

# RED WEEKLY

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DATES:

OXFORD Wed April 30 lunchtime  
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 BIRMINGHAM Thurs May 1  
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 EDINBURGH Mon May 5  
 GLASGOW Tues May 6

**ERNEST MANDEL**  
 EEC SPEAKING TOUR

# NOOSE TIGHTENS ON SAIGON



Part of a picket of the Home Office, last week, to get the Labour Government to recognise the PRG.

As the holes were being punched into the South Vietnamese defence perimeter around Saigon, the future was writ large on the wall—crushing defeat was the only outcome that Thieu's Government could look forward to.

Nguyen van Thieu, for almost 10 years America's chief paid assassin in South Vietnam, had reached the end of his usefulness. Even his 'godfather' Henry Kissinger had started to give him the cold shoulder, when four days before he had made clear that the United States was no longer committed to Thieu.

Whether the architect of defeat and the purveyor of corruption was pushed, or whether he simply fell over, matters little. What was clear

was that he could neither win, nor even be used to reach a compromise peace with the insurgents. Thieu's

resignation is the last service he can render to his imperialist masters and although he promised to act as 'an extra man in the field' he is more likely to play this role out on Miami beach than in the war-torn jungles of Vietnam.

Thieu's resignation does not mean that the imperialists have given up all hope in Vietnam. Their last throw is to cobble together a new government whose task will be to salvage the best they can from the situation. They hope by getting rid of Thieu

to line up support at home and internationally for further aid to Saigon if the PRG and the North Vietnamese prove 'unreasonable.'

The demands for 'humanitarian' aid will now get even more strident, and 'concern' for the 'evacuation' of Americans and their leading South Vietnamese agents will grow by the hour. On the day that Thieu made his exit, nine American aircraft carriers were converging on the Vietnam coast and the American marines were on standby. There is no doubt that in the top circles of US policy-making there is support for the idea of using the evacuation issue as a cover for American intervention.

The departure of Thieu changes nothing. The South Vietnamese Government formed under Thieu's formerly obedient Vice-President still remains a puppet of imperialism and the tool of the landlords and native capitalists.

## INCOMPARABLE

But victory is within reach of the revolutionaries in Indochina. On the field of battle the insurgents have demonstrated a heroism which is incomparable and have shown a military skill which is outstanding.

By their refusal to negotiate with Thieu they helped to undermine the rotten administration and intensified the crisis for the capitalist class. A refusal by the liberation forces to enter into negotiations with the new rotten regime in Saigon would further worsen the situation for the US and its hangers-on in South Vietnam.

As the noose tightens around Saigon the ability of the revolutionaries to consolidate their final and just victory depends on the political ability of the Vietnamese revolutionaries to defeat the final manoeuvres of the Americans, and on the vigilance of the international workers' movement. For the revolutionaries in Britain the message must go out loud and clear: US—Hands off Vietnam! No aid for the Saigon regime! Recognise the PRG now!

By BOB PENNINGTON

More on Indochina - p. 10.

## HEALEY'S RAKE-IN, CASTLE'S HAND-OUT

by Jeff King

Three days after Healey's savage deflationary Budget the Labour Government caved in to the consultants and gave them a 35 per cent pay rise. After the British Medical Association had waged a work-to-contract campaign that had disrupted the health service—particularly hitting working class patients—Mrs. Castle responded like a shot to their decision to go back to normal working.

Within two hours of the BMA ending its sanctions, Castle was announcing rises for consultants of over £40 a week—more than the gross pay of many nurses and ancillary workers. Last year the nurses, following the struggle of the ancillary workers in 1973, fought a many-months long battle to improve their pay and conditions.

## OPPOSITION

The struggles of these low-paid workers met the bitter opposition of both the Tory Government in 1973 and the Labour Government in 1974, and both sections were fobbed off with desisory awards that have been eaten away by inflation. Their fight was made in the interest of a better health service, in contrast to the privileged doctors who have fought to maintain massive differentials and to keep the private practice racket going.

The extent to which the Labour Government has capitulated to the doctors' demands to preserve privileged differentials in the NHS is shown by the fact that Castle dishes out 34.5 per cent to the top consultants whilst junior doctors get the lowest awards—ranging from 17.6 to 25.4 per cent.

The BMA, feeling cock-a-hoop with Mrs. Castle's hand-out, now say that the way is 'clear for improving the existing contract with consultants and the NHS.' They obviously think that more gains can be made around the demand that consultants should be free to do their own work.

## CONCESSIONS

The extreme right-wing Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association have not called off their work to rule. They are confident that the Government gave in because of their disruptive action, and believe that they can now screw even more concessions around their contracts and for special pay awards.

By failing to give backing to the actions of health workers who put embargos on private patients, and by failing to grant the legitimate demands of the junior doctors, Castle has only encouraged the reactionaries in the medical profession. For the workers the Labour Government has the big stick. For the rich and privileged the Labour Government has concessions wrapped in big fat pay cheques.

After the Budget - see pages 2 & 3.

## POLICE/FASCIST TERROR IN ITALY

In three days last weekend, Italian rightists and police killed three anti-fascist militants. As we go to press a massive general strike is planned for Tuesday April 22nd. Next week's *Red Weekly* will be carrying an on-the-spot report. Don't miss it!



# THE BUDGET

## 'A vicious kick in the teeth'

'I absolutely reject the use of mass unemployment as an instrument of policy,' claimed Dennis Healey in his budget speech last week—a budget that will help put a million out of work by the end of the year. The slashing of public expenditure—£900 million this year and £3,000 million the year after—and the cutback of grants to nationalised industries will further increase unemployment at a time when 800,000 are already without jobs and another 220,000 on short-time.

Healey's subsequent attack on the railway workers has made his policy absolutely clear—hammer jobs to curb wages, as workers fight to defend their living standards against an ever increasing rate of inflation. While claiming to attack inflation, Healey himself admitted that his tax increases will raise the cost of living by 2½ per cent in a matter of weeks.

But 'in practice, the totality of his budget will raise prices by more than twice that', wrote the bosses' magazine *The Economist* (19.4.75). It added that unemployment and short-time working will rise 'further and for longer' than the peak of one million predicted for the end of 1975 by the Chancellor.

### Verbal reaction

Purely verbal reaction to the Government's viciously anti-working class budget has been swift. An emergency resolution at the Scottish Trades Union Congress on Wednesday 16 April, calling on the trade union movement to react sharply to protect the living standards of their members, and pledging 'support to all unions seeking wage increases designed to improve the living standard of their members', was passed overwhelmingly.

Even Jack Jones, the staunchest defender of the social contract in the trade union bureaucracy, has questioned its continued viability. Several 'left' Labour MPs have also denounced the budget, and *Tribune*, the paper of the Labour left, has attacked Healey for 'budgeting for more workless'. But what do the Labour 'left' and the trade union bureaucracy intend to do about the budget? The Government's fig-leaf—the social contract—is more and more revealed as an anti-working class fraud. The question isn't *if* but *how* the Labour Government will impose a wage freeze. A statutory incomes policy might lead Wilson to a dangerous clash with the unions, so unemployment will be allowed to rise in an attempt to deter workers from wage struggles.

### Expenditure

Secondly, by insisting that Government expenditure—which already requires a public sector borrowing debt of over £10 billion—does not rise even in money terms, the Government could force public sector employers to operate a nil-norm for wage rises except where jobs are cut proportionately. This wage freeze in practice could then be extended to the private sector.



Photo: MICHAEL TULL (Report)

'Healey and the cabinet are trying to act as the stretcher-bearers for the ailing capitalist system.'

— Dennis Skinner, Labour MP for Bolsover.

'It is a draconian budget which will lead to increasing unemployment and hardship for many workers.'

— Stan Newens, Labour MP for Harlow.

'Socialist views have again been rejected by a Labour Chancellor. Already the Government are on the 1964-70 road.....'

'Unemployment is not what my members voted for, it is not what the people of Preston voted for, and it is not what I shall vote for on Monday when the house divides.'

— Stan Thorne, Labour MP for Preston South.

## So what are they going to DO about it?

The 'left' MPs must follow Stan Thorne's stand and vote against the budget. But alternative policies are also necessary.

The *Guardian* of 17 April described the 'almost stunned calm' that fell over the post-budget meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party. Because the 'lefts' are incapable of seeing beyond capitalism now, because they cannot conceive of the struggle for socialism taking place outside of and against parliament and the rest of the capitalist state, they are incapable of developing a strategy for socialism against the anti-working class policies of Healey and the Labour Government. The 'lefts' are therefore reduced to impotent word-mongering or silence—as in the case of Michael Foot.

The decision of the Scottish TUC to support all unions seeking to improve their members' living standards is to be welcomed. But to have a real effect it must be translated into action around class-wide demands that both defend the working class's living standards and jobs, and provide the basis for an alternative programme of socialist measures to the right-wing policies of the Labour Government.

At the present time this means fighting throughout the labour move-

ment for:

\*Opposition to any form of incomes policy, statutory or otherwise, full support for the railworkers and local government workers and any other workers challenging the social contract;

### Sliding scale

\*A sliding scale of wages and benefits calculated on a working class cost-of-living index, providing automatic protection of working class living standards against the effects of inflation;

\*Nationalisation without compensation of any firm declaring redundancies; work-sharing with no loss of pay and under the control of the workers in industries hit by short-time and lay-offs;

\*Opposition to the budget cuts and all cuts in social expenditure; for a sliding scale of expenditure to compensate for inflation, to be administered under the guidance of the workers' organisations in the social services.

**JAMES DRAKE**



On strike against redundancies at Cassell & Collier Macmillan

Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

## MEDIA WORKERS PLAN CONFERENCE ON JOBS

Twenty-five workers are to get the chop if the multinational publishing firm of Cassell & Collier Macmillan has its way. Eight more redundancies are threatened. The workers—members of the National Union of Journalists, the print union SOGAT, and the supervisory union ASTMS—have responded by going on strike.

This scene is becoming increasingly common in the media industries today, as the owners attempt to make the workers bear the cost of the crisis. The battles at the *Daily Mirror* over manning levels are the most obvious example. Other disputes in this field have taken in concerns as diverse as London Broadcasting and Education Audio-Visual (where the workers' occupation of the premises was officially backed by the NUJ).

It was from activists involved in two such struggles—at the *Stratford Express* and Penguin Books—that there came the idea for an all-London conference to discuss ways of fighting redundancies through-out the printing, publishing and broadcasting industries. Organisation in the media is bedevilled by the number of different unions and the craft consciousness this often represents; the conference is seen as a first step to beginning to overcome this kind of problem.

### 'OPEN THE BOOKS'

To this end the organising committee for the conference will be putting forward a resolution outlining ways in which a united response can be developed to the employers' offensive. Calling for work-sharing with no loss of pay in the event of any fall in the available work, it also states the need to 'open the books' so that the workforce can check all plans and accounting for a company's whole field of operations.

In the event of sackings, the organising committee recommends immediate occupation of the premises to prevent the removal of assets, together with the election of

a strike committee and the holding of regular mass meetings to involve the maximum number of workers. Stress is also laid on the need to avoid the isolation of such struggles by winning active support from other workers in the industry and broad labour movement.

Unfortunately the resolution fights shy of a key question here—the ideological weapon wielded by the employers through their control of the editorial content of the media. IMG members in the industries will be putting an amendment to the resolution recommending blacking by media workers of any stories attacking workers involved in redundancy struggles. This goes right to the heart of the bosses' power—indeed, it was similar action by printers at the *Daily Mail* which precipitated the 1926 General Strike.

### NATIONALISATION

Finally, says the resolution, if the employers still refuse to withdraw the redundancy notices, then the struggle should be extended to demand that the Labour Government defend the interests of those it claims to represent by nationalising the company under workers' control without any compensation.

This initiative is one which workers in other industries facing redundancies could do well to follow. Instead of simply relying on the trade union bureaucrats, workers in the media industries are coming together to work out a programme of independent struggle which can force the bureaucrats into action. That is the way the attacks of the employers can be forced back and the road opened up to a solution of the crisis in the interests of the working class.

