

# SOCIALIST VOICE

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

***"How can I stop all these Strikes?"***



★ **Tenants Fight Against Privatisation**

★ **Broad Left**

★ **Crisis in Peru**

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Editorial:

# Turn to the Youth and the Working Class

The great underlying historical crisis for British Capitalism is revealed in a simple statistic: Britain, once in a position of third in the league of exporters, has now dropped to nineteenth. It is now outstripped by Italy and even by India.

It is enough to send them reaching for the gin and tonics in the board rooms to know that once subservient India has overtaken Britain in the export stakes.

Britain now imports what it once used to produce. The Thatcher era has seen to that. It is in an increasingly deep historical and conjunctural crisis. The heads of industry, whose predecessors used to say: "what is good for Britain is good for the world", now tell the working class: "what is good for the multinationals is good for the working class".

The TUC leaders accept this message willingly. Their leadership consists of forcing on the working class what the managers of industry require.

### A JOINT PARTNERSHIP

One example of this is how certain trade union leaders, not expelled at the TUC, literally fawn after Fowler. At least four have already signed deals that will help the new Employment Training scheme get established.

Fowler knows they present no problem. All he has to offer them is some members and immediately they jump for the increased union dues that they hope will maintain the crumbling edifice of the bureaucracy.

The TUC did expel Hammond but the reasons were more to do with membership figures rather than any action based on class principles.

### RAPID MOVEMENT

The trade union leaders have moved rapidly since the Bournemouth Congress, desperate to show abiding loyalty to Kinnock.

The attacks on the youth and the unemployed, the move towards no-strike deals, the attacks on union democracy are moving

apace. Some of these are highlighted in this issue of Socialist Voice.

The British working class deserves and requires a better leadership than this. This leadership moves on questions of what it thinks is best to maintain its positions of privilege. It is a product of the boom. Unfortunately, many in the unions that have stood on a left ticket, have also been enveloped in the choking atmosphere of manoeuvring for position, of not rocking the boat and of contolling the membership.

As the broad left has shown in a number of unions, the National Union of Teachers and the Transport and General Workers Union to name just two, it is completely spineless. The only force they can turn to to develop a new leadership that will not betray, not seek to stop strikes and not seek to advance the employers interests is the youth and the working class. This is the force they are most afraid of mobilising.

The majority of lefts have found a comfortable living in the bureaucracy; high salaries, union car, hotel living, first class travel or even jet travel and bloated expense sheets. All these things help them to seek to stop mobilising than rather to mobilise. Many of them found have places in the leadership not based on years of class experience at the head of workers struggles but based on manoeuvring just like the right do in the conference halls and debating chambers of the union movement.

No one can fight for genuine leadership within the working class unless they seek to make connections with and base themselves on the struggles of the working class and its organisations. These struggles have doubled in the last year. We are experiencing the turning of the tide after a ten year low, as the hospital workers, seafarers and postal workers struggles testify. This is still a small but dark and menacing cloud on the horizon for the Tories.

## Socialist Voice

### Editorial Board for this issue

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# NUT Leaders Offer To "Halt Strikes"

Douglas McAvoy, General Secretary designate of the National Union of Teachers, is desperately trying to offer Kenneth Baker, Education Secretary, a package of binding arbitration which includes a no strike agreement. He denies this saying the NUT is not offering a "no strike agreement" they are offering a procedure that would "make strike action unnecessary".

In September the national executive voted with nine votes against to endorse the move to restore negotiating rights, but at what expense!

McAvoy has said that the union would consider pendulum arbitration if the Government allowed free negotiations over pay with local authorities.

Pendulum arbitration is a method of bargaining favoured by Hammond, leader of the electricians union the EETPU. It means the arbitrator accepts either the employers position or the unions, there is no middle ground. It gives teachers very little room for struggle. The Professional Association of Teachers, has passionately advocated pendulum arbitration for four years.

## SCABS UNION

Peter Dawson, General Secretary of PAT, commented in a letter to the Times on 8th September:

"The conversion of the NUT to the association's point of view

signals a spectacular change in its thinking. Clearly, the union has at last come to realise that the strike weapon is a futile and improper means of attempting to advance the interests of teachers."

Only a short time before this the NUT delegates at the TUC were voting to expel the EETPU. Yet they have been in the forefront of fighting for no strike deals. The two roads for the bureaucrats, the EETPU road and the rest left behind in the TUC, run parallel not in opposite directions.

So fast has McAvoy attempted to go down the road of Hammond and the bosses unions that he should have been sent as a replacement for Cramm to the Olympics. He would surely have taken the gold for Tory Britain and the TUC bureaucracy.

This will be a difficult package to sell to the membership and has already been opposed by those on the real left of the national executive. The Broad Left has a different attitude. Determined to show their militancy in September they put a motion to the national executive boasting that they had always been against pendulum agreements. An amendment stating clearly that union is against pendulum was defeated by the broad left. As in other unions the broad left huffs and puffs and then agrees

with the right wing.

Socialist Voice asks the new movements and struggles that are coming up not to adopt the name of broad left, lets put on a new shirt with politics of class struggle and not repeating tomorrow what the strike breakers of today say.

Needless to say the labour leadership jumped immediately, in the form of Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman, to support McAvoy and describe his proposals as constructive. They both agree to the setting up of a National Joint Council which they say would negotiate while the teachers union agreed not to strike.

## TORIES WANT MORE

What is the Tories response to these offers? It appears that the government will begin by rejecting these offers, after all, why accept the opening offer of betrayal, McAvoy will sell anything. The problem for the government is to what extent can McAvoy and his supporters on the national executive deliver the membership of the union to no strike deals

- \* No to binding arbitration
- \* No to no-strike deals
- \* Fight for leaders that will defend the gains of education.

## Broad Left Does Rights Bidding

The Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU) executive's decision to nominate Kinnock and Hattersley for the leadership of the Labour Party can come as no surprise to any T&G left activist.

The General Executive, with a majority of "Broad Left" delegates (22 to 17) agreed in its meeting in June not to nominate anybody for the Labour Party leadership.

This was the policy pursued by the Broad Left, justified by their North West representatives on the basis that if they fought for Benn and Heffer it would break left unity. This begs the question; unity at what price? The answer from the Broad Left is to sell principles. The Broad Left insists that it has to remain a "secret organisation" within the union, even though it has the majority of the seats on the Executive, now including the president, vice-president and chair. Who is it remaining secret from?

After winning, with the politics of compromise, the no-nomination ticket in the June executive, supporters of the left were then reliably informed by their executive representatives that the best they could now hope for in September was to get a nomination for Kinnock and Prescott.

But in September, when all 17 of the right wing GEC representatives had walked out of the meeting, the Broad Left, without hesitation, unanimously backed Kinnock and Hattersley.

The Morning Star, in an article totally uncritical of the T&GWU leadership, pointed the finger at the 17 right wingers and advised all T&G branches to pass motions condemning their actions. Totally letting the left bureaucrats of the hook, as they would do, since the Star is controlled by and is the paper of the institutionalised left bureaucracy, they ran a middle page spread describing the T&G

as being in the vanguard fighting Thatchers onslaught and covering the Broad Lefts back by underlining their 'media gunning for the T&G story'.

It is the Broad Left that stand condemned since in the face of no opposition they voted unanimously for Kinnock and Hattersley. Their justification: Todd was under attack from the right and the T&G was under attack from the media therefore they had to support his recommendation for the 'nightmare ticket'.

Amid cries of left unity and left discipline the Broad Left can always be relied upon to assume the role of the right when required to do so. The name Broad Left as in many unions must be understood: very very broad and not at all left.

These servants of the Right stand condemned for their empty posturing. It is they who should be challenged and either made to fight or be removed.

# Liverpool Postal Strike

**Bill Hayes, thirty five year old secretary of the Liverpool branch of the Union of Communication Workers and Liverpool strike leader talked to the Socialist Voice about the postal strike.**

"The main reason for the militant feeling in this strike is because over the years there have been a great number of cut-backs while there has been a great increase in the letter and parcels business - thirty per cent in the last five years. The result is that our members have been put under ever increasing pressure.

"The North West has been in advance partly because there is still a labour movement to talk of in the North West but also because the postal workers here have had leadership. We have been prepared to go forward and put a rational policy to the membership and the membership have responded accordingly.

"The primary reason for the dispute was the introduction of regional pay. In the fifty selected offices where the management want to introduce regional pay, one of the criteria for the payment is that unemployment in the region should be below 6 per cent. On Merseyside unemployment is 17.3 per cent. So our members in the North West can see that their terms and conditions will be further threatened."

