



SUPPORT CHILEAN WORKERS



Chilean troops 'restore order'

The new Chilean military dictatorship is now torturing and executing thousands of socialist militants in improvised concentration camps around Santiago, in an attempt to crush the Chilean workers movement once and for all.

The Tory Government has chosen to ignore the indignation felt by the whole British labour movement at the ruthless brutality of the Chilean generals and has granted diplomatic recognition to this butchers' regime, even before the last gunshots have died out.

By Alf Jennings

These events have had a big impact on the British working class movement. The death of the cherished parliamentary road in Chile has shaken the left of the labour movement in a way that the murders by British imperialism in Ireland have failed to do.

On Monday, a meeting that included delegates from the Transport and General Workers Union, the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers, the London Trades Council, the National Union of Students, the Communist Party and the International Marxist Group, decided to set up the Chile Solidarity Campaign Committee, which will campaign for solidarity with all those fighting the Junta.

The meeting also called for the creation of broad based local campaign committees in every area to mobilise for a projected national solidarity demonstration in London in

early November.

These committees must take as their central task mobilisation for the November demonstration. But this can best be done if there is a high degree of awareness throughout the labour movement on the question of Chile. It is therefore essential to launch a massive propaganda campaign, and to organise local actions around such things as the blacking of all Chilean trade and stopping of work on the Chilean warships being built or re-fitted in this country.

The T&GWU has called for an international boycott of Chilean trade. The Hull dockers have already imposed a ban on all Chilean trade passing through their port. T&G members should not organise systematic blacking at every single dock and airport in the country.

Britain is busy working on warships for Chile. On Wednesday, a Chilean submarine was launched at Scott-Lithgow's on the

Clyde. The ceremony was boycotted by the workers, and over 70 people, including IMG militants, and workers from UCS, picketed the gates and the reception. The Wallsend Labour Party and South Shields Trades Council have called for the blacking of work on the two Chilean destroyers being re-fitted at Wallsend. Over 100 people, including IMG members

from several parts of the North, marched to the yard last Saturday.

Many of the workers in the shipyards are reluctant to black the warships for fear of redundancy and victimisation. They are not sufficiently aware of the importance of international working class solidarity to put these fears aside. This problem can be met by mobilising the trade union movement to pledge full practical support for any workers attacked for blacking work or goods for Chile.

These military contracts indicate the ties that exist between the Chilean military and British imperialism. It is not surprising that the Tory Government was so eager to recognise the new regime. But if the Generals have their friends among the British ruling class, we must show the embattled Chilean workers and peasants that they also have loyal comrades here on whom they can count.

CAR WORKERS UP AGAINST THE PAY BOARD

As we go to press, the 160 electricians at Chrysler's Coventry plants seem to be settling in for a long strike, despite Chrysler's attempts to break the strike by threatening to sack 8,000 workers and permanently cut operations, if the electricians do not settle.

This threat will only increase the pressure which Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones have been putting on the Electricians Union. The working class must be absolutely clear on the issues involved at Chrysler. The future of trade unionism in the combine, as well as the fight against the Tory Pay Board, is at stake.

Certainly, the claim of local electricians leaders that they are not fighting the Pay Board, only the company, has alienated support. This has made it much easier for Scanlon and Jones, who understand that the objective dynamic of the struggle is against the Pay Board, to force their members to scab, thereby destroying even the most basic trade union principles. Only the workers at Linwood have disobeyed these orders. Right wingers like Frank Chapple will draw a lesson from all this. They will point out correctly that

the pious motions moved by the 'lefts' at Blackpool, are so much hot air when these same leaders are prepared to smash his electricians into the ground.

The Right will say that this shows the utter futility of any principled stand against the Pay Board. But only by transforming the Chrysler struggle into a conscious fight against the Pay Board, will it be possible to avert further damage to the struggle against the Pay Laws, let alone to trade unionism at Chrysler.

If a legacy of bitterness is to be avoided, it will only now be through action by the rest of the working class. Unity in struggle against the Pay Board can best be proposed to the Chrysler workers by those other groups of workers, such as those at British Leyland striking directly against the Pay Board, and those like the Hull dockers who are planning similar strikes themselves.