John Marston

The conference—for delegates and observers from ABS, ACTT, ASTMS, NATSOPA, NGA, NUJ, SLADE and SOGAT—will be held on Saturday 17 May, starting at 10.00 a.m. in the London College of Printing, Elephant and Castle, S.E.1. Details from Aidan White (534 4555 day) or Carl Gardner (837 9987 day).



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

## Crosfields - now it's a lock-out

THE MANAGEMENT at Crosfields' Electronics, North London, are making an all-out attempt to smash the five-week-old official occupation of the fitting area against redundancies. The rest of the workforce has been locked out for two days a week.

this on the slow-down in production since the dispute began.

This follows the use on 14 April of a scab trucking company, guarded by 50 police, to shift more than £½ million worth of machinery out of the plant. This is the biggest use of police in an industrial dispute since 10 pickets were lifted off the scaffolders' picket line at the Eldon Square site in Newcastle in late January. It confirms the workers' suspicion that the owners, De La Rue, eventually intend to transfer all production out of London—scrapping over 800 jobs and not simply the 350 announced so far.

With 40,000 industrial jobs disappearing from London every year and unemployment rising as high as 6 and 7 per cent in some North London boroughs, the workers see their struggle as a fight to defend the right to work of all workers. Resolutions of support and donations have included £100 from the Fleet Street branch of the Amateur

ated Union of Engineering Workers—the union to which most of the occupying members belong. Other union delegations have also joined the picket lines, and visits have been organised to other factories in the area to win support.

The establishment of a support committee to draw these people together, along with other interested trade unionists and socialists, could extend this vital work of gaining solidarity and popularising the struggle in the area. With management claiming that the machinery shifted out will satisfy their customers till June, the workers' spokesman Bill Hayward told *Red Weekly*, 'We're really up against it now.' This situation can only be reversed by a massive solidarity campaign in the rest of the labour movement.

Donations and resolutions of support should be sent to Crosfield Joint Shop Stewards Fund, c/o Bill Hayward, 34 Dreads Road, London N19 3BD.

# FOR A SLIDING SCALE OF WAGES!

'Neither monetary inflation nor stabilisation can serve as slogans for the working class because these are but two ends of the same stick. Against a bounding rise in prices... one can fight only with the slogan of a sliding scale of wages. This means that collective agreements should assure an automatic rise in wages in relation to the increase in price of consumer goods...' — Leon Trotsky: *The Transitional Programme* (1938)

DENNIS HEALEY'S BUDGET is another vicious kick in the teeth for the working class from the Labour Government. Healey singled out threshold deals as playing 'an exceptionally damaging role' in the present economic crisis. What was this 'exceptionally damaging role'?—they helped workers to gain some protection for real wages, however partial and inadequate, against the impact of runaway inflation! This 'crime' he *blamed* on the Phase III incomes policy of his Tory predecessors.

Since the abolition of threshold payments in November 1974, very few pay settlements have included cost of living agreements. The Government has given firm instructions to all state employers to stand firm against threshold deals. Recently Tony Benn warned the Post Office Corporation that if they went ahead with a pay deal which included cost of living increases for every point that the Retail Price Index rose over 10 per cent this year, the Corporation would not receive financial assistance from the Government to meet its debts.

The British Steel Corporation is meanwhile standing firm against the steel unions' demand for a new threshold agreement, while local authorities have yet to reply to the demand from NALGO, the 518,000-strong local government workers' union, for a 60p increase for every one per cent rise in the cost of living index.

## CONSOLIDATED

Even strongly organised sections of the working class like the miners and power workers have only succeeded in getting past threshold payments consolidated into the basic rate, with no new cost of living agreements being reached.



of all workers, including those dependent on state benefits, grants and pensions, against the effects of inflation. For the working class the sliding scale of wages and benefits tied to a working class cost of living index, giving automatic wage increases to cover every increase in prices on a monthly basis—without the interference of any kind of threshold limitation—is the most indispensable step in this direction.

The relevance of the demand for the sliding scale is beginning to be recognised by large areas of the labour movement. Many unions have included the demand for new threshold agreements in their claims, and last

child family on £30 a week would need a gross wage increase of 80 per cent to produce an increase in net disposable income of 20 per cent due to loss of entitlement to supplementary benefits and free welfare measures. (*Hansard*, 5.2.75)

As wage increases tend to follow after the effects of inflation have already been felt on incomes, the increase in wage rates announced by the Department of Employment of 32.5 per cent since March 1974—29 per cent when the three-day week

## Mick Gosling

week's Scottish Trades Union Congress meeting in Aberdeen passed by a clear majority a motion on cost of living safeguards (see box) that took up all the basic elements of the sliding scale of wages and benefits.

Not only did the motion call for 'nil-norm thresholds', but it pointed out that the 40p allowed for each one per cent increase in the price index under threshold agreements was inadequate because it did not take into account taxation of the payment.

## FALL IN EARNINGS

*Labour Research* (August 1974) calculated that actually to put the 7 per cent increases allowed under Phase III into the wage packet would have needed gross increases of 9 per cent. Thus before the threshold agree-

ment even started to operate, a fall in real earnings of at least 1½ per cent took place. Then the 40 per cent threshold was itself reduced to 25p after tax, only compensating for two-thirds of a one per cent rise in prices. Thus at six 'trigger points' (1½ per cent inflation) loss of earnings amounted to 1½ per cent (a wage increase of 7 per cent is only worth 5½ per cent after tax for a man on average male earnings with a wife and two children) plus six times one-third a total loss of real earnings of 3½ per cent.

To take the example of a married man with two children under 11, if he was earning over £33 per week, a 40p gross addition would not cover a one per cent price rise. At £45 gross—a net wage of £35—a gross threshold of 57p would be needed to give an extra 35p. At £50 gross—£38 net—a gross threshold payment of 62p would be needed. At £60—£44 net—72p would be necessary to cover a 1 per cent rise in the cost of living.

## SPUR TO STRUGGLE

Some militants claim that the existence of nil-norm threshold agreements are dangerous because they might divide workers from militant wages struggle. The experience of Italy and Belgium where sliding scales are in operation either in whole or in part, proves the opposite. Far from acting as a substitute for wages struggle, they have created the conditions for struggles to increase the real value of wages.



# AND AFTER

Although the power workers got a deal giving a 31 per cent increase, only 16 per cent of this was an actual increase in wages—the rest being consolidated threshold pay. With inflation now running at 20 per cent a year according to official figures, plus the effects of increased taxation, pension and insurance contributions, this means that by the end of the year the power workers will have taken a substantial wage cut.

During 1974 prices rose by 19.1 per cent according to the retail price index—the most rapid rise for over half a century. On the face of it, anyone earning £40 a week in December 1973 would have needed £47.64 in December 1974 just to break even. However a higher proportion of any increase goes in tax.

Before the present budget a single man earning £40 would get £28.37 take-home pay. *Labour Research* (March 1975) calculated that a 19.1 per cent increase in net pay would give an increase of £5.42, bringing take-home pay to £33.78 altogether, but requiring a gross rise of 22 per cent or £8.80. A married man with two children on £40 would have taken home £31.87. A 19.1 per cent increase would have added £6.08 to this figure, requiring a gross increase of £9.90 or 24 per cent.

## LOW PAID

For low-paid workers with families of two children, getting two-thirds of average earnings or £30 a week—which is also the supplementary benefits level for a two-child family—increases of 28½ per cent in gross earnings between April 1974 and April 1975 were necessary to gain 20 per cent increases in net earnings to keep pace with inflation. On average, workers required 25 per cent increases in gross earnings to stand still.

The hardest hit are large families.

and short-time working are taken into account—means that most working class incomes have only just been keeping ahead of inflation even where increases of nearly one third have been gained!

## SLIDING SCALE

There is no way to halt inflation without getting rid of the capitalist system itself. But until then it is necessary to defend the buying power

## Scots TUC Shows Way

### COST OF LIVING SAFEGUARDS

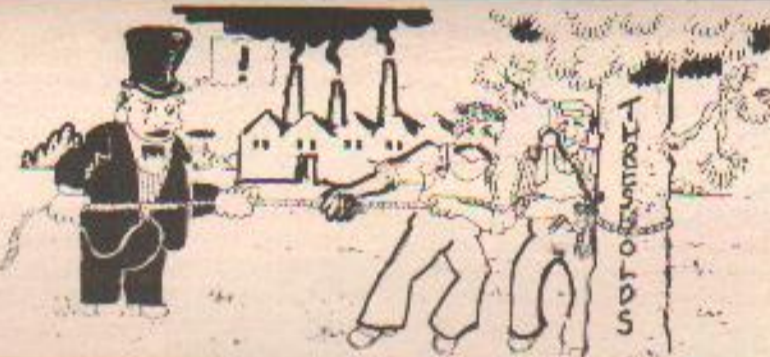
63. "That this Congress declares that in order to combat growing inflation which threatens the living standards of working people, it is in favour of all affiliated unions negotiating cost of living clauses in all wage agreements. The cost of living clause should be designed to cover increases in the cost of living with normal wage bargaining taking place over and above this.

"The threshold agreements went only part of the way to cover for increases in the cost of living. The cost of living clauses should strengthen the threshold payments by:—

- negotiating nil-norm thresholds instead of the 7% threshold under previous agreements;
- making monthly cost of living payments straight forward additions to the basic wage instead of the previous system of special payments;
- the General Council should encourage trades councils and affiliated unions to participate in the setting up of Consumer Price Committees in each area to check price rises in each area and to work out an area consumer price index which gives a true reflection of rises in the cost of living.

"The 40p for each 1% increase under the threshold agreements was inadequate in that it did not take into account taxation of the payment. Government figures on cost of living increases are inadequate in that these do not take into account differences from area to area and which items are most common to working class family budgets.

"Congress instructs the General Council to mobilise the strength of the Trade Union Movement to ensure that these cost of living safeguards are extended to all pensions, unemployment pay, student grants and other state benefits."



Automatic compensation of wages against inflation would lay the basis for an assault on low pay and for real increases in workers' standard of living, uniting the whole class around a common goal. The attempts of the bosses and the Government under the guise of 'fighting inflation' to set low paid against relatively better paid workers and unemployed against employed would be defeated, and the road opened up to workers' power socialism.

## IS ON SLIDING SCALE

In a period of extreme economic and social crisis the International Socialism group's formula of 'more militancy + IS = revolution' is revealed as utterly bankrupt. This is particularly true of their attitude to threshold payments.

After pointing out the limitations of existing threshold payments, Tony Cliff goes on to say in *The Crisis—Socialism or the Social Contract*: 'Socialists and active trade unionists should completely oppose the threshold system of payments for what it is—an indexed wage freeze.' Some members of IS have gone further and claimed that whereas thresholds induce 'passivity', inflation is the new motor-force of the revolution.

A moment's consideration shows how wrong this position is. Inflation can be a spur to fighting in wage increases, but it also tends to fragment the working class between the high paid, who can defend themselves, and the low paid, who can't. It can also divide workers from their wives or husbands, and even confuse individual workers who see themselves as consumers on the one hand and wage-earners on the other.

With inflation running at 20 per cent, even the strongest sections of the class would have to be getting 30 per cent rises—taking into account taxation and so on—just to keep pace with it. A strategy of 'more militancy' will only protect a small

pensioners and students.

A class-wide demand for a sliding scale of wages, based on a working class cost of living index, would give across the board protection against inflation and lay the basis for improving the standard of living of the whole working class—including the social aspects such as the health service, education and the social services which are also under attack.

## INTERNATIONAL

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Photo: ANDREW WARD (Inquest)

'ANTI-TERRORISM' LAWS COME UP FOR RENEWAL

## SMASH THIS ACT!!

**LAST THURSDAY** James O'Rourke, a Transport & General Workers Union shop steward, was released from Brixton jail after being held in custody for nearly four weeks. At no time was he charged with any offence. Yet all the same he was lucky not to be deported. The pretext—he was 'suspected of terrorism'.

It is now nearly five months since the Prevention of Terrorism Act was hurriedly passed by the House of Commons without a single vote against, in the wake of the Birmingham bombings. At the time *Red Weekly* warned that this legislation was designed not to uncover bombers but to intimidate the Irish community as a whole, and weaken the working class movement by stirring up anti-Irish feeling. Subsequent events have fully justified those warnings.