## GROWING CONFIDENCE

Asked to elaborate on his statement about the North West Labour Movement, Bill Hayes replied:

"On Merseyside, in particular, there has been the experience of recent struggles of that movement. Our members were involved with the struggle of the Liverpool City Council and with the National Graphical Association dispute in Warrington over the attack on union conditions by Eddie Shah. We have always involved ourselves with other struggles and that has brought forward a layer of activists who can see wider issues.

"We have had quite an effective union organisation in the post office. Contrary to popular belief, the Union of Communication Workers is still quite a strong union, well

organised and relatively democratic. Our members can see that the Post Office is attempting to destroy the union.

"Prior to 1980, the Post Office was called the GPO, it was one big corporation. A Labour Government separated the Post Office into British Telecom and the Post Office. Since around 1983 this process has gone even further.

"Steadily there has been the dividing up of the Post Office into separate units in order to sell the pieces. One of the biggest stumbling blocks to privatisation is the UCW, because at our conference we took a stand that we



would fight privatisation up to and including industrial action.

## NATIONAL DISPUTE

"We feel the union strength is being atomised. That is our great fear and that, incidentally, is what we feel in relation to the payment of different regional wages. Cockburn, managing director of Post Office Mail, has himself stated that there is too much emphasis on the national union. What he actually means is that the biggest stumbling block to the terms and conditions he wants is a national union.

"For example, we have what is called the 'Diversion Agreement'. Across the Post Office is a grid system, and if there are problems in one area mail can be diverted to other areas. What happens is that if our mail is sent to another branch, they will phone us and say: 'We've got your mail here, is it o.k. to handle it?'."

"Sometimes when it has been sent there

because we can't cope, then we would say, 'o.k. handle it'. But when we are in dispute, we say 'you can't handle that. That mail is boycotted'. That is what happened in this dispute. Mail was boycotted and it developed into a national dispute.

"The management want to break this system of control."

## NEW CONFIDENCE SINCE 1971

"When I joined the Post Office in 1974, the national post strike of 1971 was not that far away. A lot of our members used to say 'Never again! We got battered in 1971 and we'll never go on strike again.'"

Incidentally, they weren't quite right about the results of the strike.

"But since 1971, the actual profile of the membership has changed. In 1971, you still had a lot of the type of military traditions of the GPO and the rest of it. Now one of the most significant things, and you can see it on the picket lines, is that we have a young membership and '71 doesn't figure much in the discussions.

"The membership know they work in a profitable organisation, even in capitalist terms. We can see that the industry is growing, even the Post Office has admitted that an extra twenty thousand jobs are being created in the next five years. So if the Post Office is saying there is an extra twenty thousand, you are actually talking about thirty thousand. So that the membership feel confident.

"And a major thing is you have a new layer of leadership which has come forward. They don't have the memories of '71. Their age is generally, somewhere between twenty and thirty five. That is the case nationally and generally I would say they are younger down south.

"This Liverpool branch of the union is the third biggest branch in the country and I'm the youngest branch secretary they have ever had. There is a simple reason for the youth of postal workers. If you are a married man or

*Continued on page 4...*

# Post Strike: Report Interviews, Comment

## LEADERS MORE FRIGHTENED OF VICTORY THAN DEFEAT

We include accounts and interviews from a number of strike areas because of the picture they make of class struggle and show where the real development is coming from to challenge the rule of the Tories.

Postal workers did not go back demoralised. In many areas large minorities of workers did not want to go back at all. Whatever the strike did achieve is due to the fighting spirit and loyalty to the union of the rank and file, whatever the strike did not achieve is the responsibility of the national leadership.

The struggle of these workers against privatisation, casualisation and in the defence of the national union was an inspiration to all workers resisting management and Government attack and having to confront their union leadership.

They are certainly not new comers to struggle, last year there were two hundred unofficial strikes and since April this year there have been fifty walkouts. Many have been created by sheer provocation of the management.

Tuffin, the general secretary of the Union of Communication Workers, gave no leadership to the strikers nationally. It was a strike he tried to avoid and then it was a strike he tried to limit to a one day national strike

which he was forced to call. The determination of postal workers to resist from Glasgow to Cornwall and the determination to defend their union took Tuffin by surprise.

During the strike a unity developed in areas that could have been established on a national level. In the north-west Stockport strikers said we wont go back until Manchester go back, Manchester said we wont go back until Liverpool go back, Liverpool said we can find no agreement with the management! Each suffered provocations from their managers which were answered locally and collectively.

The postal workers deserve a better leadership than the one they have got. The struggle to defend their conditions and jobs is also a struggle to advance a new leadership that wants to win.

But then a leader, like Tuffin, who likes to sit on the "The Industrial Society" with the right wing of the trade union movement, whose purpose is to undermine the principles of struggle, would only feel threatened by the determination and militancy of ordinary workers. Tuffin stayed with the Industrial Society until the resistance of the post workers forced him off it. The Post Office was using this organisation to lecture the work force on the benefit of management plans. When they were boycotted the management tried to victimise boycotters. Tuffin had no choice but to resign.

The union leaders involved in this dubious organisation believe it is better to control and end a dispute than it is to achieve victory. Now more than ever these leaders are more frightened of victory than they are of defeat.

## Liverpool...

a married woman with kids you can't afford to live on post office wages unless there are two of you working.

"So you tend to get a lot of youth joining the Post Office because if you are living with your parents you can live on the wage.

"The funny thing about the UCW is that the policies are o.k. Our conference is actually quite a left wing conference in straight forward policy terms. For example, on the Poll Tax, we are for civil disobedience. On privatisation - Tuffin put out a document extolling the virtues of share ownership and that was overturned by the conference. But leadership is the crucial question.

"Cockburn actually made a statement that was very significant. He said he was very unhappy to deal with a leadership that can't deliver on the ground. You have a contradic-

tion. You have a rank and file that is quite militant, and you have a leadership that moves towards class collaboration and are interested in doing deals. So that the main thing we need is a new leadership. And that is being formed in the struggle.

"You get the feeling like the lapping of the tide on a beach. You can actually feel that the movement this year is at the beginnings of the beginnings. Earlier on you had Fords, the Health workers, Vickers in Barrow and now us.

"Some of our Executive used to say we had to wait for the return of a Labour Government. It didn't come, so what do we do now? Obviously we would welcome a Labour Government. Better a Labour Government than a Tory Government. But the Labour Government is not the be-all and end-all. The class struggle is here as I see it, it's us, ourselves that will bring out the solutions."

## MANCHESTER:

## NO CONFIDENCE IN TUFFIN

"All the branches in the North-West region are sticking together until the issue of the use of casual labour and contract drivers has been resolved. We are not happy with the national leadership of the union. At a meeting at the Apollo on the 14th September of 2,600 postal workers we voted almost unanimously a resolution of no confidence in Tuffin" Cyril Platt, Secretary of the Postal workers branch, told Socialist Voice.

"The staff in the entire north-west region have had enough. The entire North west region of postal workers will stay out or return together. There is a very good fighting spirit amongst the members. We had agreed that we would return to work and see over the weekend if we needed any casuals to be employed. The management had the casuals there ready and waiting." Cyril continued.

"The management have used all the dirty tricks to try and break the strike. During our mass meeting the management had a tape recorder smuggled in, which they played to all the other managers within 15 minutes of the end of the meeting".

The posties from Middleton had been told that unless they return to work they will be sacked and the management had taken out a full page advertisement in the Manchester Evening News calling on the members to ignore the union and return to work.

"They have used all sorts of scabs. They are employing them without any checking up. Five have been sacked through theft. Others have gone in with a known record."

## ISL FUND

We have a number of documents from the MAS, the IWL section in Argentina, which have only recently become available to us in English.

We think that these documents are important and should be published here but we do not yet have the resources.

The documents include:

Conversations with Nahuel Moreno

Twentieth Century Revolutions

A Leninist Party or a Mandelist Party

We are sure these will be of interest to many readers.

Our fund will be used, in part, to ensure these documents become available in Britain. So if you want to read them help us publish them by sending a donation to: ISL, P.O. Box 18, Stockport, SK6 4DH.

# HULME TENANTS OCCUPATION

Martin Ralph

## SUPPORT THE HULME OCCUPATION

Hulme Tenants are determined to maintain their 24 hour occupation of the Hulme Project Team offices in Otterburn Close until the Council's Tenant Participation staff are returned to the office and "full and meaningful discussion" of the tenants proposals in the council plan for Hulme takes place.

