

Manchester Town Hall
25 July, 12 noon

This SUPPORT conference has been called by sacked workers and supporters in an attempt to build solidarity and a fighting body to win our demands.

Called by Ancoats Casualty sit-in, Ardbride supporters, Senior Colman strike committee, Gateshead workers' support group, Ardbride sacked workers, and Trader sacked workers.

For information contact: Gateshead Workers Support Group, 180 Two Ball Lonnen, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 9SB

Fight Tories now! Withdraw from MSC!

DELEGATES at this week's Transport and General Workers Union conference face a vital question: how can the working class be mobilised to answer the latest round of Tory attacks?

Many delegates will agree: we don't want a 'loyal opposition' to the Tories along the lines proposed by Neil Kinnock.

Thatcher's plans, outlined in the Queen's speech, are a declaration of war on every trade unionist and working class family in this country. The Tories plan to:

- Enslave thousands of school-leavers who will be compelled to work on YTS 'training' schemes or have all benefits taken away.
- Break up the state education system
- Introduce even more vi-

ciuous laws against the trade union movement

■ Impose a poll tax which will take from the poorest and give to the rich.

Faced with these attacks, Conference delegates must tell the executive loud and clear: the time for talking about the fight against the Tories is over!

The executive must lead the fight in defence of the membership against Thatcher!

Delegates must say to the executive: no collaboration with the Tory government!

The T&GWU executive must step up the campaign to remove the EETPU from the TUC!

It must condemn all those leaders such as the engineering union's Gavin Laird who favour collaboration with Thatcher. It must take up a fight throughout the movement against the advocates of no-strike deals with the employers.

Conference must instruct the union to withdraw all its representatives from the Manpower Services Commission.

These schemes create a huge pool of cheap labour to batter down trade union conditions and cut into trade union membership. The resources of the union must be used to organise a membership campaign amongst young low-paid workers.

The Labour Party and trade union leaders must not be allowed to use the large Tory majority as an excuse for not fighting.

Every delegate should be clear on one thing: Thatcher has no mandate for her savage attacks on the working

class, the unemployed and the poor.

Only 13 million voted Tory out of the 43 million registered voters. Thatcher secured support from only 41 per cent of those voting.

In every big town in the north of England, throughout Scotland and in those parts of London where a fight against Thatcher was taken up, the Tories were hammered into the ground.

Before the election, many Labour leaders visiting trade union conferences appealed for patience. They

said we had to wait for a Labour victory at the general election, and our troubles would be over.

These leaders urged the working class to be patient in the face of systematic attacks by the last Thatcher government.

The miners and the News International printers fought bitter year-long battles against the police in defence of their right to a job.

They were left to fight alone, isolated by the TUC leaders.

Hospital workers, local government and transport workers fought against savage Tory cuts. Four million unemployed and thousands of homeless families tried to keep their heads above water. Tens of thousands joined the lengthening queues for hospital beds.

They were given the same message: 'Wait until Labour is returned at the next general election.'

What happened? During the election campaign there was no mention of socialist policies. Kinnock's media-run campaign concentrated his attack on the left in a vain effort to woo the 'respectable' middle class. Kinnock's main aim in life seemed to be to boost his own image.

The exposures of MI5 and MI6 activities against the Wilson Labour government was covered up in Kinnock's defence of the state.

Intention

Since the election Kinnock has spelt out his intention: the campaign to drive the left out of the Labour Party is to be stepped up, the role of the constituency parties will be reduced and power vested in the trade union leaders.

Last week's decision of the union executive to support Kinnock's constitutional changes — on Chair Brian Nicholson's casting vote — must be thrown out this week at Scarborough!

Kinnock's aim of a party along the lines of the American Democratic Party, openly capitalist in its politics, must be rejected.

The most decisive question facing the conference is to force the executive to break completely with the Thatcher government and take the fight for this policy into the TUC.

■ END all collaboration with the MSC!

■ REJECT Kinnock's constitutional reforms which are designed to destroy the left and make the Labour Party completely subordinate to the capitalist system!

● See Crucial transport union conference — page 2

LONDON POST VICTORY — PAGE 3



No Met Vet

FOLLOWING THE announcement by Tory Surrey County Council that all applicants for teaching posts will in future be vetted by the police comes the news that similar procedures are to be instituted by the Thatcher government for health staff working with children.

The government may well extend this policing to voluntary and private bodies which provide services to children.

Some Labour local authorities, including Lewisham and Greenwich in London, have refused to bring in police checks on teachers and last week police vetting in health was attacked by the National Association of Volunteer Bureaux on the grounds that it will discourage people with minor offences from applying for jobs.

These two moves are most sinister. They are not designed to allay the fear of parents but to discriminate against teachers and health workers with left-wing political views which the Thatcher government is less and less willing to tolerate.

To give to the police powers to decide the suitability for employment in the educational and health service is at best a cruel joke. The very week the Thatcher government announced this extension of police powers, Scotland Yard was forced to admit the mounting allegations of a new wave of corruption throughout the Metropolitan constabulary.

- The Yard's top informer — he has received over £250,000 in rewards — was recently arrested by Customs and Excise, accused of running a massive drugs smuggling operation.

- American detectives have tapes of conversations which they claim show that a senior Yard detective is in the pay of Mafia figures.

The police spent over £2 million getting John Flemming back into the country to face charges in connection with the £26 million Brink's Mat robbery. Magistrates last week threw out the case on the grounds of 'insufficient evidence'.

The trade union movement must reject out of hand any attempts by the police — well-known for corruption of all sorts, including cases of child abuse — to become overseers of the right to work.

The anti-Tory fight

THIS WEEK we publish two letters (page 12) about forthcoming conferences called as part of the development of the struggle against the Tory government. Last week a correspondent (Pat Brady, 'More Time Needed') expressed surprise that we announced a proposed National Conference on 25 July in Manchester as part of this same struggle.

As there seems to be some confusion about these issues, Workers Press wishes to make its position clear.

In the first place, we did not call the Manchester Conference. It has been called by a number of workers involved in struggle against the Tories: those in the Ancoats Casualty sit-in; Ardrbride supporters; Senior Colman strike committee and others.

We support this Conference, just as we will support every movement in the working class which helps build up the anti-Tory struggle. This is the basis for our support and we urge all our readers to fight for the maximum attendance on 25 July.

At the same time we see no contradiction between support for the Manchester conference and that to be called in November. Indeed we hope that the July meeting will be used as the launch pad for an even more successful conference at this later date.

Picket at 'Mirror'



LAST TUESDAY night copies of the 'Daily Mirror' printed in London were distributed by Robert Maxwell's Newsflow fleet of vans and trucks for the first time.

About 60 pickets, all members of the print union SOGAT's casual branches, handed out leaflets to their colleagues going in, calling for:

Background

1. recognition of all casuals as newspaper workers entitled to all benefits enjoyed by regulars;
2. no job losses;
3. immediate payment of all back-pay owed to casuals;
4. return to and acceptance of SOGAT being the traditional union in newspaper distribution with guarantees of the retention of wholesale distribution;
5. return to rail-head distribution.

The casual pickets were angry and

annoyed that SOGAT general secretary Brenda Dean had agreed to the deal which gave away their jobs.

Many London Central Branch casuals were employed as drivers or loaders each night at the 'Mirror' building and had handed it over to the NUR.

The original agreement made some months ago was for the distribution of Maxwell's 'London Daily News' but it was obvious that Maxwell would use the agreement for his other titles.

What made the pickets so angry was the fact that even if their colleagues inside didn't agree with the picket, how could they print the paper under conditions whereby it could only be got out of the building with the help of the police and Maxwell's private army of security

guards, reminiscent of Wapping?

Dean's treachery makes it all the more important that SOGAT chapels inside the 'Mirror' building stand firm alongside their casual colleagues and demand that the job of distribution is returned to the traditional method with SOGAT members.

Holding

As we go to press, Lord Stevens of United Newspapers who owns the 'Sunday Express' and 'Daily Star' will be announcing a new package of redundancies. It is rumoured that he wants another 2,000 job losses. (We will comment on this next week.)

Rupert Murdoch looks certain to get hold of the 'Today' newspaper, providing the Monopolies Commission agree. He has agreed to pay Tiny Rowlands of the Lonrho Group, £38m. David Montgomery will be the new editor.

Crucial transport union conference

THE Biennial Delegate Conference of the Transport & General Workers Union — with 1,366,000 members, still Britain's biggest union — opens at Scarborough on Monday.

The agenda has over 500 motions, many calling for action by a future Labour government.

Since all the motions and many amendments had to be in by May 30, none of them reflects the results of the election.

Much burning of the midnight oil is taking place in the transport union's Smith Square offices, where great efforts are being made to rewrite composite motions and executive statements following the results of June 11.

The executive has a motion early on the agenda calling for a 'national economic summit and a National Minimum Wage'. All the other 14 motions in this section on wages policy call for 'collective bargaining unfettered by any government or agency' — clearly aimed at a Labour government in the near future.

Of the 25 motions on anti-trade union legislation, most call on a Labour government to repeal Tory laws passed since 1979.

A notable exception is a

London branch which calls on the T&GWU to affiliate to the National Justice for Miners campaign and to raise at least £10 per sacked miner per month to be paid via the NUM solidarity fund.

The most curious section of the agenda is the way in which motions on YTS and MSC programmes are separated and dealt with.

With seven motions dealing with YTS, only one calls for the withdrawal of support from YTS schemes, but even the south coast branch which has put this forward, joins all the other branches in urging support for the TUC/Labour party 'Plan for Training'.

Later in the agenda nearly four pages of motions express opposition to JTS, MSC and Community Programme under the heading 'Special Employment Measures'.

The main motion comes from the London regional committee of the supervisory and clerical section and calls for YTS to be entirely voluntary with no financial penalty for refusing to take part, or early leaving.

The proposed demand by the government last week to stop payments to those who refuse to go on YTS mean that this question must be a major item on that T&GWU conference.

In some parts of the country the union has organised substantial numbers of young people on YTS schemes. In the north west there has

been an effective drive, in others most effort has gone into full-time union officers sitting on MSC boards.

With the destruction of manufacturing industry, a major part of T&GWU membership in hotels and catering, warehousing, local government, health service and clerical work, and will become a prime target for the use of YTS conscripts to undercut wage rates and break up union organisation.

While some union leaders and delegates may like to bury their heads in the sand and still talk of a Labour government and its future policy, the problems on the shop floor and on the dole queue are very concrete.

The T&GWU conference will have to face these problems and not talk of waiting for some future election which it cannot guarantee to win.

While there must be a massive organising and recruitment drive for YTS and part-time workers, this T&GWU conference must lead the way and break with MSC and remove all its officers from MSC bodies.

Among the motions on International Co-operation, most of which are aimed at organising international links to combat the growing strength of the multinationals, comes a call from two London branches which says:

‘This 32nd Biennial Delegate Conference is alarmed at the continued high level of long-term unemployment and the steady decline in manufacturing industry, not just in Britain, but in all the advanced capitalist countries.’

The other side of this stagnation however is the existence of widespread poverty and hunger in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In the age of technological advance, factories close and are demolished, mountains of food accumulate, millions have no work and whole nations starve.

This BDC therefore instructs the General Executive Council to call an international conference of trade union representatives, scientists, technicians, economists, statisticians, doctors, educationalists to begin to draw up an international plan for development, and thus show the way the world's resources, freed from the stranglehold of profit making, can provide employment and raise living standards for working people throughout the world.

Should this policy be adopted by the T&GWU it would give a real possibility of taking a stage further the bold statement of the Caterpillar occupation committee when they opposed the plant closure. They displayed a banner saying: 'We can feed the world'.

'News Line' joins in attack on Scargill

THE 30 June issue of 'News Line' — paper of the group led by Sheila Torrance — published an item in their column 'Workers Notebook'.

It concerned our alleged mis-reporting of Des Dutfield, president of the South Wales NUM.

We quoted Dutfield in relation to the planned opening of the new Margam pit in South Wales, an opening which British Coal says depends on the introduction of six-day working. Dutfield made certain remarks about the scab Union of Democratic Mineworkers' president, Roy Lynk.

This is how we reported Dutfield: 'Lynk seems to be saying a lot of things that the South Wales miners have been arguing for a long time. If it helps to bring jobs to South Wales, I hope you (the press) plaster what the UDM are saying all about.' (Workers Press, 27 June 1987)

News Line comments as follows:

'When "News Line" contacted Dutfield to confirm this quote he stated emphatically that he had neither spoken to Workers Press nor made such a remark to the press. The "Western Mail", the daily paper in South Wales, had no record of it either.'

How strange, for the daily paper in South Wales on 23 June, under a headline 'UDM set to step in if super-pit is blacked', said the following:

Earlier the UDM president, Mr Roy Lynk, echoed at Weymouth recent statements by the South Wales leaders saying that as the industry is changing, so too, must the mining union.

The fact that the UDM leadership are arguing the same case on six-day production as the South Wales leadership, would have been expected to cause embarrassment to the traditionally most loyal NUM area.

But South Wales NUM president, Mr Des Dutfield, said last night: 'If it helps us to bring the jobs to South Wales, I hope you plaster what the UDM are saying all about.'

'It might help South Wales enormously, not just the miners, but the whole region, because we desperately need to get the Margam jobs.'

'Lynk seems to be saying a lot of the things the South Wales miners have been arguing for a long time.'

Mr Dutfield also said the South Wales leaders had now been proved right in warning that if the NUM turned their backs on Margam the break-away union would move in to help bolster their falling membership numbers.

(Western Mail, 23 June 1987)

The 'News Line' group have again been caught out as liars. That is hardly news. What is interesting is the nature of this latest lie.

The Torrance group are deliberately covering up for Dutfield who has been part of the alliance of Stalinists and right-wingers who are sparing no effort in trying to introduce six-day working on the national union, in opposition to union President Arthur Scargill and NUM policy to fight for a four-day working week.

Poorest hit

A RECENT report has shown that privatisation and deregulation of the bus service will bring greatest hardship to the poor.

Worse and fewer bus services, fewer jobs at lower wages for bus workers and less information about available services are predicted

Postmen claim London victory



LONDON POSTMEN have claimed victory after a week-long strike in defence of union agreements. Some 900 postal workers walked out of the Western Central District Office last week after Post Office management flouted an agreement on the use of casual workers.

Post boxes were sealed in central London — after staff in other districts struck when they were told to do the work of the West Central staff.

The employment of casuals by the Post Office in rush periods is not in contention. Postmen claim that management broke the agreement for their introduction. On Thursday 24 June management introduced 30 casuals without reference to the union.

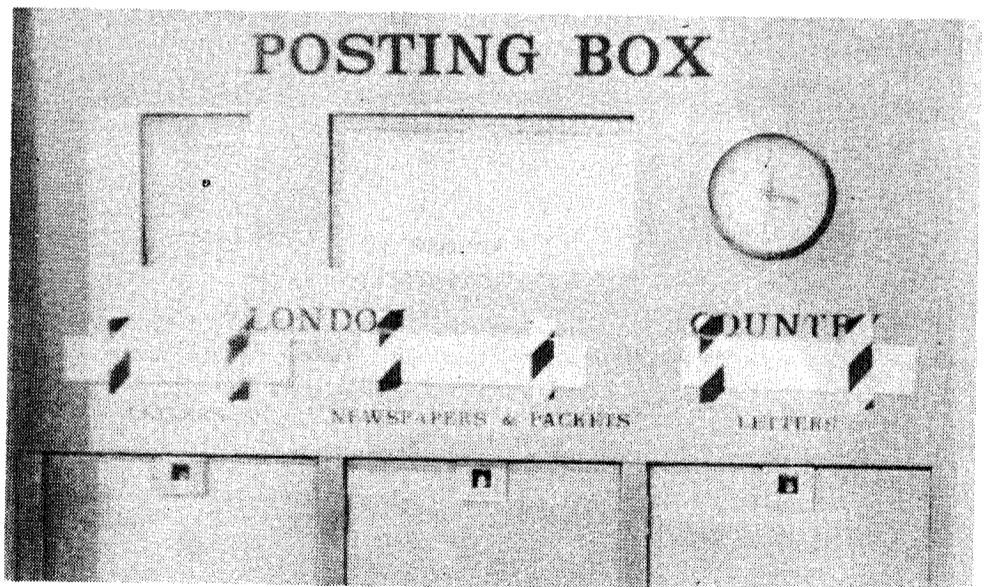
There was an immediate walk-out and a picket was

BY PHIL PENN

established. The casuals, many with other jobs, crossed the picket line shouting abuse at the striking postmen.

By Tuesday the strike was spreading rapidly. Mail for the whole of the City of London, including foreign mail, had been stopped and postal workers at London's Heathrow Airport come out.

At a mass meeting following a march of 900 workers through London on Tuesday the workers voted overwhelmingly to stay out. Later that evening management resumed negotiations and finally agreed to withdraw the casual labour. On this basis the strikers were recommended by their committee to return to work.



EETPU leader anticipates expulsion

BY TRAVIS GOULD

SOUTH WALES electricians' leader Wyn Bevan last week told a CBI conference on 'Creating a No-strike Environment' that a split within the TUC is inevitable.

The intentions of other unions at the next TUC conference would 'almost certainly be designed to have us excluded from the TUC, or to make it impossible for us (the

electricians' union, EETPU) to stay', he said.

He went on to warn of 'a thousand hand-to-hand combats', referring to the fight as he sees it to recruit union members.

The EETPU has been instructed by the TUC to rip-up or dispense with deals at two factories in South Wales: Yuasa Batteries in Ebbw Vale and Orion in Kenfig.

Bevan warned again: 'How long can we continue to take these damaging awards which seem designed to push us out of the club?' Friction between the Transport and General Workers Union (T&GWU) and the EETPU erupted at this year's Wales TUC conference over the poaching of members, and the methods used by the EETPU.

However, it goes deeper than that. At the heart of the matter is what kind of leadership is required for the working class.

In order to win members, expand and gain influence, the EETPU have become the policemen of the capitalist system. Their no-strike single-union agreements which they auction off to employers and their willingness to organise scabs to strike-break and undermine trade union rights — as they did at Wapping — prove this beyond any doubt.

Hammonds

But the Hammonds of this world are present also in other major unions like the engineering union (AEU). They are not interested in fighting for and protecting the interests of their mem-

bers, but of preserving their own privileges at any price.

These forces in the trade union movement and the road they want to travel of class collaboration and servility to their Tory masters must be defeated in the struggle to build a revolutionary leadership in the trade unions.

Central to that struggle is the expulsion of the EETPU from the TUC.

The same choice — which road to travel — faces the NUM also. It comes as no surprise that Bevan says if there is going to be a 'free-for-all' then the EETPU will vie with the UDM and the T&GWU for the whole of the Margam cake.

The NUM must get ready to do battle with British Coal's blackmail-inspired vultures, not give in to them.

At Hitachi in South Wales, one of the first factories in

Britain to sign a no-strike single-union agreement, there is continuing unrest and deep dissatisfaction with the EETPU.

In 'no-strike' Hitachi on 23 June there was a spontaneous two-hour stoppage by the whole workforce (except for a few temporary workers).

The action was taken mainly over the question of pay. Their wage rise was due in April, and so far nothing has been offered.

Many other issues though are creating a disgruntled workforce and rumours abound that many workers there are dropping out of the EETPU.

