



## TORY GOVERNMENT PREPARES FOR SHOWDOWN

# THE ANSWER— GENERAL STRIKE

The decision of the National Union of Miners to impose an overtime ban throughout the mining industry has brought the working class movement one step closer to a decisive showdown with the Tory Government.

The Tories have quickly served notice that they do not intend to give in without a fight by proclaiming a state of emergency, giving them sweeping powers to deal with the situation. This came hot on the heels of a statement from the Home Secretary that new measures are being taken to prepare a crack-down on picket lines.

By CHRIS BALFOUR

Militants in the pits correctly see the overtime ban as an essential lead up to an all-out strike early in the new year. They must ensure that this is understood by all NUM members, so that a national strike can be called at the most opportune time, and begin to campaign now throughout the labour movement for active, organised support.

Moves are also being made to step up the fight for the engineering workers' claim. In response to the failure of the engineering employers to reply to the claim—presented over two months ago—the executive of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has decided to call for mass meetings of Confederation stewards in every district, to discuss the claim and further action to carry the fight forward.

The mounting struggle of these two powerful groups of workers shows the possibilities that are now open to the working class movement. If united, these struggles could not smash through Phase 3, but could spark off a movement that would get rid of the Tory Government once and for all.

The central task for militants in the NUM and the CSEU unions must be to work towards such a united, all-out offensive. The upcoming CSEU stewards' meetings are an important opportunity to begin this work. Where possible representatives from local pits and other unions should be invited to these meetings, so that discussions on coordinated action can begin. In any event, the question of

building a miners-engineers alliance must be a major item on the agenda.

Along with resolutions calling for a national engineering strike to back up the claim, these meetings should call for the coordination of national strike action with the NUM, and a meeting of the union executives to make plans for this. At the same time, the CSEU stewards meetings should agree to reconvene in the near future for joint discussions with delegates from local pits to work out coordination of the struggle at the local, rank-and-file level.

The power of a miners-engineers alliance lies not only in the combined strength of the unions involved, but in the fact that such a united offensive would raise the confidence and fighting spirit of the entire working class. Hundreds of thousands of workers are already in conflict with the Government. Millions more would press forward with their own demands once a determined struggle was underway. And there are millions of others—students, pensioners, housewives, small traders—who suffer from Tory policy and could be drawn into the struggle.

The best way to unite the grievances of these different groups, and fuse their separate struggles into a single powerful offensive, is through a general strike to bring down the Tory Government. Such a strike, based on the fighting unity of the vast majority of the population, would isolate the Tory Government and make it very difficult for them to play off one group against another, or to resort to strong-arm methods against the more militant.

A mass campaign must be launched throughout the trade unions to educate militants in the steps necessary to prepare for a general strike, and to convince the mass of workers of the necessity and potentiality of this form of struggle. Resolutions should be passed calling for an emergency TUC to organise a general strike to force the Tories out. Mass meetings and demonstrations should back this demand up.

Practical steps must be taken in every locality to prepare for the coming confrontation: mass public meetings to explain why a general strike is needed and what it will mean, the establishment of bodies to defend pickets, and the building of local Councils of Action made up of representatives from the entire local labour movement to coordinate strike preparations.

A general strike call from the TUC would be the best way to launch a centralised offensive against the Tories. But the TUC leaders are unlikely to take that step. Practical preparations such as these are the most effective way of forcing the bureaucrats to move, and, more importantly, will allow the working class to launch a united struggle against the Tories even if the TUC refuses to act.

### FUND DRIVE

The miners have called an overtime ban, and the Government has called a state of emergency. The ruling class in Britain is squaring up for a fight with the working class, and international finance is holding its jacket.

Red Weekly is on the side of the miners and of the working class in the coming struggle. We don't intend to stand on the sidelines—we will be pitching ourselves into the battle. We think we can contribute two things to the fight. We can put forward the political ideas which can help direct it and link it up with other struggles in Britain and internationally. And we can help to rally those forces who want to help the miners and resist the Tories.

But we can't do these things without the financial wherewithal. Our £300 fund drive for November now stands at £172, a good total for this time of the month. But that figure includes a couple of windfalls, so we still need help to reach the target. Send in donations right away, put us over the top this month, and help us to get stuck into the fight.

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## STOP POWELL

Enoch Powell has accepted an invitation to address the annual dinner of the Durham University Debating Society, a right-wing grouping strongly under the influence of the Monday Club. Due to opposition from the students, the University has refused to permit the event to take place on the campus, and it has been transferred to a venue in the town. The left in the University, which has set up a 'Stop Powell Committee,' has called for a wide mobilisation to picket this junket.

In response to this call an ad-hoc mobilising committee has been formed in Sheffield. It intends to send two coaches to Durham and is planning a public meeting on Wednesday, 21 November. The speakers will include John O'Leary, President of Sheffield University, Brian Nicholson, member of the Executive Committee of the T&GWU, Bernard Panter, Manchester District Secretary of the AUEW and a member of the Greater Manchester Anti-Fascist Committee, and Brian Heron of the IMG.

# SOCIALISTS AND ABORTION

The Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) has called a rally and lobby of Parliament for Tuesday, 20 November, to campaign for the repeal of the laws allowing abortion. The International Marxist Group will be supporting a counter-demonstration organised by the Women's Abortion and Contraception Campaign (WACC).

Those who oppose the right to abortion make much of what they call the 'sanctity of life'. They argue that abortion is a kind of murder, and insist that no woman has the right to deny life to a foetus in her body.

But this 'sanctity of life' principle is a fraud. It ignores the actual living life of the woman trampling over her emotions and often desperate needs — in favour of the merely potential life of the foetus.

Furthermore, it denies a woman the right to control her own body's processes, and de facto gives that right to someone else — namely her husband or lover. In this way, a woman is made a victim of her own body's capacity to bear children — especially if she is also denied the right to use contraceptives, or if they fail for any reason.

But when Marxists support the right to free contraception on demand, the right of every woman to control her own body, we do not see it as just a question of this or that piece of legislation. The utterly irrational position of organisations like SPUC cannot be understood in terms simply of this issue, but only in relation to the whole subordinate housewife-mother role assigned to women in capitalist society.

It is at this point that we part company with both those would be socialists who treat the struggle against women's oppression as a 'middle class' diversion from the class struggle now (consigning it instead to some far-off date after the revolution!), and those feminists who still see the struggle for women's liberation as something essentially separate from the class struggle, with women occasionally and coincidentally finding themselves 'in alliance' with the 'working class' (i.e. male trade unionists).

For it is the task of revolutionaries to transform the spontaneous struggle of the working class as it is into a conscious struggle against capitalism by a working class acting for itself. The oppressed position of women in capitalist society is an integral part of capitalism — perpetuating through the family both capitalist ideology and divisions in the working class.

In order to overthrow capitalism, the working class has to make the struggles of all the oppressed its own. Male chauvinism is as dangerous in the labour movement as racism. To deal with

the ideology, however, it is necessary to begin to tackle its material basis. This is why we fight for the labour movement to support demands for creche facilities and communal restaurants, as well as the right to free abortion and contraception on demand. Big struggles, particularly those of national or general strike proportions, provide both the opportunity and the necessity for the development of independent organs of the working class in this field as in others — to free working class women for the class struggle.

For those who still doubt the political significance of issues like abortion, we should note that fascism did not make the same mistake. In the pursuit of their politics, the Nazis made abortion illegal in Germany as part of a conscious State policy of reducing women to the status of 'maid and servant.' Their policy was concisely stated by Wilhelm Frick, Minister of the Interior: 'The mother should be able to devote herself entirely to her children and her family, the wife to the husband. The unmarried girl should be dependent only on such occupations as correspond to the feminine type of being. As for the rest, employment should be given over to the men.' In this way, they carefully nurtured the authoritarian patriarchal family, the man representing the State authority within the family.

Those in the labour movement, and even to our shame in the revolutionary movement, who echo these sentiments in the practice of their daily lives and in their ridicule of women's liberation, must be confronted with the political pedigree of their ideas on women. We have to learn how to meet the threat posed by reactionary mobilisations like that of SPUC against abortion, by taking these issues into the labour movement as part of a concerted campaign to confront male chauvinism in its ranks at every level and win the working class for the struggle to end the oppression of women.

Lawrie White

Police intervened to silence a 30-strong picket outside a meeting organised by the Society for Protection of the Unborn Child (SPUC) in Swansea last week. They also refused the pickets, who included members of the IMG and IS entrance to the meeting of some 500 SPUC supporters. The picket resulted from a meeting at Swansea University, initiated by the local branch of the IMG.

This is the beginning of a continuing campaign. An ad-hoc committee has been set up, and a public meeting was held in the University on Tuesday with a speaker from the Canadian women's liberation movement. This was followed by a larger picket outside another SPUC meeting taking place in Swansea on the same day.

## More clerical workers come out for equal pay

Telephonists and postroom workers — mostly women — joined 38 clerical workers (members of APEX) on Monday in the week-long strike at the Hawker Siddeley factory in Woodford, Cheshire.

They are fighting for equal pay for women, but on Monday morning most of the pickets were men. 'You've got to stand together, haven't you?' said one, and another pointed out that his mother, whom he was replacing on the picket line for the morning, had been working at Hawker-Siddeley longer than him and was earning £4 less.

The strikers are demanding a weekly rise of £1.50 for the women, as the 'first stage' of bringing them into line with the provisions of the Equal Pay Act. Since December 1972 the lowest rate for women in the factory has been £17 and for men £21.50. Last year female workers received notice of job evaluation which announced that several of them would receive three increases of 25p by 1975, others less, and that 'some were already receiving the substantive rate

according to the Act'.

APEX workers have also been on strike at the other Hawker-Siddeley factory at Chaderton, near Oldham, and both groups have raised a levy amongst sympathetic fellow workers in other unions to bring strike pay closer to normal wages. But if the strike is to be won, as the women workers' representative said: 'We need support — money especially'.

The strikers have no illusions in the Act. They know that it contains plenty of loopholes for the employers in the form of job evaluation, grading schemes and so on, and that there are no penalties written in for employers who fail to comply with its provisions. A victory for industrial action here, following the earlier 11-week struggle at Salford Electrical Instruments, would therefore really show the way to the millions of women workers who still suffer from this discrimination.