The response from the Director of Housing, Bob Young, has been to arrange for electricity and heating to be cut off. In fact ever since Hulme had been targeted for privatisation under the nationally hated HATs scheme the council has been running down their commitment to Hulme.

## COUNCIL STAFF WITHDRAWN

The Tenants Alliance, which is made up of the 11 tenants associations on Hulme, reached an agreement with the Housing Department on the 28th July that the status-quo would prevail and the Hulme Project Team would not be run down any further. The council had planned that the Tenant Participation Staff SHOULD "be drawn from central resource". In other words they proposed to withdraw all the TPS from Hulme. In the eyes of the tenants the TPS had become part of the process to involve tenants in Hulme's future.

The September Housing Committee meeting decided to remove the last of the team of Tenant Participation Assistants. These are the backbone of the team and have a particularly friendly and professional relationship with the tenants. The Housing Department is intent on removing these workers from the area which is against the proposals of the report the Tenants drew up.

The council now continues the attack and they forbid any team worker to communicate with any tenants. As if to prove just how much the Housing Department is against the tenants Young suspended (pending dismissal) the Tenant Liaison Officer and one of the Project Officers for alleged helping to organise the occupation.

## LABOUR MOVEMENT SUPPORT

The tenants point out that the occupation was organised entirely independently of anyone from the project team. The Occupation has won support from the National Union of Public Employees (Housing Department), the National Association of Local

government Officers (Housing and Social Services department), the Hulme Ward and City Party Labour branches.

The latter believes:

"That the current situation is embarrassing to the Party, and may bring into question our ability to run the estate at a time when the Tories are threatening to remove responsibility for the estate to an unelected Housing Action Trust Board or private landlord." Resolution on the 14th September.

## COUNCIL ATTACK

So the Manchester Council is attacking the Hulme Tenants at exactly the same time as the Tory government is threatening the

privatisation scheme someone may have thought of is highlighted by the current demise of the London Docklands Development Corporation. It is facing a financial crisis which will mean the end of any of their plans for housing, community schemes, schools or road development. They need £404m to continue, either the government will try to hide this political crisis and its ramifications for its HATs proposals or its privatisation schemes in the social area are in a real crisis before they even start.

The Tory privatisation plans are entering a crisis, so why is the council acting in this way? Does it have any plans for any sort of privatisation for Hulme or any other part of



homes of workers through the privatisation of councils. They are repeating what the old Liverpool council did to sections of workers, when the council attacked them rather than mobilising around them. No council can hope to fight the Tories with this strategy.

Over the summer tenants have been mobilising against the HATs, 700 met in Sunderland, 100 Leeds, 90 in Southwark and 1,500 in Tower Hamlets! The councils, if they were interested in fighting the Government and turning to the only force that can help them in their fight would not be attacking those that they depend on for their political life. Clearly the tenants through long experience are saying with or without you we will continue the fight to maintain our housing.

## PRIVATISATION CRISIS

Just how much under threat the council housing is under the HAT or any other type of

Manchester council housing? The council should be reminded that the housing does not belong to them, it belongs to the working class of Manchester whatever the tory law might say.

As Socialist Voice has said before the council should aid the struggles of the tenants not oppose them. It should meet the demands of the tenants. It should discuss the hosting of a national conference of tenants fighting against the HATs.

We suggest that any labour movement organisations with connections in Hulme or with the council should immediately support the tenants, pass resolutions and ask the tenants how they can help.

- \* Reinstatement of the council workers in Hulme.
- \* No victimisation.
- \* No privatisation in Hulme.

# Interview: A Tenant Speaks

Socialist Voice talked to Dave Hughes, a member of Hulme 5 Tenant's Association who is supporting the occupation.

S.V. "How important is the lifting of the immediate threat of privatisation?"

D.H. "We think it is a victory. Privatisation would be an immense threat to the people living here. We are fighting for our homes, all our homes. Hulme is 5 minutes from the city centre, 5 minutes from the airport and 5 minutes from the Urban district Council that is why it is a prime target.

"In Hulme 50% of the male population and 30% of the female population is unemployed, 95% receive housing benefit. Many are on income support of only £26, we have to pay 20% of the rates which is £4 to £5 per week.

"If Hulme was privatised the council would provide no service. Under private ownership service charges would be between £12 to £15 per week and with a HAT the rents would go up. Housing Benefit will not pay service charges so we would lose security of tenure. It would be easy to evict tenants and since nobody here could buy the house the landlord would force you out. But with privatisation the council house provision is further eroded making it even more difficult to get a council house."



S.V. "Why are you fighting to maintain the Hulme estate?"

D.H. We are here because we want to be. People enjoy living here and there is no other place I would want to live. There is a lot of support around here and you can always find someone in the same boat as yourself and who is willing to help."

"In the 1970's the council bulldozed down everything, old terraced houses were de-

stroyed in three years and it amounted to five and half thousand houses. Tenants then said it was a disaster and it was not going to work. A conference was held in 1985 that was known as the "Desk Access Disaster Conference". So the problems of Hulme are not new and have not been created by the tenants.

"The worst part of Hulme is always shown on television. There are real problems but these have developed from 20 years of neglect and mismanagement."

## Ocean Odyssey Disaster

Kevin Townsend

Once again the warnings of oil and gas platform workers have gone unheeded leading to another disaster in the North Sea.

Only 11 weeks after the Piper Alpha rig disaster killing 167 oilfield workers, Health and Safety conditions in the North Sea are in the headlines, with the tragic death of a worker in the Ocean Odyssey explosion.

As we said in Socialist Voice (issue No. 5) about the Piper Alpha explosion: "Patch and Mend! Keep the oil flowing, keep the profit coming, lives are expendable! This is the reality in the North Sea...This means that there is a continual threat of Piper Alpha happening again, anywhere, anytime." Yet again there were warnings.

The oil company ARCO UK knew and admit they were dealing with an awkward situation or to be more precise endangering the lives of the 67 crew members. They left it to the last minute before abandoning the rig only too late for the life of a young worker.

The company is lying when they say the rig

had passed safety inspection only a week before the disaster. As one survivor claimed, there was gas emissions on the drilling floor at an unprecedented level, far and above the explosion limit, workers were overcome by gas and were made physically sick by inhaling the gas.

North Sea workers can hardly put their trust in company safety inspection or in a Department of Energy inspection after the Piper Alpha cover up of 1984.

How can workers put their trust in people like Cecil Parkinson the head of the Department of Energy when he cynically blames the workers or operators as he calls them, for shirking their responsibility for ensuring their own safety.

### WORKERS SAFETY

Oil and gas workers should answer this slander on all those who have died producing the wealth and fortune for a few parasites by fighting for independent rank and file elected workers health and safety committees.

Parkinson and the Tories are the accomplices to the murder of North Sea workers. They give carte blanche to the oil companies to evade any legal requirement to enforce the Health and Safety at Work Act on off-shore rigs and platforms.

Most companies refuse to even allow trade union representation on company run health and safety monitoring bodies. In the bosses dictionary Health means only one thing Healthy Profits and by Safety they understand only the Safety of their Capital.

North Sea workers should also fight for the complete separation of the living accommodation on rigs and platforms from the working areas, a vital and legitimate argument of workers after the Piper Alpha disaster.

The bosses will argue it is economically impossible and disastrous for the industry, to this we ask: for years you have made a fortune out of the North Sea, the accidents become more frequent, more workers suffer debilitating injuries, where has the money gone?

Whether the oil and gas monopolies are making a profit or loss is not the concern of the working class, we cannot allow another Piper Alpha or Ocean Odyssey, Health and Safety is a necessity not an option.

# Chile: The Plebiscite of the "Jackal"

The Chilean plebiscite on October 5th will show how many want Pinochet, termed the "Jackal" by the people, in power for eight more years. That is if anyone can believe the results of a vote organised by the military.

This ballot has been organised under the full rules of the dictatorship, according to the constitution approved by the Military Junta in 1980. The constitution allows the repression of the opposition, and has already been used to censor the propaganda broadcasting programmes denouncing the tortures and the censorship.

In this Plebiscite there is only one candidate elected by the Junta, Pinochet of course, and the voters can only vote YES or NO.