Those, such as the Communist Party, who continue to urge reliance on the 'left' bureaucrats to lead the fight against the Pay Laws, are only paving the way for further disasters.

Dave Bailey Full Story - Page 3

Revolutionaries Raided

Early on Tuesday morning, (Sept. 25th), seven special branch detectives raided the premises of Workers Fight, the small Trotskyist group. They took away lists of addresses of subscribers to WF publications. The warrant for the raid was issued under the Criminal Damages Act, and was obtained at Bow Street Magistrates Court on Monday.

The harassment of Workers Fight is undoubtedly a result of the princ-

ipled stand they have taken in solidarity with Irish Republicans, despite the ever increasing witch-hunt. In this respect Workers Fight contrasts sharply with most of the British left. Red Weekly unhesitatingly declares that if support for the struggle to smash British Imperialism in Ireland is a crime, then we should also stand in the dock. We call on the British left, and the Labour Movement to organise defence for all the victims of the current Police persecution.

FIGHT THE BAN ON THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE

SPEAKER: PIERRE ROUSSET (former member of Political Bureau of the Communist League)

Pierre Rousset was recently released from prison after serving a two month jail sentence arising out of the banning of the League and the raid on its headquarters by the French police.

Monday - 8 October - 7:30 p.m.

Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, London WC1.

ADWEST VICTORY

CURRENT ACCOUNT

The sit-in strike at Adwest in Reading which has held out since the 20th of August, has won significant concessions. After Union/Management negotiations on Monday and Tuesday, the workers accepted the deal which emerged.

They will get an across the board increase of £4.00 per week, which will be kept within Pay Board restrictions through alterations to the bonus system, flexibility and merit payments. As a step towards equal pay women workers will receive up to £2.00 in addition to this £4.00.

A formulation on job security was agreed as follows: 'no machinery, plant or work to be moved without mutual agreement'. In practice the shop stewards will block the transfer of work unless it will be carried out under the same conditions, and wage rates as at Reading. The work force will be increased from its present 400-450 to 660. And there will be a guaranteed new investment scheme of approximately £1 million.

However there will not be a return to work until the workers at Western Thompson receive parity. This adjacent factory, which is part of the Adwest group, was out in sympathy, and has always had the same conditions in the past.

This victory was won by the determination and militant tactics of the strikers. They faced hostility from the local press, especially after the industrial reporter of the *Reading Post* was taken to the Press Council by the management for 'biased' reporting. And AUEW officials did not pay out strike pay until last Friday.

The struggle at Adwest has significance for workers throughout the Reading area, where speculation in land sales has created a growing threat of factory closures and redundancies.

P. O'SULLIVAN

Wandsworth 3 Move on

The victimisation of the Wandsworth 3 has undergone further developments. The 3 were originally charged with unprofessional conduct following a meeting at Central Hall which broke up in chaos after the EC refused to hear a motion which had been properly put and circulated. Now the 3 face further charges for refusing to keep the proceedings of the union hearing secret.

Immediately after the first charges were brought, a Wandsworth 3 Defence Committee was established. It has argued that the chaos at Central Hall was due to the EC's unwillingness to lead a serious fight for the Pay Claim.

The bureaucracy, aware that the militants were getting large support, had to check this. It is this which lies behind the further victimisation, and the decision of the EC to remove the right of local NUT branches to call strikes.

The Defence Committee understands that the best way to defend the 3 is to mobilise the mass of the teachers, on the victimisation issue, and also in opposition to their bureaucratic decisions on the salaries claim, and local autonomy.

It is not surprising that the refusal of the 3 to observe the secrecy clause has evoked yet more charges. The teachers are again taking up the question of the London Allowance, there is a new wage claim in the pipeline, and with Phase 3 coming up, the militants will be drawing on the experience of the London allowance campaign.

The success of the Defence Committee in mobilising sections of the teachers has intimidated the EC. They face a dilemma. They are forced to suppress the militants, but this generates opposition not only to the victimisation but to their handling of the pay claims and other issues.