Please send all donations to: Strike Fund, c/o 33A Longshot Lane West, Stockport, Cheshire.

## NALGO rank and file support action group against executive at London mass meeting

Two thousand local government, gas, electricity, university and other service workers packed Westminster Central Hall on Wednesday, 7 November.

The rally was called by NALGO in support of the £400 London Weighting claim. It was designed to mobilise the membership behind the bureaucracy's strategy for winning the claim — a strategy of building an alliance with the employers to put pressure on the Tory Government.

This was exemplified by the presence on the platform of Iltyd Harrington, deputy leader of the Greater London Council. The union bureaucrats are anxious to get the token involvement of the membership in order to cement the alliance. So far the employers have been prepared to offer only £115-126.

### EXPECTATIONS

But such central rallies, and talk by the leadership of selective strikes and overtime bans, raise the expectations of those who want a real struggle against the Pay Laws and the Tory Government. At the Central Hall meeting, the bureaucracy had prepared a 'declaration' advocating support for the negotiators, which they urged should be passed unanimously. However, a speaker from the floor tried to move an

amendment drawn up by the Nalگو Action Group.

This situated the claim within the general struggle against Phase 3, calling for a national pay claim of £500, links with other unions fighting the Pay Laws, the creation of campaign committees in all areas, and planned strike action. The bureaucrats had earlier agreed to allow amendments, but now changed their minds. When the speaker received the support of a clear majority on asking the meeting whether they wanted to vote on the amendment, the platform cut off the microphone.

### NOT PREPARED

The Nalگو Action Group, including its IMG members, had not anticipated that the mood of the membership would be so high. It had therefore not prepared for the NAG speaker to stay on the platform until a vote was taken. In such a situation the bureaucracy would have faced a difficult choice of either taking the vote, or removing him bodily from the platform in front of the rally. As it was, the bureaucracy were able, if only just, to regain control of the rally.

The Central Hall rally showed that the balance of forces in the union is in favour of the left, if the left is willing to take the initiative. This must now be done by extending campaign committees all over London NALGO, and campaigning vigorously for a national claim.

ARTHUR BENNETT

## Edinburgh postgraduates strike for parity with university lecturers

In Edinburgh University 200 postgraduates, members of the Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs stopped teaching work this week in an attempt to force the University Administration into negotiations over a series of demands.

They are using the tactic of daily mass pickets against key University buildings to maximise the effectiveness of the strike, and have been pledged support by Edinburgh University Student Association and the National Union of Public Employees as well as technicians, computer operators and academic staff in their own ASTMS branch.

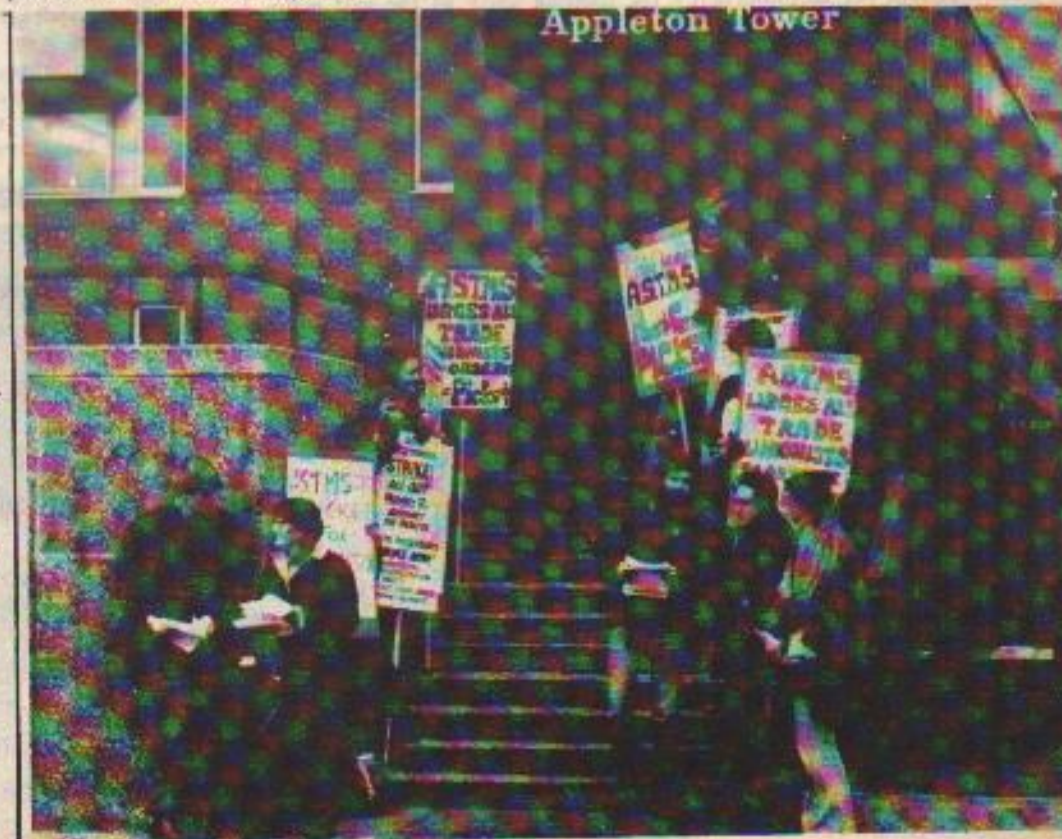
Their demands are:

1. That the University set up a standing committee to negotiate with ASTMS on postgraduate issues.
2. Rates of pay for teaching to be calculated on the basis of parity with junior lecturers.
3. Laboratory accident insurance for science postgraduates.
4. The right to participate in decisions about the structure and content of courses they teach.

Postgraduates have always been in an anomalous position, halfway between undergraduates and academic staff. At a time when British higher education is in crisis they find themselves doubly squeezed: the value of their research grants has been falling rapidly in the face of inflation; and forced to do University teaching to supplement their income, they have found that they are paid far less than academic staff for the same job. The Universities are being forced by State rationalisations into reducing the number of staff per student, and postgraduates, by allowing themselves to be used as cheap teaching labour, are thus doing themselves out of future job opportunities.

By demanding the right to negotiate their own conditions of work as a collective trade union body, the Edinburgh postgraduates challenge the State's right to solve its own problems at the postgraduate's expense.

Motions of solidarity and support should be sent to: Edinburgh University ASTMS Postgraduate Group, Branch Office, 14 George Square, Edinburgh.



# MINERS : RIGHT WING MANOEUVRE OVERTIME BAN



Flying pickets in action at Ipswich during last year's miners' strike. The Home Secretary, Robert Carr (above), warned this week that a special intelligence centre had been set up at New Scotland Yard to co-ordinate police action against flying pickets. Referring to the use of mass pickets, he said: 'We have arranged for police forces to make co-operative arrangements with their neighbouring forces, so that at short notice they can send reinforcements . . . We want to stop the mass forming in the first place.' The working class, too, will have to make advance arrangements to defend the struggle.

The miners' struggle got under way this week with the unanimous adoption of an overtime ban by the NUM Executive.

This followed their rejection of the Coal Board's last minute offer, which added a miserable 5p to the proposed basic rates of £2.50 and £2.25 under Phase 3, and came nowhere near to meeting the miners' demands for rises of between £8 and £12 per week.

An overtime ban is an essential prelude for a successful strike. It would exhaust the 18 million tons of coal the power stations have in stock, and flying pickets could then bring about power cuts to industry from the first days of the strike. Some pits started to ban overtime before the EC made its decision, and all 20 areas of the NUM voted in favour of the ban.

## RIGHT WING

Unexpectedly, the right wing, led by Joe Gormley, created a division in the Executive by proposing a full overtime ban. This would mean that safety and maintenance workers, as well as production workers, would be involved. The left wing of the EC, led by the Communist Party, voted in favour of a production ban only, but were defeated.

Now, every miner should think twice when Joe Gormley appears to be taking a militant line. He is a master in the use of ultra-left behaviour in order to sabotage struggle and demoralise workers. His 'general strike or nothing' line over Phase 2 was a good example; and his latest stunt, to warn that a successful

repeat of the 1972 strike would allow the Tories to win the next General Election, was a blatant attempt to frighten the miners away from a struggle before a single power cut had been made.

The *Times* commented about a full overtime ban: 'It is the moderates who are pushing for a complete overtime ban. This would remove key safety and maintenance men from collieries, particularly at weekends, and bring a strong risk of spontaneous overheating and flooding at some pits, which might have to close as a result. Equally, if men are sent home for refusing to work overtime, their mates are likely to follow and sporadic strikes may then break out. The scene is set for a confused bout of industrial action leading nowhere.' (7 November)

A full overtime ban, therefore, would hit the miners long before it hit the power stations. Some miners would lose substantial earnings just before Christmas, and there would be a confused situation in which some miners were on strike, while others were hardly affected at all. On the basis of the hardship suffered by some of the miners just before Christmas, the right wing will then argue that the overtime ban is a substitute, rather than a preparation, for full industrial action.

## STRATEGY

So far the EC has avoided spelling out clearly the aims of the present overtime ban. To avoid these dangers, the miners need to have a worked out strategy.

Their first step must be to set up liaison

committees between NUM production workers and the maintenance and safety men in NUM (2) and NACODS, in order to plan ways of cutting down production with the minimum effect on the miners. Each pit needs to evolve a plan to ensure that any reduction in earnings occurs gradually, and is spread as evenly as possible over all the workers. Confused situations in which men turn up not knowing whether work is available, or situations where management are able to provoke premature strikes, have to be avoided. A system of pit-head delegates should be created, to co-ordinate these plans as far as is possible on a regional basis. These measures are particularly important where pits are highly mechanised—especially since many of these are in areas which traditionally hold the balance of power in a ballot.

The second step is to start to prepare for a strike. The ruling class is much better prepared for a miners' strike than it was in 1972. Power stations are taking in extra stocks of oil and oxygen. The police have set up special mobile radio intelligence squads to relay information about the destination of flying pickets, so that they can deploy their forces with more strength and economy than before.