### NOT ISOLATED

The case of James O'Rourke was hardly an isolated one. Last month, according to the Home Secretary's own figures, no less than 221 other people were detained without warrant under the Act's provisions and held for up to seven days without access to a solicitor. Only one out of all these people was actually charged with an offence—yet almost all were forcibly finger-printed and photographed. In addition, several were deported under exclusion orders—a fate James O'Rourke only escaped because of the trade union pressure brought to bear on his behalf.

North of Ireland methods of coping with opposition are now being brought home with a vengeance. The Prevention of Terrorism Act is only one measure in this web of repression. Another is the way in which Irish people have been charged with involvement in bombings, been interrogated over a period of months, and then had the charges against them dropped without explanation.

This happened to four of those charged with taking part in the Guildford pub bombings—three of them

charged, indeed, with murder. When they appeared in court on 13 February, the prosecution simply announced that it did not intend to proceed with the case against them.

### TORTURE

Interrogation methods are also coming to resemble those used in the North of Ireland. At the Old Bailey on 20 February Eddie O'Neill, charged with plotting explosions, gave a detailed account of what his counsel described as 'softening up' treatment by the police.

He said: 'I was made to stand for hours with my finger-tips to the wall and my feet as far back as possible. There was a whistling sound like wind escaping and lights were flashing on and off. After a while I collapsed. I was picked up and put back in the same position. If I refused, the usual procedure was to kick me in the private parts.'

Next, O'Neill said, he was placed alternately in a refrigeration room and between two convector heaters so that eventually he lost control of all his muscles and couldn't use his hands or legs. Finally, after five days of torture during which he was allowed no sleep at all, he was put in an empty detention room flooded with water, his clothes were taken from him for forensic examination, and he was told to lie in the puddle to sleep.

Other attempts to intimidate those who support Ireland's right to self-determination include the current prosecution of 14 pacifists under the Incitement to Disaffection Act (with the catch-all 'conspiracy' charge included for good measure), and the banning of 'Troops Out'

One of the first people to expose the torture methods of British imperialism in its colonial wars was George Lennox, a serving soldier at the time of the Aden crisis under the last Labour Government. George was promptly jailed on a frame-up charge for his pains, but was finally released from Wandsworth last week.

### DEFEND THE 14! DROP THE CHARGES!

PUBLIC MEETING in solidarity with the 14 supporters of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, who have been charged with conspiracy to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act.

**Saturday 3 May 2.00 p.m.**  
NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields, W.C.1. (Holborn tube)

**SPEAKERS INCLUDE:** Joan Maynard MP, Maureen Colquhoun MP, Bill Hetherington (defendant, Peace Pledge Union); Ernie Roberts (Asst Gen Sec AUEW); Pat Hickey IUCATT convenor, IMGJ

demonstrations from using Trafalgar Square.

The Prevention of Terrorism Act is, of course, supposed to be only a 'temporary' measure. But such legislation has a habit of prolonging its stay. When the Special Powers Act for Northern Ireland—from which some of the features of the Prevention of Terrorism Act are drawn—was introduced in 1922, it was supposed to last 'for one year and no longer unless Parliament otherwise determines'. But Parliament regularly did 'otherwise determine', until in 1933 it was formally made permanent.

The same may well become true of the Prevention of Terrorism Act unless the working class movement organises now to prevent its renewal at the end of May. And the longer it lasts, the wider its net will be spread. The arrest of James O'Rourke, following that of Bletchley Trades Council member Joe Gallagher in February, shows the way the wind is blowing.

It is instructive to recall that in 1936 the National Council for Civil Liberties commented on the Special Powers Act that, 'there is abundant evidence of the daily use of such powers against individuals active in the working class movement, particularly on its left wing'.

### CAMPAIGN

So far the fight back against the Prevention of Terrorism Act has come entirely from the rank and file of the labour movement. It was when workers on several building sites went on strike in support of O'Rourke that Roy Jenkins realised he had to release him.

In the leadership of the working class, however, virtually no action is being taken against the Act—with the honourable exception of the decision of the T&GWU national executive to campaign for the repeal of the Act. In particular only one Labour MP—Leo Abse, not even a 'left'—has said he will vote against renewal.

Only a coordinated campaign of working class action can force the 'anti-terrorism' law off the statute book. Every Labour MP must be instructed to vote against renewal. The decision of Hammersmith Trades Council to circulate trade union bodies with a view to setting up a broad based committee against the Act can be a vital first step in the campaign to defeat this anti-working class law.

Martin Meteyard

For a detailed analysis of the Prevention of Terrorism Act and its implications for the working class movement, see the NCCL pamphlet, *The State, the Law, and Ireland* by Steve Cohen (obtainable from Red Books 97 Caledonian Road, London N.1.

## 'WHEN THE KISSING HAD TO STOP'

Reprinted from the Plough, Volume 2, No. 17.

What really happened to Thomas Niedermayer, the German industrialist kidnapped from his home in Belfast more than a year ago? And why, when the true story has been told in Germany, have the British papers not printed it up to now?

A recent issue of *The Irish People* carried an article translated from the German equivalent of the *Sunday Mirror*, *Bild am Samstag*, which reported that Thomas Niedermayer's abduction on 27 December 1973 was connected with Vanguard leader Bill Craig. The connection? Niedermayer had been sleeping with Craig's German wife, Doris.

The fact that *Bild* were advised by their lawyers not to make an out-of-court payment to the furious Craig on the grounds that they could prove the accuracy of their story, indicates the truth of the *Irish People's* facts. But there is much more to the story than is included in the *Irish People*.

From 1971, Niedermayer was both the German honorary consul for Northern Ireland and the representative of Grundig. For ten years he had been Craig's closest friend and drinking companion.

Craig's career has been that of a pompous but dangerous demagogue. Given to making bloodthirsty 'shoot to kill' speeches, he enjoys strutting up and down serried ranks of Vanguard 'volunteers' like a latter-day Mussolini. A less public side to his character was his involvement with Niedermayer in arms smuggling.

### ARMS SMUGGLING

For whatever reason, Niedermayer agreed to a scheme whereby arms were imported in Grundig containers coming from Germany. With a weight limit of five tons, the gap at the top of the containers varied according to the mass of the material. These gaps were filled with arms at Dusseldorf, and the containers were sealed at Hamburg. They were then shipped to Hull, brought by container-lorry to Heysham, and finally to Belfast, where the seals were broken.

When Niedermayer became involved, he did not foresee the volume of traffic increasing as fast as it did, and he became uncomfortable when he heard that the arms were being smuggled in with containers of steel, because in these cases the containers held 4/5ths arms and only 1/5th spare parts. As these arms-laden containers were arriving, he was abducted. What exactly happened on 27 December?

When he came home from work he settled down to watch television. Shortly after 11.00 p.m. a knock came at the door and two men informed him that they had run into the back of his parked car. He strolled down the drive to his car to look at it, all the time laughing and joking with the 'strangers'. Then, however, they began to argue. Niedermayer turned to go back to his house, was grabbed by the men, shoved into their car, and driven away.

All this was seen by Niedermayer's assistant, Heeck, who however waited *one hour* before informing the RUC. (This man left Andersonstown in 1971; the Provos suspected him of collusion with the UVF.)

### APPEASEMENT

Why has this story not been made public before? Most of it was published in *Der Spiegel* early in 1974. Craig tried to ignore it, but Mrs. Craig went on German television to deny any relationship with Niedermayer. British papers issued a garbled version of the story, concocting a fantasy about Niedermayer absconding to South America with his secretary.

The British Government are believed to know the whole story, but are reluctant to act for fear of Loyalist reaction. The Irish Government know, but are too compromised by British intelligence infiltration to do anything. Amongst other things, the story illustrates the extent to which both British and Irish Governments are determined on a course of appeasing Loyalism.

## WHAT'S ON

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**DEFEND THE 14:** Public meeting in defence of the 14 pacifists charged with conspiracy to contravene the Incitement to Disaffection Act. Speakers include: Joan Maynard MP, Maureen Colquhoun MP, Ernie Roberts (Asst. Gen. Sec. AUEW), Bill Hetherington (defendant), Pat Hickey (IMGJ). Saturday 3 May, 2 pm, in NUFTO Hall, Jockey's Fields, Holborn, WC1.

**AGAINST WHITE'S BILL:** Meeting of doctors to discuss implications of Abortion (Amendment) Bill and plan campaign of action against it. Thursday 1 May, 7.30 pm, in Games Room, University of London Union, Malet St, WC1. Further details from Dr. Barbara Jacobs (735 8141) work, 822 B530 home or Dr. Berry Beaumont (229 1156).

**FREE BUKOVSKY & MOROZ!** Public meeting in solidarity with imprisoned Soviet dissidents Vladimir Bukovsky and Valentyn Moroz. Fri. 25 April, University of London Union (Room 3E), Malet St., WC1, at 7.30 pm. Speakers: Terry Liddle (Cttee to defend Vyacheslav Chornovill), Ivan Hartel (Cttee to Defend Czechoslovak Socialists), Peter Gowan (IMGJ) and from IS and Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.

**EAST KENT Science for People Group** one-day school on 'Industrial Health and Safety'. Delegate conference for local workers and interested groups. Sunday 4 May, 10 am at Rutherford College, The University, Canterbury. Speakers include Pat Kinnersly (Author of 'Hazards of Work') and Charlie Clutterbuck (BSSRS). Films. Further details from Chris Pitts, 27 St. Thomas Hill, Canterbury.

**LONDON Rank-and-File Technical Teacher:** next meeting Sunday 27 April, 7 pm, in the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Rd. John Shemeld will speak on 'College Government and Democracy'.

**WORKERS' FIGHT Readers' Meeting:** 'The Role of the Prison System in Society Today', Speaker Ted Ward (PROPI). Sunday 27 April, 8.30 pm, in 'The George', Liverpool Rd, N.1 (Angel tube).

**WORKING WOMEN'S CHARTER:** London Co-ordinating Committee general meeting at ULU (Room 3A), Malet St, WC1—Saturday 26 April, 1.30 p.m. All welcome.

**CAMBODIA VICTORY Celebration—** Thursday 24 April at 7.30 p.m. in SOAS Assembly Hall, Malet St, WCJ. Speakers from PUNK and DRV.

**BIRMINGHAM Labour Movement Conference on Ireland:** Saturday 3 May at Transport Hall, 211 Broad Street, Birmingham, 10.45 am to 6.15 pm. Delegates 50p, observers 30p.

**LOBBY WELSH TUC** on question of abortion, Saturday 26 April in Swansea. Organised by S. Wales Women's Rights Committee.

**ABORTION CAMPAIGN:** Meeting for all women in London interested in either joining or forming a NAC group in their area plus those that have already been set up. To exchange ideas and co-ordinate activities to mobilise for the National Abortion Campaign. Thursday 24 April, 8 pm, Panel Room, Collegiate Theatre, Gordon Street, WC1.

**FREE DESMOND TROTTER Campaign:** picket of East Caribbean High Commission, Haymarket, SW1—Friday 25 April, 4.30-6 p.m.

**PRESTON WOMEN'S GROUP** meets at the Moorbrook Hotel (North Road) each Wednesday at 8 pm.

### National Labour Movement Delegate Conference

### THE BRITISH LABOUR MOVEMENT AND IRELAND

Saturday 24 May, Collegiate Theatre, Gordon St., London, WC1.

Starts: 10.00 am. Ends: 5.30 pm approx. Creche available.

Speakers include: Senator Michael Mullins (General Secretary, Irish Transport and General Union); Eamonn McCann (Author *War and an Irish Town*); Dr. Tim Shallice (Neurologist, National Hosp.); Joan Maynard, MP; Harry McShane (Pres. John MacLean Society); Michael Knowles (Sec. Hackney Trades Council); Gery Lawless (Troops Out Movement).