The Defence Committee's tactics have proved correct; they must now continue to mobilise mass support for the 3. Every association should set up a sub-committee to assist the Defence Committee in publicising the case in every area. The Defence of the Wandsworth 3 is a vital preparation of the NUT membership for the political fight against Phase 3.



Adwest workers outside the gates. Pickets such as this helped win.

...but setback at Tampax

AUEW workers at the Tampax factory near Havant have returned to work after a six week strike, without the Union recognition they were struggling for. The decision was taken by a very small majority, at a meeting of both the remaining strikers and the scabs who had returned to work. This 'democratic vote' was a manoeuvre by the AUEW District Committee. Neither willing to conduct an effective blacking campaign, nor to order a return to work, the DC attempted to put the onus of defeat upon its members.

It was clear early in the strike, that production would not be stopped. Mainly fitters and maintenance men were involved, and most of the production line workers remained at work. Only a consistent blacking campaign and the kind of mass pickets proposed by Havant Trades Council could have won the strike.

In such situations the use of the mass picket is essential to overcome the isolation of small groups of workers. It was to prevent the use of such tactics that the employers brought in sixty Policemen to clear a path for scab lorries, and arrested three pickets.

With a national engineers strike on the agenda the lessons of Tampax are clear. It will be necessary to conduct a campaign of mass pickets and the organisation of support from Trade Unionists and other sections of the population. Tampax has clearly illustrated that this cannot be left to chance, and that it will be necessary for Shop Stewards and other militants to take up the job that the District Committee failed to do.

PORTSMOUTH IMG

LEFT WOMEN GATHER FORCES

Over 300 Marxist women in the Women's Liberation Movement met in London for their second conference last weekend.

One of the central debates which occupied them, was the issue of the 'autonomy' of the Women's Movement. Discussion on this tended to focus on whether or not 'dual' membership is legitimate, when some revolutionary organisations treat the WLM as a recruiting ground. However this is a false dilemma.

The overall task of the Movement is to develop the self-activity of a certain social stratum, i.e. particular groups of women, while the task of a revolutionary organisation is to provide political leadership (as distinct from organisational domination). The central question however is autonomy not from politics or political groups but from the institutions of the capitalist state.

The question was asked, why have many of the campaigns, on such issues as child care, night cleaners unionisation, and family allowances, not gone beyond partial success? Lacking any analysis of the strategy of the government towards issues, such as family allowances and nurseries, reforms tend to diffuse the movement's political energy rather than allowing it to build further.

Yet some of the socialist women in the WLM still allow that movement to be walled off by the male chauvinism prevalent in working class organisations. Although a number of small breakthroughs have been registered on this front, many socialist women do not yet see the struggle against male chauvinism in the workers organisation as a strategic task of the movement.

As to the future, many of the workshops showed an interest in particular issues. One workshop for example agreed that local groups should take up the issue of rising prices as a means of transforming private battles within the working class family into a political struggle against the government. But the plenary session discussed only topics for future conferences rather than priorities for action now, and these topics were not chosen in the light of discussion about the present political conjuncture.

This does not simply reflect political disagreements amongst the revolutionary groups, but the ability of the socialist women to challenge the established reflexes of the movement.

FIONA McGUINNESS

FUND DRIVE LATEST...

It looks as if this month's Red Weekly Fighting Fund will end up very near the mark. With almost a week to go until the end of the month we have received a total of just under £250. Only £50 more to go for our £300 target! With just a little extra effort from our readers and supporters we can reach the target this month. So don't hoard your spare change or sit on your cheque books - send in a donation to the Fighting Fund today and help make the Red Weekly a better paper.

The Chilean crisis has placed a big burden on Red Weekly: we must devote plenty of space to examining the lessons of this great tragedy, and we will be in the forefront of the campaign in this country to organise solidarity with the Chilean workers and peasants. That will require even greater resources on our part. Part of your international solidarity with the Chilean struggle should be to support the paper that backs that struggle for all its worth - Red Weekly.

PHASE THREE & THE THIRST FOR PROFIT

Within a week the Tory government will have to announce its detailed plans for Phase 3 of its all-out attack on the wages and conditions of the working class (officially known as the 'anti-inflation policy'), which is due to come into force on November 1. In the past week startling economic news has revealed how the condition of capitalism in Britain makes it urgent that this attack be stepped up.