Those trade unionists who oppose the road the EETPU are treading will welcome Bevan's statements, and will be gearing themselves up for those 'thousand hand-to-hand combats'.

Socialism: now or later?

SINN FEIN is undoubtedly the most vociferous and active anti-imperialist party in Ireland.

That it should change its long-standing policy of abstention in relation to the Free State Parliament comes as no surprise when considered against the background of hard work and persistence on the part of those advocates for change.

While the new departure has proved to be of immense concern to the establishment parties in the South, the republican left and socialists in general have tended to greet the move with some degree of satisfaction.

Regardless of whether such satisfaction is justified, the left cannot afford to sit back and grow complacent. Now, perhaps more so than ever, there is a growing need for ideological, political and strategic debate.

This is essential if the anti-imperialist struggle is to avoid losing its way and its thread of continuity in a labyrinth of parliamentary legality.

A useful exercise at this stage would be to examine the possible effects on the development of the anti-imperialist struggle produced by the recent Sinn Fein policy change.

Due to media hype, a popular image has been created which shows that the issue of abstentionism gives expression to a left/right divide within Sinn Fein. But how useful is the media characterisation of the issue?

If the media veneer is scratched it would seem that the divide is not so much along left/right lines as along traditionalist/modernist lines. There would

WORKERS PRESS has published a great deal of discussion material on the problems facing Irish revolutionaries and the Irish working class. Here we publish an article on the question of abstentionism, of the 'stages' theory, and other issues under discussion among socialists and republicans.

This letter, from two prisoners in the Long Kesh H-blocks, was published in 'An Reabhlóid', journal of People's Democracy, the Irish section of the United Secretariat of the Fourth International.

seem to be very little evidence to support the view that a significant difference exists between the political ideology of either Sinn Fein or Republican Sinn Fein.

Statements by protagonists of either side (for example, Adams and O'Connell) differ little in terms of social content.

Both factions are anti-imperialist and advocate the eventual establishment of a decentralised socialist society.

In view of this it is perhaps best to view the central difference between the two parties as follows: Sinn Fein is attempting to bring republicanism into the late 20th century with all the hazards which that entails, whereas Republican Sinn Fein seem content to leave republicanism in the state of monastic isolation and freedom from contamination afforded by the legitimacy conferred upon it by the second Dail.

The problem with the approach of Republican Sinn Fein is that abstentionism in the present political environment is very much an anachronism.

They fail to understand that participation in a bourgeois parliament can often be a valid and necessary revolutionary tactic, despite its inherent dangers.

The approach of Sinn Fein is no less problematic. While attempting to bring republicanism into the late 20th century for the purpose of mak-

ing it 'relevant' they have failed to specify exactly what is meant by 'relevant'.

Relevance always exists in a certain context. What was relevant yesterday may not be so today.

Seemingly, the most 'relevant' political ideology in Ireland today is some brand of social reformism, and, arguably, by adopting such an ideology and giving some practical expression Sinn Fein could become relevant.

But becoming relevant in a given context (e.g. social reformism) without attempting to change that context inevitably means rendering a new context (e.g. revolutionary) irrelevant.

While socialists and the republican left are justified in feeling that the position of Republican Sinn Fein is untenable, they can only give unqualified support to the Sinn Fein decision to enter Leinster House if Sinn Fein are intent on changing the present context in which social reformism is relevant.

This is so because, while the left are obliged to support all anti-imperialist struggles, they must critically assess the strategies and tactics of all groups involved in that struggle in order to establish just how far the struggle can be taken by any particular group.

In this respect, socialists and the republican left must address themselves to the question of how far Sinn Fein can take the anti-imperialist

struggle in the wake of their decision to participate in Leinster House.

Recently, in an interview with the 'Irish Times' (10 December 1986) Gerry Adams was asked whether as a result of Sinn Fein's policy he would be asking people to vote for socialist and republican policies. He allegedly replied:

'I don't think that socialism is on the agenda at all at this stage except for political activists of the left. What is on the agenda now is an end to partition. You won't even get near socialism until you have achieved national independence. It's a prerequisite.'

In articulating his position, Gerry Adams stated that socialism is a thing of the future.

Some republicans have already stated that he means that the establishment of a socialist society is a thing of the future and not the socialist process.

However such an interpretation seems seriously flawed. Gerry Adams was specifically asked if Sinn Fein would be requiring people to vote for socialist policies now that Sinn Fein will be participating, if elected, in Leinster House.

Voting for socialist policies now is part of the socialist process. Gerry Adams' non-affirmative response is a clear indication that he, at least, feels the socialist process is not yet under way.

In the same interview, Gerry Adams stated that he hoped Sinn Fein would capture some of the support that



JAMES CONNOLLY

Fianna Fail, the Labour Party and the Workers Party presently enjoy.

While this is a legitimate tactic by most people's standards, it nevertheless points to the fact that without initiating the socialist process the fight for that support will take place only on non-socialist ground, i.e. that of social reformism or nationalism.

This would, in effect, mean that Sinn Fein would need to become a more vigorous social reformist or nationalist

party than the others.

If this is so, then how far can Sinn Fein take the struggle against imperialism? What can a combination of social reformism and nationalism in the South linked to armed struggle in the North hope to achieve?

It was the view of James Connolly that national liberation could only be achieved through the socialist process.

His reasons for believing this were that the bourgeois classes were too closely tied to imperialism in one form or another to be able to complete a national liberation struggle.

His views were given validity in 1921. Nothing which has occurred since then has seriously challenged Connolly's thinking on this issue.

This brings us to the crux of the matter which can be posed in terms of the following: in the course outlined by Gerry Adams, in order to achieve national liberation, there is no need for a strategy to make the capitalists disappear as a class.

A non-socialist process combined with nationalism is sufficient.

In the view of James Connolly a socialist process aimed at making the capitalists disappear as a class is necessary in order to achieve national liberation.

For Adams the creation of a qualitatively new politics to replace the traditional non-socialist politics isn't necessary — for Connolly it is.

It is our opinion that the Connolly line, as opposed to that of Gerry Adams, is the correct one in the present conditions.

That past republican struggles and strategies have failed to achieve national liberation is not because republicans have entered Leinster House, as Republican Sinn Fein have said, but because they never took up with socialist struggle as a means of achieving national liberation.

Without a willingness to initiate the socialist process now, Sinn Fein's decision to enter Leinster House, while modernistic, is not revolutionary.

Because of this, Sinn Fein will inevitably experience the ruptures, tensions, dilemmas and failures faced by all non-socialist groups in their attempts to make the parliamentary system work towards national liberation.

Is sinne,
Micky McMullan and
Antony McIntyre
H-Blocks
Long Kesh



Sinn Fein's GERRY ADAMS

REPUBLICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

LONG LARTIN

HM Prison Long Lartin, South Littleton, Evesham, Worcs, WR11 5TZ

LIAM BAKER, 20-year sentence, 464984.

JAMES BENNETT, 20-year sentence, 464989.

EDDIE BUTLER, Life sentence, 338637.

ROBERT CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 131877.

GERRY CUNNINGHAM, 20-year sentence, 132016.

JOHN MCCOMB, 17-year sentence, B51715.

ANDY MULRYAN, 20-year sentence, 461576.

PATRICK MULRYAN, 20-year sentence, 461575.

NOEL GIBSON, Life sentence, 879225.

PARKHURST

HM Prison Parkhurst, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5NX

PATRICK HACKETT, 20-year sentence, 342603.

GERRY McDONNELL, Life sentence, B75882.

PAUL NORNEY, Life sentence, 863532.

TOMMY QUIGLEY, Life sentence 69204.

PETER SHERRY, Life sentence, B75880.

WAKEFIELD

HM Prison Love Lane, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF2 9AG

HUGH DOHERTY, Life sentence, 338636.

NATALINO VELLA, 15-year sentence, B71644.

ALBANY

HM Prison Albany, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 5RS

MARTIN BRADY, Life sentence, 119087.

HARRY DUGGAN, Life sentence, 338638.

BILLY GRIMES, SEAN HAYES, 20-year sentence, 341418.

SEAN KINSELLA, Life sentence, 758661.

GARTREE

HM Prison Gartree, Leicester Rd, Market Harborough, Leics, LE16 7RP

RONNIE McCARTNEY, Life sentence, 463799.

STEPHEN NORDONE, Life sentence 758663.

JOE O'CONNELL, Life sentence, 338635

ROY WALSH, Life sentence, 119083.

FRANKLAND

HM Prison Finchale Ave, Braside, Durham

WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, Life sentence, 119085

BRENDAN DOWD, Life sentence, 758662.

PAUL HOLMES, Life sentence, 119034.

CON McFADDEN, 20-year sentence, 130662.

MICHAEL J McKENNEY, 16-year sentence, L46486.

EDDIE O'NEILL, 20-year sentence, 135722.

LEICESTER

HM Prison Welford Rd, Leicester, LE2 7AJ

PAUL KAVANAGH, Life sentence, 1888.

BRIAN KEENAN, 21-year sentence, B26380.

PATRICK McGEE, Life sentence, B75881.

WORMWOOD SCRUBS

HM Prison, PO Box 757, Du Cane Road, London W12 0AE

DONAL CRAIG, 4 years.

VINCE DONNELLY, Life Sentence, 274064.

DURHAM

HM Prison Durham, Old Elvert

Street, Durham.

MARTINA ANDERSON, Life sentence, D25134.

ELLA O'DWYER, Life sentence, D25135.

REMAND PRISONERS: BRIXTON

HM Prison, Jebb Avenue, Brixton, London SW2 5XF.

G. (DANNY) McNAMEE, L48616

LIAM McCOTTER, LB83693

PATRICK McLAUGHLIN, LB83694

LIAM QUINN, 49930

WORMWOOD SCRUBS INNOCENT MEN AND WOMEN FRAMED BY THE BRITISH POLICE:

CAROLE RICHARDSON, 290719, HM Prison Styal, Wilmslow, Cheshire

PATRICK ARMSTRONG, HM Prison Gartree.

PAUL HILL, 462778. HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD CONLON, 462779, HM Prison Long Lartin.

JUDITH WARD, HM Prison Durham.

HUGH CALLAGHAN, 509499, HM Prison Gartree.

JOHN WALKER, 509494, HM Prison, Long Lartin.

BILLY POWER, 509498, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

GERARD HUNTER, 509495, HM Prison Frankland.

RICHARD McILKENNY, 509497, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

PADDY HILL, 509496, HM Prison Gartree.

PATRICK McLOUGHLIN, HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs.

They are all serving life and in the case of Carole Richardson, indefinite detention.

We thank An Cumann Cabhrach, British section, for supplying and updating this information.

A reactionary provocation

WORKERS PRESS was asked by solicitors fighting for the release of the Guildford Four to publish a correction to a statement made in an interview with one of the relatives of the prisoners (see Workers Press, 13 June 1987).

We believe the mistake this person made was the result of a genuine misunderstanding and Workers Press published the statement in good faith.

However, a small group of people who were expelled from the WRP in 1985, calling themselves the WRP and publishing a paper called the 'News Line', have seized upon the correction in order to try and score an unprincipled point.

Twisting the facts, they imply that the interview contained 'lies and distortions' which thereby endangered the prisoners' chances of release.

This group have so far not raised a finger in defence of the framed prisoners, only using their 'interesting' story to pad out a TV review page on one occasion in July last year.

The only other mention the prisoners have received in the pages of the 'News Line' is in the anonymous 'Workers Notebook' column on the 30 June 1987, where they are cynically used as a weapon with which to attack the WRP.

We repeat, part of the interview published in the Workers Press was the result of incorrect information which was both given and received in good faith.

Nobody lied! In view of the legal aspects surrounding the issue at this point the 'News Line' article is nothing short of a reactionary provocation.

Gorbachev and Glasnost Soviet capitalist roaders

FROM the July 1987 issue of 'Working Class Opposition', monthly newspaper of the International Workers Party (Fourth International), American section in solidarity with the International Workers League (Fourth International).

SINCE the article was written, the recent bi-annual plenum of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party has seen Gorbachev attempting to broaden his power base in order to push through the next period of *perestroika* (restructuring) of the economy. In his address, Gorbachev outlined his plans for cutting back central planning, for drastic changes in the pricing system to match prices to supply and demand. Gorbachev also stressed that wages must reflect the quality of work. Plans were also laid for the opening of state orders to tendering by competing (publicly owned) contractors; the creation of funds by local authorities by means of a turnover tax on local industry and a 'realistic' system of rent which would reflect the quality of accommodation.

THE SOVIET bureaucracy's adherence to the utopian vision of socialism in one country in isolation from the world domination of capitalism finally has led to the crisis presently consuming Soviet society.

Every sector of the economy is systematically falling short of set goals for productivity and growth, and industrial equipment is for the most part obsolete.

The result is a list of ailments in the Soviet economy that is endless: bureaucratic mismanagement of the centralised economy; serious social problems; a high rate of alcoholism, absenteeism

and even drug addiction.

By the same token, although productivity and growth are significantly behind schedule, there are neither huge falls in economic indices nor the violent fluctuations characteristic of capitalist economies, where negative growth is common.

The fact remains that despite the bureaucracy, the gains of the Russian Revolution of 1917 — the socialisa-

tion of the means of production and of internal trade, the abolition of inheritance, the collectivisation of agriculture and the monopoly of foreign trade have remain, guarded by adamant but powerful Soviet working class.

The 12th Five-year plan extending from 1986 to 1990 as well as the forecast for the next 15 years propose to increase the social productivity of labour by 20 to 30 per cent, through the growth of qualitative parameters of production, i.e. technology and science.

The plan calls for doubling national income and industrial output by the year 2000.

To effect this acceleration, the bureaucracy is introducing a spectrum of 'market oriented' capitalist roader reforms.

In the new Law on State Enterprise submitted for approval by the Supreme Soviet in June, a greater decentralisation of production is formalised, giving farm and factory managers more control over what and how to produce.

At the same time, a 'profit and loss accountability' and self-financing system will be instituted under this proposed law that will separate the operation of enterprises from the country's overall central planning.

'Profit accountability' essentially means that factories operating at a profit would give their workers bonuses and other economic incentives.

Gorbachev plans to completely abandon 'wage levelling' and implement 'the socialist principle of distribution in accordance with the quantity of one's work'.

Gorbachev's distortion of socialism is grotesque, since as every worker who has ever read the Communist Manifesto knows, the goal of socialism is to reach a society where production and distribution is according to the principle 'from each according to his or her ability, to each according to his or her needs' — in other words, the socialist goal is 'wage levelling' and equality.

Gorbachev is taking a major step backwards from

real socialist principles.

But 'loss accountability' is aimed at an even more fundamental principle of socialism: the right to a job.

The Soviet working class, unlike workers in the capitalist countries, enjoys the right to a job, a gain won by the Russian Revolution.

With the introduction of loss accountability, enterprises that are not profitable will be allowed to close their doors, lay off workers, who will then be 'retrained' for work in other sectors of the economy.

If this sounds familiar, it should — it is modelled on the capitalist system of plant closures and 'retraining' that has ravaged the industrial belt of the US.

Methods of 'self-financing' already introduced into industry will be extended to housing . . . 'to pursue the line for improving housing and other social and living conditions increasingly out of funds earned by the work collectives. . . ' (Nikolai Ryzhkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Guidelines for the 12th Five-year plan).

In other words, unprofitable work collectives will be penalized by having their right to decent housing taken away from them, along with other social services, since from now on these rights will also be dependent on profitability, just as in the capitalist countries.

In his report to the plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on 27-28 January, Gorbachev explained that 'the system of foreign trade activities is being restructured, the rights of enterprises and industries in this field have been extended (our emphasis). New forms of cooperation, including direct relations between enterprises, joint ventures and specialised production and co-production schemes with foreign partners are continuing to gain ground.'

Gorbachev could have said the same thing more simply — the Soviet Union's economy will now be more and more directly linked to the international capitalist economy.

More and more the crisis

of worldwide capitalism will be directly transmitted into the domestic Soviet economy through 'direct relations between enterprises, joint ventures' and 'co-production schemes'.

This 'reform' combined with the internal capitalist-roader reforms, poses a major threat to the Soviet working class, which has been protected by the state monopoly over foreign trade since the days of the 1917 October revolution.

Unlike capitalist economies, where the 'anarchy of the market' prevails over foreign trade the planned economy of the Soviet Union is able to determine in a centralised way the economic needs that must be met by imports.

Once this is determined, the planners use exports solely as a means of obtaining foreign exchange to purchase in the world market whatever is needed — the would process working to insulate the domestic economy from the recessions and depressions of the capitalist world.

Fifty years of betrayals of the revolutionary struggles of workers in other countries by the Soviet bureaucracy have already taken their toll on the domestic economy of the Soviet Union.

Isolated, and burdened by an arms race forced upon it by US imperialism the Soviet Union has never been able to overcome its economic backwardness in comparison with the imperialist countries.

Today, just as in the era of the Tsars, the Soviet Union is primarily an exporter of raw materials, and an importer of producer goods and high technology.

With the international collapse of the price of raw materials, including oil, all Soviet plans based on export earnings have been thrown into crisis, especially imports of producer goods and high technology.

The response of Mikhail Gorbachev and the bureaucracy to this crisis is exactly the opposite of the revolutionary solution of extending the gains of 1917 to the rest of the world.

Gorbachev's answer is to further integrate the Soviet economy into the world capitalist economy, truly following the capitalist road.

Glasnost has meant a new openness in the press of the Soviet Union, but the critics of Soviet policy whose voices are now being heard in the open for the first time are of a very peculiar kind.

They are critics of those who oppose Gorbachev's reforms, and who say that Gorbachev's reforms do not go far enough down the capitalist road.

One example is prominent Soviet economist Nikolai Shmelyov, who advocates the abolition of all price controls and subsidies, the elimination of central planning and the devaluation of the ruble to reflect its 'real value' on the international market.

All Shmelyov needs to add to his programme to be completely in line with Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's 'free market' programme is a call for the privatisation of Soviet industry!

The fact that glasnost is a very selective kind of democratic reform designed to encourage the forces of political reaction and capitalist restoration is revealed in a hundred other ways.

The right-wing Russian nationalist group Pamyat, compared by some to the Black Hundreds that led the pre-1917 pogroms, is now allowed to hold public meetings and demonstrations, and is even invited to meet with high government officials.

Gorbachev himself has encouraged Great Russian chauvinism and the continued oppression of the national minorities in the USSR.

When a massive protest occurred in Alma Ata against the replacement of a local party official by a Great Russian bureaucrat, Gorbachev called the demonstrations 'manifestations of parochialism, ethnic isolation and ethnic arrogance!' (Talk about arrogance. . .)

It is true that some political prisoners have been released. Andrei Sakharov, for instance, emerged from prison in Gorky to publicly announce his support and admiration for Gorbachev's reforms.

But none of the old Trotskyists or supporters of Zinoviev, those who are known still to be alive somewhere in the Gulags, have yet been heard from.

It is true that Boris Pasternak's 'Dr Zhivago' is scheduled for publication, but what about the writings of the President of the Leningrad Soviet and the Third International, Gregory Zinoviev, or the head of the Red Army after 1917, Leon Trotsky, or any of the hundreds of other revolutionary leaders liquidated by Stalin in the great Moscow purge trials and the KGB terror of the 1930s?

The truth about glasnost is there for all who care to see — it is the greatest capitulation of the Soviet bureaucracy to imperialism since World War II.

