.

As yet, however, the mobilisation of the workers is too large, and the repressive forces of the army too small, for any direct attack

aimed against the mass of the working class. The right-wing army operation in Lisbon started with only 800 soldiers of the commando regiment. At its height the number of soldiers involved was only 1,600.

Since the failure of the 'revolt' right-wing regiments have been moved into Lisbon, but they still only number 5–6,000. This is sufficient to arrest left-wingers and suppress newspapers, but it is totally inadequate to crush the mobilisations of hundreds of thousands of workers seen in the metal workers' or the construction workers' strikes and in the CP and workers commissions demonstrations. The right still needs time to construct a mass repressive force capable of taking on the workers and rooting out the final elements of all opposition in the army.

The small size of the repressive forces, however, also vividly demonstrates what is today the vital problem in Portugal. The left-wing soldiers were utterly defeated in Lisbon for political and not military reasons. Certainly the 800 troops of the Amadora commandos are a crack fighting regiment, but they were totally outnumbered and would have been incapable of defeating the paratroopers and military police in a serious battle. Furthermore none of the units involved in the 'revolt' made anything other than the feeblest attempts to fight.

### Ultra-left

The reason was political — that the left-wing regiments believed the ultra-left political groups when they said that the Lisbon workers would flock to support an insurrection. But not one section of workers supported their adventure. It was this which utterly demoralised the soldiers and meant that the tiny number of pro-Government forces won such a speedy victory.

It is also *politics* which is necessary to recover from the defeat. The basic power and organisation of the masses is not crushed.

Certainly we must expect some decline in the size of the vanguard, some lessening of the influence of the workers commissions, some retreat from the centralisation of organs of popular power, a strengthening of the CP at the expense of the revolutionaries, of the SP at the expense of the CP, and of the PPD and the CDS at the expense of the SP. These are the inevitable consequences of a defeat. But three vital factors still work in favour of the revolution.

### Repressive

Firstly, hundreds of thousands of workers daily feel the effects of the economic crisis. The Government still cannot repress them. A mobilisation around demands to safeguard the living conditions and employment of the workers can reunify the masses and begin to turn the tide against the Government. It is more construction workers' and metal workers' strikes, not new military adventures, which are needed.

Secondly, the repressive power of the state is still weak. The Government does not dare

repress the masses and has only dared to arrest a small number of those involved in the struggle. A massive campaign of defence against all the democratic rights threatened — against the state of emergency, against the press closures, for the release of those arrested, to defend *Republica*, against the purges in the army — can both defend those under attack and once more find links to the masses.

### Spain

The struggle to release Major Diniz de Almeida (of the left-wing RALIS regiment) and all the others held in the Cusioas prison near Oporto; to lift the censorship; and to stop the disarming of civilians — these must be the first tasks. Through this combination of struggles for the immediate needs of the masses, the vanguard can overcome its isolation, and the workers' commissions and other organs of workers' democracy can be strengthened and centralised.

Thirdly, the situation in Spain works entirely in favour of the Portuguese revolution. The demonstrations for the release of prisoners in Madrid, Barcelona and San Sebastian are the first sign of what is to come. An upheaval in Spain can alter everything in Portugal. It would deprive the right of their military support in the north, the fascists of their main bases, the right of its political initiative. To gain time through the defensive struggle in order to receive the gigantic reinforcement which Spain will mean is now a vital task.

If Portuguese revolutionaries and the working class can today undertake these defensive tasks, then all is very far from being lost. The Portuguese revolution has escaped from this defeat with far less repression and other harmful consequences than many other revolutions have passed through.

### Finished

But one thing in Portugal is clear. The infantile adventurist line of the PRP-BR, the MES and the other ultra-lefts is finished for ever. In the first onrush of the Portuguese revolution these absurd politics had some success. Now they have brought down a severe defeat on the working class.

Many individual militants of the PRP and other ultra-left organisations, and even of the junior officers, can doubtless still be won to a revolutionary line. All must be protected from the repression. But we do not think that the Portuguese workers will forget the crime which has been committed against them.

As organisations the ultra-left should be condemned to the dustbin. The task is defeat the repression, create a united front of the workers organisations, revive the mass movement, and build the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI) — Portuguese organisation of the Fourth International.

# Multinational sabotage economy

'Portugal's problems are not over just because successfully crushed an attempt at rebellion [the Forces Movement] has not yet shown the pressing political, economic and administrative (1976)'.  
(1976)

The defeat for the left soldiers in itself is not enough for the Portuguese and international bourgeoisie. The economic crisis is weekly becoming more serious, and with it brings the threat of further inevitable class confrontations. Earlier this month Dr Salgado Zenha, the finance minister in the Sixth Provisional Government, claimed that the Portuguese economy faced 'bankruptcy'.

In part this statement was an attempt to stress the need for the workers and peasants to take a cut in their living standards to solve the crisis. However it does also contain more than a grain of truth. Historically Portugal has been the weakest of the western capitalist economies and is suffering severely under the blows of the world recession. But the depth of the Portuguese crisis is also the responsibility of the multinational corporations, who have systematically sabotaged the economy.



This is what upsets the multinationals—workers

# Internationals

# Stage

# omy

se the Government appears to have suc-  
radical left-wing units.....It [the Armed  
t can deal with Portugal's ever more  
ive problems' (*Financial Times*, 27 Nov-

The multinationals began to influence  
economy in 1965, when -- as part of the  
n of the Portuguese economy towards  
urope -- Salazar introduced various decrees  
owing foreign capital to move into the  
ntry and repatriate profits. Between 1960  
1970 the penetration of foreign capital  
e dramatically from 1½ per cent of Port-  
ese industry to 27 per cent.

## LOW WAGES

These multinationals invested in Portugal  
t out of pity but for profit. As in Latin  
merica, the attraction was a labour force  
ffering severe repression and paid very low  
ges. In 1960 the average wage was a  
gre £2.50 per week. By 1970 it was still  
s than £4, and meanwhile prices had risen  
at least 40 per cent.

For the multinationals it was paradise --  
subsistence wages and the PIDE secret pol-  
ice to crush any strikes. As the vast major-  
ity of the Portuguese people were impoverish-  
ed there existed no internal market. Instead  
the firms imported raw materials and semi-  
finished goods, made them up, and then re-  
exported them to the prosperous European  
markets.

Meanwhile the Portuguese economy stag-  
nated. In the four years between 1967-71  
only 18 per cent of the Portuguese gross dom-  
estic product was devoted to investment.  
Throughout this period capital flowed out of  
Portugal into the coffers of other European  
countries via repatriated profits. For exam-  
ple, during 1971 alone one Dutch biochem-  
ical firm registered a 145 per cent return on its  
capital invested in Portugal.

## BOYCOTTS

Since April 1974 these links with the multi-  
nationals have turned sour. Credit, loans and  
orders have been cancelled. The Lisnave and  
Setenave ship repair yards, which employ  
over 10,000 workers, have found their order  
books emptying as international capitalism  
boycotts the yards. For example the Japanese  
firm of Sanko Kisen should have sent 40 ships  
this year -- but none have arrived.

The brewing firm SSC, who produce  
Schweppes under licence -- and for the privilege  
pay royalties on all SSC products -- arranged a  
4 million dollar loan from the First National  
City Bank. After SSC was nationalised -- no  
loan. Similarly SECIL, which has links with  
Dutch cement firms, had an 18 million dollar  
loan cancelled. Other Portuguese firms have  
found that foreign firms have refused to del-  
iver orders of important spare parts and raw  
materials. Foreign firms will not accept letters  
of credit from the Portuguese banks and in-  
stead demand cash.

It is quite obvious that British firms have  
been pursuing such policies. British exports,  
especially of machinery and transport, have  
declined dramatically in 1975. In March of  
this year Britain exported £3,668,000 worth  
of non-electrical machinery, £1,339,000 of  
electrical machinery, and £2,769,000 of trans-  
port goods. In September the figures read  
£1,644,000 and £472,000 respectively.

Plessey, which produces telecommunications



longer prepared to remain as a cheap labour pool but have successfully fought for massive wage increases



Appeals like this in last week's *Economist* are likely to fall on stony ground--the multinationals want to see the Portuguese working class smashed before they will lift their trade boycott

equipment and in the last three years made  
£3 million profit from its Portuguese subsid-  
iary, is now trying to shift production to  
Malta because the wages are lower there.