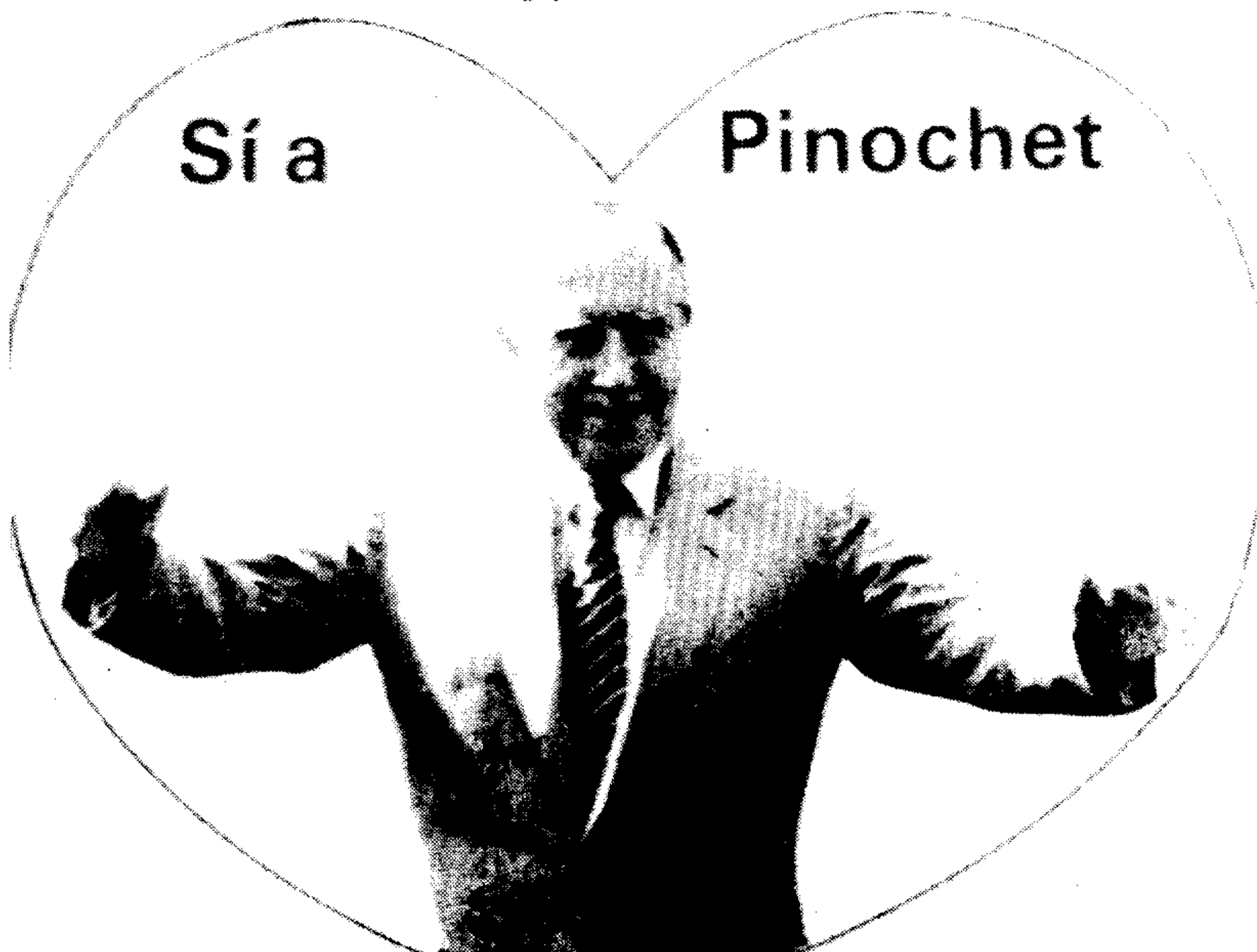
With this "democratic" manoeuvre the Military want to maintain the regime with a new "legal" feature.

Pinochet is supported by the Partido Nacional (National Party) and other ultra right groups.

Meanwhile the Christian Democratic Party (the most important bourgeois opposition party) and several factions of the Socialist Party formed the "Committee for NO". The Communist Party, very strong within the working class, is calling for a NO vote, but it was not accepted into the Committee.

These three opposition parties are fully supporting the alternative of the plebiscite since they have never wanted the revolutionary defeat of the dictatorship. The Christian

*The Electoral Message from the Jackal: "Yes for Pinochet"*



Democracy has always tried to stop the mobilisation of the masses and to achieve an agreement for the resignation of Pinochet and for a "peaceful transition" to a new democratic regime. On the other hand, the Central Committee of the Communist Party sent a letter to the Vice-command of the Armed Forces in 1986 saying: "The Communists do not want confrontation with the Armed Forces... we would like the Armed Forces to change their attitude and talk with the 90 per cent of the Chileans...".

Even with this attitude of their leaderships, the Chilean workers and people have never stopped fighting in the streets during the past thirteen years. It is this heroic struggle that forced the Military Junta to attempt this manoeuvre of the Plebiscite. It shows the weakness of the dictatorship, and even if the dictatorship will not be removed by the vote, it is an opportunity for the mass movement to express hostility. A large NO vote will open a deep political crisis in Chile.

## ANC Leadership Rejects Armed Struggle

A senior African National Congress representative said in September:

"we don't believe that victory will be achieved by armed mass insurrection any more" confirming what the Socialist Voice said in the September issue::

"reliance on workers strength to resolve the national democratic and social questions of the African struggle is not that of the middle class and Communist Party leadership of the ANC, particularly since the Gorbachev policy of the Soviet leaders, and their attempts to find a common solution with imperialism to the struggle for freedom"

The common solution must exclude the mass armed struggle, it includes the stopping of possible military victory in Angola. In fact the emphasis on "democratic methods" and

the two stage theory, first freedom and then socialism, is sweeping through the southern cone of Africa and is being applied in the heart of the liberation struggle.

Under cover of saying civilians should not be attacked the ANC national executive is trying to curb the armed struggle itself. But this is something they cannot deliver to the west or to the Soviet bureaucracy. They are having difficulty controlling the ranks and middle leadership. For them Umkhonto We Sizwe, the military wing of the ANC, carried out acts which "resulted in unintended casualties", they condescendingly added these acts were inspired by anger at Apartheid.

There is increasing political discussion and tension in the training camps in Angola and Tanzania. The same is happening within the

ANC leadership. Their rejection of the Freedom Charter, the stopping by stalinism of the Cuban military advance in Angola, the expulsion of the ANC from Mozambique, the refusal of Zimbabwe and Botswana to accommodate the ANC fighters, the visit of the Pope to the so-called front line states to support the new native capitalists will help the polarisation inside the ANC.

The tensions are part of a striving for an independent international class action against Apartheid and the striving for a real revolutionary leadership that will carry the struggle forward not only to the end against Apartheid but to the carrying through of all the national and socialist tasks so that the misery of the masses is eradicated.



# Peru: Political and Economic Crisis

Mark Smith

The Peruvian President Alan Garcia is now facing a deep economic and political crisis after the total failure of the plan that made him the most popular Latin American leader when, in February 1986, he announced a decision to resist the International Monetary Fund by limiting the payments of the external debt to 10 per cent of the country's trade surplus.

Two and a half years later, inflation is heading for 1,000 per cent by the end of the year; unemployment has reached 62 per cent; workers lost 50 per cent of their buying power (the average wage is \$60 a month while the family budget is estimated at \$250); the external debt has grown from \$ 13,8 bn. to \$14,6 bn. Peru was declared ineligible for further credits by the IMF.

Faced with this chaotic situation Garcia is attacked by those sectors of the ruling class (including the head of the Armed Forces) which are closely linked with the interests of the super powers who are demanding the "normalisation" of the relationships with the world banks.

At the same time the masses are demanding the satisfaction of their needs that Garcia has been promising throughout his presidency. A wave of strikes of teachers, miners, civil servants, textile workers, drivers, resulted in a 48 hours General Strike in the second week of July, this marked the beginning of a new situation in Peru. Since then the rank and file organisations have not stopped fighting. Several strikes of different unions and the storming of supermarkets which forced the leadership of the CGTP (Peruvian TUC) to call another General Strike in October.

The peasants' movement which constitute the main base for the powerful Guerrillera movement of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path), continues to be a threat.

*Alan Garcia*



## WHY DID ALAN GARCIA'S PLAN FAIL?

As in every Latin American country (and semi-colonial country) in Peru there is no way to solve the economic crisis without stopping the payments of the external debt built up by the super powers' banks with their allies, the military dictatorships and the native ruling class, during the last decade.

In this sense, Alan Garcia's plan was progressive. The decision of limiting the payments of the external debt to ten per cent of the trade surplus allowed Peru to maintain within the country millions of dollars that otherwise would have gone into the coffers of the foreign banks. This was clearly revealed by the fall of inflation from 158 per cent in 1985 to a 62.9 per cent in 1986 and by the Gross Domestic Product that grew from 2 per cent to 8 per cent in the same period.