The final word on glasnost has yet to be heard, and sooner than expected. The last several months have witnessed riots by youth in East Berlin demanding 'glasnost' to listen to rock and roll concerts in West Berlin.

Yugoslavia has been shaken by a nationwide strike wave against the austerity measures imposed by the bureaucracy, and the Soviet working class may very well demand that glasnost and democratic reforms be extended to include democratic rights for the working class, and the protection of the gains that are under attack by Gorbachev.

No doubt Gorbachev's nightmares are regularly filled with the spectre of a Soviet-style Solidarnosc, which no doubt is also in the dreams of the Soviet workers, and perhaps even in their plans.



Gorbachev in East Berlin



Trinidad: A march of oil workers from Fyzabad to Port of Spain

Trinidad trade unions' jubilee

BORN IN STRUGGLE

TRADE UNIONISTS from around the West Indies, and international guests including delegates from the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), joined brothers and sisters in Trinidad recently to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the big strike wave which swept the Caribbean in 1937.

The events — continuing this month, with a Caribbean women trade unionists' conference on 10-12 July, — began with a march and rally on 19 June at Fyzabad, where Trinidad's oil workers came out on strike on 19 June, 1937.

Trade Unionism in the West Indies was born in struggle. Workers had to fight the employers, the colonial government, the police, and troops — the might of the British Empire.

The big strike wave actually lasted from January 1935 — when sugar workers in St. Kitts came out to fight for decent wages — through to June 1938, when there was a general strike in Jamaica.

In September, 1935, strikes broke out among Indian agricultural workers in Guyana. The following month, three workers were killed and 26 injured when the governor of St. Vincent ordered police to disperse a crowd demonstrating against high customs duties.

In St. Lucia, the governor called up a warship and had marines patrol the streets after workers coaling ships there had gone on strike. The strikers returned after a committee was set up to investigate their conditions.

Trinidad's oil workers had taken a 30 per cent pay cut in 1928. Between 1935 and 1937, the island's cost of living rose 17 per cent.

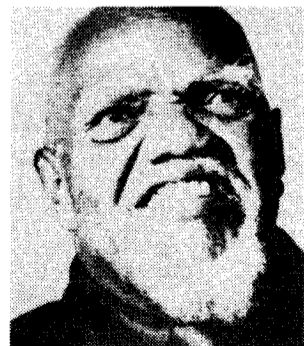
In 1935, the oil workers came out on strike for better pay and conditions, but were persuaded to go back by Arthur Andrew Cypriani, mayor of Port of Spain, and leader of the Trinidad Labour Party.

Cypriani had promised workers would get their jobs back if the strike ended, but this was not kept by the oil companies.

Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler, originally from Grenada, had come like many Grenadian workers to get a job in the oilfields. An ex-soldier — he had served with the British Army in Egypt — 'Buzz' Butler had gained his first political experience heading an ex-service association in Grenada.

His Union of Returned Soldiers, fighting for pensions, educational facilities and jobs, gave rise in turn to the Grenada Representative Government Movement, demanding elected government and one person, one vote.

In 1936, Butler quit the Trinidad Labour Party and formed the British Empire Workers and Citizens Home



Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler, central leader of Trinidad oil workers' strike

Rule Party. It called on oil workers (mainly African origin) and sugar estate workers to unite for decent wages and conditions. It also called for an end to colonial rule.

'We are determined to use the strike and boycott,' Butler declared, addressing oil workers in Fyzabad on April 18, 1937. 'We are under crown colony government and it is their habit to use the police in support of the capitalist. We expect government to keep away . . . and not interfere.'

Turning to the police, Butler said: 'You, tell the col-

onel that from tomorrow night he will not be safe, we are not afraid of bullets and British bayonets . . . There are strikes in America, Venezuela, and England.'

On 19 June, after attempts to meet the authorities and employers for negotiations had been rebuffed, the oil workers came out. Besides the issues of pay and conditions, they felt strongly about the imposition of white South African racialists in management in the oil fields, and the use of the 'Red Book', a kind of 'passport' which workers had to carry containing photograph, personal details and work record.

That evening, as Butler was again addressing the oil workers in Fyzabad, police arrived with a warrant for his arrest. 'Comrades, must I go?', he asked the crowd. 'No!', they responded three times.

When the police tried to move in and arrest him, the workers fought back. In the fighting, a police inspector and a corporal were killed, and many police officers injured.

As the strike spread, Governor Sir Murchison Fletcher called for help. The warship HMS Ajax arrived on 22 June, followed two days later by HMS Exeter. Platoons of Royal Marines disembarked.

On 5 July, having gained some concessions on pay, and a commission to investigate labour conditions in Trinidad, the oil workers began returning. On 25 July, the Oilfields Workers Union was formed, and set out its demands for a pay increase and two weeks paid holiday.

Soon, more unions were being set up. The All-Trinidad Sugar Estates and Factory Workers' Union organised the islands' other big industry. The Transport and General Workers' Union was formed in September 1937, the Seamen's Union and Public Works' Union were recognised later.

In Barbados, on 26 July 1937, the governor deported union organiser Clement Payne, a friend of 'Buzz' Butler. A large crowd gathered at the dockside to prevent the deportation, but

police had hustled Payne on to an earlier steamer.

As soon as they heard this, the workers were enraged, and a battle broke out in which the police killed 14 workers and injured 47.

Back in Trinidad, 2,000 British troops combing the island had failed to capture Butler. The trade union fighter stayed on the run until 27 September, when he was persuaded to come out of hiding so he could give evidence to the commission of inquiry.

As soon as he appeared, however, Butler was surrounded by troops and police and thrown into jail, charged with sedition. On 16 December, 1937, Tubal Uriah 'Buzz' Butler was sentenced to two years.

Upon his release in 1939, 'Buzz' began organising the oil workers again. By now, the British Empire was going to war — 'for democracy', as the Labour leaders and later Stalinists too would claim.

The people of the West Indies were still waiting to enjoy some of that 'democracy', and 'Buzz' Butler refused to subordinate the oil workers' interests to the colonial rulers' war. He was arrested again on 28 November, 1939, and sentenced to five years.

Today, as Trinidad trade unionists celebrate the jubilee of their movement, they know that with political 'independence' their struggle has not ended. The Caribbean islands' economies have been thrown into decline and poverty by capitalism, and US imperialism policies the area.

Along with the celebrations there have been conferences on the devastation caused by the world debt crisis, and on the political situation in the West Indies since the 1983 US invasion of Grenada.

In drawing inspiration from the vision and heroism of their forerunners, young workers will also have to examine the political history of their movement so as to build a new revolutionary leadership and go forward to victory.

Raskolnikov letter

'You are wading through comrades' blood'

A LETTER from Bolshevik sailors' leader and Red Navy commander Fyodor Raskolnikov, accusing Stalin of 'wading through the blood of yesterday's friends and comrades', has been published in a popular Soviet magazine for the first time — almost 50 years since it was written.

The Raskolnikov letter appears in the mass-circulation weekly 'Ogonyok' together with an article giving for the first time the Soviet Defence Ministry's own figures on Red Army and naval commanders slaughtered by Stalin in the 1937-1939 purges.

Three out of five marshals, 50 out of 57 corps commanders, and 401 of 456 colonels — these are the kind of statistics 'Ogonyok' quotes.

Raskolnikov, real name Ilyin, a Bolshevik since 1910, led the Kronstadt sailors in the October 1917 Revolution, undertook hazardous naval missions in the wars of intervention, and was captured at one time by the British, being held briefly in Brixton prison.

After commanding the Soviet Baltic fleet he was sent to Afghanistan on important diplomatic work, later working in Europe.

Recalled to Moscow in 1937, Raskolnikov had been sacked, and went into exile instead. His colleague Antonov-Ovsenko returned, and was shot.

'Outlawed' by Stalin in 1939, Raskolnikov wrote his letter thanking the dictator for having 'given me the same rights . . . as all Soviet citizens, who under your rule live as outlaws.'

The Bolshevik fighter accuses Stalin of 'wading through the blood of yesterday's friends and comrades, staging court trials which surpass medieval witch-hunts in the absurdity of the accusations.'

'While differing with Trotsky on points of principle,' Raskolnikov declares, 'I regard him as an honest revolutionary.' He refuses to believe the lies of the Moscow Trials, and denounces Stalin as a 'perjurer' and 'renegade' who has 'destroyed Lenin's party.'

'On the eve of war, with the spearhead of fascism aimed at the Soviet Union, you are destroying and be-

heading the Red Army, killing its most talented commanders,' Raskolnikov warns. 'Sooner or later, the Soviet people will call you to account as the betrayer of socialism and the revolution.'

Raskolnikov's letter raises dangerous questions for Stalin's successors. In at least one version — perhaps not that seen by 'Ogonyok' — he accuses Stalin of destroying workers' hopes by proclaiming 'that socialism has already been fully built. . . the workers bewildered, ask each other in whispers: "If this is socialism, then what, comrades, did we fight for?"'

In 1956, Raskolnikov was rehabilitated and posthumously readmitted to the party after Khrushchev famous 'secret speech' on Stalin's reign. But following Khrushchev's fall, Raskolnikov was denounced once more, as a 'Trotskyist and traitor', in 1965.

Meanwhile, oppositionists had got hold of the Letter to Stalin, and circulated it clandestinely.

Commenting on Raskolnikov's courageous attack, 'Ogonyok' contrasts it favourably with the inadequate explanation of the 'cult of the personality' adopted officially by the Party. The magazine blames this for 'stagnation in the social sciences' in the Soviet Union.

'What remains now is to investigate the reasons and conditions that led to the appearance of the Stalin cult, and the historical experience of the struggle against it', 'Ogonyok' concludes.

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Under threat of death



Fermin Montes Garcia, arrested in 1980



Miriam Ortega Araya, 37, arrested in January 1981



Cecilia Radrigan Plaza, 39, arrested in October 1981



Carlos Garcia Herrera, 34, arrested in January 1981



Jorge Palma Donoso, 37, arrested in February 1983



Juan Gajardo Ortiz, 52, arrested in February 1981



Hugo Marchant Moya, 33, arrested in September 1983

Accomplices in torture

BY TRUDI JACKSON

THE WEST GERMAN government is refusing political asylum to 14 Chilean 'oppositionists' who are currently awaiting trial by military tribunal.

The 14 are certain to receive the death penalty should their trial go ahead, as 'confessions' under torture have been extracted from them that they were all involved in a conspiracy to assassinate General Pinochet.

Some of the accused, like Fermin Montes Garcia, have been in prison for more than six years on this charge.

In May members of the European Parliament were asked if they would issue visas for the defendants in order that they would avoid execution. (Under Chilean law the death penalty can be transformed to that of extradition.)

West German Minister of the Interior, Friedrich Zimmermann, despite a direct appeal from a human rights organisation, initially turned down the appeal.

Disregarding how the admissions of 'guilt' were known to have been obtained, Zimmermann called the detainees 'capital offenders' and refused them permission of entry on grounds of 'security'.

But the outcome has still to be finally decided. The latest information is that Chancellor Kohl is now involved in the matter.

Singapore police round up 'Marxists'

More than 20 people have been arrested in Singapore in a round-up of alleged 'Marxists'.

The Lee Kuan Yew government accuses them of being involved in a 'communist conspiracy' to overthrow it, supposedly led by Tan Wah Piow, an Oxford law student.

BY CHARLIE POTTINS

Tan, a former Singapore students union president, denies he's a communist, describing his politics as 'democratic socialist'.

The detainees are held under Singapore's Internal Security Act, which means they can be detained indefinitely, without trial.

The big 'conspiracy' hunt began on 21 May with early morning arrests of 16 people, including Roman Catholic church activists, community workers, lawyers and journalists.

A further six, including the leaders of the Singapore Polytechnic student union, were arrested in the early hours of Saturday, 21 June. The Ministry of Home

Affairs claimed their names had cropped up during interrogation of the first detainees.

Families allowed to visit these some days after their arrest reported signs of ill-treatment. One prisoner told her lawyer she had been beaten-up. Another woman needed hospital treatment after one day in custody.

Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew has said those held cannot even expect a trial.

'It is not a practice, nor will I allow subversives to get away by insisting that I've got to prove everything against them in a court of law or provide evidence that will stand up to the strict rules of evidence of a court of law,' Lee told reporters.

Lee took a double first in Law at Cambridge. A one-time 'socialist' and 'anti-colonialist', he has turned Singapore into a cheap-labour colony for the capitalist multi-nationals, and has a mutual admiration for Margaret Thatcher.

Although this bastion of the 'Free World' has long had a reputation for rough-treatment of political opponents, the latest crack-down suggests Lee's People's Action Party government fears Singapore's capitalist 'success story' is facing trouble.

The people detained look an unlikely bunch of 'Red conspirators'. Vincent Cheng, formerly with the Catholic Church's Jurong Industrial Mission and the Student Christian Movement was executive secretary of the Archdiocesan Justice and Peace Commission at the time of arrest.

Tang Lay Lee worked full-time for the Young Christian Workers' Movement; Mah Lay Lin was on the staff of the Chai Chee Catholic Centre for Foreign Workers; and Kevin Desmond de Souza is on the staff of the Catholic Students Society at Singapore Polytechnic.

According to the government, these people were all part of a 'Marxist conspiracy to subvert the existing social and political system in Singapore through Communist united front tactics to establish a Communist state.'

More than half those detained are women. Teo Soh Lung, active in the Singapore Association of Women Lawyers, headed a legal study group which expressed concern at government curbs on press freedom. She has pioneered legal aid for poor people in Singapore.

Teresa Lim Li Kok, named 'Business Woman of the Year' in 1986, is managing director of a publishing firm whose titles include 'Legal Status of Singapore Women' and 'Labour Pains', about the problems of women workers in Singapore today.

As for Ng Bee Leng, she was a full-time social worker with the Geylang Catholic Centre for Foreign Workers in Singapore, which has engaged in such highly subversive work as giving advice and pastoral care to Filipino girls employed as housemaids.

Some of those detained are associated with the legal opposition Workers' Party. Typesetters Low Yit Leng and her husband Tan Tee Seng worked on the Party's paper 'The Hammer'.

Kenneth Tsang also helped with Workers' Party publications. He and his wife, 'New Straits Times' journalist Jenny Chin, arrested with him, are both North-East London Polytechnic graduates.

Workers' Party leader Joshua Jeyaretnam and two of his colleagues were arrested on 31 May while taking part in a picket on the presidential palace to protest the detentions.

Behind the search for a 'Red plot', the Lee Kuan Yew regime is trying to suppress growing opposition to its policies. The last general election, two years ago, showed a noticeable shift in support away from the ruling People's Action Party.

Faced with economic problems, the government has adopted a wage-cutting policy, and offered bigger inducements for foreign capitalists. To push through these measures, Lee Kuan Yew has sharpened instruments of repression, tightening press laws and using media, courts and the secret police to attack opponents.

In neighbouring MALAYSIA, fourteen organisations including the Malaysian TUC, National Union of Journalists, Transport union, civil rights and Christian societies have joined to form a 'Human Rights Support Group', protesting to the Singapore High Commission against the detentions.

In LONDON, the Singaporean and Malaysian British Association (SIMBA) is urging representations to Minister for Home Affairs Prof. S. Jayakumar, at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Phoenix Park, Tanglin Rd. Singapore 1024.

(for more information contact SIMBA, 20c Breakspear Rd. London SE4 1UW. Also let them know of your protests, union resolutions etc.)

Ruhr jobs anger



MORE than 12,000 workers demonstrated outside the Thyssen steel company's headquarters plant in Duisburg to oppose mass sackings (above).

Thyssen plans to close steel foundries in Hattingen and Oberhausen, throwing 4,000 workers on the scrapheap. The closure will bring unemployment in the district up to 30 per cent.

Altogether, some 5,900 jobs are due to go in the Ruhr. Neither the Federal nor North-Rhine Westphalia state government have come up with plans to save jobs.

Leaders of the giant IG-Metall union have come in for severe criticism from the workers. There was great anger and bitterness on the recent demonstration.

National struggle in Soviet Latvia

OVER 5,000 people took to the streets of Latvia's capital Riga on 14 June in the third of a growing number of street protests against the Kremlin-imposed regime.

The demonstrators were marking the anniversary of the deportation of 15,000 Latvians to Siberia in June 1941 when Stalinist Russia occupied the country in line with the pact with Hitler's Germany.

The recent demonstration marks growing discontent in the country. In December, 300 Latvian youth protested at the Freedom Monument in Riga shouting nationalist slogans and then marched to a high-class hotel, which normally harbours local bureaucrats.

At Easter, Militia were called in to quell disturbances at an Art Festival in Dom Square, Riga. Apparently, art works which had not been officially sanctioned were removed, pro-

voking protests from Latvian youths.

In an unprecedented act of defiance, the Militia van holding the youth was surrounded by 500 people, taunting the Militia and demanding the release of the youth. Prevented from leaving, the Militia backed down and released the two arrested youths in front of the crowd.

The victory fuelled the protesters' confidence. According to an official estimate, '2,000 youths' took to the streets once again marching to the Freedom Monument shouting: 'Freedom in a Free Latvia'.

According to a report in the state paper 'Literatura un Maksla' by Janis Peters of the Writers' Union, the demonstration led on to street battles between 'Latvian nationalists' and 'chauvinists'.

Another report stated that it was the second night of fighting which resulted in many injuries. It said the demonstration was not spontaneous but was organised after the severe beating-up of 70 Latvian youths.

The recent larger protest demonstration included a de-

BY PATRICK KANE

legation from a neighbouring opposition group in Lithuania. The group 'Helsinki 86' made the call for the protests for 14 June, but probably never expected such a mass turnout.

For a change, the 100 Militia stood by and made no attempt to suppress events because they were so outnumbered.

The national question is at the root of problems facing Latvian workers. Since the Soviet occupation in the 1940s was stabilised, after thousands were deported and executed, the country was subjected to Russification which has been compared to out-and-out genocide.

In an appeal to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, the 'Helsinki 86' group poses the question: 'Why have conditions arisen whereby an oppressive majority of those living in new, high-standard housing are immigrants, while Latvians live in old run-down housing under degrading conditions?'

'This is hidden but deliberate creation of national animosity which serves neither the interests of Latvians nor Russians. Why does the state security service refuse to see such violations of law? Why is there no struggle against the heirs of Czarist Russian ideas?'

The Latvian language and culture is driven from all aspects of life, they point out. 'Our language in so-called independent and free socialist Latvia is being forced out of all institutions... That is not internationalism they are talking about, but real Russian chauvinism.'