The economic sabotage of the multination-  
als has greatly deepened the impact of the  
world recession of the Portuguese economy.  
This year gross domestic product is likely to  
fall by 6 per cent and total investment by as  
much as 30 per cent. Manufacturing produc-  
tion is forecast to decline by 14 per cent and  
construction by up to 20 per cent. Thirty per  
cent of the 300,000 building workers are on  
the dole, and 80 per cent of building firms  
report a fall in the level of industrial activity.  
Other industries face similar prospects. Tex-  
tiles, clothing, paper, printing, iron and steel  
metal products, non-electrical and electrical  
machinery -- which between them employ  
49.5 per cent of the workforce -- are in de-  
cline and do not envisage any improvement in  
the near future.

Let us look more closely at the fate of the  
textile industry. This is of great importance  
to the Portuguese economy, employing  
250,000 workers, and involves major British  
firms like Courtaulds, ICI and Coats Patons.  
Under Caetano this industry operated by im-  
porting raw materials from the colonies at  
half price, working a 60 hour week, and pay-  
ing wages of 77p a day. The British textile  
firms exported various fibres, yarns and the  
necessary machinery, then the goods were  
made up in Portugal at low cost and re-ex-  
ported to be sold on the competitive world  
markets with big profits.

## CRIPPLED

Since 1974 things have changed. Firstly  
the whole textile industry has been crippled  
by the world recession -- for example, during  
March 150,000 British textile workers were  
on short time. Consequently the British tex-  
tile industry has been clamouring for import  
controls on Portuguese goods. Harold Wilson,  
backing these nationalist demands, pushed  
through the imposition of EEC import tariffs  
on Portuguese textiles, and since Britain has  
always been the largest market for Portuguese  
textiles it is obvious who stands to gain.

Between May and September of this year,  
Portuguese textile exports to Britain fell from  
£4,253,000 to £3,118,000; meanwhile British  
exports to Portugal of yarn and machinery  
dropped from £1,083,000 to £826,000. One  
British mail order firm has already switched  
their order for T-shirts from Portugal to that  
haven of repression, Brazil.

A further change has been the demands  
won by the textile workers, which the *Finan-  
cial Times* described as 'dramatic'. The work-  
ing week has been cut to 42 hours; a month's  
holiday gained; and wages doubled. The cheap  
labour pool has dried up, hence the departure  
of the British firms with all the unemploy-  
ment and other consequences that entails.  
The sabotage of the Portuguese economy by  
Britain is however fairly general. In seven  
months this year, exports to Portugal fell by  
half and imports from Portugal by 22 per  
cent.

## DECLINE

The decline in output, the closure of subsid-  
iaries by the multinationals such as Plessey  
and ITT, the demobilisation of the army,  
the return of the African settlers, and the  
slowdown of emigration as unemployment  
rises in France and Germany also mean that  
unemployment in Portugal has shot up dram-  
atically. Today the Centre for Studies and  
Planning estimates that 500,000 are on the  
dole -- 17 per cent of the working popula-  
tion.

However unemployment is only one of

the problems facing the Portuguese workers  
and peasants. Inflation has continued unab-  
ated since the fall of Caetano. During June  
of this year prices rose by 3.12 per cent,  
while over the previous year food prices had  
increased by 28.3 per cent. Thus despite the  
wage increases that have been won -- increas-  
es that according to the *Financial Times* 'have  
sent shockwaves through the conservative  
upper echelons of the Portuguese banking  
and industrial world' -- they have only been  
sufficient to keep up with the rate of infla-  
tion.

The Sixth Provisional Government, to com-  
plement its drive to reimpose 'law and order',  
has put forward a wide-ranging plan of auster-  
ity measures to solve the crisis. This austerity  
programme includes the rationing of basic  
foods, price controls, the freezing of wage  
negotiations until after Christmas, and restric-  
tions on the use of heat and lighting to cut  
Portugal's huge oil imports. The aim is to cut  
consumer spending by over £600 million and  
transfer these resources to industry.

## COME-BACK

At the same time proposals are being  
made to encourage foreign investors to re-  
main and develop in Portugal. The very  
firms who have drained the economy of  
resources are being asked to come back for  
more. Guarantees have already been given  
that no foreign interests will be nationalised,  
and if such a tragic event should occur then  
full compensation will be paid.

A real workers government would have  
drawn no distinction between the Portuguese  
bourgeoisie and their foreign counterparts. All  
the key sectors of the economy, irrespective  
of foreign interests, should have been nation-  
alised without compensation.

Recently the building workers smashed  
through the austerity measures by gaining a  
44 per cent wage increase. Other sections  
of the working class are demanding the same.  
However the defeat of the left units' adven-  
turer uprising has given the Government the  
victory it needed to go on the offensive.

With many other workers likely to be dem-  
anding big wage rises to compensate for the  
effects of inflation, a confrontation is certain.  
The Lisnave shipyard workers, despite the  
world crisis of ship repairing as the oil tankers  
lie idle, have shown the way by demanding  
the total nationalisation of this sector, the  
reconversion of the yards, workers control  
over production, and 'the planning of the  
economy at a national level, for only in this  
way can one have a correct notion of the forms  
of productive reconversion of the various  
sectors without leading them to a collision'.

The choice facing the workers and peasants  
is either the austerity measure of the Sixth  
Government or a planned economy as the Lis-  
nave workers suggest. But it is a choice whose  
outcome can be influenced by socialists in  
the rest of Europe. It is the multinationals  
based in Britain, France, Germany and Swit-  
zerland who have been sabotaging the Portu-  
guese economy with the backing of the  
social democratic leaders like Wilson, Mitter-  
rand and Schmidt. International solidarity  
throughout Europe can play an important  
role in defending the gains of the Portuguese  
revolution and extending them to final vic-  
tory and a planned, socialist economy.

RIC SISSONS



Worker at Lisnave ship repair yard--boycotted by international capitalism

# "Never play at insurrection"

Karl Marx

## An Open Letter to the International Socialists on Portugal

Over the past few months we have on several occasions criticised both the International Socialists and the organisation in Portugal with which you have established fraternal links – the Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat – Revolutionary Brigades (PRP-BR). This has been part of a vitally necessary discussion on the revolutionary left about developments in the Iberian Peninsula.

Now, however, events have taken a qualitative turn. What occurred in Lisbon last week necessitates more than a fraternal polemic.

What occurred in Lisbon was not a desperate rearguard action against a ferocious right-wing assault. On the contrary, until then the political situation was evolving entirely against the capitalists.

The mobilisations around the construction workers' strike and the CP/workers commissions' demonstration on 16 November were amongst the most powerful in the whole period since 25 April 1974. The Government was on the brink of falling. The pretext for the events – the dismissal of Carvalho as the military governor of Lisbon – did not strengthen the Government's position because no-one would have obeyed his successor anyway; indeed, the struggle against Lourenço would have further undermined the authority of the whole officer corps.

No, what occurred in Lisbon was an insane adventure carried through by ultra-left political groups and left wing officers, which received no support from any section of the masses and has imposed a very severe defeat on the Portuguese revolution. Overnight the whole political, and even more the military situation in Portugal has moved against the working class. This concerns the IS in particular

**'It is now time for the revolutionary forces and the workers to pose the question of an insurrection.'** PRP Declaration 30 September.

because the PRP with its 'immediate insurrection' line was responsible perhaps more than any other organisation for imposing this bitter defeat on the Portuguese revolution.

We fully recognise the valuable solidarity work which the IS has done on Portugal. We do not for one moment doubt the *personal* dedication and bravery of the members of the PRP and their devotion to the cause of the working class. But this cannot hide the fact that the *line* of this organisation has played a major role in imposing the heaviest defeat to date on the Portuguese revolution.

The IS have not only supported this organisation politically and financially in the past, but according to last week's issue of *Socialist Worker*, you actually propose to continue this policy and distribute vast quantities of the PRP's manifesto and other material. We will of course join with you in any moves against the repression of the PRP or any other organisation of the left in Portugal; but it is also necessary to point out the disastrous nature of your relations with this organisation and the political consequences which this entails.

Throughout the entire period of the Portuguese revolution the PRP has spread the most dangerous illusions in the nature of the left-wing officers in Portugal. This is well summed up in the PRP paper *Revolucão's* description of Carvalho: 'We underline the courage of this soldier, who is always ready to advance without fear' (8 May 1975). We only need remind you of Carvalho's role in attempting to break strikes, his flirtation with the Melo Antunes group, his implication in the military occupation of the radio stations and so on to show what nonsense that is.