This time, many more than the 12% of miners who were involved in flying pickets in 1972 will be needed. This means that the committees which organise flying pickets should be created as early as possible. They should send lay members around the country to gain pledges of support from other workers, promises of accommodation for travelling pickets, and commitments to strike action for the purposes

of freeing men for mass picket duty, in solidarity with the miners, when the time comes.

## ENGINEERS

Finally, no miner should be complacent about the ability of the NUM to win on its own. To be certain of victory they need to construct an alliance with the engineering workers, in line with statements made by figures such as Bill McLean, Scottish Secretary of the NUM. If the Tories were to defeat one section, they would feel certain of victory over the other. Unity in action of miners and engineers, on the other hand, would be a decisive step forward in achieving a working class victory.

Calls should be made on the Executives of the two unions to prepare a joint national strike. But without waiting for the ECs, the rank and file should go ahead and hold joint meetings between the NUM area councils and AUEW district committees, set up joint action committees, call joint conferences etc, with a view to synchronising actions leading to a joint strike. No union should settle without the other, and all negotiations should be under the control of the rank and file.

If these concrete steps of preparation for a strike in the new year are taken now, they will reduce the demoralising effects of a full overtime ban, overcome any crisis of perspective among the rank and file, and smash Gormley's latest attempts at sabotage.

JOHN KILBANE

# Middle East: Rocky Road to a Phoney Peace

The crackling of machine guns on the banks of the Suez Canal seems now to have given way to the serene diplomacy of 'peace-seeking.'

The prospect of an Arab-Israeli settlement under the auspices of the big powers has become less remote with Kissinger's lightning visit to Cairo and the conclusion of a new ceasefire between Israel and Egypt. But the path towards a negotiated settlement threatens to be far from smooth, and several thorny problems remain which could well plunge the Middle East into bloody turmoil yet again.

The talks which were supposed to take place immediately following the original ceasefire could not get off the ground while the Israelis remained entrenched on the West Bank of the Suez Canal. For Sadat to have agreed to talks while the Egyptian Third Army remained trapped and encircled would have been tantamount to political suicide.

## PRECARIOUS

There can therefore be little doubt that if the Americans do not now manage to secure at least a partial Israeli withdrawal (to the 22 October ceasefire lines) in the near future, Sadat will once more face irresistible pressure to return to the battlefield in order to maintain his position at home. The present 'no war - no peace' situation is fundamentally precarious, and the Arab rulers, who want to 'war' to achieve the stability of a bourgeois peace, will do everything in their power to prevent the Israelis from consolidating their positions. Sadat simply cannot afford to tolerate the development of a deadlock situation such as prevailed for six years after 1967. The oil embargo is intended precisely to shift US policy in a more 'pro-Arab' direction.

Sections of the Israeli military no doubt continue to play with the idea of turning Egypt's defeat into a rout, while Meir and Dayan have

had to contend with the rampant annexationism of the right-wing Likud coalition—which opposed the ceasefire, and has been accusing the Government of gross mismanagement of the war and of 'taking orders from Washington.' US imperialism, however, understands that unless it can bring Israel to its senses a fifth round of fighting is almost inevitable.

## US AND USSR

The United States and the Soviet Union find themselves torn between their commitment to 'détente' and their 'vital interests' in the Middle East. Both powers understand that the situation in the area will remain explosive for as long as there is no settlement. The Americans, however, are bent on ousting the Soviet bureaucracy from the Middle East arena (Syria, Iraq, Egypt) as the price for giving the Arab regimes what they want. The Kremlin, for its part, realises that a definitive peace between Israel and the Arab states can only in the long run be harmful to Soviet influence in the Arab world.

A renewed 'no war - no peace' situation would therefore in a certain sense be ideal from Moscow's point of view, but that would sooner or later mean no Sadat. It is of course possible that Brezhnev and Co. intend to hold on by posing as the winners of the peace, but Sadat knows only too well that the key to a diplomatic settlement with Israel lies in Washington.

Sadat, in fact, is faced with a serious dilemma: he can neither capitulate totally to imperialism nor seriously take it on ('I could not fight America as well' was his justification for agreeing to end hostilities). Certainly he will sanction a Soviet presence only for as long as he has to face up to Israel, but he cannot evict the Russians and leave himself defenceless until he has achieved a stable peace. And another bourgeois war, which failing considerable Israeli concessions may well be his only option,

is inconceivable without massive Soviet aid.

## TIGHTROPE

US imperialism must also walk a delicate tightrope. Israel is still the most reliable bulwark of imperialist interests in the Middle East, but Nixon is conscious of the need not to compromise US oil interests in the Arab world through a policy of one-sided commitment to Israel. The area remains one of crucial economic and strategic importance to the US, which is not prepared to countenance any challenge to its hegemony from radical bourgeois-nationalist regimes (e.g. a Nasser-type development in Saudi Arabia). These would of necessity be dependent on the Soviet Union—hence the liquidation of Soviet influence is a strategic imperative of US Middle Eastern policy.

In addition, the Americans are clearly indignant at the uncooperative behaviour of the European ruling classes. The massive split in NATO which was revealed by Nixon's recent nuclear alert has its roots in the Franco-British ambition to regain a foothold in the Middle East. By adopting a favourable attitude towards the claims of the Arab regimes, and distancing themselves from the pro-Israeli policy of the US, the Europeans hope to ensure the continued flow of vital oil supplies.

The Arab bourgeoisies, however, take Europe's posturings with a large pinch of salt. Europe's military and political impact is far too small to affect the Middle East situation significantly. This sordid quarrel among thieves simply prefigures the intensification of inter-imperialist contradictions, as capitalist Europe strikes out on an 'independent' road and disentangles itself from 'Big Brother' America.

## RESISTANCE

There are, nevertheless, forces in the Middle East which will resist the bourgeois peace now in the offing. The Iraqi Ba'athist regime is making a great show of opposition to any compromise with the Zionist state. Rhetoric

aside, however, this is no more than a cynical political operation designed to capture the sympathies of the Arab masses and weaken the rival Syrian Ba'ath (which is now prepared to subscribe to Security Council Resolution 242).

It should be remembered that the Iraqi regime, whose hands are stained with the blood of countless thousands of Communists, trade unionists, Kurds, and Jews, cleared its troops out of the way in September 1970 to facilitate Hussein's assault on the Palestinian commandos. Such deeds speak louder than a thousand Baghdad-Radio broadcasts about the 'liberation of Palestine.'

Then there are, of course, the Palestinians. The proposal for the establishment of an 'independent' Palestinian state, to consist of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, is sure to lead to dramatic developments within the resistance movement. The leadership of Al Fatah, which has clung systematically to the coat-tails of the 'progressive' Arab regimes, is under heavy pressure to accept the Palestinian state package. But the rank-and-file fedayin cannot be counted on to go along with the gentlemanly agreements reached over their heads in the world's capitals.

The phoney peace will almost certainly involve Egyptian and Syrian guarantees to curb outbreaks of guerrilla warfare and police their territories more effectively than hitherto (they will of course be aided in this by the UN peace-keeping forces so dear to Tribune hearts). Defence of the Palestinian resistance against the 'men of peace' (Kissinger and Kosygin) and their local satraps must therefore be a priority for the revolutionary movement throughout the world. The socialist movement in the West can help to ensure that the peace pact between the oppressors and exploiters of the peoples of the Middle East is not worth the paper it is written on.

Alan Adler

Seven weeks have now passed since the successful coup of the Chilean Generals—seven weeks of horrible, shocking repression.

These have been seven chaotic weeks filled with massacres, summary executions, denunciations, bonfires of Marxist books, curfews, firing squads, deaths, disappearances, massive arrests.

At the conclusion of these seven weeks, we must begin to take stock of the situation. Even the sceptics and the cynics have to bow before the facts: the dead have to be counted in tens of thousands—20,000, perhaps even 25,000; those imprisoned must be counted in tens of thousands—about 30,000; those who have gone underground, seeking to flee this nightmare, this hell, must be counted in tens of thousands. The workers who have lost their jobs because they are suspected of left-wing sympathies and have been thrown into poverty, or are even on the verge of starvation, must be counted in *hundreds of thousands*.

Seven weeks have passed—but the repression continues to mount. Two days ago, according to official sources, the courts pronounced 32 death sentences.

Seven weeks have passed, without any organised and co-ordinated response—apart from isolated, spontaneous incidents—directed against General Pinochet and his confederates. These have been, then, seven weeks of real and deep demoralisation.

### NATURE OF THE REGIME

Beneath these shocking and unimaginable events, beneath the tears and blood of the Chilean workers, lie a multitude of political questions. The first of these questions, the one which sets the framework for most other debates, in particular that on the political tasks of the left, concerns the nature of the military regime. What is its social base, who are its supporters, what are its ultimate aims?

It would be a mistake to look on the new Chilean military regime as just another military dictatorship of the kind we have seen throughout Latin American history. The Chilean military regime differs from those military governments that have come to power in a context of general apathy in that it has—and this is no exaggeration—*genuine mass support*.

Capitalists and petty bourgeoisie, still shaking with the fear instilled by the working class mobilisations of the last months of the Popular Unity government, today support the military junta blindly and without reservation. Artisans, small and large traders, landowners threatened by the eventual extension of the agrarian reform, administrative staff from commerce and industry, members of the liberal professions, compete with one another in exhibiting their slavish gratitude to the numerous masters of the country. There are all sorts of examples of this—examples which anyone can see and experience daily in Santiago and throughout the country.

### DENUNCIATIONS

The most sickening, and the most widespread, are the denunciations. The newspapers and radio broadcast every day, in every Chilean city, the telephone numbers to ring in order to denounce someone or report anyone behaving suspiciously. Day and night, 24 hours a day, these numbers are busy, even

IN THIS ARTICLE reprinted from the 29 October issue of our sister newspaper in France, *Rouge*, JEAN-PIERRE BEAUVAIS, recently returned from Chile, looks at

# CHILE UNDER THE GENERALS

though there are often many of them. Thousands of calls come in each day, we were told by one telephone operator. She was non-political, but close to nervous exhaustion after the calls she has to receive and record throughout the day.