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# FIGHTING THE

In the debate inside the Labour Party on the EEC Wilson possesses the real support of only a minority of Labour MPs—although naturally these are backed up by practically the whole of the capitalist class. Against Wilson are the majority of MPs, the coming vote at the Labour Party conference, the Labour Party Young Socialists, the Co-operative Party and the TUC. But Wilson has been running rings round these apparently formidable forces. He has sacked Heffer, gagged the anti-Market ministers in Parliament, and stopped the Labour Party NEC from using the Party's resources in the campaign against the Market.

The reasons why the Labour left cannot wage a real fight against Wilson and Healey are very clear. As long as Britain retains a capitalist economy then British industry needs the Common Market—not just because it provides a bigger market for British goods, but even more importantly, because it has to merge with the continental multinationals if it is to have any chance of *staying alive* in a world of increasing competition.

Staying in Europe is of course only one part of Wilson and capitalism's overall plan to rescue British industry. British capitalism cannot be effective in Europe unless industry at home is made more competitive. This means boosting production and cutting costs. Working class living standards will have to go down. Unemployment and the workload will have to go up.

Big sections of the working class know what is coming and oppose the EEC because they correctly see it as part of the ruling class's attempt to solve the economic crisis at their expense. But in order to launch into a campaign against the EEC with enthusiasm, the working class needs to know what is the alternative to British capitalism in the Market.

The 'lefts' have completely failed to make any effective reply to Wilson's anti-working class policies. Jones and Foot are against staying in Europe but defend the social contract. Benn has refused to put up any state funds if the Post Office goes ahead with its present pay rise but has the most sympathetic attitude when it comes to doling out subsidies to British Leyland.

At last week's meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party, *Tribune* group MPs admitted that the Chancellor has little alternative to the course he described as 'the stony road'. Over the Prevention of Terrorism Act the 'lefts' filed into the 'yes' lobby like obedient sheep and voted for what even Jenkins called 'draconian' measures. The campaign of the 'left' MPs over Shrewsbury has been restricted to avoid embarrassing Wilson.

By failing to come up with alternative socialist policies to Wilson and company the 'lefts' have opened the door for them on the EEC. The narrow nationalism of the 'lefts'—their economic policy basically amounts to the reactionary plea for import controls—means that they can offer nothing better than an isolated decrepit British capitalism, a prospect which is hardly likely to enthuse the working class. Indeed, Wilson plays directly on this drab and uninspiring picture painted by his 'left' critics to issue dire warnings of the consequences if Britain does not stay in the EEC.

Because they do not provide a *socialist* alternative to the capitalist Common Market, the Labour 'lefts' are condemned to complete impotence in the face of Wilson. But even worse, the thrust of their campaign goes completely against the chances of creating international working class solidarity. How can you conceivably work for the *international* class struggle while talking about import restrictions, immigration controls, the threat from 'German and French' goods, and so on?

This nationalism of the Labour left has always been completely reactionary. Its worst it helps to promote chauvinism and racism, and ties the working class to capitalism's wars. But even in trade union struggles it is incapable of developing the necessary international solidarity of the working class. This is above all seen in the inability of the reformists to respond to the increased internationalisation of capital since the Second World War—a development seen most importantly in the struggle against the EEC and against the multinational firms.

In the unfolding international class struggle revolutionary anti-nationalist politics are not merely needed in the great events. Without revolutionary internationalist politics, not even the day-to-day interests of the working class can be adequately defended. The struggle against the EEC has to be linked to a massive drive to create international working class links on every field of class struggle. The fight against international companies is a key starting point for this.

Dossier compiled by  
Alan Jones  
Charles Udry  
Bob Pennington

# NO

# TO THE CAPITALISTS' COMMON MARKET



# FOR

# A UNITED SOCIALIST EUROPE



# MULTINATIONALS

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**FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST EUROPE**

# THE NEED FOR AN INTERNATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

There is a long and glorious tradition of international working class trade union solidarity. This solidarity has frequently had an important and direct effect at crucial points in the class struggle. To take just three examples from Britain:

● In the late 1850s and early 1860s, British trade unions reached agreement with French workers against the importation of foreign blacklegs. It was the development of this collaboration which was one of the key events leading to the formation of the First International led by Karl Marx.

● In 1889 the dock strike, which more than any other struggle was responsible for the foundation of the modern trade union movement in Britain, was almost crushed through the prolonged resistance of the employers and their attempt to starve the dockers into submission. The final victory of the strike was largely due to the very large sums of money—around £30,000 (a colossal sum in those days)—sent by Australian workers.

● In 1926 Russian trade unionists collected over £1 million in voluntary contributions to send to the support of the British miners' strike. This was one of the main reasons why the miners were able to hold out for a further six months after the defeat of the General Strike. And the length of this strike in turn, while it was defeated, was a real deterrent against the launching of subsequent attacks on the same scale by the ruling class.

## FEDERATION

But as well as the effect of acts of solidarity with individual struggles, the working class also discovered very early—long before international class organisations such as the EEC were even thought of—the need for permanent international trade union organisation. The International Metal Workers Federation was established in 1893, when metal workers in several European countries 'decided to join their efforts in the fight for an eight hour day'. Then in 1907 the International Federation of Chemical and General Workers was founded.

Despite this long history of international solidarity, it has been the rapid internationalisation of capital since the Second World War, and in particular the rapid development of multinational firms, which has really sparked off the beginnings of regular trade union collaboration on an international scale. Since the late 1960s, in particular, we have seen a number of examples of the beginnings of a working class response to the development of international firms.

● In May 1969 the Turkish Chemical Workers Federation called a strike against the local subsidiary of the Hoechst company. The German union IG Chemie-Papier-Keramik, which represented workers in the Hoechst parent company, supported this struggle and a vice-president of the German union flew out to help the Turkish union in the negotiations. The combined pressure of the two unions resulted in a victory for the Turkish workers.

● In 1969 the Norwegian Borregaard chemical and paper company set up a subsidiary in Brazil. The Norwegian unions attempted to apply direct pressure to the firm in Norway over the appalling conditions of the Brazilian workers. Not much success was achieved, largely because of the military regime in Brazil, but it was important as a real example of

cooperation between workers in an imperialist country and those in a semi-colonial country.

● At the beginning of 1968 a 53-day strike by workers in the firm of FESCO at Tokyo and Kobe in Japan took place. The international trust, whose headquarters are in Geneva, attempted to replace the lost production by increased work in its Canadian plants. This was answered by the workers in Vancouver who refused to allow any increase in production for the duration of the strike.

— In 1971 workers of the Air-Liquide trust in France were on strike. Workers in Belgium, Holland, West Germany and Italy refused to



How to fight the multi-nationals—Belgian glass workers at Glaverbel-Gilly launched an international struggle against BSN

increase their production to replace that lost in France. This came after a similar experience a year earlier, in which action had been taken in solidarity with eight Air-Liquide factories in France on strike.

● In May 1971 workers at the Kodak factory in Vincennes, France, were on strike. British transport workers, and German and United States workers of Kodak were contacted and acted to prevent the transfer of goods.

● Just ten days ago, strikers at the Standard Telephones and Cables factory in East Kilbride—a subsidiary of ITT—returned to work after winning wage increases of £7 to £10.50 a week. An important factor in their victory was the international solidarity of other ITT workers in Portugal, Spain, Belgium and Northern Ireland, who refused to do any work that would normally have been done at East Kilbride.

## ST. GOBAIN

While most of these examples were simple solidarity acts, there has been one notable case in Europe of a real plan of action against a multi-national company. This was the struggle organised in 1969 by the International Federation of Chemical Workers against the St. Gobain firm. This multinational, employing 140,000 workers, virtually controls the European glass industry along with two other multinationals, BSN and Pilkington.

The planning of the campaign against St. Gobain involved a meeting of trade union representatives from France, Italy, Germany, the United States, Belgium, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland, who established a standing committee to coordinate the wage negotiations in France, Germany, Italy and the United States. The conference which established this standing committee agreed that no negotiations should be concluded in any country without the approval of the standing committee; that if there was a strike in any country, international financial assistance would be provided; that if the

at other St. Gobain plants; and that if the company tried to move production from one country to another in order to break or weaken a strike, then this move would be stopped.

The value of this international struggle rapidly proved itself. The German subsidiary of St. Gobain offered large wage increases and job security provisions. This agreement was accepted—but with the warning that the German union would still participate in the international struggle.

In Italy and the United States the company took a hard line. The workers in both countries therefore decided to coordinate their strike action. At this point the Italian part of the company gave in and conceded virtually all the union's wage and recognition demands. In the

But if St. Gobain and other struggles show clearly what is possible through united international working class action, too many other examples show how consistently the bureaucrats refuse to organise an international struggle. This is despite the fact that in many cases the international organisations have considerable resources—for example the International Federation of Chemical Workers has a membership of three million and computer facilities with the available financial information on all the main chemical companies in the world.

Probably the most notorious failure of the bureaucrats is the case of the Ford motor company. This firm is continually threatening to move production from one country to another, to close down plants, redirect investment, sack workers in one country and not another, and so on, but not one single really effective international campaign against this company has been launched.

Other similar examples are the manoeuvres of the Goodyear Tyre Company, which in 1966-67 built up huge stocks in Sweden which it used to threaten first its United States and then its German workers with defeat, and the Canadian Massey-Ferguson company, which in 1968 threatened to run down its operations in Canada completely when its Canadian workers demanded equal pay with those in the United States. In none of these big examples, let alone hundreds of smaller ones, did the national union bureaucrats launch any significant international campaign. For every one St. Gobain there are a hundred Goodyears.

## NATIONALISM

The failure of the reformist bureaucrats in the struggle against the international firms is not just a result of inactivity or conscious sabotage—although that does play a role. The basic reason is the narrow nationalism of the reformists and their failure to pursue the international struggle of the working class. This is shown most obviously in their support for such openly reactionary policies as import restric-



United States St. Gobain's attempted to hold out by saying that its American subsidiary had made no profits for three years. The international standing committee intervened to give the American workers the figures on St. Gobain's rocketing world-wide profits and the details of the German and Italian agreements. Armed with these facts, the US unions led a 26-day strike and won a substantial pay increase.

Only in France did the international campaign fail to bring any real results. Here the Communist-controlled CGT union federation refused to participate in the overall plan, deserted the other unions, and settled for a 3% wage increase—only a third of what most of the other unions had obtained.

tions, immigration controls and so on. How can international solidarity conceivably be developed when the bureaucrats continually fight for policies which divide the workers?

What is possible against the international trusts, including on a European level, is enormous. Demands for action by the existing international organisations must continually be made. The traditional demand for a European Congress of Labour is not at all empty words.

But what the bureaucrats will do is a million miles from what is possible and necessary. The immediate tasks of international working class solidarity will continue to fall mainly on the shoulders of the rank and file workers and the organisations of the revolutionary left.

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**FOR A UNITED SOCIALIST EUROPE**



Workers at Fords and Goodyear — two groups who really need to come to grips with the multinationals on an international scale.



## DEVELOPING SOLIDARITY

The failure of the national trade union bureaucrats to take up the international struggle of the working class has made the development of international trade union solidarity and generalisation of national struggles much harder than is necessary. But they have not succeeded in stopping it. It is now possible to see a real development of international solidarity organised at a rank and file level.

Some of the most important recent examples of this have been:

— During the 1969 strike at the Belgian Ford plant at Genk, the workers contacted the Ford plant at Cologne in West Germany. The German workers promised not to allow men to be sent to Genk to do various vital jobs and not to allow work from Belgium to be transferred to Germany.

— When the AZKO chemical trust threatened to lay off 6,500 workers in four countries, there were simultaneously organised occupations of the Dutch and German plants.

— Workers at Rhone-Progil, part of the multinational Rhone-Poulenc company, cut production of phenol from 280 to 140 tons as part of an industrial action. The company threatened to move production elsewhere or to obtain other supplies. The workers immediately got in touch by phone with the factory shop stewards at Bayer in Cologne and Montedison in southern Italy. The Bayer workers immediately replied that they wouldn't produce any extra phenol. Montedison replied that there was no problem if they were on strike anyway!

— During the long struggle for recognition of the United Farm Workers in the United States in the late 1960s, the Union sent a full-time worker to Europe to organise dockers to boycott Californian grapes. This struggle included workers in Sweden, Britain and other

countries. In Britain this struggle was cruelly sabotaged, despite verbal support, by the TGWU bureaucracy. Nevertheless individual dock leaders managed to get the blacking enforced.