The Latvian Communist Party, long Stalinised, has actually defended this racist policy. In reply to Gorbunovs, the CP Secretary, 'Helsinki 86' say:

'We can safely say Gorbunovs himself has mixed up Lenin's writings about national politics with Stalin's instructions on the same theme. If Gorbunovs continues in such a manner then

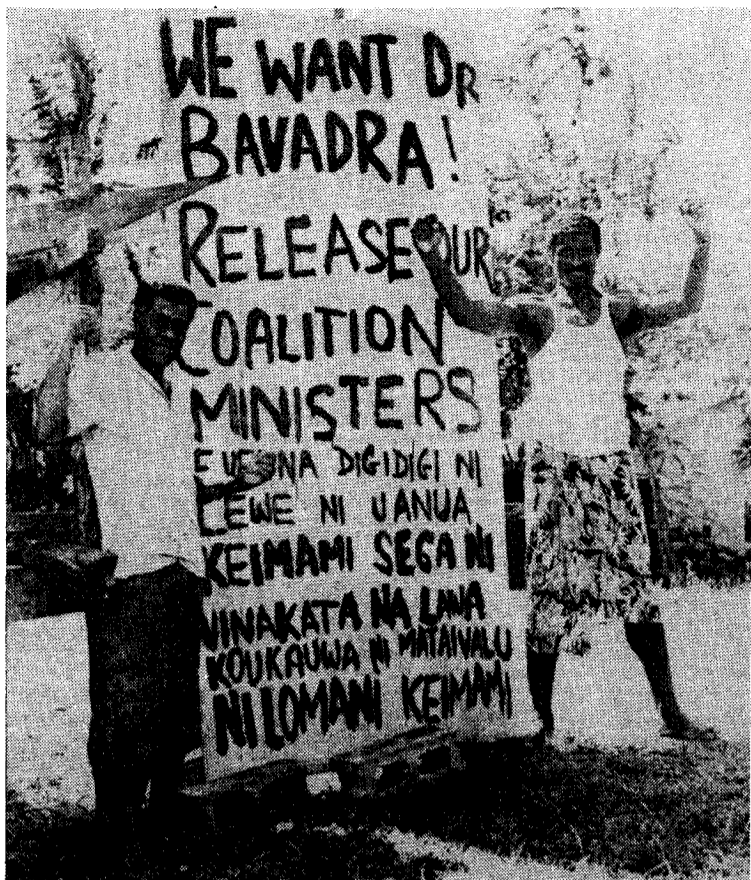
FIJI Legacy of

THE 14 MAY military coup in Fiji threw the Pacific nation into crisis as thousands of Fijians protested against the sacking of the Labour-National Federation Party coalition government.

Tension mounted as most of the country's shops remained closed and trade union leaders and members of the ousted government organised opposition to the military regime.

The first armed takeover in the region's history received the blessing of British imperialism through a deal worked out between Governor-General Ratu Ganilau, coup leader Colonel Rabuka, and the long-time British stooge Ratu Mara.

BY PHIL SANDFORD



Residents of the village of Korotogo display a placard calling on the military coup regime to reinstate Dr Bavadra and his Fijian Cabinet ministers

BACKGROUND

BY DEREK MOORE

Statistics

POPULATION: 330,441 native Fijians (46 per cent), 347,445 Indians (50 per cent), 36,766 others (4 per cent).

POLITICS: Alliance Party, old established conservative party.
Fiji Labour Party, formed almost two years ago by the Fiji Trades Union Congress and increasingly winning support from urban voters of both races.

National Federation Party, Indian dominated

GOVERNMENT: Right of centre coalition of Labour Party and NFP elected 13 April 1987 with a 28-24 majority. Overthrown in military coup, 14 May. Had pledged to end racial divisions; end corruption, create a nuclear-free Fiji and South Pacific (following New Zealand's lead in banning visiting US nuclear ships). Promised more jobs, better welfare and education, had talked of, but not yet acted on, possible nationalisation of some foreign enterprises like gold mines.

ARMY: 90 per cent Fijian, officer corps 97 per cent Fijian.

ECONOMY: Sugar, copra, tourism, gold mining, fishing. Fijians own 83 per cent of the land, Indians own most of the commerce.

FIJI IS a classic creation of imperialism. The islands of the South Pacific, populated by Melanesians, were colonised by Britain in 1874 and from around 1880 Indians were introduced as cane cutters.

This laid the basis for future divide-and-rule tactics which the coup leaders are now attempting to exploit.

(The French have used similar methods in their nearby colony of New Caledonia where they are able to maintain power largely because the country is divided between native Kanaks and a mixture of other races introduced by the French.)

The coup of 14 May is on the surface along race lines — the army ousted and arrested the recently elected mixed-race but Indian-dominated Labour and National Federation Party coalition government headed by Dr Timoci Bavadra.

The coalition lasted exactly one month from its election on April 13. For 17 years following independence from Britain in 1970 when Fiji became a constitutional monarchy, the country has been ruled by right-wing colonial puppets under Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, a descendant of the original Fijian tribal leaders.

A member of the coup Cabinet and seen by many as the shadowy figure behind the military intervention, Ratu Mara is an old boy of Oxford and the London School of Economics, Knight Commander of St Michael and St George and Knight of the British Empire (they don't make them like that any more).

He was held in particularly high esteem by the British, the Americans and the Pope, all of whom have continually praised Fijian democracy and racial harmony.

When Ratu Mara was defeated in the polls, one Australian newspaper, the influential Sydney 'Morning Herald', headlined a story: 'Lost — a friend of the US and Britain' and went on to say that the Ratu Mara government 'had come to be regarded as the West's best friend in

the region'.

This could well be the main reason behind the coup, rather than the racial differences which undoubtedly exist and are exploited.

Vital US naval presence in the South Pacific is threatened by a growing anti-nuclear movement and rising nationalism.

Although Dr Bavadra has stressed his desire to maintain 'strong ties' with the US and has denied any moves for closer links with the USSR, the right wing of Fijian politics clearly did not accept his pledge of conservatism. What outside forces are backing them is unclear at this stage.



Dr Timoci Bavadra, deposed head of the elected Fijian coalition government

On top of the coalition's proposed ban on nuclear ships, there were fears by the former government that the coalition would support rebels fighting Indonesian rule in Irian Jaya, the western section of Papua New Guinea.

Together with increasing support for the peoples of the South Pacific by Libya, these were the causes of the explosion.

Shortly after the election former members of the Alliance Party and reactionary tribal chiefs organised marches of up to 5,000 Fijians in the capital Suva and Lautoka against the government in an attempt to whip up racial fears and justify a clearly well-planned coup on the basis of defending law and order.

This replaces the ousted government, elected on 12 April, with an 18-man 'advisory council' dominated by right-wing Melanesian Fijians and leaves Rabuka and the armed forces in effective power. Rabuka, trained in New Zealand, Britain and Australia, has been appointed commander of the armed forces and the commissioner of police.

Fresh elections will not be held for up to 12 months to enable a new constitution to be drawn up which will bar the majority Indian population from political power. It will also give the right-wing goon squads time to set about systematically terrorising Indian Fijians and driving them out of the country.

A state of emergency remains in effect which suspends trade union and democratic rights, and will be used to try and break up the growing unity between the Fijian and Indian workers and poor which was behind the election of the multi-racial government of Dr Timoci Bavadra.

The legacy of British colonialism is that the indigenous Fijian people now make up 46 per cent of the population, the Indian Fijians 48 per cent and the remainder European, part-European and Chinese. The land is 83 per cent owned by the Fijian chiefs, while business and commerce is almost completely dominated by Indians, who have never exercised political power.

Bavadra's entire government was kidnapped by gasmasked Fijian soldiers from the parliament in an SAS-style commando raid and held under armed guard for six days while Rabuka, the traditional chiefs and Ratu Ganilau hammered out the deal that would prevent their return to power.

A group of SAS soldiers due to visit Fiji conveniently postponed their trip on the eve of the coup but the mark of the SAS was present in the continued use of balaclavas by Fijian troops.

The coup was immediately denounced by a number of Australian union leaders and seven maritime, stevedoring and aviation unions have imposed bans against the military regime.

The Australian Labour government of Bob Hawke, while not recognising the new regime, refused to provide shelter to Bavadra and his colleagues after they were released from detention.

Hawke also seized on the Fiji coup as a cover to close down the Libyan People's Bureau in Canberra on the ludicrous grounds that it has been used to set Australians against each other.

The Hawke government has, without success, been attempting to provoke an anti-Libyan response among Pacific countries in recent weeks. As part of this effort, Foreign Minister Bill Hayden made a secret night-time flight to New Zealand recently.

While officially condemning the coup, the Reagan administration could not conceal its pleasure. A Pentagon source told the Sydney Morning Herald that 'unofficially we're kinda delighted. All of a sudden our ships couldn't go to Fiji and now all of a sudden they can. We got a little chuckle about the news.'

The official was referring to comments by Bavadra that his government would institute a ban

on US nuclear-powered warships similar to that in effect in New Zealand. The New Zealand ban enraged US officials, who have effectively destroyed the ANZUS military pact in a bid to have it reversed.

A recent visitor to Fiji was the US representative to the United Nations, General Vernon Walters. Walters has a sinister background as a coupmaster in Latin America.

However, Bavadra tried to ease US fears when he came to power, stating: 'Fiji and the US have been friends for a long time and we want to maintain that friendliness.'

He also said his government would not allow the establishment of Soviet and Libyan embassies in Fiji.

When Rabuka seized power he suspended the constitution and dismissed the governor-general, the commander and deputy commander of the armed forces, the police commissioner and the judiciary.

However, once the governor-general gave *de facto* recognition to the coup, including a full pardon for all those who took part, Rabuka was happy to accept the figleaf of 'legality' offered to his regime.

Rabuka, 38, went straight into the army after leaving school and did three years officer-training in New Zealand before going to Sandhurst.

He served with the Sixth Gurkha Rifles in Hong Kong and in the early 1980s led the Fijian contingent in the UN forces in Israeli-occupied Sinai. In 1983 he attended the Joint Services Staff College in Canberra.

While the ostensible leader of the coup is Rabuka, the army's third highest ranking officer, former prime minister Ratu Mara appears deeply implicated in the well-planned operation. The leader of the right-wing Alliance Party that was defeated in the elections, he was immediately appointed foreign minister in Rabuka's administration and is now on the advisory council.

Significantly, Mara was not in parliament at the time of the armed seizure of power.

Bavadra came to power on 12 April, ending 17 years of rule by the autocratic Mara, an Oxford-educated stooge of imperialism. Far from leading any fight for Fijian independence, Mara stated in 1965: 'We have declared that independence is not our goal — we have never found any sound or valid reason to abandon our historic and happy association with Britain.'

No sooner had Bavadra won the election than right-wing elements activated a long-standing plan to destabilise the government and unleash the military. A series of demonstrations against the government were organised by former government ministers, including Apisai Tora, the former Communications Minister who was charged three days before the coup with sedition and inciting violence.

Tora urged Fijians to spit on Indians and would not dissociate himself from the possibility of violence.

But the destabilisation campaign against Bavadra had barely got under way when Rabuka acted, provoking an initial crisis among the ruling class until they were able to 'legitimise' the coup.

What may have forced Rabuka

and Ratu Mara to act so quickly was the fact that the Bavadra government was apparently beginning to uncover evidence of corruption on the part of members of the Alliance government.

The Fijian armed forces centre on 2,500 soldiers, 95 per cent of them ethnic Fijian, in three battalions, one in Lebanon, one in the Sinai and one in Fiji.

* * *

THE COUP is the legacy of British colonialism in the Pacific. The present racial divisions stem from the rapacious exploitations of the region in the 19th century.

Along with Japan, Germany and the United States, the British invaders moved into the area with the gun in one hand and the bible in the other. In the case of Fiji, Indian workers were imported to work the plantations from 1879 to 1920, a process partly stemming from soaring cotton prices within the outbreak of the American Civil War.

The virtual slave trade in the



Sombre crowds await developments

COUP

British colonialism

Pacific began in the 1850s and was bought to Fiji following the establishment of British rule in 1874. The growth of trade unionism in Australia towards the end of the 19th century was behind the decision of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company of Sydney to move into Fiji in 1880 and it quickly became the biggest importer of workers.

The appalling conditions suffered by the Indian contract workers in Fiji became a major political issue in India itself and the developing independence movement by Ghandi eventually forced the British to terminate the system in 1920.

The heritage of British colonialism is a stunted economy almost totally dependent on sugar exports and tourism and a population in which racism was cynically used to divide the population.

The first major break with this came in the dockworkers strike in 1971 which resulted in a 31 per cent wage increase. The dockers are all Melanesian and include relatives of the chiefs as well as so-called commoners.

But when Minister of Labour Ratu Cakobau, a member of the main chiefly family, came to the docks to appeal for a return to work he was snubbed by the workers. In a major break with tradition the dockers refused Cakobau's offer of the traditional cup of kava.

The growth of class consciousness has been given an impetus in recent years with the imposition of a wage freeze in 1985 that hit both Indian and Fijian workers, the breakdown of conditions at the Australian-owned Emperor gold mine at Vatukoula in the north of the main island, Viti Levu, and the refusal of the Alliance government to pass minimum wage legislation.

During the election campaign the Labour coalition attacked the Emperor mine management and called for an inquiry into the running of the mine, owned by the Western Mining Corporation whose managing director is the ultra right-wing businessman Hugh Morgan.

The Labour coalition said that

villagers living on the fringes of Vatukoula had not been adequately compensated for damage to their land, adding: 'The Alliance government has tolerated an appalling laxity in standards despite the numerous inspections that have found local rivers and estuaries contaminated with cyanide and other waste products, and the atmosphere saturated with toxic gases from the roasting process.'

Reflecting the increasing links between the Fijian and Indian workers and poor, the Labour Party was formed only 21 months ago by leaders of the Trade Union Congress. It fought the election in coalition with the capitalist New Federation Party which is dominated by Indian businessmen.

In the complicated voting system set up by the British, there are 12 MPs elected by Fijians, 12 by Indians, 10 other MPs from each community elected by the respective communities as well as all other communities (national seats), and eight MPs elected by minorities such as Europeans, part-Europeans and Chinese (general national seats).

In the 12 April election the Labour coalition decisively defeated Ratu Mara by 28 seats to 24 and Fiji had its first genuinely multiracial government.

Despite the fact that it was in a coalition with an open capitalist party and that its election rhetoric was very mild the government nonetheless represented a threat because it threatened to undermine the racist basis of imperialist domination and because it reflected in however distorted a form the emerging aspirations of the Indian and Fijian masses.

* * *

The coup has now provoked a major new crisis throughout the Pacific.

Already hundreds of French gendarmes have been flown into New Caledonia in prepara-

tion for a referendum on a new constitution later this year which could see new clashes with the liberation fighters of the FLNKS.

In the Philippines the bourgeois government of Cory Aquino has stepped up military operations against the 20,000-strong New People's Army and the Moro National Liberation Movement after breaking off peace talks.

In Vanuatu the government of Walter Lini is insisting on its right to get economic aid from both the Soviet Union and Libya, despite the protests of the Hawke government.

There is also an election taking place in Papua-New Guinea in which the Fiji coup has become an issue as well as the ongoing liberation struggle by the OPM in West Irian.

The coup has not resolved a single question in Fiji and it is likely that the coming months will see widespread opposition to the new regime, no matter what constitutional manoeuvres take place. The fact is that the 1970 constitution has in effect been ripped up and the real face of the capitalist state — bodies of armed men — has been revealed.

This crisis cannot be resolved through parliament. If the constitutional rewrite taking place — under Rabuka's personal control — is not sufficient to prevent the return of the Bavadra government the army will simply remain in power.

It can only be resolved through the establishment of a socialist Fiji as part of a federation of socialist Pacific states. The Fijian bourgeoisie is incapable of resolving the democratic tasks which are the heritage of colonial and imperialist exploitation.

If the working class and poor Fijians are strong enough to defeat the military regime they are strong enough to carry through the fight for socialism and not restrict themselves to the demand for the return of the Bavadra government.

SAM RAMAN, vice-president of the Democratic Freedom for Fiji Movement, spoke to Derek Moore about the significance of the military coup in Fiji a week after it took place.

What is the current situation in Fiji?

THE shops are closing down in Suva and all over Fiji and I have heard reports of trade union action.

The supporters of the Labour coalition are discounting the alleged racial nature of the coup. They are still together and are opposed to racism and are not divided as the military regime has claimed. The opposition to the coup is multi-racial, and is not restricted to Indian Fijians.

There have been street protests in different areas involving Fijians and Indians and a multi-racial group of people have gone underground to publish material and co-ordinate action against the regime.

Today there were reports of a fire-bombing against the multinational W.R. Carpenter group in Nadi. All the shops closed in protest against the coup but the Australian-owned Carpenter group tried to keep their shops open in defiance of the shutdown.

What has been the response of the trade unions?

ALL the unions are mixed except for the wharfies and the miners who are Fijian. Since almost the entire leadership of the Trade Union Congress has been detained it was hard for the unions to co-ordinate action against the coup. Most of the TUC leaders are also in the government, but other trade union leaders have also been detained.

Fijian trade unionists should show their support for the ousted Bavadra government by calling a general strike.

What do you think of the claims about CIA involvement?

THE evidence is fairly circumstantial but we are not discounting this. It seems to be more of a nod and a wink rather than a direct intervention by the CIA. I think they have agreed to turn a blind eye to the coup.

But the evidence is mounting that outside forces have used the internal situation for their advantage right from the start. We suspect that because of the non-aligned foreign policy that was slowly being implemented plans had been made in Hawaii when Rata Maru visited there recently.

The American aide officer based in Fiji had been with him in Hawaii and Rata Maru had links with the Anti-Communist League based in Washington. One significant factor that comes to mind is that a week before the coup, Continental Airlines, possibly the biggest US business interest in Fiji, suspended its flights there.

In cases like this it is very difficult to prove, but the people preparing the coup could have warned American interests to take whatever action necessary not to be around Fiji at that time.

In addition there was the issue of the corruption of the Ratu Mara government, which was being uncovered by the new government.

What do you think of the Hawke government's decision to close down the Libyan People's Bureau in Canberra?

THEY are deliberately trying to take advantage of the situation in Fiji to make a point that people they don't consider to be in the national interest should be expelled. The question of Fiji was being in some way linked up with the Libyan expulsion which doesn't stand up at all.

Hawke is trying to take advantage of the fact that many Australians don't understand the make-up of the Fijian people and the constitutional and racial situation there. The mass media has been playing up the Indian-Fijian division, whereas in fact the division is between the rich and the poor. It is a class question rather than a racial one.

The election of the coalition government highlighted the fact that the Indian and Fijian working class slowly coming together to form a common united front.

In what way are the divisions breaking down?

IT IS significant that the trade unions are multi-racial in composition and that they could form a Labour Party with Indian and Fijian support. The two races have been separated by the British for so many years and allowed to develop separately. It was the old divide-and-rule strategy.

There were Indian businessmen as well as trade union leaders in the Bavadra government and it was seen that there was a link between the small businesses and the trade union movement to form a common alliance against the powers that be.

The main support for the coalition came from the urban areas. In the villages a very traditional way of life exists and it is very hard for Fijians to move out of the system unless they enter the cash economy and become economically independent.

What is the system of land ownership in Fiji?

THE traditional ownership is by the chiefs. In the 1940s the London government set up a Native Land Trust Board which took over the administrative functions of the land on behalf of the chiefs. That board was responsible for leasing and everything to do with the land.

The chiefs retain the power over who leases the land and how much can be used productively and so on. It is not commonly owned with everyone having equal rights.