But what Alan Garcia did not do was to use money saved to satisfy the needs of the masses. His plan consisted in leaving that money in the hands of the native rulers who were supposed to invest and develop the economy. But they did not. In 1986 the Peruvian ruling class had a fabulous surplus of \$4 bn, the Gross Domestic Product jumped to 8 per cent, but the rate of investment fell to 3.1 per cent of the G.D.P., in other words, the rulers used the situation to increase their bank accounts.

And Garcia did not do anything to avoid it. He confronted the IMF but not for the benefit of the masses but for the gains of the capitalists. So, that a progressive measure, which no other government had attempted, not even the Nicaraguan, became a regression since it did not include consistent measures against the ruling class.

## GARCIA AGAINST THE MASSES

Two years of confronting the IMF, and at the same time attacking the living standards of the masses by one austerity plan after another, only favoured the native capitalists. This provoked a very contradictory situation which can only be solved by the class struggle. Either the workers and the masses impose their demands, or the bourgeoisie and the foreign bank will impose harsher conditions on them. Alan Garcia is not an alternative leadership for the struggles coming. He is still a representative of the bourgeois APRA Party and will not betray his class. The ruling class of the APRA, after earning millions, want to re-establish relations with the IMF, as a condition to continue supporting "their" President.

**But at the same time, the masses are struggling harder and harder for their rights, their needs and their interests.** A new leadership is emerging from the rank and file organisations which have been leading the recent struggles.

**It is in this situation that the PST, Peruvian section of the LIT-CI (International Workers League - Fourth International) is fighting for the Programme of the Socialist Revolution within the working class and amongst the people as the only way to develop the "progressive" measures of Alan Garcia into a real solution to the masses' needs.**

# The Palestine Rebellion Continues

**After ten months struggling in the occupied territories on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the resistance of the Palestinians continues in the face of repression by the Israeli army resulting in 350 Palestinian deaths, 12,500 injuries and 1,800 miscarriages and abortions caused by beatings and the affects of tear-gas.**

The strength of the Palestinians comes from the elementary and just character of their demand: to recover their country usurped by Israel. At present in the occupied territory there are 1.6 million Palestinians who are treated in the same way the Nazis treated the Jews during the forties. Over three million have been forced to emigrate.

This resistance has caused the failure of the repressive measures and instigated the worst crisis of the Israeli Armed Forces. This is of crucial importance, since Israel has been supported and supplied by imperialism to defend its interests in the Middle East.

Reagan's plan has failed too. This plan consisted of an "International Peace Confer-

ence" where the Palestinians would be represented by King Hussein of Jordan, denying the PLO the chance to represent the Palestinian people who consider them their sole representatives. Reagan also proposed, the creation, within five years, of a Jordan-Palestine federation. The struggle in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank alarmed Hussein and forced him to reject the attempt to represent the Palestinians declaring that "they want their own state".

**The situation is polarising. On the one hand the Israeli right wing demands the definitive annexation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. On the other hand, the "United Leadership of the Uprising" (the local leaders of the rebellion) call for the "establishment of an Independent Palestinian State".** They have asked the "external leadership of the PLO" led by Yasser Arafat and the General Palestine Congress -a kind of Parliament in exile- to: "openly declare and implement practical measures in support of

the struggle", and to: "intensify the attacks, expelling the Israelis from the occupied territories", in a declaration that appears as a hidden criticism of Arafat and the leadership of the PLO.

The achievement of a Palestinian state in Gaza and the West Bank would be a great triumph for the Palestinian struggle and a great advance towards the destruction of the racist soldier of imperialism, the state of Israel and its replacement with a secular, non racist and democratic state of Palestine.

#### Correction:

In the last issue of Socialist Voice it was incorrectly stated that the Israeli and British Labour parties were instrumental in forming the Second International.

They were not, of course, founder members whilst they are now both loyal adherents and long standing members



# Burmese Masses Resist the Military

The Burmese regime of General Ne Win continues desperately to cling to power. In the latest of the unfolding tragedy of the Burmese masses the army announced a take over. The Burmese Socialist Party which nominally held power was merely a front for the military rule of General Ne Win who came to power after a coup in 1962.

The regime has become increasingly isolated, only having control in the capital Rangoon. Lately, sections of the armed forces have shown their solidarity with the masses. In Mandalay, the country's second city, 1000 soldiers joined in anti-government demonstrations and 200 airforce personnel from the airbase at Mingaladon took part in a demonstration in the capital Rangoon.

## SCHOOLGIRLS GUNNED DOWN

In a desperate bid to control the country military law has been announced, a curfew introduced and house to house searches have been made for opposition leaders. In one incident, according to eye witnesses, three students were summarily shot after being dragged from a house. In another outrage troops machine-gunned at close range a group of schoolgirls.

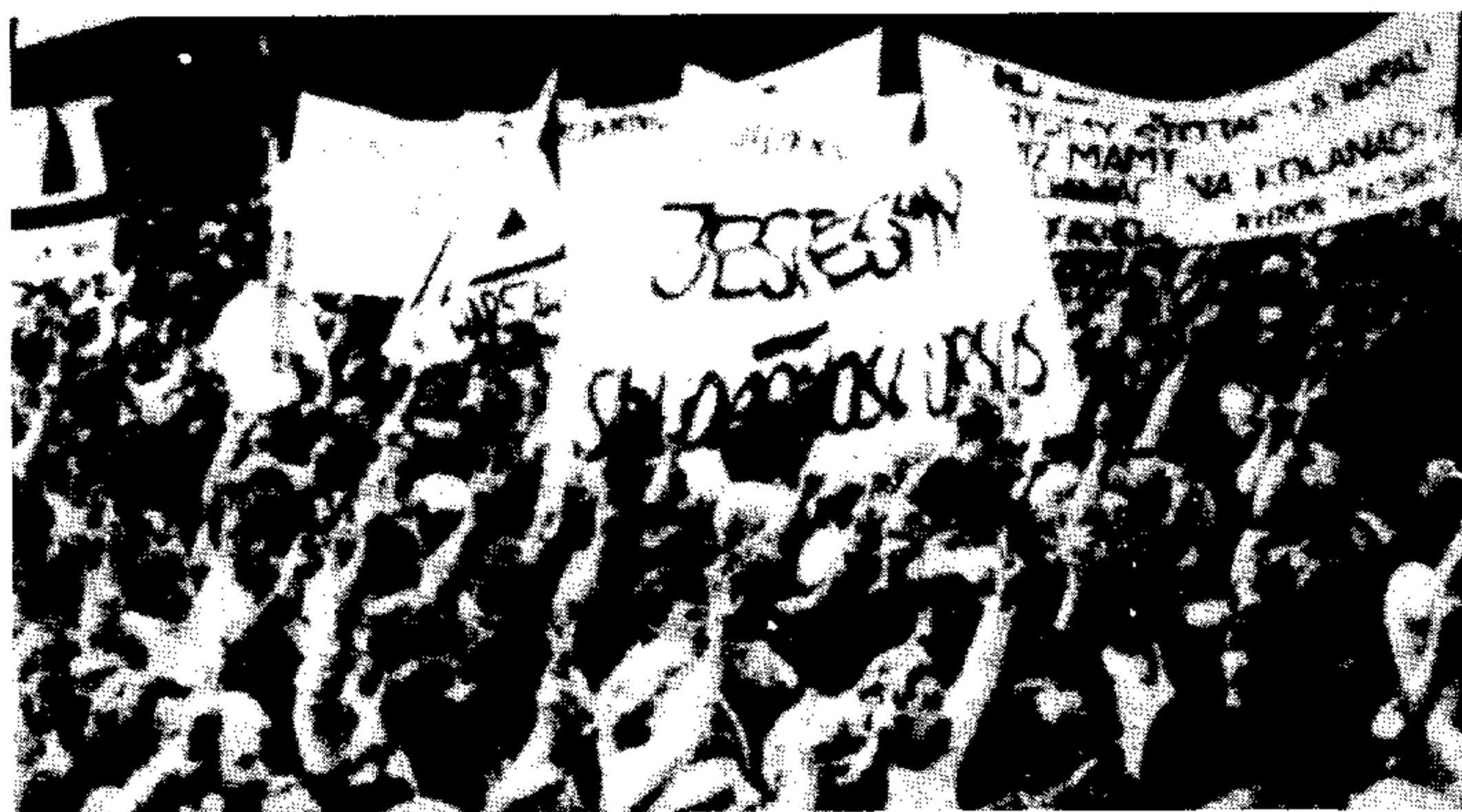
In the days immediately following the announcement of the military take over on Sunday 18th September the army shot dead approximately 1,000 people in Rangoon alone. Bodies littered the streets of the capital. Troops collected as many as possible in order to dispose of the bodies so as not to embarrass the friends of the regime such as the USA and Japan.