In the end Carvalho – to his credit – refused to go along with the line of Azevedo; but his main role has been to provide a left cover for the Armed Forces Movement.

In the recent period, however, the line of the PRP had become even more dangerous with the adoption of a *short term* orientation towards an armed uprising. On 30 September it issued a declaration stating: 'It is now time for the revolutionary forces and the workers to pose the question of an insurrection' (*Diário de Lisboa*, 30 September). It continued this line throughout October and November – stating at a press conference on 10 November: 'Only a national insurrection on the basis of armed power represents at the present time a way out of the contradictions of the revolutionary process in Portugal' (*Révolution*, 14 November).

This was based on a so-called analysis that: 'The organisation of the masses has already attained a level sufficient to inherit power' (press conference given by Francisco Marquez, a leader of the PRP, 7 November – quoted in *Révolution*, 14 November) – which leaves out such 'little' facts as the question of the Socialist Party, the domination of the workers' movement by the Communist Party the fact that even in the Lisbon area a really systematic centralisation of the organs of workers' democracy does not exist, the fact that even in such a major city as Oporto the revolutionaries are in a tiny minority, etc.

Under such circumstances it is only too clear what everyone understood by the appeal of the PRP and the MES (Movement of the Socialist Left) quoted in last week's *Socialist Worker*: 'The time has come to give a lesson to the bourgeoisie. Against the Sixth Provisional Government. Against the counter revolutionary council. Long live the armed working class. Long live the socialist revolution.'

Given this insurrectionist line, and the undoubted fact that the PRP and the MES have a real influence in certain regiments (indeed, scientifically speaking the line of the PRP could be said to represent a certain stratum of lower officers) what occurred in Lisbon last week was easily foreseeable. It does not matter particularly whether what was involved was

reaction.

Francisco Marquez, a leading member of the PRP, said at the press conference on 7 November: 'Social democracy represents simply the shortest road to fascism' and 'an alliance of the Socialist Party and the PPD is openly preparing the victory of fascism'. Of course, if this were true, then obviously the only course would be towards an armed uprising in the short term – after all, even a defeated insurrection would be much better than allowing the workers to be passively crushed as they were by Hitler in Germany. In fact, however, it was manifest nonsense.

Furthermore this nonsense has now been carried over into *Socialist Worker* itself. The last issue describes the Socialists in Portugal as 'playing the same so-called "moderate" role played by the Christian

**'An alliance of the Socialist Party and the PPD is openly preparing the victory of fascism.'** Francisco Marquez – a leader of the PRP – 7 November.

Democrat leaders in Chile two years ago'. But the Christian Democrats supported the Pinochet coup. In Portugal, when the real Pinochet makes his move, he will be just as careful to smash Soares and the Socialist Party as he will be to kill the revolutionary left and the CP. Anyone with a grain of sense understands that against this they will be fighting alongside the SP, and probably even Soares, against the Portuguese Pinochet. The PRP and now the IS leadership make the same mistake as the Stalinists in the Third Period in Germany – to confuse the counter-

later the Fifth Government was succeeded by the reactionary administration of Azevedo. Similarly, last week's criminal adventure in Lisbon was greeted with the banner 'Portugal: Everything at Stake'. The only thing that can be said on that is – thank goodness it wasn't true! If *everything* was at stake then presumably not merely is everything lost – and with ridiculous ease – but the consciousness of the Portuguese workers is so low that at the decisive moment not one single section of the masses acted.

Fortunately the Portuguese working class is far from being so backward. The IS leadership must have known that what was involved, far from being the decisive test, was an adventure perpetrated by the PRP, MES etc. and a handful of their supporters. To use Trotsky's famous phrase, what happened in Lisbon was an attempt to rape the working class having failed to persuade it. The tragedy is that it will not merely be the militants of the PRP, MES etc but the mass of the Portuguese workers who will have to pay the price for this insane adventure.

*Socialist Worker* and the IS leadership have also followed the PRP in their ridiculous estimates of the degree to which the domination of the reformist parties over the working class has been broken. Tony Cliff even goes so far as to claim in his pamphlet (page 19) that the Socialist Party has no base in the working class – which fails to explain how the SP has still won union elections in Lisbon despite its general loss of working class support there; while in Oporto and the North the *majority* of the workers support the Socialist Party.

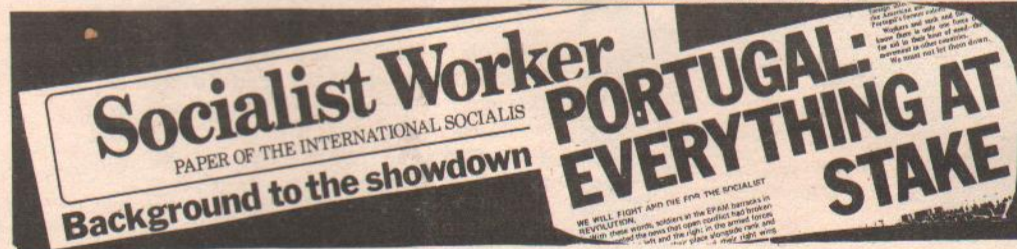
More recently, however, the IS leadership has begun to extend this type of idiocy even to the Communist Party. In the October issue of *International Socialism* (No. 83) Chris Harman informs us that 'while the Communists retain some [sic] influence in the workers movement', nevertheless 'with the SUV the revolutionary left has emerged as a major contender in the national struggle for

**'While the Communists retain some influence in the working class'.....'With the SUV the revolutionary left has emerged as a major contender in the national struggle for power.'** *International Socialism* No. 83

power'. Instead of the reality – that the Communist Party in particular, and the Socialist Party to a certain extent, enjoy the support of the mass of the workers while the revolutionaries as yet command only the support of a vanguard – the entire situation becomes stood on its head. The result of such an analysis is complete political disorientation – with the revolutionaries, rather than using the important vanguard they do influence to win the masses from the CP and the SP, instead seeking to act as 'a major contender in the national struggle for power'. This succeeds only in discrediting and isolating the vanguard and imposing major defeats on the revolution.

What confronts IS militants in relation to Portugal is clear. Develop the solidarity work. Campaign against the repression of the PRP and the other left organisations. **But demand an end to the nonsensical line on Portugal carried in your press and publications. End your absurd relationship with the PRP.**

The situation in Portugal and the Iberian peninsula is too important for such behaviour. Your association with the PRP – an organisation which has helped to impose a severe defeat on the Portuguese revolution – not merely endorses a disastrous line for the situation in Portugal but discredits the entire revolutionary left internationally.



a government provocation, a pre-arranged plan, or anything else. Even if – as is most likely – it was a provocation, the immediate insurrectionist line of the PRP, the MES and the leftist officers with which they were allied meant that they would inevitably fall into the trap.

Of course the IS leadership may claim that all this has nothing to do with them. After all, didn't they caution against a premature insurrectionist line – for example in Cliff's open letters to the PRP printed in *Socialist Worker*?

**'Only a national insurrection on the basis of armed power represents at the present time a way out of the contradictions of the revolutionary process in Portugal.'** PRP Declaration 10 November.

Unfortunately, however, the problem of the PRP's line on insurrection wasn't just some spot on an otherwise healthy sun, but flowed inexorably from its whole politics. A glaring example of this was the PRP's line on the Socialist Party – characterising it not as a reformist party of the working class, but as a party of the ruling class or even as a party of fascist

revolution of Ebert, Schiedeman and the Social Democrats (aimed at smashing a workers revolution to install a bourgeois democracy with the existence of workers organisation) with the counter revolution of Hitler (which not merely smashed bourgeois democracy but the workers organisations as well).

This adoption of completely confused positions by *Socialist Worker* is characteristic of the whole way in which the IS leadership has increasingly dealt with the situation in Portugal. In fact, some of the reporting in *Socialist Worker* has been utterly grotesque: for example, the claim that the left-wing demonstration of 20 August had 150,000 people on it when the real maximum was 60,000; or that the SUV demonstration in Lisbon at the end of September had 85,000 people on it with 100,000 at the rally at the end, and with 12,000 soldiers – 'one fifth of the whole Portuguese army' – taking part, when the real figures were 40,000 on the demonstration with 4,000 soldiers.