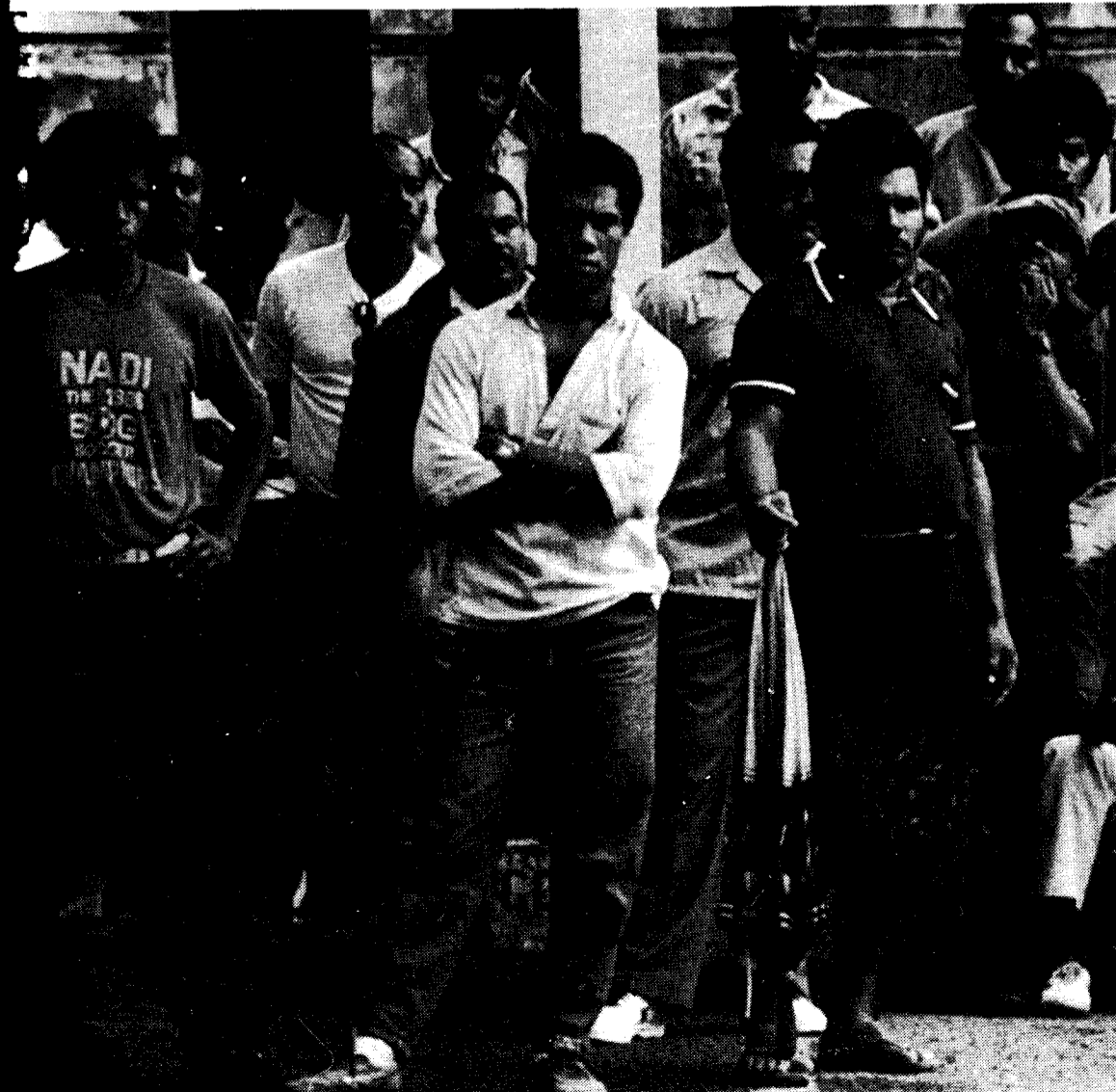
What is your attitude to a new election?

WE don't want an election. We want to remain with the constitution because the takeover was quite illegal and we oppose the governor-general assuming power by dissolving parliament and calling fresh elections. This is an endorsement of the coup.

The government in power has to decide. The people who led the coup should be charged.

What can trade unionists in other countries do?

THEY should ban all trade and aid to Fiji and call for international condemnation of the military regime. The international community should condemn the coup and if need be liaise with the Bavadra government to see it is reinstated as soon as possible.



the military coup events

Bevan and the 1945-1951 Labour government **PART II**

ON EDUCATION, the post-war Labour government resolutely defended the 1944 Tory Education Act, specifically designed to protect the class-based structure in general and the grammar, religious and public schools in particular.

Meanwhile, all the old racially-based Empire jingoism was retained in the curriculum.

These welfare reforms and the piecemeal nationalisation of some essential industries constituted the totality of Labour's 'socialism', actually the reconstructing of British capitalism.

Except in the case of iron and steel — a production industry — the Tories offered no real opposition to the nationalisation measures.

Churchill virtually endorsed the takeover of the Bank of England (put under control of the Treasury) as vital for centrally funding the redevelopment of industry¹⁷. The Labour Cabinet itself rebuffed calls to nationalise the High Street banks, the major insurance companies and the key City finance houses.

Any anxiety among Britain's employers about Labour's radicalism was soon dispelled. The major productive industries — engineering, chemicals, shipbuilding, motors, construction — were left untouched. Others were heavily financed with no obligation to accept state control or direction.

Massive disillusion occurred among workers in the nationalised industries when it was seen that control was to be left with the old owners. It was plain that the only concern was to rationalise and speed-up production in a drive to re-establish Britain's world market position.

Almost at once strikes broke out in mining and

BY BERNARD FRANKS

other industries in defence of working conditions and living standards.

Even in the case of iron and steel, the Tories calmed down somewhat. Nationalisation was seen as part of a rearmament programme aimed against the Soviet Union. Wide loopholes had been included to leave the most profitable firms untouched.

Bevan, with an important steelworks in his constituency, backed the takeover. But, when the Lords blocked steel nationalisation, he rejected calls to close them down. 'It may not be entirely necessary to shut it up. We do not do things like that in this country,' he said¹⁸.

BEVAN's personal retreat from all pretence at socialist ideals became increasingly synonymous with Labour's own.

When a series of economic and monetary crises occurred in 1946, 1947, 1949 and 1951, the Cabinet adopted the MacDonal-dite solution of tightening the screw on the working class. Bread was rationed (it had never been during the war), other rations were cut, austerity budgets were applied.

A wage freeze was im-

posed with the help of the union leaders and the miners were ordered to work an extra half hour a day (after just winning a five-day week).

Bevan solidly endorsed these policies and finally agreed in principle to the imposing of Health Service charges towards meeting the cost of a hugely inflated military spending bill.

In 1949 Labour controlled calls to further extend the nationalisation programme with the watchword 'consolidation'.

Bevan was one of the first to advance the conception of the 'mixed economy'. He told the Labour Party Annual Conference that year: 'The kind of society which we envisage, and which we shall live in, will be a mixed society, a mixed economy.' State planning and employment by the community would exist side-by-side with 'the light cavalry of private competitive industry.'¹⁹

A few years later in his own book 'In Place of Fear' (1952) he wrote: 'It is neither prudent nor does it account with our conception of the future that all forms of private property should live under perpetual threat.'

Foot's book refers to this statement as 'an acceptance of reality' making possible 'an honourable compromise between left and right of the Party.'²⁰

LABOUR's — and Bevan's — other great social policy retreat lay in the field of housing. In a shocking state at the end of the 1930s, it had been devastated by wartime bombing to the extent of nearly one in five dwellings damaged or destroyed.

In 1945 Bevan promised 5 million new homes but advanced few plans for acquiring sites and none for nationalising land and the construction industry, or for requisitioning building materials or setting targets.

Local councils were left to establish direct works departments or deal with private contractors as they thought fit.

Then, with the onset of the financial crisis, the housing programme was savaged. Imports of building materials were cut to save dollars and home produced items were directed into the export trade.

Foot tells us: 'Bevan's instrument for house building had to be used in reverse: instead of stimulating the laggard authorities into action, it became a main function of the Ministry to stop local authorities building too much.'²¹

The number of building 'starts' now dropped every year — from 284,000 in 1948 to 204,000 in 1951.

In 1946 a massive squatting campaign erupted as 40,000 homeless people occupied disused army camps, a reflection of Labour's lack of any policy for requisitioning empty properties as an emergency measure.

By the end of Labour's term in office 1 million houses had been built, little enough when spread over six years and across the boroughs of Britain's 600-odd main towns and cities.

IN JANUARY 1951 Bevan transferred to the job of Minister of Labour but resigned in protest in April when prescription charges were imposed by Chancellor Hugh Gaitskell.

He was possibly looking for an excuse to go.

During his short term as minister he fought off rail and electricity strikes, approved the prosecution of dock workers' leaders, continued the operation of the hated wartime National Arbitration order, 1305 (which required a 21-day notice of strike action) and was heckled by dockers at a Bermondsey public meeting. He had also been into the process of drawing up a National Incomes policy of the type eventually applied in the 1960s.

His actions in these respects were entirely consistent with his view that all workers' rights and conditions were subordinate to the need to protect a Labour government. In 1948 during a dock strike against the wage freeze he had told the Cabinet Emergency Committee 'It would be prudent to have wide powers to deal with any trouble if relations between troops and strikers became strained.'²²

In foreign policy matters Bevan had solidly supported the 'Cold War' initiatives of the US government and the Labour Cabinet.

Along with 'Tribune' he warmly endorsed the establishment of NATO, a western military alliance against the Soviet Union and for joint support in repressing colonial struggles.

Labour had not merely agreed to its founding, but through Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevan had been instrumental in bringing it about against the reluctance of some 'isolationist' sections of American capitalism. In fact in 1945 Labour had expressed no ideals in terms of a socialist Europe but had advocated 'an organic federation of Western European Nations.'

In 1946 Bevan joined the pro-Zionist lobby of Dalton, Shinwell, Strachey and Crossman, himself favouring partition of Palestine.

In 1949 he supported the witch-hunt and expulsion of pro-Stalinist party members, including Konni Zilliacus.

Foot also recalls how Bevan flew into a terrible rage when mildly admonished (over drinks) for having supported the witch-hunt of John Lawrence and other St Pancras Labour Party members²³.

In 1949 Bevan advocated the use of tanks to smash through the Soviet sector of Germany to raise the Berlin blockade.

Bevan was probably not a party to the secret negotiations and fiddling of accounts that went with the development in secret of Britain's atom bomb — hidden behind the establishment of a nuclear power station network.

However he made no retrospective protest at this, nor at the installation of US bases, complete with atomic weapons, on British soil.

Foot comments: 'Bevan it appears did not oppose or cavil at any of these measures in which the British



Students protest over Britain's invasion of Egypt in 1955. In 1954, Bevan attacked Nasser's nationalisation of the Suez canal as 'theft'.

government participated.'²⁴

In 1951 Bevan supported Britain's aggressive stance against the nationalisation by Mussadiq of the Anglo-Iranian oil company.

This was entirely consistent with his policy for the region. 'We should have done better,' he had told the Cabinet in January 1949. 'To base our position in the Middle East on the friendship of the Jews who, if we had pursued a different policy, would have been glad to give us all the facilities we needed to establish military bases in Palestine.'²⁵

Labour now sent the Royal Navy to the Gulf and war was threatened. In the event, MI6 and the CIA were instrumental in bringing down the Persian Prime Minister, Dr Mussadiq, and restoring the Shah — a CIA stooge and US agent — to absolute power.

Bevan also supported US aggression against Stalinist North Korea, endorsing the huge arms budget which led directly to the onslaught on the areas under his control, health and housing.

In 1945 one of the first actions of the Labour government had been to give £132 million to the reactionary Greek regime.

By the end of 1946, 1.5 million members of the British Armed Forces were still in service throughout the world at a cost of £1 billion a year. In 1947 military conscription, due to end in 1949, was extended indefinitely.

TRUE, by the end of its administration Labour had granted India and some other colonies 'independence'. Britain was in no position to forcibly suppress the peoples of these countries any longer.

They had ostensibly been given their freedom but in practice merely been reduced to semi-colonial status.

They were kept dependent

on Britain by 'aid' loans, trade agreements and the lack of industrial development and administrative investment which the British rulers had always practiced.

Labour's concern in all respects was to hang on to key imperialist outposts and ensure the continued supplies of cheap raw materials, cheap food and guaranteed markets upon which British recovery depended.

To this end divisions were encouraged on religious and national grounds and bourgeois nationalists were supported who were prepared to repress and exploit their people, as agents of imperialism.

Meanwhile, Ireland remained partitioned, the whites in Rhodesia and South Africa were guaranteed their continued domination over the blacks and HMS 'Sheffield' was dispatched to the South Atlantic as an answer to Argentinian representatives who had asked for discussions on the sovereignty of the Malvinas (Falklands) Islands.

In December 1950, John Strachey, for years considered to be on the left of the Party like Bevan, wrote to Prime Minister Attlee about the situation in Malaya where a national liberation movement was operating, led by the Communist Party.

Strachey called for 'a great firmness and vigour on the part of the governing authorities in the military and police side; in fact, ruthlessness where ruthlessness is necessary.'²⁶

Attlee needed little such urging.

In his book 'Imperialism and the Labour Movement', P.S. Gupta quotes a leading Labour Party colonial adviser, Rita Hinden, as writing in 1949:

'We have not the intention, and we know it, of sacrificing our standard of living for the sake of colonial development, we do not contemplate an evening out of wealth; we know, too, that our development plans are partly inspired by our own needs' (page 324).

In fact Labour gave very

A newly-translated document from the Vietnamese Trotskyists

AN English translation is now being made of 'National Movements and Class Struggle in Vietnam' by Anh-Van and Jacqueline Roussel, originally published in Paris, in French, by the Fourth International in 1947. (English translation copyright New Park Publications).

This work consists of a Marxist historical analysis of Vietnam before and during the French conquest, the class structure of Vietnam, an outline of the development of nationalist movements from their origins in the 1890s, and of the Stalinist and Trotskyist movements in Vietnam.

It concludes with an estimation by the author, a Vietnamese Trotskyist who work-

ed in Paris after World War II, of the nature of the Indo-Chinese revolution.

We are not able at present to print this material. However, this work is invaluable for the study of the Vietnamese revolution, and of importance for the study of revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries in general.

We are therefore offering Xeroxed copies of this document (approximately 100 A4 pages) for £5 plus postage (Special offer for WRP members £2.50).

Please return the form below within a month if you want a copy of this document. We need finance in order to complete the work on this project.

To: WRP Education Department, PO Box 735, London SW9 1QS. Please send me a copy . . . copies of 'National Movements and Class Struggle in Vietnam'.

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Please enclose £5 per copy (£2.50 for WRP members) plus postage: 50p — Britain and Ireland; 60p Europe; £1.56 — Middle East and north Africa; £2.12 — America, southern Africa, India; £2.40 — Australia, Far East.

Dr Cutting tells of 18 months in a Palestinian camp

DR PAULINE CUTTING, the English doctor who worked in the Bourj-al-Bourajneh refugee camp in Lebanon during the recent siege, gave a vivid account of her experiences at a War on Want fringe meeting at the recent National Union of Public Employees conference.

The charity Medical Aid for Palestine recruited volunteers to work in hospitals in the Palestinian camps. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society run hospitals in Lebanon which provide a free health service to everyone, and they are used by poor Lebanese and Palestinians alike.

BY STUART CARTER

The camps first came into existence when the state of Israel was set up and Palestinians were terrorised and driven out of their homes and villages by Zionist terror gangs.

For ten years the people lived in tents expecting to be able to return home. Now the housing is more permanent, though conditions are still appalling, with open sewers running through the streets. After the Tel Al Zaatar massacres, the camps armed themselves.

'If the camp had not been well defended and armed there would have been a massacre and I would not have been here to speak to you,' Dr Cutting told the meeting.

'The Amal militia backed by Syria wanted to control the camps to stop them defending themselves.'

Dr Cutting stressed that the Palestinians are not anti-semitic and that many people confuse anti-Zionism with anti-semitism.

'The camp was first under siege in May-June 1985,' she said, 'but at that time it did not have a hospital. Medical

'For the first three months the people had to live in the underground shelters with no sanitation, ventilation or light. Then the bombardment slackened off but food supplies ran out.

'We faced problems of malnutrition and by February we had people suffering from starvation. The first symptoms were collapsing headaches and stomach pain and then they began eating grass, weeds and bad food.

'The situation was alleviated slightly when they decided to eat their own pets, cats and dogs. It was only this that caught the news interest. This publicity prevented the camps from complete collapse.

'The siege was lifted and the Amal allowed women only to go out and get food. But only one entrance was opened and they were shot at, beaten up and intimidated.

'In six weeks 18 women were killed and over 50 badly wounded. In April the fighting stopped and a new medical team took over. I had been working with six Palestinian doctors as a surgeon.

'The men are still not allowed out, but the women are not being shot at any more. There is still no electricity. Water is collected from taps in the street and it is very difficult to get medicines; most are smuggled in.

'I would appeal to you to publicise the Palestinians' plight and support Medical Aid for Palestine.'

Betty Ward, who had recently been on a NUPE delegation to the West Bank, said the British people were partly responsible for the plight of the people in the camps.

'The British government left then in this position where they have been removed from the areas where they lived', she said. By con-

trast Jewish immigrants are able to get homes in four weeks.

'Many Palestinians have to travel outside the West Bank to work. Although it may take them three hours going to work and three hours back, if they are caught sleeping outside the West Bank they are shot.

'A university professor I met had to get a tourist visa from Jordan and keep renewing it in order to continue working illegally in the university, teaching Palestinians.

'When a Transport and General Workers Union delegation visited the West Bank the trades council leaders who organised meetings with them were later jailed for doing so.

'We are told that the Palestine Liberation Organisation are a terrorist organisation, but if the Nazis had occupied Britain how would you feel if they threw you out of your home and put other people in it?'

'The Palestinians are a people without a home or country. No other country wants responsibility for them.'

She called on branches to make contacts with Palestinian trade unions.

War on Want organiser Jim Coulter announced the launching of Union Aid, which will fund projects in Palestine, Nicaragua and elsewhere, taking advantage of tax concessions for charities.

But War on Want preferred its efforts to be seen as solidarity rather than charity. 'We are not just talking about imperialism but doing something about it,' he said.

Ann Squires spoke on behalf of Nurses for Nicaragua, a fund set up by NUPE branches in London to raise money to send six nurses to Nicaragua.



Bevan as Minister of Health

few colonies independence during its term and was especially tenacious in holding off such developments in Africa and the West Indies — often on strongly racial grounds.

Gupta quotes the diary of Cabinet member Hugh Dalton, for February 28, 1950, explaining that he had refused Attlee's offer of the Secretaryship of the colonies because 'I had a horrid vision of pullulating poverty-stricken, diseased nigger communities, for whom one can do nothing in the short run, and now, the more one tries to help them, are querulous and ungrateful' (page 336).

The real reasons for blocking the road to independence are obvious. Nigeria, the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Malaya alone were saving Britain from bankruptcy through their vast dollar earnings from the sale of raw materials.

These colonies did not see the dollars but were given instead sterling balances in London — which they were then prevented from drawing. Then, in 1949, when the pound was devalued, the balances 'lost about a third of their value' ('The Fall of the British Empire', Colin Cross, page 267).

IN THE 1951 general election, Labour received 13,948,883 votes, the largest number ever won by any British political party.

However, due to major changes in the electoral boundaries, the Tories, with 13,718,069 votes, won the election by 321 seats to Labour's 295.

(In 1945 Labour had an overall majority of 146 with 11.9 million votes to the Tory 9.9 million.)

Bevan having died, and Attlee now retiring to the Lords, Hugh Gaitskell succeeded to the Party leadership.