### IMMIGRANTS

While all these examples of international solidarity are important, by themselves they are insufficient to stimulate a more general process which meets up to the needs of the situation. There are, however, other important developments in Europe at present which tend to speed up the rate at which such international lessons are drawn.

One of the most important of these routes of developing the international struggle is provided by the generalising of experiences by immigrant workers at Lippstadt in Germany (who make car headlamps) won a struggle in 1973 this was largely due to the advanced forms of struggle they adopted—namely the formation of a real rank and file strike committee.

This development, far ahead of normal struggles in West Germany, took place largely because of the experience of this form of struggle in the countries—Italy and Spain—from which many of

the workers engaged in the struggle came. Similarly, when the first strike for decades broke out in various Geneva engineering factories, this was largely due to the role played by Spanish workers in this struggle.

The second process in generalising working class struggles is the big impact of some of the most advanced workers' struggles in Europe.

Undoubtedly the most important example of this has been Lip. This French watch factory in Besancon was occupied by workers for several months. They not merely continued production, selling the watches to raise money, but also seized a vast quantity of watches as a 'war-chest'. They produced solidarity newspapers, called solidarity demonstrations, and organised a massive campaign not merely in France but also internationally.

These types of tactics have been taken up in a whole series of struggles. For example, when workers at Ampex in Belgium seized a massive stock of magnetic tape cassettes as security in their strike they were directly inspired by the example of Lip.

Finally, there is no doubt that in certain countries the class struggle has reached the point where a real possibility exists for workers to go beyond the limited initiatives of the bureaucrats. The most obvious case of this is the relationship which developed between the workers of the Fiat plants in Turin in Italy and the workers of SEAT in Spain—SEAT being a firm half owned by Fiat and half owned by the Spanish state.

The real inter-relation of struggle between Fiat and SEAT started when the strikes in

Italy in 1969 reached such a high level that the Fiat boss Agnelli considered shifting the production of engines and machine tools to SEAT. The leaders of the Italian Communist-controlled union federation, the CGIL, went to Spain, to their credit, to discuss this with the workers.

However, when struggles started to break out at SEAT in June-October 1971, Agnelli was forced to give up his plan. But during the June-October struggle another significant event took place: the French CGT union federation, together with the CGIL (both dominated by the Communist Party), sent a delegate to Spain. They asked a member of the Spanish Communist Party to come and address the workers at Renault and Fiat. Clearly it was a chance for the CP to play up its 'internationalist' image while at the same time developing a purely verbal solidarity.

An alternative, however, was proposed by a militant in the workers' commissions (underground unions). Very simply, he suggested: 'The delegate should be elected on the basis of a concrete programme of international solidarity'. He proposed that a 'permanent liaison committee' responsible to the base should be established.

This committee, he said, should put out regular information on the progress of struggles and the response of the bosses in the Fiat empire. Furthermore, it should ensure the organisation of solidarity strikes in the European factories whenever a struggle broke out in any part of the Fiat trust. And on this basis he was elected.

For several reasons this project never actually got off the ground. But it was an important step in developing solidarity in future struggles. The high point of this solidarity came when in Turin the Fiat workers began to take strike action in solidarity with the SEAT workers' struggle.

This international solidarity developed by the action of the Italian workers was then taken still further when, in order to attempt to compensate for the losses of production due to the strikes in Turin, the SEAT company attempted to introduce a third shift at SEAT. This was successfully resisted by the SEAT workers who in this way concretely supported the struggle of the Fiat workers.

### TROTSKYISTS

But the very development of the Fiat-SEAT solidarity, and of other advanced struggles such as Lip, shows what is the most important force which can develop the international solidarity and struggle of the working class. While the initiative in the struggles at Fiat-SEAT first came from the bureaucrats, it was a Trotskyist militant who proposed at SEAT sending a rank and file speaker to the other plants. In Fiat itself it was Trotskyists who organised meetings in the factory workshops on the political situation in Spain and helped gain the support for the solidarity strikes. In the case of Lip, it was of course the tremendous struggle of the workers themselves which led to the initial wave of solidarity. But it was the Trotskyist Fourth International which helped to establish, in particular, the international solidarity. It is the development of a revolutionary international, with organisations in every major country, that is the decisive link in developing the united workers' response against the international capitalists.

## Mobilise Labour Party resources!

By failing to take up practical European solidarity action in workers' struggles—arguing instead in terms of defending 'British independence' against 'foreign bureaucrats'—the Labour lefts totally obscure all the class differences which underlie the fight against the Common Market.

This bankruptcy of the Labour left, while it flows inevitably from reformism, is a very serious question for the working class. What the present forces of revolutionaries can do in the struggle against the EEC and the international fight against capitalism is one thing. What could be done with all the resources of the mass organisations of the working class is something a million times greater.

It is therefore absolutely necessary to take up the fight for the real use of the resources of the Labour Party in the struggle against the EEC and for international working class solidarity. In particular we demand that the Labour and trade union lefts:

■ Adopt a clear programme of anti-capitalist measures as an alternative to the capitalist 'solution' of the EEC. This must include rejection of any form of incomes policy under capitalism; for a sliding scale of wages; nationalisation without compensation and under workers control of all firms creating redundancy; withdrawal from NATO; solidarity with all workers' struggles in Europe; withdrawal of all troops from Ireland.

■ Begin the mobilisation of the working class movement around a struggle against the international capitalist trusts and against the

EEC. In particular there must be a fight for the building of international workers' committees in the multi-national companies and for a European Congress of Labour.

■ Refuse to be bound by Cabinet decisions and make themselves responsible to the organisations of the working class and not to Parliament or the Government. The NEC of the Labour Party, which has a clear anti-EEC majority, and the TUC, which is also committed against the Market, must use all their resources to fight Wilson. This means that the funds of these organisations, their technical equipment and staffs, must all be placed at the disposal of the anti-EEC forces and at the disposal of international working class struggles. The right wing minority must be denied the use of any resources whatsoever.

It is through initiatives in individual companies and struggles, and through continually demanding that the mass organisations of the working class take up the task of international workers' solidarity, that a real struggle will be developed against the EEC and the great capitalist trusts. Without such a perspective of socialist policies and practical international solidarity, militants will finish up like the present Labour lefts—toothless dogs who have a bark but no bite and who are incapable of mounting a real struggle against Wilson even on an issue like the EEC. The international solidarity of the working class against the great capitalist trusts is far too important to be left to people like that.

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# THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The forces of the Fourth International are very limited. Most of its internationally organised campaigns are devoted to great issues such as Vietnam, Chile and Portugal. This is not merely objectively correct—these issues weigh far more greatly in the relationship of forces between the classes than any trade union struggle—but it also corresponds to the way in which the working class has historically always begun to develop an international consciousness.

Nevertheless, with the limited resources it does possess, the organisations of the Fourth International have also been able to play a real, if still modest, role in developing international solidarity in trade union struggles and in generalising the experience of these struggles. What is more, the Fourth International is the only organisation, particularly on a European scale, which both possesses organisations in every major capitalist country and is systematically attempting to develop international solidarity in workers' struggles.

Many of the interventions of the Fourth International are of course limited in scale, and consist of putting workers in various countries in contact with each other. For example, in the struggle at Rhone-Progil it was Trotskyist militants who were able to play a role in establishing contact between the various chemical factories, while in the case of Fiat-SEAT it was Trotskyist militants who were able to take initiatives both in Turin and at the SEAT plants.

In other cases, Trotskyists have been in the lead in establishing solidarity with struggles which, while they do not have the impact of something like Lip, are nevertheless of real significance in an area. For example, when workers at Uniprint in Denmark occupied their factory—the first real fight back against unemployment in that country—the sections of the Fourth International were able to play a role in establishing not only support committees in Denmark but also in creating them in Sweden.

However with the development of the class struggle, and with the development of its own forces, the Fourth International is beginning to be able to go beyond such relatively simple acts of solidarity and set in motion real international campaigns on a broader scale. Undoubtedly the most important examples of this have been the Lip struggle and the strike of the Belgian glass workers of Glaverbel-Gilly.

## LIP

The first really ambitious international solidarity campaign around a major trade union struggle which the Fourth International has been able to develop in recent years was that around the Lip dispute. Inside France itself the Trotskyists played a leading role in organising

support committees for this struggle and in mobilising for the 100,000 strong solidarity demonstration which took place in September 1973. But this solidarity campaign was also extended abroad with solidarity meetings, collections and other support organised in Sweden, Belgium, Britain, Switzerland and many other countries.

Joint issues of the French and Swiss Trotskyist newspapers were produced, and the Swiss section of the FI distributed the demands and solidarity material produced at Lip to watch factories in Switzerland, where redundancy was also a threat. In many cases these demands were pinned to notice boards in the factories and some were also adopted as demands of the Swiss workers. Finally, the French and Swiss Trotskyists were able to play a role in organising the joint demonstration of French and Swiss workers in solidarity with the Lip struggle at La Chaux-de-Fonds.

## HOSPITAL

What was particularly remarkable about this Lip solidarity was not only the general impact it had in popularising the struggle and gaining support, but in the very direct way it then interacted with the trade union struggle in Switzerland itself.

Charles Piaget, the leader of the Lip strike action committee, and other Lip workers, spoke at many solidarity meetings in Geneva and these coincided with the development of a struggle amongst hospital workers in that town. The Lip workers were able to explain how they were popularising their struggle, how they kept control over negotiations, how they sought to create unity among different sections of the workforce. They

were able, from one of the most advanced workers' struggles to have taken place in Europe, to pass on enormous amounts of information and experience to young militants who were trying to bring together different categories of Swiss and immigrant workers and ensure the maximum involvement of all the hospital workers.

Finally, however, yet another extension of international co-operation took place. While the Lip workers could give many important lessons, there are of course many specific things about a struggle in a hospital. The basic question is how to maintain health care while at the same time hitting the administration.

## INITIATIVE

Here again the Fourth International was able to take the initiative. At the suggestion of the revolutionaries a comrade from the French city of Tours, where a successful administrative strike had already taken place, was invited to Geneva to take part in a trade union general assembly. In explaining how an administrative strike should be organised, and in giving concrete and detailed explanations on how to take such a struggle forward, he allowed the workers to absorb an experience which it would otherwise have taken them years to gain. What had started just as solidarity with Lip, and which did achieve real support for that fight, finished up as co-operation between workers from Tours and Lip in France, and Swiss and immigrant workers in Geneva, both in the Lip and in the Geneva hospital workers' struggle.

Another example where the Fourth International has been able to develop a real international solidarity campaign was in the case of the glass workers of Glaverbel-Gilly in Belgium.

The Glaverbel factory in Gilly is part of the huge French-based multi-national BSN, which employs 73,000 workers and is part of the triangle—with St Gobain and Pilkington—which controls the European glass industry. The factory at Glaverbel has a leadership from the trade union tendency 'New Defence' in which Trotskyists of the Belgian section of the Fourth International play an important role.

This factory had already been engaged in a very important struggle in 1973 in which an elected strike committee had been created to lead the factory occupation and in which the workers had maintained production during the struggle. This experience had then been generalised in a second strike in 1974 in which 4,000 glass workers in the region of Charleroi had been involved.

This latter struggle was a combined one both for better wages and conditions and against the sackings of a union militant. About half the glass factories in the region were occupied, in virtually every one a democratically elected strike committee was established, and finally an elected regional strike committee was created. This struggle was victorious.

## CLOSURE PLAN

Finally in 1975 the BSN company moved to close down Glaverbel-Gilly permanently. Rapid solidarity was organised in Belgium. The 600 workers of the factory occupied and set up a strike committee to continue production which was sold to raise strike funds. A solidarity congress involving 500 trade union delegates representing several tens of thousand of workers was held.

International solidarity was developed—particularly by the French section of the Fourth International. An eight page special supplement to the Belgian and



French sections' newspapers was produced. In Germany solidarity bulletins were distributed by the section. Help was given in organising a demonstration of 1,000 Belgian and French glass workers, with some Germans, at the BSN main office in Paris.