This type of thing cannot be brushed aside as a trifling matter of no real consequence. Everyone knows the temptation when reporting any demonstration to add a couple of thousand to the numbers. But to exaggerate the size by 100 per cent, or even give treble the real figures, is totally insane in a revolution when a realistic estimate of the relation of forces is vital. Whether you think you have 4,000 soldiers actively behind you or on the contrary 'a fifth of the entire army' makes a vital difference to your activity. By carrying such reports *Socialist Worker* only succeeds in spreading utter confusion. For example, an ecstatic report of the 20 August demonstration was headed 'Portugal – the turning point' – which singularly fails to explain why a few days



# TIMOR INDEPENDENT

Last Friday the Revolutionary Front for Independent East Timor (Fretilin) declared the country independent from Portuguese colonialism.

The declaration came after months of severe fighting following an abortive coup by the right-wing forces of the Democratic Union of Timorese (UDT) in early August. Since then the UDT and the nakedly pro-Indonesian Timorese Popular Democratic Association (APODETI) have been driven back almost to the Indonesian border.

It is Indonesia — with the tacit agreement of not only the Portuguese but also the Whitlam and Fraser Governments in Australia — which poses the major threat to Timor's independence. Timor is strategically situated near to major shipping and trade routes. But whereas Indonesia has launched an outright invasion—including the shelling of Timor by nine warships from the sea, an action in which five Australian journalists were killed — Portugal and Australia would like to see a more 'peaceful' handover to Indonesia.

Why Fretilin poses a threat to

all imperialist interests in the area is clearly seen by the way it is organising in liberated East Timor. In all areas village councils meet regularly to discuss and organise the production of staple crops. Despite the fighting, the March harvest of corn and rice is expected to be bigger than any under 450 years of Portuguese domination. The stores abandoned by the Chinese merchants are now run under workers control, and all commanders in the army are elected by the soldiers.

It still remains to be seen what overall conception Fretilin has of these developments towards self-organisation by the Timorese masses, and whether it helps to build them into organs with real power. But even now such developments show to the masses of South Asia an alternative to the brutal Indonesian regime of Suharto — which murdered a million communists in 1965 and still fills its prisons with political opponents — and so poses a threat to imperialist interests.

Confronted with the biggest ever ruling class attack at home with the sacking of the Whitlam Government, it is Australian workers who have



taken the first steps in solidarity with the Timor liberation struggle. Australian maritime and waterfront unions have banned the handling of all Indonesian ships and war materials destined for Indonesia. This solidarity must now be extended to make sure that Indonesia can't succeed for imperialism where Portugal failed.



Seven hundred Australians marched through London last Saturday in support of a Labour victory at the polls on 13 December.

Among them were a left-wing contingent organised under the banner of the Australian Socialist Alliance in London, a united front body formed out of a meeting on 25 November attended by 160 people. Attempts by the Labour Party platform to prevent Australian building workers' leader Jack Munday from speaking were thwarted by the insistence of the crowd.

The ASA later headed a further march to picket the *News of the World* offices — owned by Australian press baron Rupert Murdoch, whose press in Australia has led the anti-Labour campaign.

The ASA is holding a further public meeting on Tuesday 9 December at 8 pm in the University of London Union, Malet Street, WC1. Among the speakers will be Jack Munday. Further details from ASA, 56a The Avenue, London W4.

## NUS Conference threat from right

Open Letter from IMG Student Commission

At Aston University recently an enormous general meeting disaffiliated the Students Union from the National Union of Students. Similar moves are planned by the right at Manchester, Liverpool and other universities. The resolution to be debated at this weekend's National Conference of the NUS calling for direct ballot elections for the executive has attracted astounding support.

The aim of this manoeuvre is to render impotent the collective structures of the NUS, i.e. the delegate structure based on union general meetings through to a national delegate conference, with delegates speaking and voting on a mandate already decided by those they are representing. Direct elections would bypass these structures, producing executives with no responsibility to general meetings or conference, elected without any mass democratic discussion over the political basis of their candidature. The NUS would be decisively weakened and incapable of organising adequately to defend student interests.

### Demagogy

We therefore oppose direct elections for precisely the same reason that we oppose the use of the postal ballot to elect trade union officials. Indeed, the issue of direct elections can only be discussed within the framework of right-wing demagogy directed against working class organisations as a whole.

The issue is not democracy in the abstract. Time and again in the history of working class struggles, decisive defeats have been caused by the intervention of the employers and state around 'democracy'. Why do the right stress the freedom of the press — i.e. editorial freedom — during newspaper disputes? Why do employers call for secret ballots of workers during strikes? Again, 'democratic' attitudes on Portugal logically follow the silence throughout the years of the Salazar and Caetano dictatorships.

### Class context

Democracy must be seen in a class context, as arising from and furthering the independent struggles of the working class and students in the present crisis. What the right understand by democracy is the absolute freedom of the individual, in isolation from collective activity, to make an independent choice. Such a choice is impossible. Collective organisation and activity is central to the struggle of the working

class. No worker — or student for that matter — is immune to outside influences. Consequently the best organisations are those which, operating through their own structures, consistently struggle against the outside hostile influences of the state, employers, media, vice-chancellors or principals. By destroying these structures the right hope to give a free rein to such influence and propaganda.

### Lessons

The results of the recent postal ballot in the AUEW hold: some important lessons for student militants. The defeat of the 'lefts' (Jimmy Reid and Bob Wright) and the consequent right-wing majority on the executive was achieved through a mass propaganda campaign on TV and radio and in the local and national press under the banner of 'moderation'. What 'moderation' means, of course, is equally clear — wage restraint, unemployment, cuts in the social services, etc.

This defeat came about precisely because, in the absence of debate in branch meetings and on the shop-floor, the isolation of workers in their homes made them susceptible to the only source of information available — the media. This situation was worsened by the absence of any clear perspective from the Broad Left leadership for organising a struggle against wage-cuts and unemployment.

Only by linking the campaign for a class struggle perspective with a fight for the improved operation of union structures — fought for and developed in the course of struggle — can working class interests be defended. As it is, through postal ballots union leaderships become the terrain of the right.

### Confusions

The analogy with the Broad Left in the NUS is clear as students display increasing demoralisation and confusion on the key political issues of the day. All the fine words about opposing incomes policy were left in a Llandudno conference hall. The NUS executive did not make one mention of the 26 November jobs demonstration in its mailings to local unions.

The Broad Left also fails predictably to understand the nature of the question of democracy. Its conference motion opposes direct elections to the executive, but at the same time calls for college-wide secret ballots for conference delegates.

We support the Broad Left in their call for left unity to oppose the threat of the right. But we do not think that a defeat on one vote at one conference will do away with this threat. The only

way to combat the right wing is to fight for a political alternative based on an alliance with the working class. This alone will enable students to defend their interests against ruling class attacks and fight for the democratic structures which are most suitable for that struggle, against the idea that the left must bureaucratically defend its control of student union structures.

For these reasons we are calling on all the left tendencies in the NUS to agree to a joint public meeting at the conference to discuss these questions. We are also asking the left tendencies to meet to draw up a joint statement and hopefully a united left resolution at the conference. Finally we call on all socialist students to discuss our differences and support this call for unity.

## Solidarity with MPLA

The African revolution is at stake in Angola. Western imperialism is pouring in weapons and cash to back the FNLA and UNITA. South African troops and the Portuguese fascists of the ELP are also involved in the war against the MPLA. International solidarity with the latter is therefore vital.