Bevan, forgetting his hatred of the man who had imposed prescription charges, made a strong bid for the post of Shadow Foreign Secretary.

When Egypt under Colonel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal in July 1954 Gaitskell compared Nasser to Mussolini and Hitler while Bevan condemned Egypt's action as theft of British property:

'Egypt has a right to come into her own,' he wrote in 'Tribune' (3 August, 1954) 'but not into someone else's.'

While making capital out of the disarray of Prime Minister Eden and the Tories, Bevan deferred to Gaitskell when it was generally agreed that he could have outflanked and superseded his supposed enemy. In the event, he got his Shadow Foreign Secretary appointment a few weeks later.

Then in 1957 he again devastated his 'Bevanite' supporters who hoped to see him continue as the leader of the left of the Party.

Recently he had been speaking against the retention by Britain of the H-Bomb. At the Party conference, a motion put by Norwood Labour Party called for renunciation of all testing and manufacture of nuclear weapons.

Mover Vivienne Mendel-

son reminded Bevan that only months before he had urged Labour to 'call people out on to the streets against the bomb.'

Bevan now made a 180-degree turn and fiercely attacked unilateralism as leaving Britain nothing to negotiate with: 'If you carry the resolution and follow out all its implications and do not run away from it, you will send a Foreign Secretary, whoever he may be, naked into the conference chamber.'

To increasing gasps and jeers from the floor he went on to defend the need to maintain Britain's 'overseas commitments' i.e. those to NATO and the US.

Bevan won the card vote, 5,836,000 to 781,000, and the congratulations of the capitalist press. 'Bevan into Bevin' headlined the 'Daily Telegraph' next day.

Posters at a 1958 rally of the newly-formed CND proclaimed: 'A vote for Bevan is a vote for the H-Bomb' and 'No Bombs — Not even Nye's.'

Having secured himself from the left Gaitskell now moved to divest the Party of even a nominal allusion to socialist principles by preparing to remove Clause 4 — with its reference to public ownership²⁷ — from the Party statutes.

Gaitskell faced widespread opposition in the Party and had to retreat, but Bevan was not one of his detractors.

According to a Gaitskell biographer, Geoffrey McDermott: 'If Bevan had wished, he could almost certainly have overthrown Gaitskell on this occasion. He refrained and now became both Treasurer and Deputy Leader of the Party.' ('Leader Lost', page 184).

BEVAN died in July 1960. A year earlier he had finally taken his swift retreat to the right to its logical conclusion by blaming and writing-off the working class for reformism's failures and betrayals.

'It (the British working class) may no longer be important. History gave them the chance — and they didn't take it. Now it is probably too late. The great changes in the world will take place in spite of them.'²⁸

History gave them the chance and a treacherous leadership — of which Bevan himself was an integral component — diverted it into harmless channels.

The essential struggle — for a principled leadership which will not deviate from the road to the ultimate revolutionary battles against British capitalism — has still to be resolved.

It will never be unless the lessons of the activities of Bevan and the 1945-1951 Labour government are fully learned.

CONCLUDED

FOOTNOTES

17. 'Labour in Power 1945-51', by Kenneth O'Morgan, page 100.

18. Foot, Vol II, page 223.

19. Foot, Vol II, page 258.

20. Foot, Vol II, page 259.

21. Foot, Vol II, page 95.

22. Campbell, page 191 quoting Cabinet papers for 28 June, 1948.

23. Foot, Vol II, page 602.

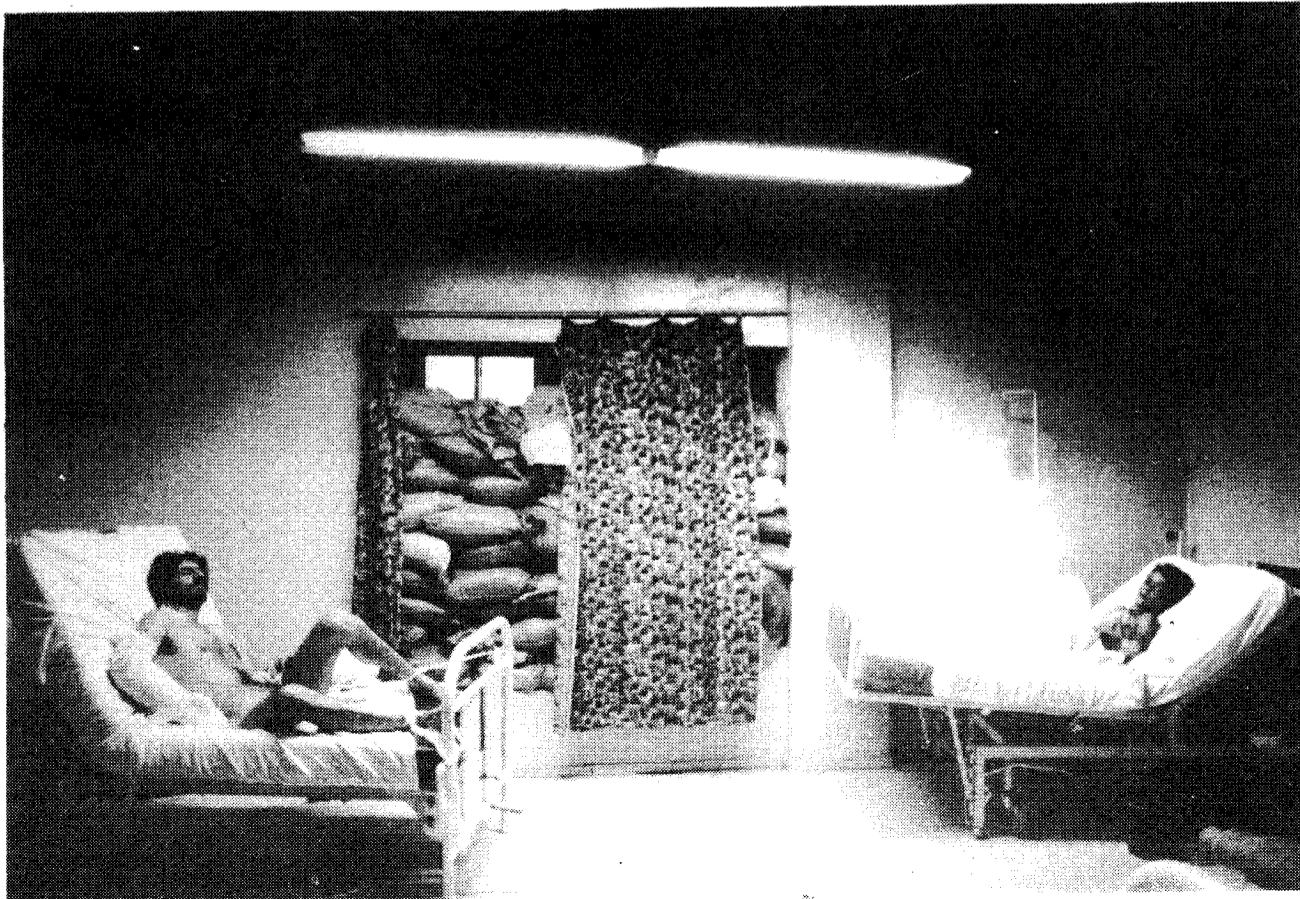
24. Foot, Vol II, page 229.

25. Campbell, from Cabinet papers for 17 January, 1949.

26. 'John Strachey', by Hugh Thomas, page 264.

27. Gaitskell's attack was specifically aimed at sub-clause (iv) of Clause 4: 'to secure for the producers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible, upon the basis of the common ownership of the means of production and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service'.

28. Foot, Vol II, page 626.



Patients at a Palestinian Camp hospital

LETTERS

Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of the Editorial Board. Letters over 500 words will normally be cut. Letters should arrive by first post Monday at: Workers Press, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS, and should include sender's address.

The MAS and the 'Act of capitulation'

YOU CAN'T fool all people all the time.

In 'International News' of Workers Press (20 May 1987), in the article regarding the military rebellion in Argentina, you state that the MAS was the only organisation that didn't sign the 'Democratic Act' with the other bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties.

While the MAS did not sign this national document, it did sign the same type of documents in the Provinces, like in La Plata, capital of the Buenos Aires Province ('El Dia', 20 April 1987).

Antonio Berkeley

A reply. . .

WORKERS PRESS has covered the revolutionary struggle against the military in Argentina during the Easter events.

The article described the role of the Trotskyist Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) as the only major revolutionary organisation which refused to sign the 'Act of Democratic Compromise'.

The MAS carried out a systematic campaign under the slogan of 'Smash the rebellion' of the military and denounced the 'Act', signed by the government, the trade union bureaucracy and sections of the left (including the Communist Party) as the 'Act of capitulation'.

But there are people, far away from the actual revolutionary struggle, who insist on smearing the revolutionary forces involved in principled fights.

This is particularly true of organisations and individuals who make their political career out of systematic slander.

Gossip replaces real political struggle, falsification becomes a method of discussion, slander substitutes for proper characterisation of political opponents.

The magazine of the United Secretariat, 'Imprecor', months before the Easter events in Argentina, was criticising the Trotskyist MAS for being 'too sectarian' towards the Communist Party.

The signature of the CP to the 'Act of capitulation' seemed to prove that the MAS criticisms had been correct.

However, after the Easter events, the newspaper of the French section of the Usec, 'Rouge', dropped the epithet of 'sectarian' about the MAS and implied that even though the MAS refused to sign the 'Act', its ranks hesitated.

The origin of this version was no other than a small sectarian organisation in Argentina, the Workers Party (which barely intervened in the struggle against the military) who published a long article in their newspaper denouncing the MAS for signing the 'Act' in one city!

They based their slander on a very brief communique by the government of the city of La Plata, published in the bourgeois newspaper 'El Dia' on 20 April 1987, indicating that a representative of the MAS signed the 'Act'.

On 24 April, without any verification, the newspaper of the Workers Party denounced the MAS, basing itself on that bourgeois publication.

A sympathiser of the Workers Party, who lives in Berkeley (California), picked up the slander and sent, again without verification, a series of letters to left-wing publications, among the American 'Working Class Opposition' and the British Workers Press (see above).

Comrade Antonio's letter was signed on 25 May 1987. We should ask, of course, if this is true. Let's see.

Here is exactly what happened, in chronological order:

On April 20 1987 the government of the City of La Plata announced that many organisations and parties in the city signed the Act. In the brief press release, the name of the MAS was mentioned and published only in the daily 'El Dia'.

On 24 April 1987 the newspaper of the Workers Party, without verifying the information, reproduced it and launched a sharp attack against the 'capitulation' of the MAS.

On 27 April 1987 the national leadership of the MAS sent the Workers Party the following telegram:

“We reject the slander of the bourgeois press, reprinted in 'Prensa Obrera' (newspaper of the Workers Party) on 24 April. You know that the MAS did not sign the 'Act' in the government house of La Plata on 18 April. We demand immediate retraction in your newspaper, in the same length and layout.”

On 29 April 1987, because of pressure from the MAS, 'El Dia' was forced to publish a press release from the MAS rejecting the slander. On the same day, a public campaign was launched to force the city government either to prove or withdraw the slander.

On 18 May 1987 in a letter signed by the under-Secretary, the city government of La Plata apologised to the MAS for the 'mistake' they made when they included the name of the MAS as signing the 'Act'.

On 19 May 1987, because of the continuing MAS campaign, 'El Dia' prominently

displayed in its political section a letter from the government house that said, among other things:

“Even though representatives of the Movement Towards Socialism (MAS) of the Province of Buenos Aires came to the meeting in the government house on April 18, when the 'Act' was signed, the MAS representatives did not sign, because they disagreed with its content.”

On 28 May 1987 Comrade Antonio sat in front of his typewriter in the petty-bourgeois suburb of Berkeley, California, where he lives and does nothing serious politically, and wrote a letter deliberately ignoring the real story.

That was not important. What was important was to try to confuse somebody into believing that the MAS has, somehow, capitulated — at least in one city in Argentina!

He failed. Like the newspaper of the Workers Party in Argentina — or 'Imprecor' or 'Rouge' of the Usec — Comrade Antonio will remain silent until the next time they can use the bourgeois press to slander some other revolutionary.

For them the struggle is not to tell the truth to the working class, but how to prevent others from telling or believing the truth.

Raul Martinez
Member of the MAS,
Argentina

Prison support for Viraj Mendis

LET ME add my support to the campaign to defend the rights of Viraj Mendis, the victim of a racist British government, but who has won the hearts of many of the British and international public.

I feel Viraj shall find, through the highlighting of his plight by those in the Viraj Mendis Defence Committee and others, that his case shall be won.

Only concerted and unremitting effort can guarantee such an outcome. Keep up the good work!

The 'Earl William' prison ship on which we find human beings held under the nice term of 'detention' brings back sad memories of the use of Brit prison ships in Ireland's freedom struggle.

They called those ships detention centres too. Internment without trial . . .

'Same old story,' as Liz Curtis's book says! They changed the name of internment to detention because of the bitter taste it provoked in freedom-loving peoples' mouths.

Don't be fooled by the use of such ships — they are an affront to freedom, they are floating symbols of racism.

Organise and help sink this plan to keep racism afloat! Yours in solidarity with Viraj Mendis,

Gearóid Mac Domhnaill
Irish Republican PoW
Parkhurst

Building a new political leadership

I WOULD like to comment on the Manchester Solidarity conference planned for July.

From the documents I have received it is clear that this conference is essentially a syndicalist operation in defence of the demands of the sponsoring groups.

The autumn conference of

support groups (see P. Brady's letter, Workers Press, 27 June 1987) will be appealing to a wider audience and will call on many groups — ranging from City Anti-Apartheid to the sacked and jailed miners campaign — to participate.

At that conference I hope many comrades will be fighting to develop the process of:

1. Building a new political leadership in opposition to social democracy and Stalinism.

2. Developing transitional demands.

The days of oppositional and propagandist conferences are over. We need to take up questions facing our class and its allies with the purpose of answering those questions.

For instance, fund-raising for strikers has been one of the most popular forms of expressing solidarity with a particular struggle. However, this form of action has often provided a cover for

inactivity, particularly from union bureaucrats.

We need to be developing such spontaneous responses of solidarity in such a way that fund-raising becomes part of the process of building workers' self-defence committees.

Such committees, in the teeth of opposition and betrayal, would organise finance, picketing, legal defence and national and international solidarity.

This activity links spontaneous action, politics and the drive for new leadership in a non-sectarian and entirely realistic way; it is a million miles removed from our usual responses to strikes which is to work tirelessly to raise funds, picket and then see the strike sold out.

This position emerges from the experiences of Tower Hamlets comrades in the context of our attempts to understand what was happening during the printworkers' struggle.

You can sum up our position very simply — we are sick and tired of propagandism, triumphalism and ultimate betrayal.

We want to be the new leadership and we are entirely serious about winning: this perspective continually forces us to evaluate and re-evaluate what we are doing.

It continually drums into our heads that patience and careful organisation must come before the trumpets sound off for battle.

I have a sneaking suspicion that someone in Gateshead allowed impatience to govern where political responsibility would have been a better tutor.

Tower Hamlets will send a delegate on July 25, and I personally hope that all the workers brought into national action by that conference will support the joint initiatives of Autumn/Winter 1987.

John Rees
Tower Hamlets

Unite whenever and wherever needed

REGARDING the recent letter 'More time needed' from the Tower Hamlets Workers Support Group (Workers Press, 27 June), we the Gateshead Workers Support Group, feel we must reply.

Pat Brady seems to be in some confusion as to who has actually called the 25 July conference. The conference has not been called singly by the Gateshead Support Group, but rather along with the co-sponsors Senior Colman Sacked Workers, Traders Web Sacked Workers, Ancoats Hospital Occupation and Arbride Sacked Workers and Supporters.

With the exception of the Arbride workers, all others were represented at the Leeds conference to which Pat Brady refers. As workers involved in disputes, it was felt that a conference to organise solidarity for work-

ers in struggle was needed as soon as possible.

The working class are under immense pressure from both the government and employers; things will most surely get worse with a whole load of anti-union legislation, further attacks on wages and conditions along with the extreme attacks that are planned on the unemployed.

Since the Leeds conference two disputes at Trader Web and Arbride have fallen by the wayside due to demoralisation, isolation and the lack of solid support.

The longer the working class waits around for something to happen, the more workers will be crushed by the growing confidence of the employers.

The working class cannot afford to squabble about petty political differences, but must unite whenever and wherever needed.

The 25 July conference is a first step to uniting workers. Those who call for a boycott of this conference, as some organisers of the October/November conference attempted at our recent

planning meeting, are not only doing a great disservice to the wider working class but are also turning their backs on those in dispute at present at Senior Colman, HFW Plastics, Moat House, J. Blakes and others.

The Gateshead Workers Support Group and all those attending the 25 July conference, will be attending all future conferences that are of benefit to the working class. We take this opportunity to point out that the Gateshead Workers Support Group have not been officially invited to the October/November conference.

We urge all workers to participate in the 25 July conference, and turn it into a huge and overwhelming success and ask those who are tempted to sabotage the meeting to think seriously about the repercussions and implications of such sectarianism on the working class.

Let's make 25 July a major event! Build solidarity for victory.

Mark Stevens
for Gateshead Workers Support Group

Call from trade union school

THE Workers Revolutionary Party trade union school last weekend made the following call:

IT IS the responsibility of revolutionaries and militants in this period to mobilise the working class to bring down the Tory government.

The trade unionists in the front-line of Tory attacks are the civil servants, hospital workers, teachers and workers in essential services. They are being denied basic trade union rights including the right to negotiate.

As part of the Thatcher onslaught, the youth and unemployed are facing the full brunt of capitalism in its decay.

The education system is being driven to privatisation and on leaving school youth will be forced to work for their benefit.

The privatisation of local authority services and what remains of the nationalised industries can only mean a further massive increase in unemployment and cuts in services to the community.

Meanwhile the Labour and trade union leaders continue to collaborate with the Tories.

They are part of the management of the MSC (Man-

power Services Commission) and other bodies. They continue to accept the anti-union laws.

This is the real weakness within the working class. The Tories are trying desperately to split the working class on race, and are stepping up the attacks on ethnic minorities.

In fact all those who fight to defend the rights of the working class internationally face repressive legislation.

The right of any worker to live and sell their labour power in the country of their choice must be defended by the working class.

For the immediate period we must mobilise all those workers and class fighters for:

● The 25 July National Conference in Manchester, called by Senior Colman Strike Committee, Ancoats Casualty Sit-In, Arbride Sacked Workers and Supporters and Gateshead Workers Support Group.

● The September Lobby of the TUC, organised by the Workers Revolutionary Party youth, demanding that the TUC break from the MSC involvement.

● The September Liverpool Conference: Shrewsbury to

Wapping. Since the Wembley conference there has not been a major conference calling for the defeat of the anti-union laws. This conference has been called by the Merseyside Association of Trades Councils.

● The 30 October-1 November National Conference of Workers Support Groups. To organise for this conference there is an Open Meeting on 22 September in Leeds.

We call for the maximum attendance at all these events. They are not separate but are all connected in the fight against the Tories. All WRP members and Workers Press readers should bring delegations and fight to mobilise for these four events.

Support Groups and movements around strikes in themselves, whilst doing essential work, are not sufficient to answer all the Tory attacks and the betrayals of the trade union leadership. The fight must be taken inside the trade unions to expose those who collaborate by their refusal to fight the Tories.