## MIRRORING IRAN

What many observers saw as merely a replay of the events that occurred in the Philippines when Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown by "people power" now appears more like the revolution in Iran when the Shah was deposed.

General Ne Win like the Shah of Iran cannot envisage losing power and the more isolated the regime becomes the more barbarous its actions. The moderate opposition leaders such as U Nu, Former Brigadier General Aing Gyi, Aung San Suu Kyi and General Tin Oo who attempted to negotiate with the Ne Win regime now seem out of step with the needs of the ordinary Burmese. The masses are demanding a much bolder leadership.

# Challenge to Walesa's Leadership



The wave of strikes against Jaruzelsky and for the recognition of Solidarity that shocked Poland two months ago involved the miners region of Silesia, Gdansk (where Solidarity was born in 1980) and important factories of Warsaw.

This development took place within the framework of the grave social-economic situation to which the country has been driven by the bureaucracy and which has deepened during the seven year government of Jaruzelsky with his austerity-IMF plans to pay back the \$40 bn. external debt.

The struggle of the workers obtained its first success by **demonstrating the social isolation of the regime and also by provoking a deep crisis in the government that forced the party leaders the sack of the government of Zbigniew Messner on September 19th.**

Even **the official trade unions** - in fact a branch of the government - **threatened to call a General Strike in Warsaw and the United Workers Polish Party** (the name of the Polish Communist Party) **distanced itself from the government saying that even if the strikes were "illegal" the demands of the workers were "just".** The economist Jozef Kaleta, who is tipped to be asked to join the government next month has said that the authorities were pushing the country to disaster by refusing genuine concessions to the opposition and he has forecast that: **"unless we begin to work hard to overcome the crisis we are inevitably heading for yet another outbreak of popular discontent, which will no doubt be much more disastrous than any of the previous ones."**

With Jaruzelsky's rule weakened, there is opening up the necessity of a united front for his dismissal, as Sbigniew Bujark, one of the main leaders of Solidarity said: *"General Jaruzelsky and his lobby must leave"*.

## THE TRICK OF THE GOVERNMENT

The Government faced with this situation is trying to manoeuvre. The Home Minister proposed on television *"a dialogue without conditions with every sector of society"* but *"excluding those who reject the constitutional order"*. This proposal is a double trick. On one hand it denies one of the central demands of the workers: the legal recognition of Solidarity, since its existence is prohibited by the ruling laws. On the other hand it tries to take the struggle into hand without an end of the negotiations.

Jaruzelsky's dictatorship is not alone in trying to attempt this. The Polish Catholic Church offered its services to mediate between the Government and the strikers while the Pope called for "peace and tranquillity". Meanwhile, Lech Walesa (the historic leader of Solidarity and who forwards the positions of the Church) has proposed a "dialogue without conditions" too (that is to say abandoning the demand for the recognition of Solidarity) at the same time he has said: "a part of myself is crying because there are strikes going on".

**But while Walesa is ready to collaborate with Jaruzelsky there is emerging a new generation of activists of Solidarity who lead the new factories' committees. They are young revolutionaries fighting for their elementary rights and they do not want to wait. They are not confident in Walesa. These new activists have the influence of different Marxists currents, amongst them Trotskyism.**

**A big part of the future of Poland depends on the capacity of these young activists to build an alternative leadership for Solidarity to confront Walesa's positions.**

It is a duty of the British workers to support the just struggle of the Polish workers of Solidarity.

# State Terrorism Exposed

John Owen

The court procedures at the Gibraltar inquest have that familiar smell that characterises the British judicial system - the stench of hypocrisy.

Despite earlier witnesses who testified that the three IRA volunteers were shot in the back, a string of fairytale evidence is being produced that rivals the Oliver North scandal - only the 'heroes' are different.

The main focus of the inquest is not to uncover the truth of the events in Gibraltar, or even to bring the murderers to justice, it is to demonstrate that legalised violence is necessary to safeguard British interests in the north of Ireland.

This is clear as the three assassinated IRA volunteers have no right to reply to the anonymous evidence given in the proceedings, they were denied this and the right to life when they were pumped full of lead by the so called 'brave heroes' of the British army.

But despite attempts to cover the truth, the

long-term implications of these showtrials will be the discrediting of the British occupation forces in the north of Ireland and the myth that terror is only employed by the IRA will be exploded.

The policy of "shoot to kill", first uncovered by the Stalker Inquiry, has now been taken a step further and has become an international conspiracy of state terrorism.

To what extent the Spanish government is involved is still not clear, but you can see from the detailed reports of the latest testimonies that the operation was a joint effort.

New evidence has come to light which shows that the Spanish police had undertaken to keep the three volunteers under surveillance since November last and to report their movements to the British. Further that in March the journey made down the Costa del Sol to the Gibraltar border was reported by the Spanish police to the SAS minute-by-minute.

This contradicts SAS claims that they were unaware of the car having crossed the border into Gibraltar. It also makes nonsense of the claims that the prime concern of the British was to protect the people of Gibraltar, if this was the case why was the car allowed to cross the border at all.

## SHOOT FIRST

Under questioning from the lawyers representing the families of the volunteers one of these Frankenstein monsters admitted that he was not sure whether he shouted surrender before or after he had fired his gun.

The inconsistencies in the testimonies of both the soldiers and the Spanish police are so full of holes that you could mistake them for a golf-course plan.

What is becoming clearer is that this was no defensive shooting by the SAS, rather the leading of the three Irish republicans into an ambush for their assassination.

One thing is clear. The struggle being waged by the Republican movement is one that capitalist governments across Europe are being forced to take a stand on. And the co-operation of the Spanish police in this incident makes it clear which stand they will take.

In contrast to those armchair revolutionaries who can tell you what should not be done, but who balk at taking their slippers off and doing something, socialists have a duty to support all national liberation struggles in practise as well as in words. It is within the umbrella of this support that differences of the strategies being pursued can be aired and discussed.

## The Economic Miracle Judders On

Peter Windeler

When the Tories came to power in 1979 they pledged themselves to run the economy on the lines of that of a corner shop. Well it now appears that with the government's finances expected to be in surplus this year by £12bn they have succeeded. The problem is that a large chunk of the £12bn has been raised by selling off the country's assets to the capitalist sharks of London, Tokyo and New York. Including the proposed sale of British Steel the Tories will have netted £6bn from privatisations. A further problem is that the UK has a current account deficit of £15bn for the year, this means that to live as we do the country has to import £300 worth of goods for every man, woman and child over and above what we export as a trading nation. Therefore the UK has to borrow, effectively, £15bn to pay its bills.

So much for Thatcher's economic miracle!

Added to the present governments problems is that inflation is now 5.7% and likely to increase to 7% by the year end. Wages are now, on a national average, are increasing by 9%.

Both these figures are double the rates of the seven other big western economies which Britain competes with for trade. Inevitably the UK's trade position will worsen and in order to protect their friends the Tories will have only one alternative and that will be to reduce the standard of living of workers and their families.

We hear a lot about the increase in productivity in the UK under the Tories. In effect all that has happened is that since the Tories came to power in 1979 work has been taken away from those made redundant and given to those already in work. Manufacturing output is now barely higher than it was in 1979 but unemployment is now, according to official statistics, over two million (of course

the figure is above 4 million) whereas in 1979 it was only just over one million.

Added to the UK's problems in relation to other countries are the problems of the global economy. Capitalism survives by a series of booms and crises. Presently the US, which is the largest economy in the world, is living through one of the longest booms in its history. Now many of their economists are predicting that the US and the rest of the world will soon fall into a severe recession.

Recessions serve a useful purpose for the ruling class in that surplus commodities which cannot be sold and surplus productive forces such as factories which cannot sell the goods they make are removed from the scene.

Unfortunately workers are viewed as cynically as empty factories and thrown on the scrap heap. What serves a useful purpose for them can only mean more vicious attacks on workers than experienced so far since 1979.

# 50th Anniversary of the

# Fourth International



Bill Hunter

**“To unite these Marxian elements, however small their number may be at the beginning, to revive in their name the words of real Socialism now forgotten, to call on the workers of all countries to relinquish chauvinism and raise the old banner of Marxism, this is the task of the day.” Lenin during the First World War.**

In September 1938, thirty men and women met near Paris and proclaimed the Fourth International, World Party of the Socialist Revolution. “No conference of revolutionists ever met under circumstances more tense and ominous or faced tasks of such supreme historical gravity than did this one” declared a “Review of the Conference” which was issued afterwards.