Solidarity Rally—Friday 12 Dec, 7.30pm

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square (Holborn Tube)

Speakers and a film 'Angola in Struggle'  
Organised by Angola Solidarity Committee



# FUND DRIVE IN DANGER

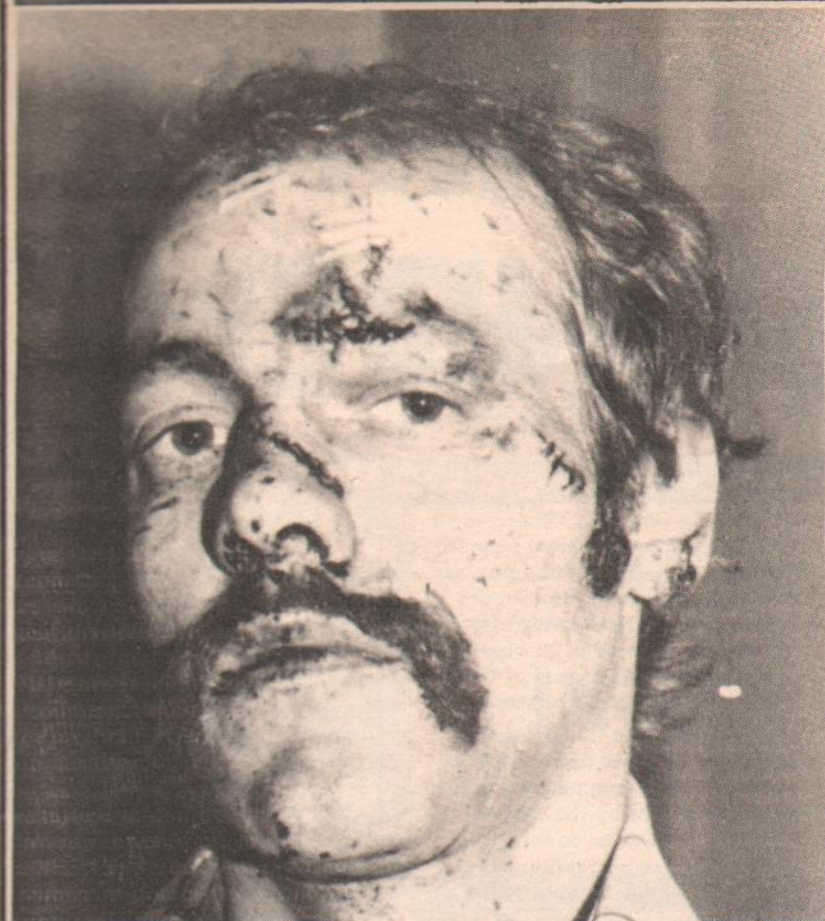
Last week we told you that we needed to raise at least £15 an hour (£1,400) if we were to meet our November target on time. Well, either comrades' watches are slow or the post is late! So in order to give all our readers a chance to get their money in, we have extended the deadline for one week to Monday 8 December.

So far we have received:

Supporter in Preston	£55	Member of TOM	£1
H. Jones, Wales	£3	Teacher	£5
East London IMG	£13.50	NSMM member	£5
Engineering worker	£5.40	AUEW member	£5
IMG Stall at Rouge Fete	£700	Supporter in Bath	£4
Health Worker	£5	North East reader	£27
Bus worker	£5	Sympathisers in Leicester	£20
L. Hodges	£3	Anonymous donations	£57
L. McDougal	£5	Bus conductor	£12
Birmingham teacher	£50	Guildford IMG	£6
Supporters in Leeds	£40.60	North London IMG	£140
L. in Glasgow	£50	Scottish supporters	£300

We have also had three big donations from individuals — one of £1,000, and two of £250. That makes a grand total so far of £3,017.50. In other words, we still need to raise another £982.50 by 8 December to meet our target. We have had lots of promises of money from IMG branches, but so far only NORTH LONDON IMG has 'come up with the goods'.

So come on comrades, don't let us down! If 3,000 readers gave us one pint of beer over the next week and donated the price to the Fund Drive, we would be almost there. Isn't that a small sacrifice to make in order to strengthen the IMG and its struggle for the overthrow of capitalism? Rush in your money now to: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.



Labour Party member Graham Atkinson after NF thugs had finished with him

# NF thugs attack meeting

With a scream of 'scum like you ought to be garrotted', National Front thugs launched a vicious and planned attack on a National Council of Civil Liberties conference in Manchester last Sunday. Chunks of concrete were hurled at the platform and bottles flew through the air.

To ensure maximum personal injury, NF members — aided by Ulster Volunteer Force and British Movement goons — sealed off the doors and then lashed out with chairs, bottles and glasses. The mother of one of the speakers was smashed over the head with a chair, and a prominent member of the local Labour Party needed 19 stitches in a face wound.

## MAYHEM

Despite the mayhem, the conference reconvened 1½ hours later to continue its discussion on the Prevention of Terrorism Act. The Conference was sponsored by AUEW-TASS No 10 Divisional Council, Salford and Manchester Trades Councils, Manchester AUEW District Committee, Manchester NCCL, and the National Union of Students area organisation.

The fascists' attack underlined only too grimly the points made in the resolution which was to be

put to the conference: that the Prevention of Terrorism Act is a threat to the Irish community and the whole labour movement. In fact, it is the atmosphere of intimidation created by this Act — making Ireland the focus for all reactionary forces — which allowed the Front to launch its assault.

## PERNICIOUS

The responsibility for this state of affairs lies squarely on the shoulders of the Wilson Government, which introduced this pernicious Act to back up its repressive policy in Ireland and deny the Irish people their right to self-determination. *Red Weekly's* persistent warning that British workers ignore the struggle in Ireland at their own expense is coming home with a vengeance.

Sunday's events make one other thing clear. The split in the National Front has put everything up for grabs. The kid gloves are off, and more attacks can be expected. From now on meetings of workers' organisations, especially on the question of Ireland, must be protected by self-defence pickets. Fascists smashing up working class meetings is another 'Return to the Thirties' the workers' movement can ill afford and must prevent.

# NO TEARS BUT NO WAY

We shed no tears for the end of Ross McWhirter. Apart from his well-known activities in raising huge sums against the Irish freedom fighters, campaigning for the death penalty, and taking to court workers involved in strikes, this man was also involved in organised vigilantes to attack railworkers and organising strike-breaking squads. He was a fascist in the strictest sense.

But those who shot McWhirter — no matter what their intentions — aided not the working class or the Irish freedom struggle but those who stand for reac-

tion. A tremendous argument has been given for the restoration of the death penalty, the fascists have been given a martyr, and a despicable swine has been given a halo of respectability.

Hatred and contempt for Ross McWhirter were totally justifiable. But the crimes of capitalism are too great for merely individual acts to be any recompense. Only the total destruction of this system and its national and class oppression will suffice. Those who shot McWhirter put off that day rather than bringing it forward.

# 7 DAYS in the 6 COUNTIES

JOHN MAGEE reports from Belfast

The closure of the British Government incident centres in Northern Ireland — from which direct phone links were maintained with Provisional Sinn Fein — has been dismissed as unimportant by the Provisionals. The latter have declared that their own incident centres (now termed 'advice centres') will remain open to offer 'exactly the same service to the people'.

The British decision to close the centres was announced by the Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees, in a one-line statement which said that they 'no longer served a useful function'. The incident centres were set up following the truce, and were purportedly designed to prevent any unintentional breakdown. They were thus an integral part of the truce between the British Army and the Provisionals, as Sinn Fein leader Ruari O'Bradaigh pointed out only a few weeks ago when he said that they were 'the legs on which the truce stands'.

It is surprising, therefore, that the Provisionals should now dismiss the closures of the centres so lightly. They have not only declared that the truce will continue, but have described the closure as 'an illustration of the extreme frustration of the British Government, defeated on yet another war front' (Belfast Executive, Sinn Fein).

It is difficult to grasp the reasons for such an assessment. As the Provisionals themselves have pointed out, the British Army has breached the truce on many occasions. Rees has frequently made it clear that his only interest in the truce is to allow a free rein to the British Army and Royal Ulster Constabulary to carry through their campaign of harassment against the anti-Unionist working class. In practice, there has been no truce — but rather a ceasefire on the part of the Provisional IRA.

## ASSESSMENT

A more realistic assessment would see the closure of the incident centres as a highly significant indication of Britain's intentions. Rees's announcement was made while the two major Republican organisations — the Provisionals and the Officials — were locked in violent conflict with each other. This feud was the perfect pretext Rees needed to concede one of the major demands made by the Loyalists, and also by the collaborationist SDLP. He also announced the ending of special category (political) prisoner status at roughly the same time, openly declaring his intention to 'depoliticise' the anti-imperialist struggle.

Certainly Britain's policy has not consisted entirely of naked repression. The phasing out of internment, earlier release dates for prisoners, and the truce itself all benefited the nationalist working class on the surface. But if the carrot has been big, the proverbial stick has been even bigger. More importantly, the carrot itself is rotten right through. Britain has given no commitment to end internment permanently,

while the price of earlier release dates may well be the sympathy of the ghettos. And the biggest price of all may have to be paid for the truce itself.