In the end the struggle at Glaverbel-Gilly did not result in complete victory. One hundred workers were laid off. However 500 jobs, five-sixths of the jobs in the factory, were saved. This was a remarkable outcome of a struggle of 600 workers against a trust the size of BSN. There is not the slightest doubt that it was the campaign of international solidarity which had a real effect in ensuring this outcome.

The Fourth International must be extremely modest about its role. It would be insane for a small revolutionary organisation to attempt to play the same role in international solidarity as should be played by the trade unions with their massive resources. The initiatives which have been taken must be seen as part of the fight against the reformist bureaucrats within the trade union organisations themselves. In this direction the Fourth International has four main tasks:

- as well as the international campaigns on the questions of the big political struggles, to carry out a campaign on an international scale for some of the most important demands of the working class movement such as the sliding scale of wages, workers control, tactics in the struggle against redundancy, etc. There are a host of demands and examples on an international scale which can be used.

- to organise campaigns of international solidarity with key working class struggles such as Lip and Glaverbel-Gilly.

- to develop international co-operation between worker militants in the different countries. The European workers' conference, with the participation of representatives from the United States, which was held by the FI last year in Belgium, was a real step forward in this process.

- to demand continually that the unions take up their responsibilities on the international field. Central demands in this are the call for international union organisations, such as has just been set up for ICI, and the call for a European Congress of Labour to plan the struggle against the EEC and international capitalism.

The forces of the Fourth International are very small compared to what is necessary. But when the needs are great and no one else is in a position or prepared to act, the possibilities are also huge. It is through this work that we will begin to turn the international solidarity of the working class, and slogans such as the United Socialist States of Europe, into a living reality. ■





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# Bureaucrats sabotage Chile blacking campaign



This Thursday, 24 April, the TUC is to hold its long-awaited special conference on Chile. But those who had hoped that this might be the occasion for the launching of a campaign of working class action to black all aid and trade to the junta are in for a sad disappointment. The conference, for members of affiliated union executives only, will last for a mere two hours; and the purpose, according to TUC general secretary Len Murray quoted in the *Morning Star* of 27 March, is no more than to seek 'a reaffirmation of the unions' abhorrence of the regime's actions'.

'Abhorrence' never changed anything, unfortunately. But that doesn't worry the Communist Party, which is intent above all on preserving its 'special relationship' with the trade union bureaucrats. As we recount below, the example of Glasgow shows that this is already seriously undermining the possibility of any united campaign which could concretely aid the struggle to bring down the Chilean junta.

The 1975 Annual General Meeting of the Glasgow Chile Committee on 5 April saw a determined attempt by the Communist Party to force home the split they have tried to provoke in the Scottish Chile Solidarity Campaign for the last six months.

Activists in the Chile campaign hoped that the meeting would get down to the desperately urgent task of building solidarity in the Glasgow labour movement with the struggles of the Chilean workers and peasants once again. The last AGM, in December 1974, was used by a 70-strong CP block-vote to create a 'Scottish Chile Defence Committee' over the heads of five other Scottish local

James MacAllister

committees outside Glasgow, thus leaving Glasgow without a functioning local committee itself.

## BLACKING

Within a month, a vicious attack by right-wing AUEW boss John Boyd and his local cronies brought down the most important anti-junta blacking action in Western Europe, that of aircraft engines at Rolls Royce, East Kilbride. The Communist Party raised not a murmur, and the 'Scottish Chile Defence Committee' decided that it would be 'out of order' to discuss the

organising of support action to sustain the blacking.

The attempts of the 'Scottish Committee' to usurp the authority of the national campaign and the autonomy of the local committees in Scotland became so blatant that the bi-monthly Committees Conference, the highest authority of the Chile Solidarity Campaign, passed the following resolution at its February meeting: 'The "Scottish Committee", until Executive discussion, has no brief other than its stated one of co-ordinating existing activities.'

In the fortnight after the Committees Conference, the 'Scottish Committee' made clear exactly which 'existing activities' it was prepared to 'co-ordinate'. When the Scottish Young Communist League organised a 'flag-day for Chile', it received the full support of the 'Scottish Committee'. But when a picket was called in support of Chilean sailors on trial, supported by Chilean exiles of all parties as part of the CSC's main national campaign, a different sort of support was the order of the day.

The promises and encouragement of the 'Scottish Committee' evapora-

ted into thin air when police forced the 100 pickets to disperse. The leading lights of the 'Scottish Chile Defence Committee' had failed to secure even the police permission they had promised, and were not even present to answer for their failure.

## SABOTAGE

The second 'Annual General Meeting' in Glasgow in six months decided to stand by this abject record of sabotaging any attempt to put the CSC's blacking programme and campaigns into action. To do that, it was necessary for the Communist Party to get out of its hair the nasty 'ultra-lefts' who insisted upon maintaining the full solidarity programme.

Out-going Chairman Phil O'Brien, a founder of the national CSC and of the local committee, was defeated for the time-consuming and arduous task of Secretary by CP trade union bureaucrat Archie McMillan. Of the new 10-person Committee, nine are believed to hold CP cards. Long-standing activists of the revolutionary left were block-voted down in favour of

some candidates who were attending their first CSC meeting.

The finishing touch to the new 'Glasgow Chile Committee' as a law unto itself was put when CP Committee member Jane Mackay successfully moved that it should not be 'tied down' to monthly meetings of CSC activists in Glasgow, but should only summon such meetings when it thought fit. As Phil O'Brien pointed out to the meeting, such actions by the Communist Party point a dagger at the heart of the only remaining national united front Chile campaign in Western Europe.

The Glasgow IMG will continue to defend the united front of the Chile Solidarity Campaign by publicly defending the full CSC programme in action. Activists in all local CSCs must act at the next Committees Conference to put an end to the Glasgow CP's wrecking manoeuvres. The grave being dug by the Stalinists in Glasgow is designed to bury the united front of Chile solidarity throughout Britain.



# United Farm Workers



## 1. UFW and immigrant workers—setting the record straight

On behalf of the United Farm Workers, and particularly our members who are striking for union recognition in the grape fields of California, I would like to thank you for the very fine article you wrote about our struggle ('Black These Grapes', in *Red Weekly* of 3 April) and your support of our strike and international boycott of California table grapes.

However, I would like to correct one glaring error you made in the article, i.e. you wrote that the union is 'encouraging desperate tactics like asking the immigration authorities to act against illegal immigrants being employed by the growers, which can only divide farm workers'. This is blatantly untrue.

The Immigration Authorities, commonly known in California as 'La Migra', happen to be one of the greatest enemies of the farmworkers and the United Farm Workers Union. They act in league with the multi-millionaire growers, the racist courts and police in California, and those in Washington who are out to break our Union.

The law that we are asking to be enforced reads that it is illegal for any foreign worker (be they legal or illegal immigrants) to work in any place (field or factory) where there is a certified strike going on. Our UFW strike has been certified by the US Department of Labour and the US Supreme Court. But the Immigration Authorities and the Department of Justice are not enforcing this federal law.

hire poverty-stricken Mexican workers to work in the struck fields (without telling them that their brothers and sisters are on strike) and not even checking papers at the border or at the fields where there are picket lines.

Therefore, the UFW has set up its own 'border patrol' made up of huelguistas (strikers), most of whom are Mexican or Chicano (Mexican-American), to explain in Spanish to the Mexican workers why we don't want them to work at the struck ranches. We *never* 'turn over' Mexican workers to the Border Patrol of the Immigration Authorities, as we know from our own experience how brutal and harsh their treatment is of all poor people.

As most of our membership is Third World people (and in California and Arizona, largely Mexican), we ourselves are constantly harassed by 'La Migra'—they break into our homes, interrupt our work, intimidate and brutalise us at every turn, even if we are US citizens or have the correct papers and visas for working in the US. The UFW does not require its members to be US citizens, but we do require every member to respect the Union and not to scab on their fellow workers. We have had several marches to the Mexican border, met by marches of Mexican workers (at Calexico-Mexicali) to show our solidarity with all farmworkers, regardless of citizenship.

We are asking the Immigration Authorities to: (1) Stop employers and labour con-

fields rather than the workers themselves; (3) Tell workers crossing the border that it is illegal for them to work at struck ranches; (4) Post notices at the struck fields telling all workers it is illegal for them to work there under US federal law if they are not US citizens. In other words, enforce their own laws.

The following statement written in a letter to the Department of Justice by our Union president Cesar Chavez further explains our relationship to them. It was written after Romulo Avolos, a US citizen born in Texas and a member of the United Farm Workers, was shot in the head and murdered by Border Patrol officials while he was working at a prune orchard at the Cal-Mission ranch where the officials were checking workers' visas and work papers.

Chavez writes: 'The efforts of our Union to organise farm workers have always been met with hostility by the US Border Patrol. More recently, the Patrol has embarked upon an organised programme of visiting Union crews at those few ranches where we have contracts to harass our members by singling them out for special investigation and embarrassment—and today a death by violence. The presence of your agents at our Union fields is not welcome and unless immediate remedial action is taken to control these agents and their behaviour, we will have no alternative but to initiate a massive campaign of non-cooperation and resistance.'

Again, we thank you for your support of our strike and boycott and hope that

## 2. Appeal for Chinese Trotskyists

According to a recent Hsinhua News Agency dispatch, 'war criminals just released by special amnesty numbered 293 in all, including 290 war criminals who originally belonged to the Chiang Kai-shek clique, two war criminals from the Japanese puppet regime in Manchuria and one war criminal from the puppet "Inner Mongolian Autonomous Government"'. This means that all war criminals held in jail have now been released.' (19 March 1975, Peking).

But no similar amnesty has ever been declared in the case of those revolutionaries, in particular the Trotskyists, who were arrested in the course of a nationwide raid on the night of 23-24 December 1952. Altogether 200 persons were seized. No indictment was ever made public. No public trial was ever held. Those arrested were refused contact with their relatives and friends.

It is therefore impossible to say with any certainty what has happened to those Trotskyist militants since—what 'crimes' they were charged with, or how many of them are still alive. What little information there is indicates that most of the younger ones are now living under supervision after five years or more of imprisonment, and are barred from employment. The older comrades continue to rot behind bars.

Who are these Chinese Trotskyists Mao judges more dangerous to his regime than Kuomintang counter-revolutionaries? They include:

1. Cheng Ch'ao-lin: a founding member of the Chinese Communist Party and the Chinese Trotskyist movement, a leader of the 1925-27 revolution. A prominent writer and translator. Assuming that he is

still alive, Cheng will be 74 years old. He will have spent 30 years in jail—seven under Chiang Kai-shek, 23 under Mao.

2. Chiang Tseng-tung: a leading activist in the Shanghai labour movement and a participant in the Shanghai general strike and uprising of 1927. If still alive, he would now be about 65.

3. Ho Chi-shen: a student leader in Peking in the early 1920s, who joined the CCP shortly after its formation. Together with Mao, Ho played a leading role both in the 1925-27 revolution and in the revolutionary movement in Hunan Province after its defeat. Like Cheng Ch'ao-lin, Ho will have spent seven years in jail under Chiang and 23 under Mao—his old comrade-in-arms. If alive, he will now be 79 years old.

4. Ying Kwan: a student in France with Chou En-lai in the early 1920s, an intimate friend of Marshal Ch'en Yi and a leading activist in the CCP in Anhwei Province during the 1925-27 revolution. Ying Kwan was also a founding member of the Chinese Trotskyist movement. As a Trotskyist, he was jailed twice by the Kuomintang police during the 1930s. If still alive, he would be about 75 years old.

5. Lin Huan-hua: a revolutionary leader of the younger generation. He worked underground in the anti-Japanese resistance from 1938-45, and was a member of the Executive of the Canton Printworkers' Union when arrested by the Maoists. He is now a little over fifty years old.

I would therefore appeal to all workers' organisations to take up this issue throughout the labour movement and to campaign for the immediate release of all Chinese Trotskyists and other revolutionaries still in jail.—GREGOR BENTON, Leeds.



# After the fall of Thieu

To understand the likely development of the situation in Vietnam following the fall of Thieu it is necessary to understand the political strategy of the Vietnamese Communist Party and the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) in the South.