The most grotesque are the women from the middle and upper classes who queue up for hour after hour to donate a portion of their jewellery or savings to the fund for national reconstruction. The most revolting is the unending file of thousands upon thousands of men and women, fathers leading their offspring by the hand, who come to openly and rudely exhibit their joy in front of the ruins of the Moneda Presidential Palace.

Because of the specific features of Chile's social and economic structure, we are dealing here with a numerically important section: artisans, tradesmen, small landowners represent about 30–40% of the total Chilean population.

The fact of their support is a key element in analysing the nature of the regime that has been set up since 11 September, and for an understanding of certain of the policies of this regime. As far as the repression goes, only the total, at times even enthusiastic, support of these groups—which do not hesitate to play on occasion the part of useful auxiliaries for the policy of repression—allows us to explain and understand the massive, vindictive character this repression has had since the very first day of the coup.

### ORGANISATIONAL PLANS

Having said this, two further questions immediately arise. This support is, at present, essentially spontaneous. It is not structured, organised or directed. Can it continue for very long? Are there any plans for the organisation of these masses into an actual fascist or semi-fascist party?

There are not at present any precise plans underway on the part of the military. Air Force General Leigh, who is described as the strong man of the military, has turned himself into a specialist in constitutional law and is drawing up a new constitution. The other day he offered the results of his first thoughts on Chilean television.

There had a surprising frankness. There were plenty of historical references: Mussolini? Not bad... Franco? The man and the regime to whom we feel the closest... The Cortes [Parliament in Franco's Spain]? A model of democracy... Hitler? To be taken seriously,

many things to be learnt from his example... Salazar [former fascist President of Portugal]? A master...

The military seem, in the long run, to be looking towards the establishment of a corporatist regime in which the professional associations—those of the right and extreme right, to be sure—will play a fundamental role. The associations of the lorry owners, traders, artisans, and others of this sort will thus see themselves rewarded for the key role they played in the downfall of the Popular Unity Government.

But no one is seriously proposing the organisation of a fascist-type mass party to structure these bourgeois and petit-bourgeois groups. The reason for this is quite simple: no matter how massive the support for the military regime is among these sectors, it remains, in many respects, superficial and subject to serious limitations. It is not support for a worked out political plan, or a long, or even medium term set of economic and political policies.

It is nothing more than gratitude—often of an hysterical sort—to those who have eliminated a serious threat. As far as the medium and long terms are concerned, even in the absence of a clearly worked out plan at the present time, the first tentative moves made by the military allow us to evaluate the policies which they are putting forward with very considerable accuracy.

### INTERESTS OF BIG BOURGEOISIE

The Generals are not planning on policies that will serve the interests of the middle and petit-bourgeoisie, but policies that coincide with the interests of the big Chilean capitalists—of a few great families of the Chilean ruling class who, in conjunction with foreign (especially North American) capital control and own, in a remarkably concentrated fashion, the decisive sectors of the economy.

This is how we must understand the recent appointment of the director of *Mercurio*, the journal of this big bourgeoisie, to the ministry of the economy. Besides its 'journalistic' activities, this publication is the source of the power of several of these great families, the most powerful of which is the Edwards family, one of whose members is a vice-president of the international operations of Pepsi Cola.

Policies in the service of these groups, of this big Chilean bourgeoisie linked to international



big capital, must eventually come into contradiction with the interests of the small and middle capitalists. These policies will necessarily involve the rationalisation of the economy, a modernisation of the economic network, which in many cases will go against the interests of the excessive number of small artisans, traders, intermediaries of all sorts, that characterises the Chilean economy. In the shorter term the harsh measures taken by the junta to suppress the black market—the illicit traffic of all sorts that flourished under Popular Unity—will mean a severe fall in the income of all these sectors.

As soon as the first moment of enthusiasm passes, the awakening promises to be harsh and bitter for all these backers of the massive repression. This makes it easier to understand why the Junta does not plan on organising the present mass support for the regime into political structures under these conditions, and that there is therefore no perspective for a mass fascist movement.

### REPRESSION

Another element which must feature in the analysis of the military regime is the repression which it is carrying out, and which has become the very axis of its politics. It is not so much a question of the quantitative extent of this

A section of the poorest and most oppressed workers in the United States has been waging a bitter struggle since April of this year against the combined might of the multi-million dollar agricultural industry of California (which employs one out of every seven workers in the state) and the largest trade union in the advanced capitalist world.

On 7 October they won an important battle, when the 2 million strong International Brotherhood of Teamsters dropped its attempt to smash the United Farm Workers Union (AFL-CIO), and left the organisation of the workers in the Californian grape fields to the smaller union.

### UFW

On the face of it the UFW had little chance. Their membership consists mainly of Mexican immigrant and Mexican-American migratory workers, who have for years been forced to accept intolerable conditions and abysmal wages. The hourly composite wage of farmworkers in the United States is about 1.42 dollars (57p.)—about 42% of an average factory worker's wage. But this does not give a complete picture: last year 2.8 million farmworkers worked an average of only 88 days, and their average yearly income was 1,160 dollars (£460). These facts are eloquent testimony to the situation in which a section of the American working class which has never been

# HISTORIC STRUGGLE IN THE

able to build a permanent trade union is placed.

In 1965 the UFW launched a struggle for unionisation which was finally victorious in July 1970. A decisive weapon in this fight was the organisation of a boycott of Californian grapes throughout the US, in the course of which sections of left-wing and liberal opinion were mobilised in support of the farmworkers.

So drastically did grape sales plummet that the growers eventually gave in. They recognised the UFW and signed contracts which conceded much improved wages and working conditions.

But when the contracts ran out this year the UFW was suddenly faced with a major scabbing operation by the Teamsters. Out of the 182 contracts held by the UFW 150 growers signed with the Teamsters instead; and in the end the UFW was left with only 12 contracts. This not only undermined the ability of the UFW to fight for the grape workers, it posed the very destruction of the Union, since its finances are based on a check-off system under which the employers deduct dues at source on behalf of the Union. The Teamsters scab operation thus cut dues-paying membership from 80,000 to 6,500.

### TEAMSTER SCABBING

The growers and the Teamster bureaucrats claimed that the grape workers had petitioned to join the Teamsters, but they refused the UFW demand for a ballot of the workers, and journalists such as Vincent Hanna of this country's *Sunday Times* found the petitions which they produced of doubtful authority.

The Teamsters' contracts were slightly less favourable to the farmworkers in terms of wages and fringe benefits than the UFW contracts, but the UFW had introduced two important innovations into the industry. First, they actually enforced their contracts, while the Teamsters could be relied upon to be 'flexible' over such expensive items as restrictions on the use of poisonous chemicals, and the provision of toilet facilities and drinking water for workers.

The second, and more important innovation was the introduction of the Union hiring hall. Until 1970 workers were hired by a middle man, called a labour contractor or 'straw boss.' He ensured that only the youngest, fittest and most suppliant workers were hired, and that they worked at the highest possible pitch. The

UFW hiring hall ensured that jobs were distributed under a seniority system which favoured, rather than discriminated against, the older workers and ensured that work was kept down to their pace.

The growers had chafed for three years under this incursion on their rights to own and control the labour power of the workers, and grabbed with both hands at the opportunity to sign up with the Teamsters, who guaranteed the abolition of the hiring hall.

### SOCIAL MOVEMENT

There could be no more dramatic contrast than that between the UFW, with its full-time staff paid five dollars per week plus keep, and the Teamsters, with its flash organisers driving around the grape fields in expensive cars. But in fact the UFW holds up to the Teamsters a mirror of its own past.

The UFW is more than a union—it is a broad social movement which has spilled over from the Chicano (Mexican-American) struggle against their exploitation and oppression, and expressed their feelings of national identity. The Teamsters were built through just such a broad social movement.



## CHILEAN PRISONERS DENOUNCE REPRESSION

A member of the Swedish technical aid corps, Kristian Lund, who was working with a forestry project in the south of Chile, was imprisoned by the military in the mass round-ups that followed the coup. He was held in the Valdivia municipal prison, along with 500 political prisoners. Except for three Brazilians and one Ecuadorian, he was the only foreigner. The ages of the prisoners ranged from 15 to 80.

When Lund was released, the other prisoners asked him to take out a statement to the world press. The text was circulated in English by Lund and follows in full. It was dated 29 September. Lund can be contacted through the Chilean Committee, UBV, Gamla Brogata No.29 v, S-111 20 Stockholm, Sweden.

In the first week after the coup, the military arrested people indiscriminately, not even knowing what questions to ask them. In this period torture was not used, but because of the sheer frenzy of the putschists, ill-treatment was general, resulting in many deaths. Many officers got their men drunk so they could beat the prisoners without stopping to think. Later on, the military began to concoct false evidence against the victims in an attempt to preserve its good name. The junta has said that there are not going to be any political prisoners, and so sentences are being handed down for robbery, assault, and other such alleged offences.

In the second week, the junta started to get a better idea of the kind of people they should look for. Then they changed from ill-treatment to systematic torture, sometimes even under the supervision of doctors. Besides mental torture, the following types of physical torture were employed: electric shocks in the ears, the back of the neck, nipples, and sexual organs; beatings on the ears until the eardrum burst; pumping water into the mouth through a rubber hose; repeatedly jabbing the eyelids with fingers; tearing off fingernails; putting burning cigarettes into the ears; beating with rubber truncheons; pricking with needles. Prisoners have also been forced to run with crushed glass in their shoes.

In none of the trials has any of the accused had a chance to defend himself. The situation is worst for the poor, who have no money, do not understand the kind of language that is used, and have no contacts. The junta has abolished all human rights. Everything that was legal is now illegal, and people are being sentenced for what was legal before.

In every workers' strike, there is a seed of revolution; in every right-wing and capitalist organisation, the seed of fascism. In order to defend their interests against the demands of the workers, the capitalists are compelled to act like fascists.

In prison there is total solidarity among the members of the different left parties.