The Provisionals' belief that the British embarked on the truce as some sort of crusade to make 'respectable politicians' of them is very much mistaken. The Government agreed to the truce as a tactic which could disorientate the anti-Unionist working class and thus strengthen the hold of imperialism. Far from fostering Sinn Fein as a political movement, Britain's aim was to destroy the influence of the Republican movement — Sinn Fein included.

The truce was thus accompanied by massive recruitment campaigns for the Ulster Defence Regiment and the RUC. Huge expenditure has taken place on the repressive machinery — on more efficient police stations, interrogation centres, prisons, etc. The British Army and the RUC have been allowed to launch a new offensive against the ghettos, with widespread screening and searches, and unprecedented numbers of arrests. The Loyalist-controlled courts have also been given the go-ahead to impose even more severe sentences.

## INTO THE TRAP

The way in which the Provisional leadership operated the truce unfortunately fell into imperialism's trap, spreading illusions that negotiations would lead to 'victory'. Instead of open negotiations — in which the mass of the nationalist working class could have participated — the Provisionals kept them behind closed doors.

The Provisionals thus failed to use the truce as a vehicle to allow the anti-imperialist forces to assess the relationship of forces with imperialism and Loyalism, and thus plan initiatives which could rebuild the confidence of the nationalist working class and shift the relationship in its favour. The mass participation of the anti-Unionist working class is not just some extra comfort for the 'Soldiers of Ireland', but an absolutely essential requirement for the armed campaign. Yet the Provisional leadership have bluntly rejected every appeal for anti-imperialist unity, preferring to call upon the people to 'trust in the Leadership'.

The Provisional leadership prefer to ignore the decreasing militancy and increasing demoralisation within the ghettos. But neither the imperialists nor the Loyalists will ignore it. Already the last week has seen an intensification of British Army operations against nationalist districts, and one of the most brutal sectarian assassinations yet perpetrated by Loyalist extremists.

The carrot and the stick is an old policy of imperialism. But its age makes it no less dangerous, and it is now an urgent task of militants to prepare the nationalist working class to resist and defeat it. The key to the solution of this task is the development of united action involving all the anti-imperialist forces. The Provisional leadership must not be allowed to block such unity.

## PAT ARRESTED AGAIN

Pat Arrowsmith, who has been prominent in the campaign for the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland, has once again been arrested by the police and then released without any charges against her.

She and fellow campaigner Peter Magee were on their way to speak at a meeting organised by the Sheffield Troops Out campaign when police detained them at the city's railway station. The alleged reason was 'suspicion they might commit something arrestable'. Only when left-wing Sheffield MP Martin Flannery telephoned the police station were Arrowsmith and Magee released.

They then went on to address a highly successful meeting attended by more than 100 people. An emergency resolution proposed by an IMG shop steward at James Neill's engineering factory, calling for an emergency meeting of the Trades Council executive to call for an enquiry and send a protest delegation to the Home Office, was passed unanimously.



Pat Arrowsmith speaking at the Manchester conference after it was reconvened

# — WHAT'S ON —

**IMG CENTRAL LONDON STUDENTS** public meeting: 'Revolutionary perspectives for Ireland', Weds 10 December, 7pm, in University of London Union, Milet Street, WC1.

**LONDON SOCIALIST FORUM:** 'The Civil War in Lebanon', Tues 9 Dec, 7.30pm—Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. All welcome.

**IRELAND and the British Labour Movement**—public meeting with speakers Mike Knowles (Sec, Hackney Trades Council) and Dom Flynn (Hackney North LPYS), Fri 12 Dec, 7.45pm, Manchester Town Hall Extension Basement Theatre. Organised by TOM.

**DEFEND THE RIGHT TO WORK** badges—17p inc postage from: Jo-Ann, 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1. Bulk rates on enquiry (01-278 9526).

**CONFERENCE ON IRELAND** organised by East London TOM with workshops and film—Saturday 13 Dec, 10am—5pm. Social in evening (starts 8pm), entrance 60p. Both at City of London Poly, Whitechapel High Street (Aldgate East tube).

**HARINGEY STREET THEATRE** have a play about the Working Women's Charter available evenings and weekends, expenses only. Phone 888 2610 (evenings).

**BIRMINGHAM ENGINEERING VOICE** public meeting on 'The labour movement—past, present, and future'. Discussion introduced by Harry Wicks. Also discussion on 'After the AUEW elections—what next?' Australian Bar, Thurs 11—Weds 10 Dec, 8pm.

**CRITIQUE SEMINAR** 11 December—Chris Arthur of Sussex University on 'E-B Pasukanis: A Materialist Conception of Law', 7.30pm, St Clements Building (Room S117), London School of Economics.

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE CUTS** in public spending—demonstration in Birmingham 13 December. Assemble 10.30am, Victoria Square. Speakers include Tom Litterick MP, Ernie Roberts (Asst Gen Sec, AUEW), Jeff Rooker MP, Ken Barlow (UCATT), Val Coultas (NUS Exec), Chris Adamson (NUPE), Gordon Green (NUT).

**RED LADDER THEATRE** Grand Variety Night. This pioneer socialist theatre group needs money for permanent move to North of England. They will perform

their new play 'It Makes Yer Sick'—about Health and the NHS—at a special benefit where they will be joined by much acclaimed women's rock band Steptey Sisters. Fri 5 Dec, 7.30, St Pancras Assembly Rooms (Kings X tube). Bar from 7pm. Tickets £1.

**MAYDAY THEATRE** now have available two campaign plays each 25 minutes long, suitable for your meeting, conference, canteen, etc. One is on unemployment and the fight back, the other is on the British Army presence in Ireland. More information from 23 Atherton Street, SW11 (223 3419).

**'REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST' 3/4**, a special double issue of the theoretical journal of the Revolutionary Communist Group on the crisis, now available price 50p. Are trade unions responsible for inflation and unemployment? Must state expenditure be cut to allow a 'regeneration' of British industry? Why has the post-war boom ended? These central questions are answered for the first time from a marxist standpoint in 'Inflation, the Crisis and the Post-war Boom' by David Yaffe and Paul Bullock, and 'On Productive and Unproductive Labour' by Peter Howell. Becoming recognised as the only marxist journal seriously confronting the major issues facing the working class, 'Revolutionary Communist' 3/4 is on sale at political meetings, from left bookshops, or direct (send 50p+13p post) from RCG Publications (RW) Ltd, 49 Raiton Road, London SE24 0LN.

**REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST GROUP:** 'Unemployment, Inflation—The Reason Why'. A Rally to launch 'Revolutionary Communist' No. 3/4 Special issue on the crisis. Speakers: David Yaffe, Chris Davies. Friday 5 December, 7.30pm, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London WC1.

**RCG BRISTOL** Public Day School on Inflation and the Crisis. Speakers David Yaffe and Chris Davies. Saturday 6 December, 11am—5pm, Students Union, Queens Road, Bristol.

**RCG MANCHESTER** Public Day School on Inflation and the Crisis. Speaker David Yaffe. Sat 13 Dec, 10am—4pm, 'Lass O'Gowrie', Charles Street.

# Battered Wives

## victims of oppressive



It is understandable when women who have been battered by men become 'men-haters' and come to believe that it is 'just their nature'. This however does not explain the increase in 'wife-battering', or its absence in some other societies. Nor for that matter does it explain the oppression that many men themselves feel. It is something which can only be explained in terms of the general sexist and class oppression of our society.

There is enormous pressure on us to conform to certain sex-linked roles — through the way we've been brought up by our parents, our education at school, the books and comics we read, the television programmes and adverts we see. The sex-role stereotypes to which women are 'urged' to conform are of a passive, dependent, somewhat helpless, sexy, 'attractive' young female who is only really fulfilled by getting married and having children and engaging in perhaps a few harmless, home-centred hobbies. The male is encouraged to be strong, dominant, independent, unemotional, aggressive and virile, who is fulfilled by getting an education and then a good job.

Those who don't conform to these roles in obvious ways — such as 'fat' or 'ugly' girls, spinsters, or men with obvious feminine characteristics — suffer for it by being made the object of jokes and being gener-

## sex roles by Anne Chesterton

ally left out of things. This is seen most clearly in the case of homosexuals, whose very sexuality represents a threat to the 'normal' prescribed sex roles. So homosexuals are ostracised and told they are sick.