The whole thrust of the PRG's activity in the past period has been fixed within the framework of the Paris Peace Accords of 1973. The PRG has held that the gains which were formalised in the Accords should be defended as strongly as possible.

This framework was seen by the PRG as providing a valuable diplomatic weapon—and given the potential isolation of the Vietnamese revolution (thanks to the Chinese and Russian bureaucracies) they held this to be very important. Of much greater importance, however, is the fact that the Accords represented a summary—although a distorted one—of some of the requirements of the revolution. It allowed emphasis on the withdrawal of all US intervention—a key step—and as such served as a focus for the activity of the developing opposition in the zones held by the puppet regime (GVN).

The PRG repeatedly made it clear that their aim was to speed up the overthrow of the Thieu regime. They stated that they were willing to negotiate a settlement once Thieu was removed. The aim of these negotiations was described as the formation of a 'National Council of Peace and Reconciliation' to work towards reunification.

It is quite clear, however, that neither in Vietnam nor anywhere else does there exist the possibility of 'national reconciliation' between the exploited and exploiting classes. The problems of the national and democratic questions can only be solved by a determined struggle against the bourgeoisie, not by forming a bloc with them.

## Disarm

We therefore do not support the PRG's formulation of a 'National Council of Peace and Reconciliation'. This derives from the stalinist heritage of the Vietnamese CP and will disarm politically the cadres of the party and the revolutionary workers and peasants.

This formula will also be used to prevent the formation of organs of workers' democracy in South Vietnam. We counterpose to this the formation of workers' and peasants' councils based solely on the revolutionary masses, which should be organised to confront the reactionaries at all levels. But although we disagree with

these demands of the PRG, it is necessary to analyse the actual situation in more detail to understand what they would amount to in practice.

The Paris Accords allowed for the formation of a tripartite coalition based on the existing regime, the PRG, and the Third Force. The PRG originally called for a bipartite coalition with the Third Force but they were forced to concede on this point as part of the price for the removal of the US military. They may still return to their original idea, as they were definitely against negotiations with Thieu. Certainly the PRG has always made it quite clear that it is the only force in Vietnam which is at all representative of the broad masses.

## Different Matter

The 'Third Force' is a different matter. It has been expanded and organised mainly through the National Reconciliation Forces which the PRG has supported—and consists of radical Buddhists, intellectuals, workers' and peasants' organisations, students, women's organisations, trade union committees, etc. These groupings are very heterogeneous.

In general they represent forces which have led some resistance against the Thieu regime. Although linked to the PRG through the revolutionary committees, they are not under its domination. Because of their objective role, the PRG may well make a united front with them.

Both because of the possibility of a coalition government, and because of the united action with the 'Third Force', it is likely that the present phase leading to the fall of Saigon will not be the concluding victory of the revolution but will see the development of a new phase in which the class struggle will continue in a different form.

A number of factors may well lead the PRG into a coalition with the bourgeois forces. Firstly, their own formulations do not exclude such possibilities. Secondly, they may feel that such a bloc will reduce the misery and suffering that a long-drawn-out siege of Saigon would entail. Thirdly, they may give in to the pressure from the bureaucracies of the workers' states—Thieu claimed that Kissinger, the USSR and

China had already agreed to precisely such a demand. Finally, the PRG may make such an alliance because it fears a US blockade.

## Workers State

Whatever the confusions created by the manoeuvres of the PRG, it is almost completely excluded that the process in the South will result in anything other than the creation of a workers' state. Firstly, although the Vietnamese CP has deep roots in the Stalinist period of the Communist International, and adopts a rhetoric of forming alliances with bourgeois forces, of 'peace', etc., it at present interprets that line in a way which is very different from that of the Moscow-dominated CPs.

For example, on the central question of 'peaceful coexistence', Le Duan, the first secretary of the Vietnamese CP, wrote—almost as if answering the Soviet and Chinese bureaucracies—that: 'To intensify the anti-imperialist revolution, far from being incompatible with peace, is proved in practice to be a very fundamental direction in which to attack imperialism in order to safeguard peace in a truly effective manner.'

This statement, in *The Vietnamese Revolution—fundamental problems, essential tasks*, is in line with his speech to military cadres in 1974 in reply to those members of the Vietnamese CP who opposed the idea of deepening the revolutionary struggle and wanted to play down re-unification. He said: 'Our whole country is in a stage of acute national struggle and class struggle. So long as our national liberation and re-unification is not complete, there can be no complete independence and peace.'

Finally, on the crucial question of the character of the revolution in the South, Le Duan stated: 'The national liberation revolution no longer fits into the framework of a bourgeois revolution, but is becoming an integral part of the proletarian revolution and the dictatorship of the proletariat on a world scale... in our times the national democratic revolution led by the working class is of necessity bound up with the socialist revolution' (*Forward under the banner of the October Revolution!*)

## Class Alliances

Even more important than the stated positions of the PRG is the actual military situation in the South. Whatever the confusions created by the PRG's manoeuvres what is important to understand is that any bourgeois forces in government will be in a situation in which the state power of the capitalist class, its control over any major armed force, will have already been largely destroyed.

Capitalists with armed force to support them in a government are one thing but it is something very different when the capitalists possess only economic and not real armed power. Under these latter conditions, while such class alliances disorient the workers, the bourgeois forces are isolated elements. Any 'coalition government' would in reality be a transitional phase in the elimination of bourgeois remnants.

The exact course of events in the South is hard to predict. It depends, for example, on whether Thieu's successors attempt to hold together their forces long enough for a cisar military fight around Saigon, or more likely, whether they attempt to negotiate immediately with the PRG.

But one thing is clear. The revolution has made gigantic strides in Vietnam. Whatever the manoeuvres of the coming weeks they will not alter the basic fact. The downfall of the capitalist regime in the South is inevitable. The PRG will win.



Provisional Revolutionary Government soldiers sit in a crowded truck passing down a busy Danang street where life is getting back to normal.

## SAIGON » the noose tightens

THE SAIGON PUPPET GOVERNMENT is now confined to a zone of about 15-30 miles around the capital of Saigon and a few scattered areas in the Mekong Delta. Most of the roads leading into Saigon are in the hands of the liberation forces.

Although the military situation remains fluid, certain things are clear. The main military strategy of the People's Armed National Liberation Front (PANLF) has been—and still is—to smash the South Vietnamese armies (ARVN) both numerically and in terms of morale. The fruits of this strategy were the victories of the last few months.

Two major tactics have been adopted in this strategy. The first has been to destroy ammunition dumps and airfields, thereby limiting the fighting ability of the ARVN. The second tactic has been the encirclement of particular ARVN bases. The isolated bases have then either been worn down by the liberation army or they have been used to lure ARVN reinforcements before being attacked.

### BOGGED DOWN

It was the second tactic which was used so successfully at Xuan Loc. After most of the original garrison had been wiped out, Thieu was forced to send in the 1st Airborne Division—the absolute elite of the ARVN army. This bogged down his best troops at Xuan Loc, denying them the ability to take any initiatives of their own and ensuring that they were unable to reinforce the defence perimeter elsewhere.

Meanwhile the PANLF forces bypassed the isolated Xuan Loc and headed towards the key air base of Bien Hoa, 14 miles north-east of Saigon. Now the puppet government has been forced to move half its air-strike force from Bien Hoa leaving behind the aircraft repair shops.

### BALANCE OF FORCES

As yet, however, the balance of forces between the two sides is not clear cut. The puppet government has at its disposal the best part of seven divisions clustered around Saigon, all armed with modern up-to-date weaponry. Most of these troops are fresh and have the backing of a huge armed and airborne force.

But although the planes, tanks and helicopters are there it is not known how many are usable. For instance, only one quarter of the giant Chinook gunships are fit to fly. Over the last few years the servicing of planes and tanks has been carried out almost entirely by US personnel. Most of the Americans have now left, and it is highly probable therefore that the technical backbone of the ARVN will now be unuseable.

Above all, the question of morale is most important and this is known to be very low. The ARVN troops have never won a decisive battle, and are genuinely afraid of the 'invincible' communists. They can have little or no confidence in their leaders, even

In comparison the PANLF has committed very little forces to the fighting. Most of the battles in the last few weeks have been carried out by regional units of the PANLF. They have used up little ammunition and have had to do comparatively little fighting. The regular units of the North Vietnamese divisions around Saigon are still fresh and well-equipped.

Although the arms of the liberation army are inferior to the ARVN, they certainly use them to better effect. They are also able to use captured US arms. Long-range 130mm howitzers are now in position around Saigon, and the airport at Bien Hoa could soon be made completely unusable.

How long the ARVN will be able to hold back the insurgents will be determined by two key factors. Firstly there is the ability of the PRG to develop an insurrectionary situation inside Saigon—it is known that there has been a big infiltration of political cadre and sappers into the city. Then there is the mood of the ARVN, and even reporters from the capitalist media are forced to report on the despair and pessimism that is sweeping through Saigon.

The PRG often liken the puppet regime to a rotten apple on a tree. All it needs now is a well-aimed blow and this could well come from within the city.



Photo: ANDREW WARD (left)



# world revolution

## Armed Forces Movement steps up harassment of left

With the 'pact' that has been signed in Portugal between the ruling Armed Forces Movement (MFA) and all the country's leading political parties, the elections which are to be held on 25 April (whose final results will be known on 6 May) will have little direct importance. Irrespective of what happens on 25 April, the Armed Forces Movement intends to continue to hold the political strings for the next three to five years.

The MFA, as part of its class collaborationist scheme to meet the crisis of Portuguese capitalism, has already proposed to draw up a 'common programme' that will unite all the signatories of its pact—from the far-right Centre Democrats to the far-left Popular Socialist Front. There is even talk of trying to fuse all these groups into a single organisation whose job would simply be to back the MFA leaders.

But the outcome of the elections will have an important indirect effect on what takes place in Portugal over the next few months. If the right-wing supporters of the MFA pact—the bourgeois CDS and PPD parties and the Socialist Party—win a sweeping victory, it will strengthen the right wing of the Armed Forces. This will lay the basis for manoeuvres designed to block any further measures that cut into the interests of Portuguese capitalists and to lay the ground for a right-wing counter-offensive.

### 'LEFT' PACT

If the 'left' pact (the Communist Party, its front group the Portuguese Democratic Movement, and the Popular Socialist Front) do well, then the present policies of the MFA will be given a boost in the short term. But at the same time the combativity of the mass movement will be spurred on, and the workers will feel encouraged to continue their demands for forthright anti-capitalist measures. At the same time the right will be discouraged from pursuing any further its policy of compromise with the regime, and



Prominent on last Sunday's demonstration celebrating the anniversary of the overthrow of the Castano regime were militants from the Spanish Solidarity Committee, whose slogans stressed the need for a united struggle to end capitalist exploitation throughout the Iberian peninsula. Photo: MICHAEL TOMLINSON (IFLI)

## Stop NATO Plots

THE DICTATORIAL Spanish regime is clearly worried about its future. Faced with a growing tide of opposition and the loss of almost all its traditional props at home, it is seeking support from the international forces of counter-revolution.

In the current negotiations for the renewal of the US-Spanish military pact (whose original adoption in 1953 represented the acceptance of this offspring of Italian and German fascism into the camp of 'western democracy') the Spanish Government is known to have

asked for assurances that US military assistance would be forthcoming in the event of 'internal disorders' getting out of hand.

In response the American Government has proposed that Spain should be much more closely linked in with NATO, and has offered to do everything possible to bring such a closer relationship about, with a long-term aim of Spain actually joining NATO in the future.

This move is not just some minor manoeuvre in the military juggling act between imperialism and the Soviet Union. As one Portuguese daily paper put it: 'The discussions perhaps assume greater

importance because of the sharp turn to the left of Portugal, which has raised the possibility of a break between Lisbon and NATO.'

The integration of Spain into NATO relates to the most basic purpose of this imperialist alliance—to prevent the outbreak of social revolution in Europe. That was the reason for its establishment in the first place, and while the downturn in the class struggle over the last 25 years has put the emphasis more on its narrow military aspect, its political function is once again emerging as clearly as ever.