It was the brink of World War Two. The reformist and stalinist leaders of the Second and Third International by their betrayals and misleadership had opened up the masses to imperialist war and fascism. Stalin had set as the capital task of his GPU apparatus the destruction of the trotskyist world conference and the assassination of Trotsky. In the year preceding the Founding Conference, Erwin Wolf, Trotsky’s secretary was kidnapped and murdered in Spain. Ignace Reiss, a GPU functionary who broke with stalinism, and announced his adherence to the Fourth International, was murdered in Switzerland soon after. In February 1938, Leon Sedov, Trotsky’s son died in a Paris hospital under circumstances that leave no doubt of a GPU assassination. In July 1938, Rudolf Klement, responsible for the preparation of the Founding Conference, was kidnapped and murdered in Paris. Documents and reports he had been collecting for the conference disappeared with him. This tiny handful of people was facing awesome world prospects. They could draw strength only from a consciousness that the future of humanity depended on creating a world organisation and strategy for the

working masses.

Trotsky in his struggle for internationalism against Stalin had hammered home the truth that the period in which we live is above all a period of world economy and world politics. Trotsky did not underestimate the tasks facing the new International. “We



do not need any self deceptions” he wrote, and continued: “The discrepancy between our forces today and the tasks on the morrow is much more clearly perceived by us than by our critics.” He saw the future in terms of what must happen to the masses, and declared: “...the harsh and tragic dialectic of our epoch is working in our favour. Brought to the extreme pitch of exasperation and indignation, the masses will find no other leadership than that offered by the Fourth International”. Trotsky’s confidence in the working class was the axis of his political life and he expressed it throughout the period of severe defeats of the masses before the war.

It has been absolutely vindicated by the vast revolutionary upsurge which began during the last war. The old empires have disappeared; in a great number of countries the feudal and capitalist property forms have

been changed. The upsurge carried stalinist and petty bourgeois nationalist forces into power. But history has been determined not just by this upsurge there has been another decisive factor. That factor is the crisis of leadership which remains as acute today as in 1938. Because of it, all the advances of revolutionary events over great areas of the world have left the world and world economy under the domination of imperialism. Socialism in one Country has been proved a reactionary illusion. But what is involved is not just a question of history or abstract theory but of practical politics today. No section of the masses in any country can resolve any of its problems within its national boundaries - neither in the capitalist countries nor in the workers states can there be any permanent advance except through taking it into an international struggle.

Above all the conclusions of trotskyists in 1938 that the future would be decided on the world arena were absolutely correct. Either the working class in the Soviet Union would remove the bureaucracy or the Soviet Union would succumb to capitalist counter revolution said Trotsky. Today the Soviet Union is in as great a danger as ever and together with it are threatened the property overturns which came into being since the end of the war.

The only movement which is based on that internationalism which alone can make the advances of humanity permanent is the trotskyist movement.

The principled trotskyist international organisation which exists today is the International Workers League (I.W.L.) Fourth International built on the principles of that conference fifty years ago. The IWL has proved in declarations and practice that it strives to build a world party with sections in every country and with mass influence. By words and deeds it has stood for internationalism and made a decisive break from circle existence in many countries.

**To our readers we say: If you wish to struggle for internationalism which means building an international organisation and taking trotskyism out of propaganda sect existence and building deep connections with the masses; if you want to struggle for a world trotskyist party and carry forward the traditions of the Founding Conference and of Trotsky then join the ISL the British section of the IWL.**

# Down With Youth Slavery

Sue Gwyer

The unions are supporting the Government's Employment Training (ET) scheme despite the widely publicised "opposition" taken at the Trades Union Congress in Bournemouth.

Confusion reigns as unions interpret the TUC's "fudged" position in anyway that suits them.

John Edmonds, leader of the General, Municipal and Boilermakers Union (GMB), boasted about his: "shabby little trick", engineered with full support from the TUC General Council. The GMB's amendment to the NALGO motion allowing involvement in ET for a period of two years, in other words, aiding its administration and helping it to get established, can leave no illusions that the TUC are going to defend the unemployed in the face of the Tory's attacks.

With the flurry of publicity announcing the TUC's so called opposition to the Government's latest slave labour scheme Norman Fowler scrapped the Training Commission, no longer needing to disguise direct Government economic policy behind a bogus tripartite quango which the TUC claimed to have some control over.

Willis promptly stated that he felt Norman was "over-reacting", hoping that he could be given the chance to win the rest of the union movement around to John Edmonds' way of thinking.

## T.U. LEADERS COLLABORATE WITH FOWLER

The TUC's collaboration over ET was decided a long time before the TUC Congress. On April 14th the Transport and General Workers' Union (T&GWU) and the Union of Construction and Allied Technical Trades (UCATT) signed a deal with the Construction and Industry Training Board (CITB) approving a 6,000 place scheme. The MSC accepted the tender on April 15th. We demand that these deals are published and made available to the rank and file members of the unions. Why did the very existence of this deal only surface five months after it was signed? Why do activists have to wait for the bourgeois press or leaders like Hammond of the electricians and Bill Jordan of the engineers to find out what their own union leadership is doing?

In the first instance the practical skills training of the CITB trainees will be acquired whilst building in the London Docklands, the Channel Tunnel and at Kings Cross.

Recent publicity has revealed that the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) has run out of funding and is faced



with the inability to pay the labour costs for the planned building development. Salford Quays was also built by scheme labour.

Both UCATT and T&GWU claim the deal with the CITB fulfils the criterion laid down by the TUC "Charter Against Workfare"; that participants will receive the rate for the job, there will be no compulsion, the trainees will be regarded as employees and as such covered by Health and Safety legislation, they will be able to receive trade union representation and will get quality training.

The CITB scheme is planned to last two years, using the six months of ET with trainees receiving just benefit plus £10, the remaining 18 months to be spent on site receiving CITB apprenticeship rates. Obviously the use of ET by the CITB to partly fund its traditional building apprenticeships will seriously undermine what remains of skills training in the building industry.

The Employment Training centre in the docklands is being set up by the EEPTU with the aid of the LDDC, the CITB and the construction company Bovis (a subsidiary of P&O).

One of the largest placement providers under ET is the construction company Jarvis. Based in the North West, Jarvis claimed they would be able to pay the trade union rate for the job under ET and begged the T&G to get involved in their scheme offering 1,000's of members on a plate to the union.

To achieve the rate for the job trainees would work however many hours necessary at the rate to reach their stated level of benefit. They might work as little as ten hours at the rate for their job to reach their weekly benefit levels.

And what about the training? Well, Jarvis stated that trainees could continue working on site after they attained their benefits level if they wished, receiving no pay of course or they could go home, provided with a book; this being billed as literacy training!

## COMPULSORY "TRAINING"

This being the real face of ET, a vision of people clamouring for the Government's latest training scheme is hard to imagine.

In the first month of ET it has been hard to track down the thousands of participants supposedly on the scheme. The few who have been traced have been placed under threat of removal of benefit and have accepted ET only because of this veiled compulsion. Many have dropped out when told that it is not compulsory. The first participants have been those vulnerable claimants who have been unable to challenge the Restart interviewer.

Rochdale Council have pulled out of ET in its first week of operation after receiving trainees who had been compelled to go on the schemes.

The issue of compulsion has become the sticking point for many organisations now running the scheme. It is clear that ET is not going to achieve full occupancy without mass compulsion.

ET is only going to be defeated by those directly affected by its implementation. The unemployed have shaken the trade union movement. In the organisation of the scheme workers, strike action and self mobilisation, independent of and against their own union leaderships they have shown an ability and willingness to fight sadly lacking in their own trade union leaders. The central demand now coming from the trade union movement should be for quality training linked to real jobs and an end to all temporary employment measures.

- \* We demand training under trade union control and supervision.
- \* Open the doors of the unions to the unemployed.
- \* Down with youth and wage slavery

## TUC Leaders and Hammond:

# The Same Road

"The power is not at Bournemouth; the power is outside Copperas Hill Sorting Office" (*striking postman at a Liverpool meeting talking about the mass pickets.*)

Decay, paralysis and demoralisation! Those were the characteristics of the Trades Union Congress at Bournemouth last month.

The trade union bureaucracy is prostrate in front of the international combines, the British capitalist state and Mrs Thatcher.