We demand:

- TUC break with the Tories! Withdraw from the MSC!
- A massive expansion of public works with trade union rights and pay!
- Mobilise against the anti-union laws!
- Return to the Wembley Conference decisions!
- Expell the EETPU from the TUC! Establish a holding section for the EETPU members loyal to the working class!
- Immediate 30-Hour week with no loss of pay!

LISTINGS

LISTINGS are published free by WORKERS PRESS each week for organisations in the labour movement. Please send details to arrive by midday Monday for publication the following Thursday.

BOTHAS LAWS COME TO BRITAIN Non-Stop Picket against Apartheid banned from South African Embassy. Public Order Act used against City of London Anti-Apartheid Group. Join us to challenge unjust police action. Mass Rally every Friday, 5.30p.m.-7.30p.m., Ducannon Street, WC2.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST POLICE REPRESSION (CAPR) Weekly planning meetings every Tuesday at 7.30p.m. Stoke Newington Community Centre, Leswin Road, N16. All welcome. Contact: Box CAPR, 83 Blackstock Road, N4 (01-991 2938.)

BRING BACK VICTORIA WILIAMS! Campaign meetings, second and fourth Wednesdays of every month, 7.30p.m., UCA, Acton Technical College, Mill Hill Road, W3.

VIRAJ MENDIS WILL STAY! National Demonstration in Manchester, Saturday 11 July. (For further details ring London Support Group: 01-837 1688.)

GREENHAM COMMON WOMEN'S CAMP To all women — we are still here; we still need your support! Near Newbury, Exit 13 on M4, or BR Newbury, Berkshire.

VIRAJ MENDIS LONDON SUPPORT GROUP Downing Street Protest every Monday, 6p.m.-7p.m. (Westminster/Charing Cross tubes.) Weekly organisational meetings take place after the picket.

PERSONAL COLUMN

Peter Fryer

Court in the act

SURELY nobody who can put two and two together was the slightest bit surprised at the final integration of the younger royals into the entertainment industry?

Something like their participation in BBC1's 'Grand Knockout Tournament' — which the 'Listener' called 'seemingly democratic joining-in-silly-assness of sovereign and common' — had been on the cards ever since it was revealed that our Ideal Family had got into the habit of shutting up their dottier elderly relatives in institutions, never visiting them, and falsifying the reference books.

A lot of highly paid journalists and public relations wizards are employed to keep tabs on the Ideal Family's popularity ratings, and to make sure that some gooey little titbit about them is almost always available to round off the evening news on TV.

The public relations packaging and presentation of British royalty are nothing new, though there is a lot of evidence to suggest that a careful refurbishing was carried out in the early 1960s, when our rulers at last began to understand what a powerful instrument of mass indoctrination had come into their hands.

Back in the early years of Queen Victorias's reign the royal family were not, on the whole, very popular.

Most democrats, radicals, and socialists then were unashamed and outspoken republicans, as a matter of course; many people saw the royals as a bunch of German interlopers who couldn't even speak English properly; many in the middle and upper classes remembered the newspaper reports about George IV's immoral court and the scandal over Queen Caroline, and disapproved of the monarchy as an institution that had set a bad example to the lower orders.

It was Victoria's husband Prince Albert who first cottoned on to the idea of harnessing the power of the press behind the monarchy. It was he who invented the 'Court Circular' — in effect a sort of daily press release, far longer, more detailed, and more colourful than its modern equivalent in 'The Times'.

This fed the press with a regular supply of information about, for instance, which of the Queen's children had gone for a drive with her. Thus was begun, and carefully fostered, the idea of the royals' happy home life.

Artists were invited into the various palaces to sketch the royal children — the then equivalent of the TV cameras which record, with

sycophantic simpers, each infant princeling's first day at some appalling nursery school.

The drawings produced by these professional toadies were featured in the illustrated press. Thus were laid the foundations of our present-day system by which meaty chunks of nauseating 'news' and 'photo opportunities' about the Ideal Family are tossed each day to the never-sated hacks, every trite word uttered by the future King Charles III is headlined, and a veritable royal soap opera is under way.

What position should socialists take in face of this massive daily onslaught of maudlin pap?

First of all, we can and should point out that the royal family are not just very rich, but stinking rich. They are one of the richest families in the land.

This is a point on which Buckingham Palace is already fairly sensitive, judging from this week's denial of reports that the Prince of Wales's increase in income to more than £1 million a year from his 130,000-acre Duchy of Cornwall estates amounted to his awarding himself a pay rise.

Secondly, it can be pointed out that, historically, a hefty segment of their wealth came from the slave trade. It was 'Good Queen Bess' herself who started this tradition, in 1564, when she lent a ship called 'Jesus of Lubeck' to John Hawkyns for his second slave-hunting voyage.

The Royal Adventurers into Africa, the first English company whose charter specified slaves as an objective, included Charles II, his wife Catherine of Braganza, and their fellow-royal Prince Rupert.

Lastly, it's important above all to nail the carefully fostered myth that the British monarchy is politically neutral. This has never been the case.

The ruling-class strategy on the royal family was summed up by Lord Stamfordham, George V's private secretary, soon after World War I:

'We must endeavour to induce the thinking working classes, Socialist and others, to regard the Crown, not as a mere figurehead and as an institution which, as they put it, "don't count", but as a living power for good, with receptive faculties welcoming information affecting the interests and social well being of all classes and ready, not only to sympathise with these questions, but anxious to further their solution.'

This is the fable that was consciously developed as the ruling class's response to the rise of the working-class movement. The reality behind the fable was very different.

Victoria played a big part in the choice of ministers, forced her views on every aspect of home and foreign policy, intrigued constantly against Gladstone, and was an unyielding opponent of all reform.

Her son Edward VII influenced appointments, put strong pressure on the Cabinet in relation to India, was in constant contact with the Tory opposition under a Liberal government, and did his best to exploit differences within the Cabinet.

It was George V who played the leading part in persuading Ramsay MacDonald to desert the Labour Party and form a 'National' Government in 1931. It was George VI who insisted on the appointment of Ernest Bevin as Foreign Secretary in 1945.

The British royal family and their hangers-on constitute a reactionary Tory caste that is an integral part of the British capitalist state. One of the first tasks of the future workers' government will be to put this caste out of business.

Quotation of the year?

IT'S a bit early, I know, to start choosing a quotation of the year. But, when the time comes, some recent remarks by Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment, ought to stand a pretty good chance.

An orthopaedic surgeon at Worcester Royal Infirmary, John Guy, had written to 200 patients on his waiting list telling them they can't have their hip replacement operations because of Thatcher's cuts, and suggesting that they complain to their MPs.

When a copy of this circular landed on Ridley's desk, he lost no time in dictating the following memo to Health Minister Tony Newton:

'It seems to me intolerable that employees of the Health Service should openly criticise their health authorities and the Government in this sort of way.

'I would be glad if you could investigate this and see that the necessary action is taken to silence Mr Guy.'

To Guy, these words conjured up an image of 'a big eagle on a swastika'.

Well, Old Arrogance had better make the most of its power to silence, lie, and repress, which isn't going to last for ever. Sooner or later, for these little Hitlers and Jacks in office, there will come a reckoning:

*But by the God above us
And by red hell below,
We'll teach the knaves a lesson
That they deserve to know.*

WORKERS REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

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£5,000 Special Fund

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The Workers Revolutionary Party Special Fund has moved, but only very slightly, since last week.

The position remains a most serious one.

Important work is currently being undertaken in relation to the forthcoming Conference to reorganise the Fourth International. Our Party's financial, as well as political contribution to that work is absolutely essential.

We urge you to give this appeal your closest consideration.

Donations to the WRP Special Fund are vital for the Workers Revolutionary Party's contribution to the work of the Preparatory Committee to organise the International Conference of Trotskyists.

PLEASE send, send, send donations, large or small, to:
WRP Special Fund, PO Box 735, London SW9 7QS

WORKERS PRESS JUNE FUND

Our fund stands at £1,734.91

Before the Workers Revolutionary Party expelled its former leader, T.G. Healy, for his sexual and physical abuse of comrades, together with the Redgraves and Sheila Torrance who supported him, the figures published in the monthly fund appeals were a total fabrication. After the split we gave an undertaking to our members and supporters that all such practices would cease forthwith.

Torrance, who remains in charge of the rump and its News Line, can continue to make all the snide and lying accusations she cares to. (See for example, if you can stomach it, the so-called Workers Notebook column for Tuesday, 30 June).

Having parted company since, herself, with Healy and the Redgraves, not to mention the Price detachment (and not a semblance of principle contained within any of it) these remnants of the British section(!) of the ICFI must be in desperate straits.

Our earlier assurances remain unchanged.

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 4. Re-Organisation of the Fourth International
- Liverpool Polytechnic Students Union
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Workers Revolutionary Party

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Every Friday, 7.30p.m.

Duke of York, York Way, N1
near Kings Cross Station

- July 3: The Communist Manifesto
July 10: The Russian Revolution
July 17: Stalinism and Trotskyism

Workers Revolutionary Party

Public Meeting

Mobilise Against the Tories!
Labour Leaders Must Fight Thatcher!

Thursday 16 July, 7.30p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square

Speakers: Simon Pirani (WRP Central Committee);
John Simmance (WRP Central Committee and AEU
convenor, Charing Cross Hospital — in a personal
capacity)

Kashmir Welfare Society UK

Commemoration of 13 July, 1931
'Quit Kashmir Movement'

Monday 13 July, 7p.m.

Carmichael Hall, Eastwood Park
Rouken Glen Road, Giffnock
Glasgow G46

Workers Revolutionary Party

West of Scotland

Public Meeting

Tuesday 14 July, 7.30p.m.

Mobilise Against Tories NOW!

Craigneuk Community Centre

Shieldmuir Street

Craigneuk, Lanarkshire

Workers Revolutionary Party

Public Meeting

Labour, the Election and the International Working Class

Tuesday 7 July, 7.30p.m.

Brighton Unemployed Centre

Tilbury Place (off Calton Hill), Brighton

Speaker: Bob Archer (WRP Central Committee)

SOUTH AFRICA

PERMANENT REVOLUTION

The fight for a Bolshevik party

The first of a series of 3 articles

'The revolution does not believe in words. It tests everything, and, what is more it tests it in blood.' (Trotsky)

PROLETARIAN revolution permits no half measures. This is particularly the case in South Africa today where the imperialist chain has been weakened to breaking point.

The bourgeoisie senses its own death is at hand and consequently its chief executioner, the Botha state, is at its most dangerous. Now, as apartheid capitalism writhes in its death agony, it must prove itself worthy of the title vanguard. It must lead!

Where the mass of workers sense instinctively where the revolution is going to, the revolutionary vanguard must clearly outline the tasks and goals of the revolution.

Let us base ourselves on Trotsky's words: '...clarity, theoretical precision, and consequently political honesty is what renders a revolutionary tendency invincible.'

To make the revolution itself invincible we must draw all our best proletarian fighters in every mass organisation into a single, disciplined, democratic-centralist, Bolshevik party. It cannot be the South African Communist Party (SACP), the party of the two-stage conception. It can only be the party of the permanent revolution!



Victory written on the faces of shop stewards of the Metal and Allied Workers Union — after winning their pay battle.

Stalinism is responsible for the domination of a petty-bourgeois nationalist perspective!

A genuine Bolshevism has never really taken root in South Africa. Only petty-bourgeois nationalism has acquired the real force of a political tradition within the mass movement.

This popularity constitutes a crucial aspect of the crisis of the leadership in South Africa, for it is directly bound up with the anti-Marxist role played by the SACP. Even though it long ago abandoned any real commitment to an independent working-class policy it still holds up the stolen flag of Marxism-Leninism and claims to be the vanguard party of the proletariat. The SACP is thus identified as the party of the working class and the party of socialism.

Yet, at the same time, following the logic of the 'two-stages' it insists that it 'does not and should not seek to

replace the ANC as the leader of the liberation alliance'. In this way, the SACP has consistently provided the ANC with 'left' cover.

Given the profound intensification of the class struggle in South Africa, it is the veneer of revolutionism that explains why the ANC, despite fundamentally erroneous policies, has drawn under its influence some of the best and most fearless fighters.

The revolutionary crisis, however, 'tests everything'. Never before has it been more opportune and necessary to demonstrate how dangerously wrong the two stage conception is. Never before have conditions been so ripe for Bolshevism to take root in the advanced sections of the South African working class. All the problems of the revolution are

essentially problems of the crisis of leadership. Stalinism and petty-bourgeois nationalism will take the re-

volution down a dead-end. Only revolutionary Marxism, only a Bolshevik party, can guarantee victory.

Workers and youth, break with the two-stage conception! Fight for the Permanent Revolution!

At the present juncture, the most critical point in the entire liberation struggle, the SACP spreads only vacillation and confusion.

There is no doubt that an enormous ideological crisis has built up in the party under the pressure of the revolutionary events of the last three years. The party's insistent propagation of the Stalinist two-stage conception of revolution has come up against the living reality of the South African revolution.

While the largest and most militant trade union and

youth organisations place socialist tasks on the agenda, the SACP responds with equivocation.

At the same time as applauding the spread of socialist ideas it howls about 'sectarian forces' who 'demand socialism now at the expense of the liberation movement.' (our emphasis)

Incapable of grasping revolutionary dialectics, these charlatans cannot understand that socialist ideas are spreading because they are rooted in the very crisis of apartheid-capitalism.

Trapped in their mecha-

nistic two-stage perspective, they close their eyes to the fact that socialist ideas are answering the immediate, material, objective needs of the overwhelming majority of the oppressed — the working class. Only the sowers of confusion preach to workers that the struggle for socialism is 'at the expense of the liberation movement'.

Over 65 years ago the Communist International, under Lenin and Trotsky, answered the misleading charge of 'socialism now', in the following way: 'It is not a question of proclaiming the final goal of the proletariat, but of intensifying the practical struggle. . . ' and: 'The fight for even the most modest demands grows into the fight for communism.'

STRUGGLE

The living experience of the struggle of the workers in COSATU and the youth in SAYCO and the thousands of militants in other organisations, has amply demonstrated that the struggle for consistent democracy 'grows into the fight for communism'. It is not, as the SACP would have it, simply a struggle for the spread of socialist ideas, but of intensifying the practical struggle against apartheid, which inevitably invokes democratic, transitional and socialist demands!

In South Africa, to paraphrase Marx, socialism will become an invincible material force when it is seized by the masses.

However, the SACP insists that its 1962 Programme 'still stands up to scrutiny', and that the aim of the first stage of the revolution is still to 'overthrow the colonialist state and establish an independent state of National Democracy'.

What this perspective fails to do is to explain the class nature of this intermediate regime, which the SACP insists will be an ANC government.

Did the Comintern, under Lenin and Trotsky, not clarify the Marxist position on

the state: 'We cannot speak of "pure democracy" as long as classes exist; we can only speak of class democracy,' and: 'So-called democracy, i.e. bourgeois democracy, is nothing but concealed dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.'

Was it not Lenin himself who argued that 'the passing of state power from one class to another is the first, the principal, the basic sign of revolution, both in the strictly scientific and practical political meaning of the term'?

The SACP doggedly refuses to call things by their name. It resists fighting for the dictatorship of the proletariat and soviet power, at this stage, but, at the same time, its leader Joe Slovo argues that once an ANC government has been installed, 'the continuing drive towards a socialist future. . . could well be settled in debate rather than in the streets' (!) and that given 'the predominance of advanced socialist forces' (!) in the national democratic state (read dictatorship of the bourgeoisie!) 'the new social relations of production (will) gradually tilt in favour of the state'!

No, Comrade Slovo, you have learnt too well the doctrine of Comrade Stalin! There is no way of avoiding the basic task of the proletariat to seize power and smash the bourgeois state; for 'the power of one class does not "grow over" from the power of another class but it is torn from it, rifle in hand.' (Trotsky) There is no peaceful, parliamentary road to socialism: this notion indeed is the logical outcome of the two-stage theory, but it is the antithesis of Bolshevism.

The workers of South Africa must be guided by the words of Marx: 'Make the revolution permanent, until all more or less possessing classes have been forced out of their position of dominance and the proletariat has conquered state power.' Like the party of the permanent revolution, the SACP must be the party of the permanent revolution.



Scene of a bombed out office in COSATU House.

Learn the world-wide lessons of Stalinist betrayal! Beware! The two stage conception will strangle the South African revolution!

The history of the struggle for socialism, since the Stalinist degeneration in the mid-1920s, reads like a catalogue of betrayals and defeats.

Today, in a number of different guises, Stalinism still represents the single most important ideological and political brake on the world-wide proletarian struggle.

The political policy of later-day Stalinism has deep roots in the tragedies of China in the 1920s and Spain, France and Germany in the 1930s.

In the mid-1920s the Chinese Communist Party, acting under orders from Stalin, submitted itself completely to the political leadership of the Kuomintang, the Chinese nationalist party.

It waived the right to propagate its own political ideas through its own independent publications. Every cardinal principle that Lenin consistently fought for was abandoned for the sake of honouring an 'historic alliance'.

The relationship between the SACP and the ANC, in virtually every respect, is a tragic replay of the relationship between the Chinese CP and the Nationalist Kuomintang.

Like the Stalinists of today, the abdication on the part of the Chinese CP to lead the liberation struggle was justified by the two-stage perspective. Whereas the SACP, following ANC policy, advocated the marching together of all democrats against apartheid, the Chinese CP, under orders from Moscow, had to march together in a 'block of four classes' against foreign domination.

The result of this disastrous policy of disarming the proletariat politically and organisationally was the massacre in Shanghai of thousands of Communists at the hand of the very 'allies' that Stalin forced them to merge with.

The tragic events of the Spanish revolution demonstrate with equal force the reactionary role played by Stalinism. The immediate task, so the argument went, was to unite all democratic forces in a Popular Front against the Fascists, in defence of the bourgeois democratic republic.

CLASS

The Spanish proletariat had other ideas; ideas that flowed entirely from the inexorable logic of the revolutionary class struggle. In many industrial cities it rose up, arms in hand, seizing factories and implemented other socialist measures.

Rather than giving this correct revolutionary instinct greater force and direction, the so-called vanguard Communist Party forcibly suppressed it. Here too, 'Turning Bolshevism upside down, Stalin carried out successfully the role of the grave-digger of the revolution'. (Trotsky)

Some may argue that the

events of China and Spain are not of direct relevance to the South African revolution. This is profoundly mistaken.

These political disasters were a product of the needs of the Stalinists' bureaucratic caste that entrenched its position on the basis of the theory of 'socialism in one country'.

Potential revolutionary success was turned into brutal defeat at the hands of the Fascists, the smashing of the organisations of the proletariat, and the horrible slaughter of the war. The disastrous policy of Stalin, socialism in one country, and its necessary corollary, the abandonment of Leninist internationalism, culminated in the dissolution of the Communist International, the world party of socialist revolution. The dire effects are still with us today.

The experience of Zimbabwe demonstrates quite clearly that the theory of socialism in one country, and the related theory of two-stages, is now part and parcel of contemporary petty-bourgeois nationalism.

There have been seven long years of 'national democracy' under the Mugabe government. The first 'stage' of the 'revolution' has seen the entrenchment of the rule of the bourgeoisie.

Suppress

Not only has the social position of the toiling masses, workers and poor peasants deteriorated, but their struggles have been suppressed by 'their own' popularly-elected government.