Most of us conform to these roles, albeit unconsciously, even though for many of us they conflict with our own inclinations. This can and often does give rise to marital strife. The woman is often frustrated by having to be financially and legally dependent on her husband. She wearies of being tied to the home, of having to do an uninspiring and low paid job that doesn't realise her potential. Invariably she has to face the main responsibility of looking after the children.

### Agressive

The man is also often frustrated by such things. He has to take legal and financial responsibility for a wife and children. He has to suppress his emotions, and live up to the image of masculinity and virility that is expected of him. Each sex is brought up to expect that their partner will fulfill the prescribed role, and often unintentionally puts unbearable pressure on the other to do so.

For the man, this frustration (or his failure, as he, his wife, or others

see it, to live up to society's expectations because he is out of work, feels emotionally 'weak', or thinks he's sexually 'incompetent') can lead him to try and compensate by being overbearing and aggressive, especially as this is seen as a specifically masculine attribute. In an attempt to assert his masculinity he will often try to make his wife seem weak and dependent on him, which he can usually do by using his superior physical strength on her. That this gives some men temporary relief is perhaps shown by the fact that they often become 'loving' and remorseful once the wife is in a battered and tearful state.

Having clearly defined sex roles makes it easier to divide labour on sex lines. There has been a sexual division of labour in most cultures, but this division has intensified under capitalism, benefiting the ruling class in a number of ways. It has enabled the ruling class to pay a large section of the workforce lower wages.

### Ideology

By perpetuating the ideology that women should be in the home — even though industry couldn't manage without vast numbers of women in the factories — lower wages are justi-

fied on the assumption that they don't need the money because they're not the 'bread-winners' and that they don't really have the right to work anyway. Thus they are also used as a reserve labour force. In these respects, as in many others, the position of women is very similar to that of black and coloured people.

Another advantage to capitalism is that, by fulfilling their role as wives and mothers within the context of the family, they perform work in the home which is essential, both economically and ideologically, to the maintenance of the capitalist system.

### Divisions

Furthermore, it always benefits capitalism to have divisions in the working class whether they be on the basis of sex, colour, nationality, religion or whatever. In the case of sex it is a 50/50 division, and all divisions in the working class undermine its collective strength.

The lack of help that battered wives get from doctors, social workers and public figures like councillors is not simply due to a lack of finance and facilities — important as these things are. The great majority of these professional people and officials have been socialised to accept the inferior role that capitalism prescribes for women.

They assume that a woman's first duty is to her husband and children. Her rights and her potentialities have to be subordinated to that over-riding need. Consequently their first concern is to effect a reconciliation. The social conditions that have created the situation are ignored, and they therefore try to 'solve' the conflict at the private level. In reality most

of them do nothing more than perpetuate the oppression of women.

Unfortunately many 'good trade union militants' also do not understand the oppression of women (or gays for that matter) or its significance for the working class as a whole and so they effectively help the ruling class in its 'divide and rule' tactics by maintaining the economic and social differences between men and women. By trying to preserve their own position — for example, when trade unionists oppose training for women for fear of competition for 'their' better paid jobs — they are preserving the status quo and thus the basis of their own exploitation.

It is not surprising that the crisis of capitalism is reflected today in marriage and the family. Capitalism needs to reinforce the family and the 'traditional' roles of the sexes, and so many of the gains that have been made by women are now being threatened — such as abortion, nursery provision and further education opportunities.

### Intensification

At the same time many men and women face unemployment, and the financial burden on the family increases all the time as inflation cuts into 'restrained' wages. These sorts of pressures can only serve to intensify the conflict that is often just beneath or on the surface in many relationships.

It is only by understanding the basis of sexist oppression, and by fighting it on all fronts on which it occurs, that we can destroy the root causes of such things as 'wife-battering' and women's oppression in general.

## Women's Aid



We would like to point out several important factors that were not raised in your article on battered women and the take-over by Chiswick Women's Aid of the Court Hotel in Richmond.

For the past two years the Richmond Women's Action Group has been trying to get the Council to give them a house as a refuge for battered women but have had no success. Although the inaction of local councils often makes squatting the only means of providing refuges, Chiswick Women's Aid never attempted to consult the Richmond group as to how the take-over would affect their struggles with Richmond Council. Co-operative efforts between the Women's Aid groups is essential in the fight for support and financial aid from the state and local authorities, this being one of the main motivations for the setting up of the National Women's Aid Federation.

The question of an 'open door' policy in running a battered women's refuge is also an issue which received no explanation in your article. It is impossible for any refuge to operate successfully a complete 'open door' policy. The number of battered women who need accommodation at refuges far exceeds the space available in existing refuges. This means that in a situation where no woman is turned

away the result is severe overcrowding, which only exacerbates women's problems and forces them to put up with conditions which no-one should have to live in, even though many women may feel that overcrowding is preferable to violence.

A complete 'open door' policy can also mean that the refuge is used by Social Services and other agencies, with the assumption that the refuge can and will deal with every case of battering, and that there is therefore no need for the state and local authorities to accept their responsibility to provide assistance in the setting up of refuges. Most refuges affiliated to the Women's Aid Federation make every effort to provide immediate refuge to women, while at the same time pressuring their local councils to take responsibility.

These issues are important in the fight of battered women and should not be glossed over by the left as they are by the bourgeois press.

**ISLINGTON WOMEN'S AID**

Having read your article on battered women (20 November), we feel it necessary to correct you on several points.

First, we think that Red Weekly should be aware that Chiswick Women's Aid should not be taken as be-

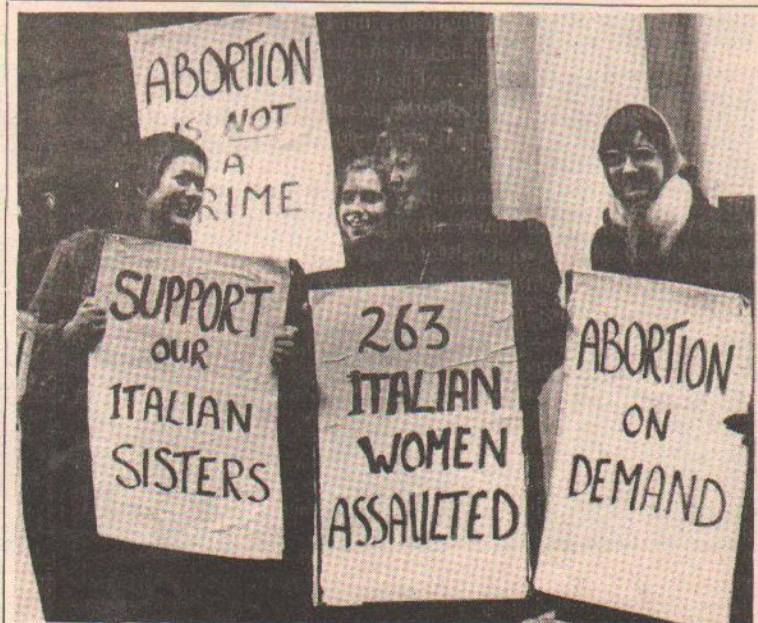
ing representative of the Women's Aid movement. Approximately fifty groups from all over the country are affiliated to the Federation of Women's Aid Centres, a national organisation which Chiswick have chosen not to join. Therefore we feel that an article on battered women and Women's Aid should be written in consultation, not only with Chiswick Women's Aid, but with the above federation.

Further, we must point out that the article was misleading on two accounts:-

1. Chiswick Women's Aid is not the only group with an 'open door' policy; for example, the seven refuges in the Yorkshire area, to the best of our knowledge, would never turn a woman in need away.

2. Most Women's Aid groups are fully aware of the political significance and causes of wife-battering. The York group was set up by feminist women, and we view the phenomenon as part of the general oppression which women suffer in patriarchal societies. We realise that a real solution to the problem lies in structural and cultural changes in the society in which we live. This indeed is the general perspective of the national organisation, as written into the constitution.

PAT YOUNG, JANIE NEWTON-MOSS  
(York Women's Aid)



### INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION ON ABORTION

This Saturday, 6 December, is the international day of action on abortion set earlier this year by a meeting of representatives from the women's movement in various European countries. There will be an international demonstration in Rome—to which the National Abortion Campaign is sending a contingent—and a solidarity picket in London the same day from 1-2.30pm outside the Italian Airways office, 251-259 Regents Street, London W1.