To cover their capitulation they peddle their doctrine that the working class no longer exists as it did in the past, and trade unions must adjust to the plans of multi-nationals, accept the steadily increasing legal shackles on workers' organisations and desert the class struggle, out of which the trade unions were born.

In the vanguard of this cowardly liquidationism is the Communist Party and the "Morning Star". They thought the TUC made "some good progress".

The real "new reality" in Britain was outside the Congress Hall. The well-turned-out bureaucrats did their best to ignore it in their speeches. One facet of it was expressed in the small but significant lobby of unemployed youth on the first day which the overwhelming number of delegates treated as if it was not there.

This was no accident, of course. The worshippers of the "new reality", later, in the discussion on the Tories' so-called "Employment Training", ignored the realities which face the youth and the unemployed. It is a fact that they were concerned, not about training for the unemployed, but training for capitalism!

### BLEEDING HEARTS

For these bureaucrats, struggle is an obscene conception. To be sure, on the first day of the conference they had to have some words about the seafarers long dispute at Dover with the P & O ferries. But it was stage-managed to come after the expulsion of the electricians union as a demagogic lift. Significantly enough, the Dover seafarers outside the hall could not even get visitors tickets!

Meanwhile, inside the hall the seafarers' dispute became a great opportunity to reveal hearts bleeding for the seafarers. But certainly no real action was proposed. God forbid! The days of wordy defiance in face of the government's legislation have gone.

The call remained at financial assistance. Now that is very important for the families of the seafarers. But, for these trade union

leaders at Bournemouth it was an occasion for "caring" phraseology and the collection of conscience money.

Miss Brenda Dean in a carefully emotionally laundered speech finished with the remarkably militant demands that delegates should give ten pounds out of their delegation fees to the seamen - less than the amount some of the trade union leaders would spend at the bar each night - and also go in for the fifty pound prize which her union executive -SOGAT- was donating. This was to be paid to whoever thought up the best slogan for the seamen's fund! Meanwhile she and other trade union leaders will be fervently wishing the picket will go away.

### NEW UPSURGE

The traditions of trade unionism and the future of workers' organisations were being defended outside the hall by post workers and seafarers. Meanwhile they were being trampled on inside. The bureaucrats reluctantly parted with the EEPTU, making very plain it was not because of any policy difference. The concern of this bureaucracy was the dividing out of the dwindling pool of union subscriptions and not the assistance of workers in struggle.

Every alert trade unionist knows that in reality they felt closer to Hammond and the EEPTU leadership than to striking post workers or seafarers whose actions might create legal problems for the unions. There was not just a vacuum of leadership but a black hole at the TUC. The Broad Left collapsed inwards. In the movements of struggle now coming up a new leadership must be built in the communities and workplaces. It must organise on agreed policies. Its first platform must be:

- \* Down with "new realism", for the independence of working class organisations.
- \* Break the unions from the state and the employers.
- \* For a thirty five hour week.
- \* For real democracy of the membership in the unions.
- \* For workers representatives, in all labour movement organisations on workers average wages.

# Employment Credit ?

**Government ministers are now discussing how to compel people to enter the Employment Training (ET) scheme following the poor take up in the initial month of operation. They have commissioned a new scheme currently being referred to as Employment Credit.**

The local Employment Credit initiative is needed, say the government, to counteract the 'black economy'. Participants in the scheme will be allowed to earn up to £39 per week in part time work for a maximum of six months whilst still claiming benefit.

The catch is that the claimant cannot have the £39. The earnings will be paid into a bank account on behalf of the worker by the project administrators.

The money may only be drawn upon when the claimant finds a full time job or enters ET within a year of first taking up Employment Credit. If the claimant does not find work or refuses to join ET after a year the money earned through the Employment Credit Scheme will then be deducted from benefit.

The so-called charity "Action on Long Term Unemployment", which is supported by trust funds and donations from industry first submitted the plan to Whitehall in 1987. The special accounts created for the participants in the scheme would bear interest but would also be tax deductible. The costs of materials and equipment needed whilst working on Employment Credit would be taken from the accounts by management.

Pilot schemes may be introduced in a number of inner city 'task force' areas.

The mention of compulsion onto Employment Credit is carefully avoided.

Employment Credit is ET without the top-up. If you refuse to go on ET after returning to unemployment from Employment Credit your benefit will be withdrawn.

This incentive, which borders on lunacy, would be laughable if it wasn't for the fact that the TUC will probably use the Fowler 'carrot' to sell the working class and youth once again to big business.

**NO TO EMPLOYMENT CREDIT!**

**NO TO EMPLOYMENT TRAINING!**

**FOR QUALITY TRAINING LINKED TO PROPER JOBS!**

**NO TEMPORARY EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES!**

## Cantril Farm Estate:

# Privatisation Does Not Benefit Tenants

Throughout the country, the movement is growing against the plans of the Government to hand council estates over to Housing Action Trusts.

Thousands of tenants on an estate in Knowsley, on Merseyside, have had bitter experience of participating in just such a scheme. They know how valueless were the promises of the Tories that a trust would take over their estate and according to government propaganda "what had become one of the most run down and problematic estates of the region", would have a "greatly improved physical environment" and a "changed image".

The estate was then known as Cantril Farm, with 3,007 dwellings. It was re-christened Stockbridge Village and taken over by the Stockbridge Village Trust on the 6th April 1983. The Trust paid 7.42 million pounds to Knowsley Borough Council for the freehold.

The money came from the Abbey National Building Society and Barclays Bank and the Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

In 1983, the Cantril Farm estate was suffering under the government's severe cuts in the expenditure of councils. In 1982/3, Knowsley Council's capital allocation was 5.3 million pounds spread over a stock of 34,000 houses. The Government had imposed penalties on the rate support grant so that each additional pound spent would cost double.

To a large number of Cantril Farm tenants it looked as if perhaps they could get some repairs done, have their homes refurbished and have a chance to buy them in the new scheme. In this area of mass unemployment, 80 per cent of the youth were unemployed, there was even the suggestion that the mortgages could be paid out of an extra grant from social security.

In fact, the expectation of the bank, the building society and Barratt the building contractor was that the main guarantee of success would be buyers from outside the estate. The estate is at the side of a motorway on the outskirts of Liverpool and there was a plan that the high rise flats - the Denes - would be remodelled as apartments for "Yuppies".

On the 13th April 1983, Stockbridge Village was launched by the Government Minister John Craven who declared: "There will be about 1,000 dwellings for sale at prices first time buyers can afford and major improvements in shops, new sports and community facilities and a real uplift in the environment."

As he was speaking, tenants were demonstrating with placards protesting at the number of deaths on the estate because the main perimeter road was without pavements.

In December 1983 The Stockbridge Village Tenants Association was in collision with the Stockbridge Village Trust. On one of his flying visits to Knowsley, the then Labour MP, Kilroy Silk, tried to mediate. The tenants were complaining about poor lighting and about rats. They demanded that the minutes of the Trust meetings should be made public and complained about the lack of democracy. The Tenants Association wanted more local representatives on the Trust and an enquiry into the danger of asbestos inside homes. They demanded that the direct labour organisation of the council be allowed to tender.

The Trust ran deeper and deeper into crisis. By April 1986, development was virtually halted. Barratt who were the sole contractor declared the cost of building each house had risen four fifths. They delayed their plan to re-develop "the Denes". The Denes were then sold back to Knowsley Council so that public money could be used for their demolition!

Barratts subsequently departed from the estate. The dream of a bonanza had gone. The 'Yuppies' were not attracted and the Cantril Farm residents lost any illusions they had in 1983. The Trust considered raising rents but had very little hope of raising any sizable income that way. The right wing Labour Council of Knowsley had left them with rents in 1983, which even in 1985 were higher than the 'fair rents' on equivalent properties elsewhere in the region.

In face of the same massive cash crisis that the council faced in 1983, the Government put in an extra 3 million pounds of Urban Programme grant. Barclays and the Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council deferred capital repayments.

Since then, however, the conditions for the working class families in Stockbridge Village have declined further. One of the subcontractors working on the estate went into liquidation amid allegations that trade unionists had been threatened with violence.

Those who bought their homes and are paying mortgage payments of up to eighty pounds a month are finding that their houses are unsaleable. Fifty per cent of tenants in one street, Blackthorne Crescent, have left - unable to keep up the mortgage repayments.

The tenants have learned that the government's attack on council housing is not motivated by compassion for the working class and the poorer sections of society who live in them. Their concern is for the landlords, bankers, building societies and building contractors. The working class only won decent housing by a long continuous struggle against these profit makers.

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