What happened in Chile is the result of the reformist betrayal of the working class. The reformist element in the Allende government was determined to avoid civil war at any cost. In reality this meant letting the fascists prepare and leaving the workers unready. The workers were told to sit down and wait while the reformists looked after the cause of socialism. These reformists did not understand that it is the workers themselves who must make the revolution, not the leaders. Socialism can only be won through crushing the bourgeois state.

What happened in Chile did not happen because of the will of the Chilean people but of the fascists, the military junta, and the US imperialists.

Finally, we want to declare that the Chilean people will never surrender. We will fight until the fascists have been overthrown. There is resistance, and it will continue as long as the junta is in power.

repression (about which much has been said, and which we must ceaselessly take up), but the qualitative nature of this repression: who is it primarily directed against, and what are its objectives?

In the short term, the massive repression which Pinochet and Co. are carrying out has an obvious purpose: to nip in the bud all attempts at, all possibility of, resistance to the coup. Given the level of mobilisation of the masses, and the importance of the organisations of the left and the extreme-left, this made it necessary to strike quickly and hard to dismantle the organisations of the left, both political and trade union, to liquidate physically their cadres and most active militants.

This is certainly an essential aspect of this repression: it aims at the systematic destruction, the physical liquidation, of the organised Chilean workers' movement. But, and this has rarely been stressed before now, the repression goes beyond this: the policy of repression is not only aimed at the destruction of the organised workers' movement, but is directed against the entire working class.

For example, how is the repression carried out in the factories? After having crushed the various centres of resistance in the factories, the

military arrested—and often executed on the spot—the officials and local leaders of the left-wing parties, along with the administrators appointed by the Popular Unity Government. They appointed the former owners and managers as administrators. Then they called together the workers, organising virtual general assemblies... but with the participation of armed troops.

### WORKING CLASS UNDER ATTACK

In many cases, either following denunciations extracted under threats of violence, or after turbulent mass meetings, an execution squad went to work under the eyes of the general assembly, shooting known or identified 'ring-leaders' who were present. Afterwards the workers were told that only the docile and the non-political would be re-employed. In the most important firms all sympathisers, supporters or militants of the Popular Unity parties were dismissed.

The leaders of the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left), trade union officials, and members of the Communist Party Central Committee still on the spot all agree that today at least 30% of the Chilean working class has been dismissed from employment, is without work, has no hope of finding any, and is reduced to poverty or starvation. When

it is realised that prices have risen in 15 days by 400% to 600%, that they are due to rise by 1800% between now and the end of the year, it becomes clear that the expression 'starvation' is to be taken in its most literal sense.

Beyond the organised workers movement, it is really the working class—as a class—which is hit by the repression and which the military literally wishes to demobilise and dismember. (One sector has been almost ~~least~~ totally spared the repression: the copper mines—which account for 80% of exports. There none of the social gains have been abolished, and even the trade union officials adhering to Popular Unity—a minority—have been left untouched. The big bourgeoisie and imperialism know how to be merciful when their fundamental interests are at stake.)

Today, no matter what possible developments may lie in the future, there can be little doubt that the features of the Santiago regime—the repression, the political aims (openly proclaimed or not), the mass support of the small and middle capitalists (even if not organised in a mass party, as was the case in Europe of the 30s)—are those of a fascist regime, such as exists nowhere else in contemporary Latin America.

# CALIFORNIA GRAPE FIELDS

Farrell Dobbs, prominent American Trotskyist and former Teamster organiser, has documented the classic struggle in the '30s to organise the mid-Western truck drivers in his books *Teamster Rebellion* and *Teamster Power*. The entire working class community—the drivers, their wives and children, other workers, small shopkeepers in the working class districts—were all mobilised to carry on the fight against the employers and the state. Since that time the Teamsters, like the rest of the American labour movement, have become restricted to the organisation of the economic bargaining power of the workers.

The Teamsters, however, seem to have gone that bit further down the hill than most American unions. Not only does it have well known associations with the Mafia, but it has been caught up in the spider web of the Watergate revelations. It is reputed to have dumped a 'suitcase full' of money into Nixon's election campaign fund. Former Teamsters president Jimmy Hoffa, jailed for diverting the Teamsters pension fund into the operations of the Mafia, was released through 'Executive Clemency' at the height of the fund raising

activities of the aptly named CREEP (Committee to Re-Elect the President).

### GANDHI AND ZAPATA

But if the Teamsters are influenced by Nixon and the Mafia, Cesar Chavez, the leader of the UFW, claims to be inspired by Gandhi and Zapata. In fact his politics owe much more to Gandhi than to the Mexican guerrilla leader. Chavez is a catholic, a pacifist, and a believer in Distributism, i.e. the more equitable distribution of wealth through worker ownership. The staff of the UFW is made up in large part of well-meaning liberals, and its cause is supported broadly by liberal currents in churches.

In fact, although the militancy and idealism of the UFW leadership contrast sharply with the rest of the American trade union movement, it would have been unable to survive were it not for the fact that it receives the backing of a solid section of the bourgeois political order. The very fact that the UFW was confronting the Teamsters meant that the political rivalry between certain sections of the Democratic Party and the US labour movement, on the one hand, and the Nixon/Teamsters alliance, on the other, gave extra impetus to the UFW's frail

craft.

Early in the struggles the leadership of the AFL-CIO dumped its own suitcase full of money into the UFW's badly hit funds. The American trade union leaders are a fairly hard bitten bunch, and were undoubtedly more strongly motivated by opposition to the Teamsters than by sympathy for a section of the 'wretched of the earth.'

### BOYCOTT

The Teamsters' tactics ensured that the struggle could not have been won in the grape fields. UFW pickets were met by squads of paid Teamster thugs. After two workers had been killed and many injured as a result of Teamster provocations, Chavez pulled the pickets out of the grape valleys, and concentrated on organising a grape boycott in the cities.

The boycott movement grew rapidly, aided by the influence of a number of bourgeois politicians such as Edward Kennedy, but also involving large numbers of radicalised young people. The combined weight of the boycott movement, the AFL-CIO, and the anti-Nixon politicians seems to have become too much for

the Teamsters, and they tore up the contracts they had signed with the growers. Some of the growers, angry at being left in the lurch, threatened to take the Teamsters to court. A spokesman for the Teamsters cynically commented: 'They haven't a chance—they aren't worth the paper they're written on.'

Although the UFW struggle reflects the inability of the American working class to break out of the arena of capitalist politics, it does indicate the potential of immense class struggles. These can transform the face of the working class movement as the crisis of American capitalism deepens.

The radicalisation of oppressed national minorities in the US—blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chicanos—which led to the creation of militant nationalist movements, is more and more being translated into militancy at the point of production.

They are thus contributing to the re-awakening traditions of class solidarity within the American working class, and posing forms of struggle, and ideas which go beyond the general level of working class consciousness. When the history of the decade is written, the rise of the UFW will be seen as a mark of the revival of the militant American working class.

GAVIN ROBINSON

This week we begin a new series which will look at how the various organisations of the left are facing up to the tasks presently confronting the British working class.

# STRATEGIES FOR STRUGGLE

## 1. The Communist Party

The rising tide of class struggle in Britain found a pale reflection at the 33rd Conference of the Communist Party of Great Britain, held this past weekend in London.

Conference Chairman, Mrs. Irene Swan, described the situation accurately in her opening address when she said: 'We meet at a time of acute crisis for our present system of society. A time when capitalism stands particularly naked and exposed.'

Despite the continuing organisational difficulties of the Communist Party, the crucial problems facing the Conference were political: how would it face up to the tasks confronting the working class movement at this 'time of acute crisis'?

### UNITED STRUGGLE

General Secretary John Gollan, moving the main resolution, said: 'The immediate central issue is to take up the Tory challenge and defeat the government on Phase 3 ... The TUC has declared its opposition. Turn words into deeds. Call an emergency conference of the TUC to concert action now ... We need an all-out wages offensive ... It should be a united wages offensive. Why let the government fight each section one by one?' This call was carried further by the Party's industrial organiser, Bert Ramelson, who said that the special TUC 'should organise a mass confrontation which could bring down this government as well as its policies.'

Similar statements have been made recently by sections of the trade union leadership. Eddie Marsden, a prominent Communist and General Secretary of the AUEW constructional section, wrote in the *Morning Star* of 6 November, referring to the struggles of separate groups of workers: '... in a joint struggle they would be certain of victory and could rally the whole of the movement behind them. Surely this is the role of the TUC? If that is not a manner because of right-wing dominance on the general council, I believe the unions involved ought to consider joint action now.'

Three days later Lawrence Daly, general secretary of the NUM, had the following to say: 'If the Tories fear the unity of one section of the movement how much more would they crumble and cringe if faced with the united and active opposition of the whole trade union and labour movement? Surely the answer must be that such unity could force the Tories to resign ...'

But we must apply here John Gollan's own exhortation - 'turn words into deeds', the test of seriousness is the ability to spell out concrete and practical steps that can be taken to translate these proposals into action. On this test the CPGB fails outright. The only idea they have put forward as to how the struggles of the working class are to be united is through the summoning of an emergency TUC.

### RANK-AND-FILE ORGANISATION

Let us say right off: we are totally in favour of a campaign for an emergency TUC to organise the united struggle of the working class. Let us see a real mass campaign of resolutions, mass meetings, and demonstrations to back up this call. But to propose this as the *only* way to prepare for the coming fight is criminal folly. Even Eddie Marsden felt obliged to express his scepticism that the right-wing dominated General Council will respond to such a call. What are militants then expected to do? Pack up and go home until the Communist Party can shift the General Council a little more to the left? Even if such an emergency meeting were to take place, how could it be compelled to take measures that

would actually aid the struggle, rather than just pass pious resolutions or actually sabotage the fight (as the TUC did during the Glasgow fittermen's dispute)? Do not recent events teach us that the best way of jolting the trade union bureaucrats into action is by confronting them with a rank-and-file already in motion, organising independently for the struggle and taking their own steps to carry the fight forward?