The protracted crisis in the economy, the muzzling of trade unions, the worsening plight of the majority of peasants, all these developments have unmasked 'national democracy' for what it really is: a neo-colonial, Bonapartist, capitalist state.

Yet the adaptability of the theory of stages appears to have no bounds — the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) still continues to speak of the transition to socialism, and last year became a Marxist-Leninist Party!

How fresh and true are Lenin's words that 'the dialectic of history is such that the theoretical victory of Marxism forces the enemies of Marxism to call themselves Marxists'. On South Africa's doorstep the rotten legacy of Stalinism has played itself out to the full.

Proletarian fighters, the South African revolution holds the key to the revolution in Southern Africa, and is a vital component of the world revolution.

Break the deadly stranglehold of the Stalinist perspective which persists in all continents. Break the crisis of revolutionary leadership. The world of imperialism, of which the crisis of apartheid-capitalism is an inextricable part, opens up new prospects and new opportunities which must be seized with both hands!

ROBSON'S CHOICE

No TV privatisation!

GLANCING references in the capitalist press regarding Thatcher's intention to privatise Channel Four may seem like loose talk at the present moment, but there is little doubt in my mind that such thoughts have a solid material base in the politics of state broadcasting.

Channel Four, wholly owned by the Independent Broadcasting Authority and financed largely by a levy on the profits of ITV companies, is obliged by its charter to cater for minority interests (minority views) and to transmit material generated by the 'independent' sector (as distinct from the main contractors, be they Granada TV, Yorkshire TV or any of the others).

These special provisions have created conditions without precedent in British television for the dissemination of socialist views — and not only of the reformist variety.

Pressure from below had obliged the BBC, years before, to dream up the 'community' programme known as 'Open Space' in which groups or individuals with a particular axe to grind could grind it in public with technical back-up from the BBC. For many years it was the only outlet for oppressed minorities and working class organisations to air their grievances, but it was done in the controlled way prescribed by the state.

The advent of 'franchised film and video workshops' and their adoption by Channel Four and the technicians union ACTT changed the face of British broadcasting in a radical way. Programmes could now be made — and transmitted — that would never have seen the light of day down Wood Lane or the Euston Road.

One of the first major political successes was Chris Reeves' 'The Cause of Ireland' which was shown in October 1983. It made the first class analysis of Ireland ever to be seen on television and despite minor, last minute commentary cuts, was transmitted as the authors intended. It had been produced by Platform Films, a franchised workshop, for Channel Four.

Last Monday, at 10.55p.m. also on Channel Four, you may have seen 'Suspect Community', an Irish Video Project production. It took a long, hard look at the so-called Prevention of Terrorism Act, and was lethally effective in showing it up for what it really is: a sophisticated information-gathering device of the state police.

At the time of going to press Channel Four could not provide statistics for this particular transmission but estimated that the programme would have been seen by 850,000 to 1 million viewers. For a programme of such persuasive power to reach an audience of this size must be of concern to the state because it seriously undermines its own tightly reg-

ulated campaign of misinformation.

To suppress this kind of material is not easy. The practice of 'self-censorship' which has worked so successful at the BBC for decades does not apply. Neither the IBA nor Channel Four are dealing with their own employees — in the case of franchised workshops — but with sub-contractors who enjoy a measure of support in the local communities whom they serve when they are not making programmes for television.

If the state decides, at some point in the future, to politically silence franchised workshops it will undoubtedly choose organisational or legislative means to do the job. Of the options open to it privatisation is the simplest and cleanest because it does away with subsidised workshops at a stroke. No explanations would have to be given for the 'regrettable' loss of small groups of dedicated programme-makers who couldn't make the grade when faced with 'new economic realities'.

Such a scenario, though not immediately on the agenda, cannot be discounted. It would be perfectly consistent with the type of legislative packages that the Tories will attempt to push through during their third successive term in office. All the more reason for treating these slender gains (the franchised workshops with access to Channel Four) with the utmost seriousness, and use them to the full as Ken Lynam and Don Magee of the Irish Video Project have done on this occasion.

* * *

ON **Saturday**, at 8.20p.m. (BBC2), Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers appear in the musical **Top Hat**. At 10p.m., also on BBC2, **Vanishing Earth** investigates the crisis in world agriculture. Viewers with a taste for bizarre, gothic fantasies can see Harry Kumel's **Malpertuis** at 1a.m. on Channel Four.

If anyone wishes to get a concentrated impression of sport in capitalist society, they need look no further

than the BBC's own 'Radio Times'. The introduction to the men's final on **Sunday** at 1.30p.m. (BBC2) is a classic of its kind. It says nothing about tennis, but compares increases in prize money with the escalating costs of London housing!

On **Radio 3**, at 5.30p.m., **The Historian Within** examines the effect of Marxism on British cultural life. Victor Kiernan, one of the contributors, displays his expertise with the following quotation: 'All historians are more or less Marxist, whether they call themselves Marxist or not'. I wonder if professors Hobsbaum and Hill go along with that.

The Struggles for Poland continues with episode five (7.15p.m. C-4), and at 7.45p.m. (BBC2), Tennessee Williams' **Streetcar Named Desire** in a new production. At 10.55p.m. on **Monday**, Channel Four presents **Hansworth Songs followed by Sanctuary Challenge**, in the series **Britain: The Lie of the Land**.

On **Tuesday**, at 6.25p.m. (BBC2), Fay Wray in the original version of **King Kong**. At 9p.m. (BBC2), the

first of a two part dramatisation of William Faulkner's **The Long Hot Summer**. At 9.20p.m. on Radio 3, and not to be missed, a US production of Woody Allen's play **God**: peopled by such famous Greek characters as Diabetes, Hepatitis, Bursitis etc. Very wisely, Woody Allen plays himself. At 9.30p.m. (BBC1), a 1974 production of Dennis Potter's play **Joe's Ark**.

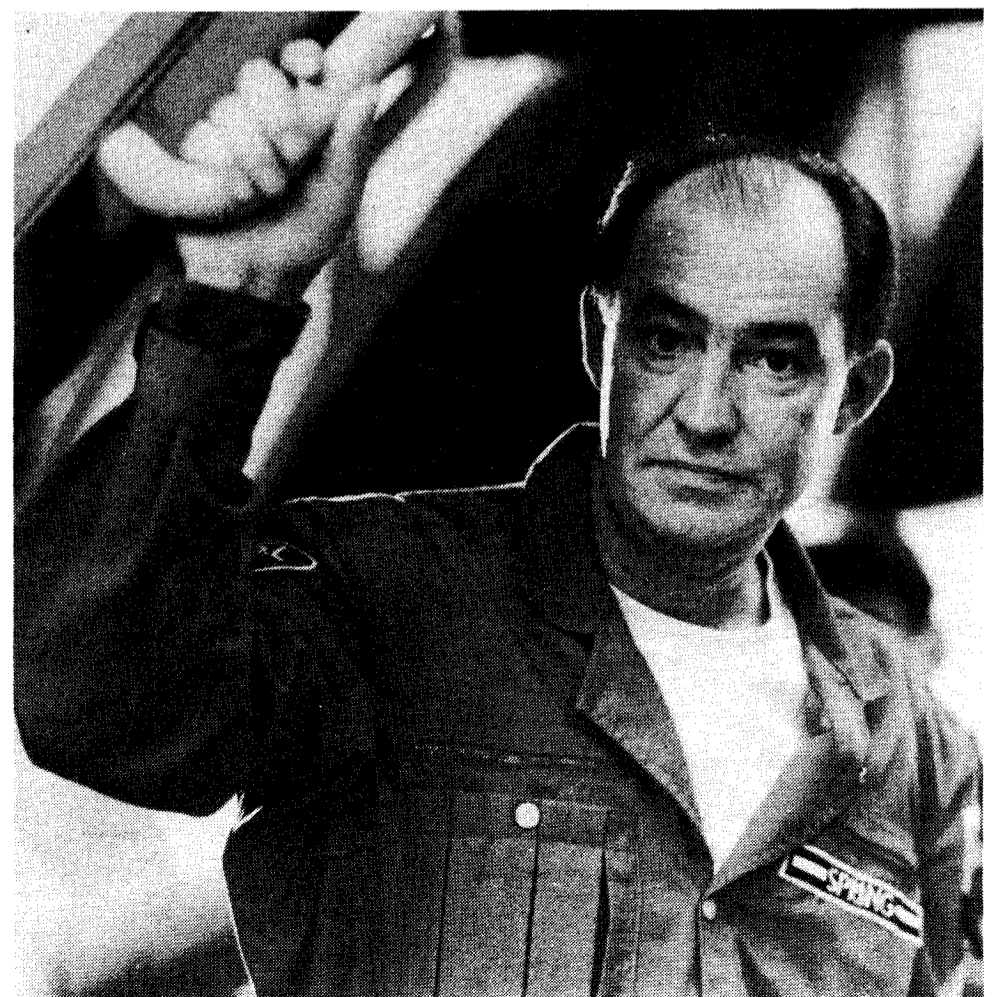
On **Wednesday**, at 8.30p.m. (C4), **Diverse Reports** takes a fresh look at the case of Colin Wallace, who served a six year prison sentence for manslaughter but has never ceased to protest his innocence. At 9.30p.m. (BBC2), part-two of **The Long Hot Summer**.

On **Thursday**, at 7.30p.m. (BBC2), **Eye to Eye** presents the first of six documentaries by black filmmakers. At 10.30p.m. (C4), **Point of Order**, the first in a season of the complete works of pioneer American documentary film-maker, Emile de Antonio. **Point of Order** reconstructs the so-called McCarthy hearings in 1954.

On **Friday**, at 10.30p.m. (BBC1), **Omnibus** presents a programme on George Gershwin. At 12p.m. (BBC2), an excellent RKO thriller called **The Window**.



A season of the complete works of documentary-maker Emile de Antonio starts with **Point of Order**, a dramatic and compelling account of the 1954 Army-McCarthy hearings that marked the downfall of senator Joseph R. McCarthy, **Thursday July 9 at 10.30pm, channel 4.**



David Calder as Nathan Spring in 'Star Cops', a new nine-part thriller series set in the future, **BBC2, begins on Monday, July 6**

**Build the Fourth International!
Build national sections in all
countries! Build a South African
Bolshevik party!**

South Korean climb down

BY A FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

SOUTH KOREAN dictator, President Chun, has been forced to bow before mass protests by students and sections of the working class and agree to direct presidential elections and other sweeping democratic reforms.

These measures include promises of press freedom, autonomy for local government and the release of many of the 2,000 political prisoners held by the Chun regime.

Opposition leaders warned that there should be no complacency: the country must remain on guard until a new president was elected.

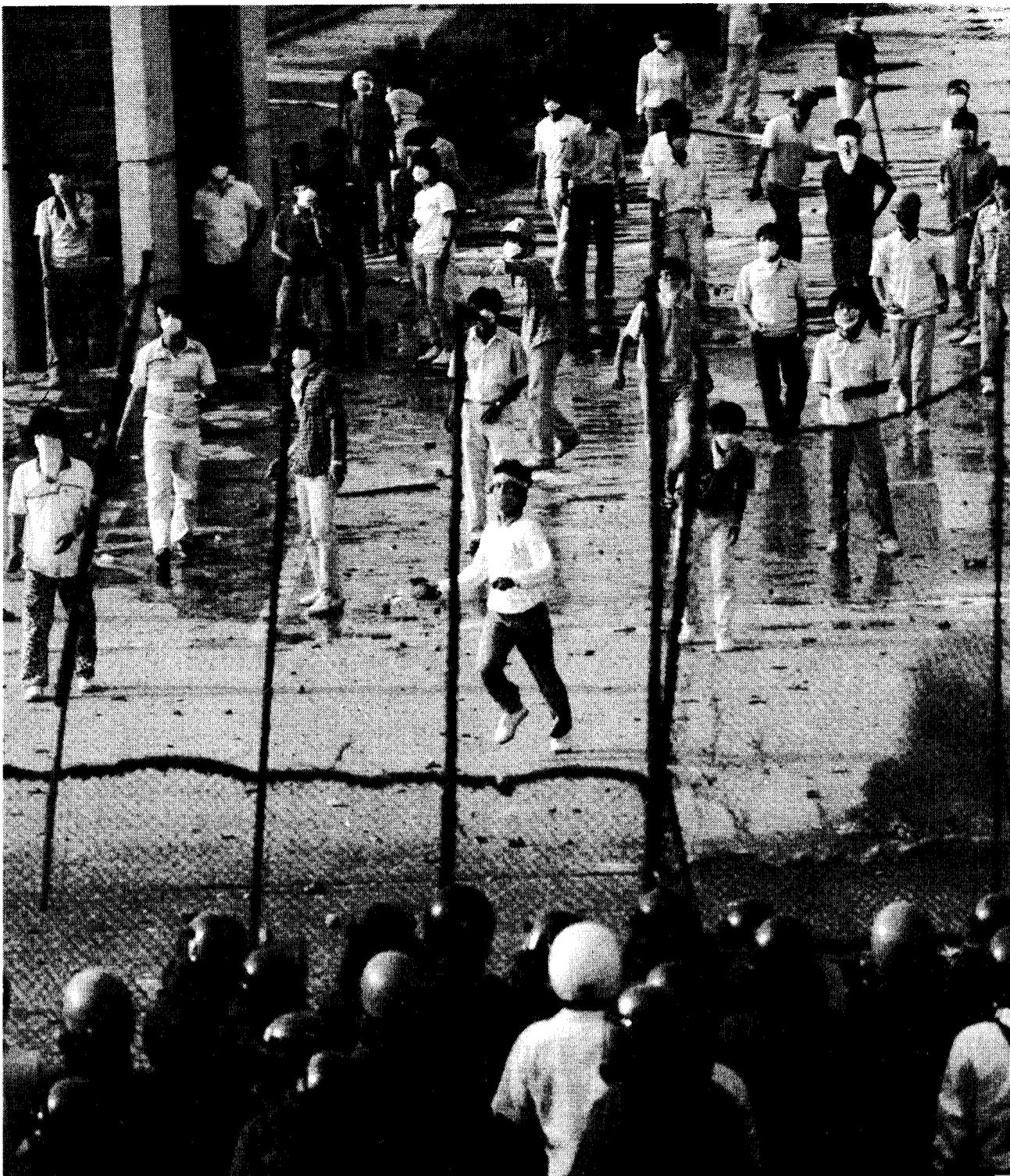
Chun has been forced to drop plans for an electoral college system of voting in a new president — a device designed to ensure that Chun's nominee would take the office.

Hundreds of thousands of people have poured into the streets over the last three weeks to demonstrate their

opposition to the present corrupt regime.

Riot police often found themselves unable to contain the demonstrations in the worst political violence since the military-backed Chun government took power in 1980.

During the last three weeks police admit to having used over 350,000 teargas



Students stone and charge riot police outside Seoul's Yonsei University.

canisters. Over 17,000 arrests were made since violence first erupted on 10 June.

Although students and other sections of the middle class played a prominent part in the struggles against the Chun government, their entry into politics indicates a deep movement in the working class.

At many of the Seoul demonstrations, drivers of halted vehicles honked their horns in support of the mass protests.

This is always the pattern: events in France, Spain, and

Greece this year have shown that as students enter political struggles the working class is not far behind.

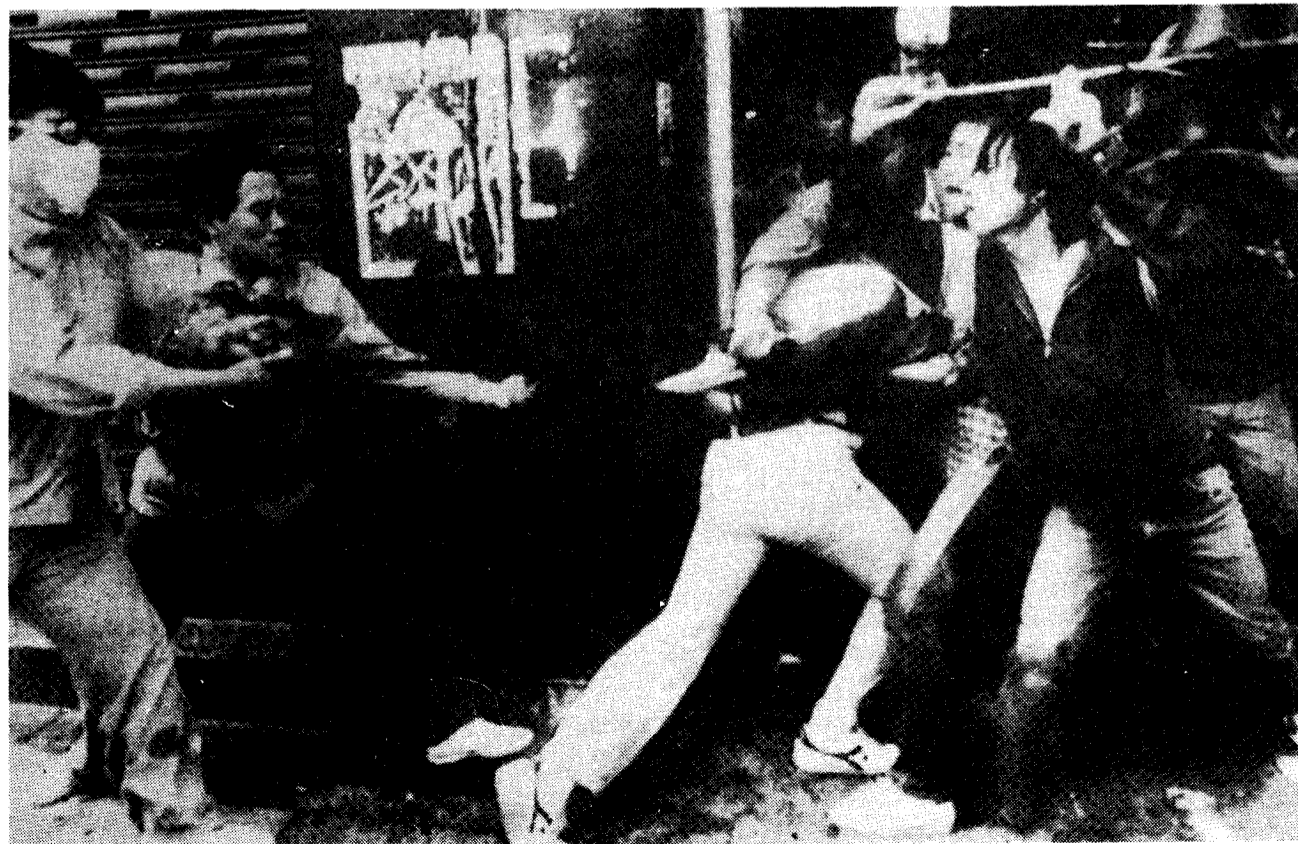
A key figure in forcing the reforms on to Chun was US Assistant Secretary of State Gaston Sigur. He was sent by Reagan to assess the situation and warn against a military crackdown.

Expressed here is of course no love of democracy but a deep-seated fear that the events in South Korea mark a new stage of an unfolding revolution throughout South-East Asia. In this respect the American ruling class are 100 per cent right.

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ing class, of women and youth, of developments in the Labour Party and Communist Party. . . We also need photographs — phone us on 01-733 3058 and discuss the best way to get them to us.



Police and students clash on the streets in Seoul.

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