Italy has been chosen as the immediate focus for the campaign because its restrictions force 1½ million women to undergo illegal abortions every year. Several thousand of them die in the process.

# Follow Innocenti -

# CHRYSLER-

# OCCUPY NOW!

# RED WEEKLY

Last Friday, 4,300 workers at Chrysler's Ryton assembly plant in Coventry picked up their pay packets - perhaps for the last time. They have been laid off indefinitely.

In early November the workers were told that there were only eleven production days left to Christmas. The plant unions accepted this but asked to work all these in November so that social security could be claimed in full for December. But last Friday no new job cards were issued for January - and in all likelihood they never will be.

The talks going on between American boss John Riccardo and the Labour Government are farcical. Chrysler don't want their British plant - which has made losses in seven out of eleven years - on top of their world-wide losses of £116 million in the first nine months of 1975. But nor does the Labour Government want to pick up the bankrupt UK operation.

## Free gift

This is despite the fact that - according to one recent story - Riccardo has even offered the Government the plant for nothing! If Chrysler workers continue to follow the advice of Bob Morris, Transport & General Workers Union convenor at the Stoke, Coventry plant, who told a recent mass meeting that their fate rested in the hands of the Labour Government, they are in serious trouble.

Yet a fight back is possible. A mass meeting of seven thousand white collar and manual workers at Linwood - which will be reduced to a ghost-town if Chrysler closes - endorsed their stewards' demand that Chrysler be nationalised without compensation and that any attempt at closure be met by occupation.

## Failure

And despite the failure of the plant leadership at Ryton to give a lead, many workers there were voicing support for an immediate sit-in last Friday. They know the choice facing them is to fight for

## James Drake

their jobs at Ryton or face months (if not years) on Coventry's 16,000 long dole queue.

But time is short. The 'difference' between Riccardo and Wilson is between total closure and mass redundancies. The Government's probable solution - £25-£35 million to prop up the Stoke plant and part of the Linwood plant for just as long as knock-down sales to Iran last - will save only a few jobs.

Only the workers themselves can work out a plan for production which defends jobs and produces products for social need rather than private profit. To save all jobs this requires immediate opening of all Chrysler's books by workers committees in every plant.

## Alternatives

This will allow the workers to assess the causes of the crisis, mount a campaign demonstrating the need for nationalisation, and allow them to begin to draw up plans for alternative uses of present plant and equipment. In collaboration with workers facing redundancies in the other car giants - Leyland, Ford and Vauxhall - a workers plan for the motor industry must be developed.

Chrysler workers can follow the example of their Italian brothers and sisters at the British Leyland subsidiary of Innocenti. In their struggle against 1,500 redundancies a solidarity strike of 300,000 metal



Chrysler workers on the march as part of the 20,000 strong demonstration against unemployment which took place in London last Wednesday. Now they can place themselves at the head of the fight for the right to work by occupying to save their jobs.

workers in the city of Milan has already taken place.

Now the plant has been occupied against Leyland's moves to liquidate

the firm, and the trade union movement is threatening more massive solidarity strikes if the jobs are not saved. In the fight for the right to

work Chrysler workers could give the same lead to British workers. And the best way of sending out a rallying call to the labour movement is by occupying to save jobs now.

# Electricians - A glimmer in the darkness

The right wing must be losing its grip. Last week members of the Electricians and Plumbers Union actually started voting for six new executive council positions out of a total of fourteen.

This was too much for the press barons. Fresh from their success in getting their candidates elected in the AUEW elections, the well-known plumbers in the editorial departments of the *Sun*, *Mirror* and *Express* got to work. Their aim: to stop supporters of the rank and file electricians' paper *Flashlight* from winning the elections and ending the EEPTU's support for the Wilson Government's policies.

## Rigging

Ever since Les Cannon and Frank Chapple took over the Electricians in 1961 - following the exposure of ballot rigging by members of the Communist Party - the EEPTU has been notorious for its reactionary positions. In order to defend 'democracy' the right-wing bureaucrats found it necessary to support the banning of all Communist Party members from office - although the CP as an organisation was never implicated in the ballot rigging.

Throughout the 1960s the EEPTU played a leading role in attempting to suppress the growing moves for shop floor democracy. In 1969 the EEPTU threatened to split the Ford unions' National Joint Negotiating Committee unless it accepted management's productivity package - despite the fact that the package had been thrown out at mass meetings throughout the country in the course of a ten week strike. EEPTU official Mark Young declared: 'I will not be party to a capitulation to unofficial shop stewards.'

## Unchanged

The record has continued unchanged. In 1974 the EEPTU refused to implement even an overtime ban - agreed by the other 18 member unions of the Con-

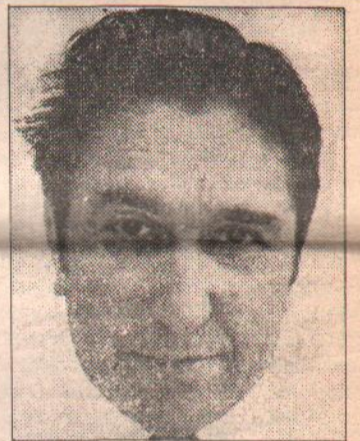
federation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions - in pursuit of a national pay claim.

When they were outvoted the EEPTU bureaucrats simply announced that they would instruct their members to work normally.

## Red-baiting

This year Frank Chapple used red-baiting tactics to attack the anti-Common Market campaign, and at the TUC Congress executive member, Tom Breakwell made a vicious attack on the Shrewsbury pickets. And throughout the years, whenever the hold of the right wing has been threatened, the paid hacks of the bosses' press have been called in to hold the line.

The Communist Party has now re-



Frank Chapple

emerged as a force inside the union through a Broad Left-type campaign around the rank and file paper *Flashlight*. It is this paper and the militants who support it who have put up an alternative slate in the current elections, thus causing the present rumpus in the press.

## Major blow

Despite the inadequacies of the *Flashlight* campaign there is a real chance that some of the Executive Committee seats could fall to the left. This would be a major blow to the right wing in the EEPTU, and go some way to reversing the defeat suffered by the whole working class through the recent victory of the right in the AUEW.

EEPTU member

## LUCAS STEWARDS DEVELOP WORKERS' PLAN

● An electric car which has its own internal generator and can reduce fuel costs by 50 per cent and pollution by 80 per cent.

● A road-rail transport system which could overcome traffic congestion and would use this vehicle.

● Production of retarder break fittings - which could have prevented tragedies like the recent Yorkshire coach crash.

● Requests to the Socialist Medical Association to draw up a 'shopping list' of new equipment needed for the NHS.

These are just a few of the ideas that stewards in the Lucas Aerospace combine have been working on in their bid to halt redundancies - estimated at 7,000 for 1975 alone. They were revealed by Mike Cooley, the former president of AUEW(TASS), at a Birmingham Engineering Voice meeting on 27 November.

The preparation of an alternative

trade union plan for production has been the workers' response to Lucas statements that there is no demand for their present products. The plans are based on the current capacity and tooling of Lucas plants, and were submitted by local union representatives following requests from a delegation of Lucas stewards who visited Tony Benn when he was still Industry Secretary.

Alongside their alternative plan for production, Lucas stewards have been building a combine committee inside Lucas Aerospace which has links with the company's sites in Europe and elsewhere, and have produced their own newspaper with a current circulation of over 10,000. The unions have no illusions that Lucas will implement their socially useful plan, and see the development of strong combine organisation as vital in preparing for a struggle over this issue.

# IT'S UP TO YOU!

Another month has ended. And once again the Fighting Fund is on the balance. We collected £391-£9 short of £400 and £109 short of our target of £500.

The balance of £109 may seem very little to our thousands of readers and to our members. To us it could be the difference between getting a paper out and being shown the door by the bank manager.

So come on comrades. Every reader and every branch of the IMG can take a decision this week. It is a decision which will show your political seriousness. It is a decision to send us the money, make up the difference, and then help us to reach that £500 target for December. The address - in case you need reminding - is 182 Pentonville Road, London N1. Remember-it's up to you.



NAME..... SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
ADDRESS..... DOMESTIC: £6 per year  
£3 for six months  
FOREIGN: £9 per year surface mail  
£12 per year airmail

Write to RED WEEKLY (distribution), 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.