And what if the TUC, under considerable mass pressure, were to launch a fight against the Tories? Does the Communist Party think that the TUC General Council can be trusted to carry such a fight through to victory? Are they totally ignorant of the lessons learnt by the British working class at great expense in 1926, when the General Council - with the collaboration of its 'left' members - sabotaged the general strike and led the working class into a massive defeat? The behaviour of Jones and Scanlon over the fight against the NIRC and the TUC-Government talks suggests that, if anything, they are even more frightened of a real showdown with the government than were the 'lefts' of 1926.

For us a campaign around an emergency TUC would be undertaken for very precise reasons: 1. it would help convince millions of workers of the need for a coordinated and united offensive against the Tories; 2. any positive moves by the TUC would set into motion large numbers of workers who would not otherwise be involved and thus contribute to the unity in struggle of the working class; 3. the more workers who are drawn into struggle, and the further the fight against the Tories goes, the greater will be the possibility of a successful rank-and-file challenge to the bureaucrats when they try - as they inevitably will - to make a deal with the Government and call off the struggle.

In other words, the Communist Party wants to pressure the bureaucrats into leading the struggle. We are convinced the bureaucracy cannot lead the sort of struggle needed to win a working class victory, but are prepared to push them as far as is possible in order to strengthen the position of the rank-and-file for an eventual showdown.

There is, of course, room here for principled united action between militants who may have different assessments of how far the existing bureaucratic leadership will go. But such unity is only possible on the basis of the following principles: 1. calls for the bureaucracy to act must be accompanied by moves to organise the rank-and-file independently as the best means of putting pressure on the bureaucrats, to avoid being totally dependent on the bureaucrats' decisions, and to prepare for the possibility of a sell-out; 2. we must agree that the needs of the class struggle - the needs of the working class - come before any tactical manoeuvres to influence the bureaucracy, and the moment that these two come into conflict we must be prepared to break decisively with the bureaucrats - right or 'left' - and forge a new leadership based on the organised rank-and-file.

### 'LEFT' BUREAUCRACY

It is on precisely these points that the Communist Party leadership disagrees. The centrepiece of their strategy for the present crisis is a permanent alliance with the 'left' bureaucrats in the labour movement, particularly the 'left' trade union leaders.

In 'For Left Advance' an attack is made on the so-called 'ultra-left' for 'counterposing the rank-and-file against so-called official action and seeing it as an alternative ...' Now it is of course a slander to suggest that the International Marxist Group (or any other major organisation of the 'ultra-left') counterposes unofficial to official action. But we do see rank-and-



Communist Party Industrial Organiser, Bert Ramelson

file action as an 'alternative' ... not to official action, but to official inaction and treachery. This is where the CP leadership disagrees: they are willing to use rank-and-file organisation to apply a little cautious pressure on the bureaucracy, or to improve the electoral opportunities of 'left' candidates for union positions, but not to organise independent rank-and-file initiatives as the alternative to inaction or outright sabotage by the bureaucrats.

The Conference resolution expresses this clearly: 'Continuation and extension of these trends [increased readiness by the unions to struggle and 'further left and progressive advances'] by the work of Communists and others on the left can make the prospect of the majority of unions with left policies and progressive leaderships a reality in the foreseeable future. This must be the aim, and continuous growth of rank-and-file movements can facilitate this. While it is necessary to criticise left trade union leaders when they tend to vacillate or retreat, this must always be done with the aim of preserving and furthering the unity of the left, and isolating and defeating the right.'

The message is clear: the aim of rank-and-file movements is to elect left-wing trade union leaders, and, while it may be necessary to criticise the 'devil' of the left, we can never break with him for fear of falling into the 'deep blue sea' of the right. Of course, put this way the dilemma has no solution. The only alternative is one which cuts right across the whole strategy of the Communist Party: the organisation of the rank-and-file to take over the leadership from both right and left-wing union bureaucrats when they 'tend to vacillate or retreat.'

Unfortunately, the trade union 'lefts' are a rather bad-tempered lot and tend to look rather harshly even on 'criticism' (particularly if it serves to focus unwelcome attention on them while they are in the act of selling out): so the CP leadership may find it necessary (as, indeed, it has in the past: e.g. Scanlon's manoeuvres with regard to the TUC-Government talks) to put even this weak reed aside; all, of course, in the interests of 'furthering the unity of the left.' Meanwhile, the rank-and-file will have to find itself some stronger weapons than those of 'criticism' to deal with the 'vacillating and retreating' that will become a major pastime of the 'lefts' in the months ahead.

### GENERAL STRIKE

The working class movement is facing a decisive

struggle against a determined enemy. True, David managed to bring down Goliath with nothing more than a sling. But trade unionists are less likely to have the will of God on their side. For this struggle they must adopt the most effective weapon which can unite the entire working class - the general strike.

Those who are serious about a showdown with the Tory Government, who are really determined to fight for the downfall of this Government, must spell out to the working class movement the necessity to work towards a general strike, educate the militants throughout the factories in what this means, and, push for the necessary practical preparations to be made now which can make this form of struggle a reality.

But the Communist Party leadership is unwilling to seize the bull by the horns over the general strike because they know it is the form of struggle which their bureaucratic 'left' allies fear the most, and because the proper preparation of such a struggle would involve taking steps which would threaten

their alliance with the 'lefts': a determined fight for a national engineers' strike, the forging of a miners-engineers alliance at the rank-and-file level as well as at the level of the leadership, the organisation across the country of bodies to defend pickets from police attack, the establishment of local councils of action to prepare for the general strike, organise strike action in the locality, and take over the administration of the local community during the strike.

It is clear that the Communist Party is incapable of carrying out these essential tasks. It cannot, therefore, offer the working class the type of leadership required for the coming battle. In the absence of a real revolutionary party, these tasks must necessarily be carried out by the united efforts of the rank-and-file trade union militants - among whom will be found many individual members of the Communist Party, the Labour Party, and the organisations of the revolutionary left. But these tasks *must be carried out* if the working class is to defeat the Tory Government and emerge victorious from the coming showdown.

CHRIS BALFOUR

### NEXT WEEK:

The International Socialists

## WHAT'S ON

**LY VAN SAU**, spokesman for the Provisional Revolutionary Government, will speak on 'South Vietnam: The Struggle Continues' at NUFTO Hall, 14 Jockey Fields, London WC1 (Holborn tube) on Friday 23 November at 7.30 pm. Discussion will include the relationship of the struggle in Indochina to those of other countries.

**NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES:** Wide ranging series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every second and fourth Tuesday in the month, 8 pm at the Lion Hotel, Clumber Street.

**NEWCASTLE RED FORUM:** Norman O'Neill on 'Revolutionary Politics in the Trade Unions', Wednesday 21 November at 8.15 pm in the Bridge Hotel.

**WOMEN AND REVOLUTION** in Vietnam: This slide show and discussion is a personal account prepared by a group of women active in W.L. in this country that links the oppression, struggle and liberation of Vietnamese women to our movement. Almost Free Theatre, Rupert Street, W1 (Piccadilly Red Route), London W1, 1970, 8.15 pm.

Circus tube), Tuesday 27 November, 8 pm. Pay what you can afford.

**THE ABOVE SHOW** is also available with commentary and historical background for rent, and can be accompanied, if expenses are met, by one of the group. £2 plus £3 returnable deposit. Contact ISC Women's Group, c/o Flat 6, 4 Cleve Road, NW6.

**HULL RED FORUM:** Norman O'Neill on 'Socialism and the Trade Unions', Thursday 22 November at 8 pm in the Rose Hotel, Beverley Road.

**TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT:** North London public meeting, Monday 19 November at 8 pm in Unity House, Euston Road. Speakers include: Jim Kemp (T&GWU building section), former British soldier, May Hobbs (T&GWU Night-dealers section), L.P. O'Connor (Camden Councilor), Keith Veness (Islington Trades Council).

**FEW COPIES LEFT!** 'Free the Coventry?', Coventry IMG pamphlet. Detailed analysis of the background to the case and the lessons to be drawn. Price 5p. Available from: W. Thompson, 27 Payne's Lane, Coventry.

**ANTI-RECRUITING LEAFLET** originally published by South Shields Trades Union Council has been republished and is now available at 50p for 100 copies from: South Tyneside Action Committee, Peoples Place, Derby Terrace, South Shields, Co. Durham.

**FOUNDATION OF LEFT OPPOSITION:** 50th anniversary commemoration meeting, Friday 7 December at 7.30 pm in Friends Meeting House, Euston Road. Speakers will include a leading member of the Fourth International. Organised by IMG.

**IMG RED FORUM:** Series of introductory discussions for those in the London area on the politics of the Fourth International. Tuesday 20 November: 'Origins of the Fourth International', General Picton pub, Caledonian Road (5 mins Kings X tube) at 8 pm.

**JOHN MACLEAN:** Commemoration meeting, Friday 30 November, 7.30 pm in Conway Hall, Red Lion Square (Holborn tube). Speakers include Harry McShane (veteran of Red Clydeside/associate of John MacLean), Walter Kendall (author of 'The British Revolutionary Movement 1900-21').

## 'INTERNATIONAL'

Summer 1973 Volume II, No. 2

**Dossier on the Chilean Coup**  
Statement by United Secretariat of the Fourth International

**DOCUMENT**  
Fourth International theses on 'The Situation in Britain and the Tasks of the IMG'

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# US plans Vietnam offensive as Thieu regime is isolated

'Reading the signs of a new Hanoi offensive' was the title of an article in *The Times* on 30 October. In it, Victor Zorza analysed the debate within the North Vietnamese leadership, and confidently predicted a new 'Hanoi offensive.'

The following day, the US State Department sent a 'stern note' to Hanoi, warning them against 'violating the ceasefire.' At the same time, the South Vietnamese military intelligence released a report of the alleged movements of North Vietnamese troops and their 'violations of the ceasefire.' Since then, there have been almost daily reports of 'communist violations' (most of them, incidentally, inside the liberated areas) and 'atrocities.'

What lies behind this?

## PRECARIOUS

The Thieu regime in South Vietnam is now threatened from all sides as it slithers precariously from one crisis to another.