If Western imperialism decides it has to step in against the Portuguese working



Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFLI)

Dominican militant Desmond Trotter still faces the death penalty because of his opposition to the repressive John regime. A picket of the East Caribbean High Commission was held in London last Friday to keep attention focused on his case, and another is planned for this Friday (see What's On).

Over 200 militants and supporters of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) have been gunned down in the last two months by rightist thugs of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola.

According to the Portuguese press agency ANI, FNLA members attacked an MPLA headquarters near the Angolan capital Luanda on 26 March and captured several dozen young MPLA recruits. One newspaper account reported that the FNLA 'carried away the recruits in a truck. Some of the recruits, suspecting their fate, jumped off on the way. Some of them were shot. The others were machine-gunned in a remote valley. At least 51 were killed in this massacre.'

This massacre was only the most vicious incident in an escalating series of gun battles and assassination attempts mounted by the FNLA against the MPLA in the past two months. On 22 March, FNLA gunmen opened fire on the MPLA's headquarters at Vila Alice during a visit by top MPLA leader Lopo do Nascimento. The same day, FNLA units attacked MPLA installations with machine-guns and grenades in Lobito, Lubango, Huambo and the Cazeiga district of Luanda.

On 8 April, shooting broke out at Luanda airport. In this incident, which left a Boeing 747 Jumbo riddled with bullet holes, the target was probably Agostinho Neto, president of the MPLA, who was expected to arrive that day on a flight from Lisbon.

### PRO-IMPERIALIST

The FNLA is a pro-imperialist group backed by the Government of Zaire, one of the United States' closest allies in Africa. Holden Roberto, FNLA's president, is brother-in-law of president Mobutu of Zaire, which is the second largest recipient of US economic 'aid' in Africa and is lavishly equipped with US military hardware. The FNLA operates from base camps in Southern Zaire and is thought to have over 20,000 armed combatants.

Well-funded—in addition to being well-armed—by its reactionary patrons, the FNLA has recently bought up all the major means of communication in Angola. On 24 March, the Lisbon daily *O Seculo* reported that Luanda's only TV station had been acquired by the FNLA and renamed FNLA TV.

Luanda's leading newspaper, *A Provincia de Angola* also appeared under new FNLA management on 24 March. Its editor, Correia de Freitas, who had recently returned from exile after being suspected of complicity in the right-wing coup attempt in Portugal on 28 September,

was escorted to the paper's offices by FNLA troops who are now permanently installed in the building.

FNLA's political goals were aptly expressed by Roberto in mid-February. Attacking a 'Week of Popular Power' organised by the MPLA's 'Popular District Commissions' in the last week of January, Roberto said that 'people's power leads to a people's dictatorship and the population of Angola, which is Christian, actively rejects Communism.'

The leading bourgeois weekly *To The Point International* noted in its 22 February issue that the FNLA 'wants a black nationalist Angola, but it wants to respect foreign investments and give the white man a chance. Its main concern is development of the country and the protection of law and order. It is fiercely adverse to the so-called "direct popular power" advocated by MPLA.'

FNLA assaults against the MPLA indicate a possible attempt by the FNLA to seize power prior to Angola's projected Independence Day on 11 November. MPLA president Neto, speaking in Lisbon on 30 March, accused the Portuguese authorities of standing by while the FNLA terrorises the African population and assaults MPLA headquarters and militants.

The MPLA itself, however, has helped to open the way for the wave of right-wing terror. By joining the popular-front 'transitional government' (in coalition with the FNLA, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, and the Portuguese colonialists) set up after the independence agreement signed in Portugal on 15 January, it has disoriented and demobilised the Angolan masses.

The MPLA is therefore encouraging the Angolan masses to place their confidence in a Government which includes the assassins of the FNLA itself! The MPLA ministers of the Government approved the reactionary anti-strike law published in January which allows strikes to be banned and workers to be placed under military discipline. And on 3 February the MPLA ministers joined with the rest of the Government to order the disarming of the workers of Luanda.

Tony Hodges

class, NATO will be a crucial instrument for such intervention, and Spain an essential springboard. Spanish territory is already being used by the fascist 'Portuguese Liberation Army', who openly admit that they are planning guerrilla actions to free Portugal from 'Marxist subversion'.

These latest developments serve only to underline the need to build, throughout the European workers' movement, a massive movement to defend the Iberian revolution from imperialist manoeuvres, and at the same time to mobilise the European working class against the counter-revolutionary NATO alliance.

Angola terror wave

# RED WEEKLY

# SCOTS TUC VOTES FOR SLIDING SCALE



Photo: CHRIS DAVIES (Report)

The Scottish Trades Union Congress meeting in Aberdeen last week overwhelmingly denounced the budget as 'a serious attack on the standard of living of working people as it will increase the cost of living and, at the same time, have a disastrous effect on employment prospects.' It declared that a sharp reaction from the trade union movement was necessary and went on to pledge 'support to all unions seeking wage increases designed to improve the living standards of their members.'

The 470 delegates, with only two opposing, voted against any form of incomes policy, voluntary or otherwise, under capitalism. Most importantly they passed by a large majority a resolution on 'Cost of Living Safeguards' which calls on unions to fight for sliding scale of wages agreements which give 100 per cent protection against inflation to the real value of wages.

Moved by Roland Sheret on behalf of Stirling and District Trades Council, the resolution calls for unions to negotiate cost of living clauses in their wage agreements which would transform threshold agreements as they are presently conceived into a genuine sliding scale of wages based on a working class cost-of-living index. This would be 'designed to cover increases in the cost of living with normal wage bargaining taking place over and above this.'

The STUC decision on a sliding scale of wages comes when a whole series of unions are beginning to put in demands for protection of wages against inflation. Already the local

government workers' union NALGO has a pay claim in for 30 per cent increases plus a 60p threshold for every one per cent rise in the cost of living index. Railwaymen are also seeking a new cost of living agreement. Ray Buckton of ASLEF has said that the latest tax and price rises will have to be taken into account in their pay talks. 'We are asking for some formula to be built into the settlement which would take care of any other increases in the cost of living.'

## ACTION NOT WORDS

But the problem with the STUC decision is whether it will actually be the basis for action. Here the STUC gave only too many indications that it has little intention of leading a fight for working class policies.

It is true that miners' leader Mick McGabey made an appeal to delegates not just to pass resolutions, but to act on them. But despite an impassioned plea from the floor to delegates 'not to turn their backs on

the two Shrewsbury comrades in jail,' the Congress was closed with a resolution calling for industrial action to free them next on the agenda.

It was clear that the majority of delegates, including the Communist Party, saw 'acting' on resolutions as hoping to convince 'their Labour Government' to carry out these measures—the very same Labour Government that had just carried out 'a serious attack on the standard of living of working people.'

Exactly the same attitude is likely to apply to the other important positions which the conference voted for on paper—opposition to the EEC, calls for the nationalisation of North Sea Oil and of the British subsidiaries of ITT (the firm heavily involved in the military coup in Chile), and support for the Working Women's Charter.

If the STUC actually fought for the policies passed, particularly the policy of the sliding scale of wages, they could give a lead to the whole working class. The bureaucrats will do everything to sabotage that fight. It is up to socialist militants to turn the words into real deeds.

by

Aberdeen IMG

The six-week-old National Abortion Campaign (NAC) got a boost last Wednesday when 800 people tried to crowd into a 300-seater hall in the House of Commons for a meeting against the Abortion (Amendment) Bill. Finally, an overflow meeting had to be set up in a Committee room in another part of Parliament, with speakers going from one meeting to the other.

The MPs, who were billed as the star turn, either said very little (Ms Short) or seemed to concede the anti-abortionists' case (Ms Hayman). Nothing was said about making the issue of abortion a 'line' for

the Parliamentary Labour Party to adopt, nothing about the fact that this move to restrict abortions is taking place against a background of cuts in the welfare services, and nothing about the need for a mass campaign, organised outside Parliament, to enforce not only the defeat of the Amendment but also the implementation and extension of the present Act.

The call for the building of the campaign, and in particular of the 21 June demonstration, was left to the NAC speakers and chairwomen.

## HAMPTON'S STAMP ON WOMEN

THIRTY WOMEN and three men, members of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, have been on strike for six weeks at Hampton Stampings, Birmingham, to secure the reinstatement of ten of their members who were sacked for joining a trade union.

Hampton Stampings is a small factory employing around 60 people, mainly women piece-workers. For years the management have got away with paying low wages and providing poor working conditions. The rates of pay vary from week to week and job to job. One woman grossed £11 for 30 hours one week; another picked up £28 one week and only £14 the next.

The assorted Government legislation like the Equal Pay Act, which is supposed to deal with discrimination against women, simply does not cover this. Low pay remains one of the major problems facing women, and cases like Hampton Stampings explain why women's rates are still only half of average male rates.

Birmingham West District Committee of the AUEW has made the strike official, and the women are now receiving strike money. But little support has been organised officially, and an appeal sheet has only just been distributed. However the women have organised regular pickets and their blacking campaign has effectively cut off all supplies and orders to the factory.

Support for the picket has come from Lucas's, Wilmot-Breeden, the Working Women's Charter group and students among others; and last Friday 15 members of the Rovers Shop Stewards Committee joined the picket line. Small employers like Hampton Stampings are usually very determined to break trade union struggles. There is every possibility that this strike could take some time to win. Messages of support and financial aid should be rushed to: Hampton's Strike Committee, c/o Wendy Shields, 25 Benfield Close, Stirchley, Birmingham.



Photo: ANGELA PHILLIPS (IFL)

A hundred and fifty Medical Research Council technical workers staged a mass picket outside the MRC's clinical research centre at Northwick Park Hospital in London last Friday. The demonstration—against the Minister responsible for their wages, Reg Prentice, who was visiting the hospital—was the first blow in an official ASTMS dispute for a new grading structure and for a national minimum starting wage of £2,200.

## OXFORD ANTI-FASCIST DEMO

According to the Labour-controlled Oxford District Council you have to be a fascist to get in to the Town Hall on Monday the evening of 12 May.

On that night the National Front has been given permission to hold a public meeting by the Estates Committee despite protests from the local Anti-Fascist Committee—a body representing important sections of the Oxford Labour movement. The request of the Anti-Fascist Committee for a meeting on that night was turned down by the Estates Committee.

Even the Oxford Committee for Community Relations has been elbowed out by the zealous Estates Committee. Although the OCCR has long held its meetings in the Town Hall on the second Monday of each month, the Estates Committee have told them they are not having a meeting on Monday 12 May and have instead offered them rooms in another building.

Local anti-fascists are not taking this decision lying down. A mass picket of the Town Hall has been called which is supported by the IMG, the International Socialists, the Communist Party, and various trade union branches and Labour Party wards who are affiliated to the Anti-Fascist Committee. The Workers Socialist League, although not affiliated to the Anti-Fascist Committee, are also mobilising against the fascists and will be on the picket.

Support for the mass picket is urged from every area as evidence exists that the NF plan this as the first of a series of rallies in the West Midlands. Every anti-fascist who can get there should be in Oxford on 12 May.

## WE NEED YOUR MONEY

Those London teachers keep coming to our rescue. Last week they forked out another £30 for the Fund Drive.

However, the silence this month from Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham and Oxford is deafening. With just over a week to go we desperately need these, and some of the London branches, to come to our rescue. We are sure they will not fail us.

There is no doubt that *Red Weekly* has risen to the needs of the international class struggle over the past weeks in a way that no other paper on the British left has achieved or even tried to achieve. This is one more reason why the left needs a paper like *Red Weekly*—a paper which can not only analyse what is going on but can also provide a line on what to do about it.

Rush in the money to *Red Weekly* Fund Drive, 182 Pentonville Road, London N.1.

## exclusive!

The publication of Alexander Dubcek's open letter on the situation in Czechoslovakia has caused a political storm. It is the first major oppositionist statement to be made public by a deposed leader in a workers' state since the time of Stalin. Next week *Red Weekly* publishes for the first time in English the main sections, in which Dubcek makes his analysis of political developments in Czechoslovakia since the 'Prague Spring' of 1968.



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