In an attempt to curb the soaring inflation and the balance of payments crisis, the piastre has been devalued five times since the ceasefire. In the cities, there are widespread food shortages and mass unemployment, a situation which is made worse by the corruption which exists throughout the administration. Under these pressures, the previously dormant urban masses

are beginning to stir again. The strike of the railway workers a few months ago and the demands of the students and ethnic minorities for the implementation of the democratic rights promised in the January agreement, directly threatened the government.

Even sectors which formerly backed Thieu are becoming disillusioned. Some even talk of bringing back Bao Dai, the senile ex-emperor who served as a puppet ruler for the French, Japanese and Americans in turn. But the real mood of these layers was shown in the violent demonstrations of Catholics (who made up Thieu's social base) and war veterans, which took place in August and September.

In the villages, Thieu's authority is being systematically eroded by the movement of peasants from the Saigon-controlled to the liberated areas. Attempts by the ARVN (South Vietnamese army) to halt this drift have been repeatedly crushed, while the Joint Military Commission (which was intended to neutralise the NLF) has shown itself to be completely impotent.

## REST OF INDOCHINA

The situation in the rest of Indochina can only deepen the isolation of the Thieu regime. The settlement in Laos, and the continuing decline of the Lon Nol clique in Cambodia, have swung the balance of forces in Indochina very much in favour of the liberation forces. The

necessity for the Thai ruling class to put its own house in order following the overthrow of the government means that the continuation of military aid from Bangkok is also doubtful.

Thieu's power rests on three elements. The first of these is US aid - which is now less dependable, given the demands of the Middle East war and the effects of Watergate (notably Congress's new ability to override Nixon's veto by the necessary majority). Also important are sections of the urban population, who feared the Provisional Revolutionary Government marginally more than they feared Thieu but are now rapidly changing their minds.

Finally, Thieu depends on the support of the army and the repression it carries out. In the present period this is the crucial factor. Thieu cannot allow the slightest let-up in the repression if he is to maintain his position. Any concessions would open wide the floodgates and inevitably lead to the toppling of his regime. His only answer to the problems of the masses, his only solution to their demands, is to increase the viciousness of his rule.

## ESCALATION

This is the real situation behind the notes from Washington and Saigon. To keep Thieu in power, his grip must be tightened and the dissidents whipped into line. But this is difficult in an atmosphere of so-called peace and rising mass expectations.

Therefore an escalation of the war is vital for the regime. Already the ARVN have moved beyond niggling incursions into the liberated areas and the bombing and defoliation of these regions. A major offensive into the Central Highlands last month was attempted (and smashed), and a second front into the Mekong Delta (which is more difficult to defend, and where there is rice desperately needed by Saigon) was opened three weeks ago.

The 'warnings' and learned articles in the bourgeois press must therefore be seen as a careful propaganda exercise to prepare the ground and provide prior justification for a massive offensive against the liberation forces. In this respect, the fact that the warnings were directed at Hanoi, and not the Provisional Revolutionary Government, is particularly ominous.

In the face of this, it is the clear task of the solidarity movement to maintain constant vigilance against the manoeuvres of Thieu and his imperialist masters; to respond immediately and decisively to any move which endangers the Indochinese revolution; and to keep up the constant demand for the implementation of democratic liberties in South Vietnam (especially the release of all political prisoners) and the recognition of the Provisional Revolutionary Government by Britain.

David Johnson

# 100 Belgian groups oppose Brazil trade fair

'New business alternatives in a country known for its stable social and economic climate, its huge exploitable natural resources, its versatile labour force', promised the advance publicity for the massive trade fair held in Brussels from 7 to 15 November. The country - Brazil, where the ruthless military regime established in 1964 has opened up a haven for foreign investment and an organising base for the operations of imperialism throughout the Latin American continent.

Over 350 firms, many of them major multinational companies, and the Brazilian dictatorship collaborated to mount the 'Brazil Export 73' exhibition. The coalition government, headed by Socialist Party prime minister Edmond Leburton, extended its benevolent co-operation in terms of police protection etc. Every effort was made to create a 'carnival' atmosphere to gloss over the repressive nature of the regime, with great emphasis on tourism and cultural activities. But this nauseating spectacle did not go unchallenged by the left.

In fact, it produced one of the largest and most broad-based movements seen in Belgium for many years. Over 100 organisations, from the Flemish Catholic Workers Youth to the Trotskyist LRT (Ligue Révolutionnaire des Travailleurs - Revolutionary Workers League), supported the mobilisation. Eventually, even the national conferences of the Flemish and Walloon Socialist Parties, which form part of the governing coalition, were forced to go on record against the trade fair. All this activity was co-ordinated by an umbrella organisation, the Europe-Latin America Committee.

The platform of this committee drew a very clear connection between the workers' struggles in Europe and those in Latin America. In particular, it noted that:

'The workers in Europe are less and less prepared to contribute to further increases in the profits of the multi-national firms. For this reason, the multi-national firms have adopted a new tactic, moving their factories to those countries where 'cheap labour' is still available in an attempt to by-pass the struggle of the workers here.

'Brazil has become the favourite country of these multi-nationals - labour is available for an eighth of its cost in Europe, and the dictatorship makes sure the extreme exploitation is maintained. The Brazilians, apart from a small elite, are not significant consumers. They do not receive the fruits of their labours. The products from the factories must be sold in Europe. That is why they are trying to establish 'Made in Brazil' as a sign of quality, a trade mark. The 'Brazil Export' trade fair is part of this drive,



'No professional army - Down with Brazil-Export!'

La Gauche, paper of the Fourth International's Belgian section, condemns Brazilian dictatorship

'When the workers go on strike here to demand their rights, the bosses may try to hire scab labour or even use the army to carry out certain jobs. In Brazil the same thing happens on a much larger scale. Instead of being allowed to work at their own rate of development, the Brazilian people are forced to work for the multinationals and the European market. In this way the bosses hope to find an easy solution to the problem of the workers' struggles in Europe.

'Real solidarity among the workers of Europe therefore means solidarity with the Brazilian people - and the other peoples of the third world against their common bosses.'

The campaign culminated last Sunday in a massive demonstration of almost fifteen thousand people through the streets of Brussels. A few days earlier a comrade of the LRT, Jan Van Kerckhoven, had to be taken to hospital after police attacked a joint delegation from the Committee which arrived at the prime minister's office. On Sunday, just to emphasise the point, police again attacked 'armed with tear gas and freely wielding truncheons', as the *Guardian* reporter put it. The lessons of their role in defence of the Brazilian regime and its imperialist backers will not be lost among the effects of a campaign which has had a major impact on public opinion in Belgium.

MARTIN METEYARD



Communist League militant Michel Recanati (left) on his way to freedom

## Campaign success frees French militant

A further victory in the fight to reverse the ban on the French Communist League (French section of the Fourth International) was achieved on 27 October with the release of one of its former militants, Michel Recanati.

The day before, another step forward in the campaign had been marked by the participation of representatives of the Communist Party and CGT trade union federation (led by the CP) in a joint delegation which visited the Ministry of Justice to call for Recanati's release. The CFDT union federation, the FEN (national teachers federation), and the PSU (United Socialist Party) were also represented.

Both Recanati and Alain Krivine, an ex-leader of the former Communist League, are now out on bail awaiting trial. Neither is allowed to leave the country without official permission. French militants are preparing to turn the trial into an indictment of the policies pursued by the Minister of the Interior, Marcelin.

Meanwhile the support campaign continues in Britain. Among the latest figures to sign the petition calling for a reversal of the ban is Spike Milligan. Another excellent initiative was that taken last month by Newcastle University Students Union, which organised a full debate on the issue. A motion calling for the ban to be lifted was proposed by Tariq Ali and passed with only one vote against.

For further details of the campaign, write to: Ad Hoc Committee to Defend the Communist League, c/o 182 Pentonville Rd., London N.1.

## Fourth International on the Greek colonels

Statement by United Secretariat

The United Secretariat of the Fourth International and the Internationalist Communist Party, Greek section of the Fourth International, warmly salute all the recently amnestied Trotskyist militants. With exemplary courage in the struggle against the military dictatorship and capitalism, these comrades have defended the programme of proletarian struggle and socialist revolution in Greece, the strategy of the Socialist United States of Europe, the policy of the anti-bureaucratic revolution in the deformed or degenerated workers states, and the anti-imperialist struggles in the colonial countries. In short, they have defended the banner of the Fourth International, the banner of world socialist revolution.

Their conduct in the jails of the security services, before the courts, and in the prisons, writes a glorious page in the history of revolutionary proletarian struggles for socialism.

In a situation characterised by the sharpening of the class struggle, both in Europe and on a world scale; by the first shakings of the dictatorial regime of the Greek military by the past and recent student demonstrations and the ferment among the people and the workers that is heralding broader social struggles; in a situation favourable to the revolutionary Marxist movement in many countries of the world, a movement that is already causing uneasiness to the ruling classes and has faced repressive measures (as in France); the Fourth International and the Greek ICP call upon all those in Greece who consider themselves to be Trotskyists to rally to the ranks of the World Party of Socialist Revolution in order to build the mass revolutionary Marxist party in Greece. That is the indispensable condition for the victorious outcome of future mass struggles for the proletarian socialist revolution.

# Students in struggle

## IN OXFORD

The most militant student occupation of recent months ended this week after 400 students had occupied the Central Examination Schools in Oxford for one week, to back up demands for a students' union building. They now intend to 'continue the struggle by other means.'

The Student Representative Council opposed the occupation, and actually formed a squad of strong arm stewards, including members of the local Communist Party, that fought to stop students occupying the building.

Once inside the students formed a Committee of Defence to organise the security of the building against the police and the University's security forces. The occupation was a model of self-organisation. Daily mass meetings were called, sometimes attended by over 1,000 students, and the central committee of the occupation was elected on a daily basis. When the University administration threatened to expel all those occupying a pledge of collective responsibility was signed by 2,000 people.

Most important was the support the occupation received, despite the opposition of the Students Representative Council and the initial opposition of the local Communist Party. At last week's rally on students grants in London, following a speech by an Oxford IMG member, 10,000 students voted that the NUS Executive should give total support to the occupation, and the Oxford Trade Union movement sent several speakers to address the occupation. This support ensured that any attempts at victimisation

would strengthen rather than weaken the struggle, and was thus of crucial importance.

## ... AND LEEDS

Students at Leeds were threatened with police dogs after they occupied a Council ante-room at Leeds Civil Hall last Thursday. They had marched, 300 strong, from Leeds Polytechnic, as part of a campaign for adequate teaching and residential accommodation on their campus.

The struggle started with a three week occupation of the administrative buildings at the college, which ended on Friday 2 November after they had wrung a number of concessions from the Local Authority. The main gain was a promise that 7,500 square feet of space would be made available for teaching at once. However the students' demand was for 80,000 square feet, the Government's norm for a Poly the size of Leeds, and the students are well aware that the Local Authority's offer will not be sufficient to meet the rapid expansion of numbers of students over the next few years.

The Local Authority also agreed to the setting up of a working party to discuss the problems. But as soon as the occupation ended they used this agreement as an excuse to call off a previously agreed meeting with the Student Union, claiming that the points they were to discuss could now be dealt with by the working party. It was in response to this that the students decided on a two hour token occupation of the Civic Hall, which ended after they had obtained a commitment that the working party would meet at 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday 14 November.

# Red Weekly

## Journalists strike

Coverage of the royal wedding was hit when provincial journalists staged a two-day selective strike this week, closing down one-third of the country's local newspapers.

The action was taken in pursuit of the pay claim for provincial journalists submitted by the National Union of Journalists to the Newspaper Society. The immediate demand is for the NS to lift its embargo on house agreements, as a prelude to re-opening negotiations on the full claim (which includes an increase of £15 on the national rate and a new deal for juniors).

Industrial action has been overwhelmingly endorsed by the NUJ membership in chapel meetings, and the strike action was prepared for last week by 24-hour mandatory meetings in an attempt to disrupt production. But only in Sheffield and Southend did papers fail to appear as a result of this.

In Southend, however, this led to a full-scale dispute involving printworkers as well as journalists. When journalists on the local Westminster Press papers, the *Evening Echo*, the *Southend Standard*, and the

*Basildon and Billerica Standard Recorder*, objected to blacklegs being brought in to do their work, management promptly locked them all out. At the same time, the NGA printworkers insisted on following head office instructions to black all non-NUJ work with the exception of the Editor's copy, and refused to allow one Editor to step in for another away on holiday. As a result all 100 NGA members were sacked.

The NUJ and NGA members immediately held joint meetings and elected a joint action committee to run the dispute. Pickets have been mounted at all the papers, and are being respected by the other unions involved - management tried to get tough by sacking a SOGAT driver who refused to make a delivery, but retreated when the rest of the SOGAT workers threatened to walk out.

This united response to management intimidation shows that the employers can no longer rely on exploiting the traditional antagonisms between journalists and printworkers. This is important because any successful struggle for the NUJ claim will depend on co-operation from workers in the various printing unions. However such unity on a national scale can only really be cemented if journalists support the

struggles of printworkers as well as vice versa. In particular, there must be a fight in the NUJ to prevent journalists from collaborating in the anti-union witch-hunt which will undoubtedly be launched by the press this winter.

It is also important to ensure that a perspective is given to the NUJ struggle beyond this week's action. There is a danger that the reintroduction of house agreements could be used by the NUJ leadership as a sweetener to buy off the more strongly organised chapels preparatory to accepting a small national increase within Phase 3 limits. In this respect the decisions of last Saturday's *Journalists Charter* meeting - to put out a special bulletin on the struggle linking it in with the fight against Phase 3, and to fight for the rank-and-file Joint Standing Committee to form itself into a strike committee and establish a regional support network - should be taken up in every NUJ branch and chapel.

Although both the NGA and the NUJ have made the Southend strike official, neither union is giving financial support. A dispute fund has been set up and all contributions should be sent without delay to: Roy Collins, 16 Queens Road, Rayleigh, Essex.

# Left or right for Labour after by-elections?

The recent by-elections have shown once again the deep crisis into which this country's capitalist political system has fallen.

Since the end of the last war, two parties have posed as alternative administrators of British capitalism: the Tories and Labour. But British capitalism is in trouble, and neither of these parties is able to offer viable solutions to the myriad of problems with which this crisis confronts the mass of the electorate.

This is especially true of Scotland and Wales, where the intense regional impact of the social crisis is coupled with the rise of nationalist politics and the veritable destruction of the working class social fabric on which the Labour Party's strength has traditionally rested.

Despite widespread press predictions that the Liberal resurgence was a spent force, they did well in the elections, winning a narrow victory in one former Tory seat, Berwick. In Hove, one of the safest Tory seats in the country, the Liberals reduced

the Tory vote to less than 50% of the total, and left the Labour candidate trailing far behind.

In the two Scottish contests the Liberals did poorly because of the presence of the Scottish Nationalist Party. But the traditional parties were badly battered: the SNP won the safe Labour seat of Govan, and both Labour and Tory had their poll cut in half in Edinburgh North (which the Tories did hold, however).

The Liberals emerged from their last conference with a coherent electoral strategy: they were out to win disgruntled Labour supporters. With this aim in mind, they pose as the party of 'honest reform' - the party which puts forward the types of policies characteristic of Labour in the 50s and 60s, but really means it. They thus aim to attract both voters who may be leery of Labour's tentative turn to left-wing rhetoric, and those who are disillusioned with Labour's abysmal governmental record. They have thus been able to make gains not only among middle-class Labour supporters, but also in working class

constituencies like Chester-le-Street and Manchester Exchange.

Labour can respond in two ways. They can decide to move away from left-wing rhetoric and back to centre-stage, where they can slug it out with the Liberals and the Nationalists. They have the advantage here of a stronger party machine and the ability to pose as a serious contender for government. But they will have to carry the tremendous burden of the disillusionment its past record has inspired in many voters.

The other road would be to take a more clear-cut left turn, in order to inspire working class voters with the image of a Party committed to a decisive anti-capitalist solution to the ills of British capitalism. This must seem like an immense gamble to the Party leadership, for it is largely unfamiliar waters for them. It is, however, probably the only way that Labour could ever again form a government. Either way, Labour will have to decide which way it is going very quickly - at the moment it is getting the worst of both worlds.

David Tettodoro

## SNP dreams of Scottish Texas

North Edinburgh and Govan are both urban Scottish constituencies, but there the resemblance ends. Over Govan's grey-black tenements hang the idle shipyard cranes, while the Georgian buildings of the former are dominated by the feudal symbolism of Edinburgh Castle.

But both by-elections establish a political fact: despite a heterogeneous base, and a political impact which is muffled by its proportionately greater support in the smaller towns than in the Glasgow/Edinburgh conurbations, the Scottish National Party has become a stable third force in Scottish politics.

North Edinburgh was a clearer test for the SNP than Govan. Little has disturbed its Presbyterian stolidity; it is a secure Tory fiefdom, with only a little light industry and a solid core of middle-class residential voters. Unlike Govan it is not an homogeneous community, and its working class component does not have a generally high level of class consciousness. In competition with the Liberals, who unlike the SNP have long had a base in the constituency, the SNP's strongest candidate, Billy Wolfe, won a solid 'third force' vote.

The result in Govan was affected by the criss-crossing of a number of factors: a low poll, and a large scale switch of Tory voters to the SNP, combined with a significant number of defections from the Labour Party. With the massive de-population of the constituency, these were sufficient to bring the former rock-solid Labour majority crashing down in ruins.

The SNP had a simple and clear campaigning issue - oil. They painted visions of a sort of Scottish Texas rising from the gutted streets of Govan, of big money

and big development, if only the oil profits could be kept out of the hands of the English Government.

The Labour campaign, on the other hand, was dominated by the overconfident apathy which marks the Labour Party in Glasgow. They offered nothing to an electorate which very well remembers the failure of the Wilson government to solve the chronic unemployment. To this was added cynicism bred by the operation of the Housing Finance Act by the Labour dominated Glasgow Corporation, pushing up the rents of the crumbling Govan tenements which the Council has taken over.

Coming on the heels of the Kilbrandon Report on regional government, which recommends national assemblies for Wales and Scotland, this new consolidation of the SNP will have important long term effects. The problem of the SNP could turn out to be more serious for the Labour Party than the rise of Liberalism from its political crypt. The Nationalists attract a high proportion of working class votes, and have proved to be a consistent electoral phenomenon.

The Tammany Hall bosses of the Scottish Labour Party are screaming Tartan murder at this erosion of their strategic reserve of seats in Scotland. A combination of the swing to the SNP, the revision of electoral boundaries, and the reduction of the number of MPs sent to London from Scotland and Wales, proposed in the Kilbrandon Report, could seriously slash the number of Labour MPs in the House. Coupled with the bitter results of the last Labour Government, the rise of the SNP constitutes a serious obstacle to Labour's hopes of winning a majority in the next election.

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## STUDENTS TAKE UP VITALE CASE

The fight to free Luis Vitale, the Fourth International militant imprisoned by the Chilean junta, has been taken up by students at Birmingham Polytechnic. A Union General Meeting, on Tuesday 13 November, decided to demand that the college authorities offer Vitale a teaching post and obtain political asylum for him from the British Government so that he can take up the post. The decision has gone to the Students Union Executive for them to follow up.

Vitale was for many years in the leadership of the Chilean Trade Union Movement, and has written an influential book on Chilean history. As yet there is no information about where he is being held, and the Fourth International has launched an urgent campaign to free him.

The Birmingham meeting also decided to donate £50 in aid for the resistance in Chile, and another £50 to a local Chile Solidarity Committee.

### DEMONSTRATE AGAINST ANTI-ABORTION LOBBY

Tuesday - Nov.20 - 4:30 pm  
Torchlight procession from  
Charing Cross Embankment  
to Central Hall, Westminster  
(where anti-abortion group  
'SPUC' are meeting)

### FREE ABORTION ON DEMAND

Evening Meeting at Friends'  
Meeting House, Euston Road  
8 pm - Tuesday

sponsored by: Ad-Hoc Committee  
Against SPUC (supported by 18  
left-wing and women's liberation  
organisations)