Apart from a disastrous set of new trade figures which sent the value of the pound tumbling once again, there is a much more alarming piece of news. The total value of national production, after rising for a year at about 4 per cent (the so-called 'boom'), actually fell between the first two quarters of this year. The Tories' 'commitment to growth' has in the last six months actually produced economic decline. This is not too surprising given that the purchasing power of the working class has been severely reduced by the wage laws, and investment has never recovered from the previous slump of 1970-71.

OUTPUT AND PROFITS

But declining output is the worst possible news for the Tories Phase 3 strategy. With output rising rapidly (as it was up to about March) it was possible, by halting the rise in real wages and then reducing them under the Phase 1 and Phase 2 formulas, to allow all the increase in the value of production to accrue to profits. As a result the share of profits in the national income, which had been halved between 1964 and 1970, and had failed to recover up to the end of 1972, increased somewhat in the first half of this year. The share in 1972 was about 10½ per cent; in the first half of 1972 it was over 11 per cent.

This increase, which is also seen in soaring profit figures for a number of individual companies, has partly been made possible by the generous treatment of profits under the Phase 2 regulations. Firms are able to raise their prices in line with increases in their costs (or at least most of them) and so get some semi-automatic protection for their profit margins. But what has mostly accounted for profit margins shooting up is not this, but rather the rapid jump in output which lasted from the middle of 1972 until March of this year: this has allowed productivity to rise and fixed overhead costs to be spread over higher output thus reducing average costs. If this growth in output is not going to continue then the price and profit regulations which have existed in Phase 2 will not be sufficient to increase profit margins any further.

A TOUGH PHASE

Yet the capitalists' thirst for higher profitability is in no way curbed. It would be very dangerous to think that the last nine months of enormous profit increases significantly eases the pressure on capital and makes it more likely that higher wage demands will be granted. Too much emphasis on the recent profits bonanza can only reduce the preparedness of the working class for the coming intensification of the Tories' attack on its wages and conditions.

Phase 3 therefore can be expected to be even tougher on wages than Phase 2, either through keeping wages down even more, or through allowing even wider loopholes for raising prices to increase profitability. The sell-out of the struggle against Phase 2 has only paved the way for the Tories to launch an even harder attack. That is the lesson for the coming struggle against Phase 3.

Michael Price

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HEATH-COSGRAVE: OUT WITH THE OLD

Out with the old, outmoded, two months old Northern Ireland Assembly, in with the new, dynamic, fifty three year old Council of Ireland! That was the message from Edward Heath and Liam Cosgrave, after their recent talks at Casement Military Aerodrome near Dublin.

We can discount press speculation that Heath flew in to smooth over the Littlejohn affair. No British Prime Minister is going to get embarrassed about being caught infiltrating secret agents who are merely accused of robbing banks and blowing up a few colonists. Mr Heath had far more serious problems on his mind. He has recognised, after two years, that his government's policy for solving the Irish problem is in ruins, and cannot be salvaged.

COUNCIL OF IRELAND

The actual achievements of the talks were slender enough; no agreement was reached on any of the three main issues which were discussed. Heath wanted a Council of Ireland to be set up only after the creation of an Executive for the Northern Ireland Assembly. Cosgrave insisted on progress towards the Executive and the Council of Ireland being pursued simultaneously. Heath did not want to discuss Cosgrave's views on the powers and functioning of the Council until after the Executive had been set up. Cosgrave would not agree to Heath's proposal for a definite date for talks between Dublin, London, the Faulkner Unionists and the SDLP. But what was most significant was the fact that the Council of Ireland was broached as a subject for serious negotiation.

The concept of a Council of Ireland was first put forward in the Government of Ireland Act, 1920. It was to be a means of joint discussion, and action on common problems between the two states created by the Act - 'Southern Ireland' and 'Northern Ireland'. It was also to be a means of eventual re-unification between them. In the event 'Southern Ireland' never happened, and 'Northern Ireland' chose not to implement the proposal. For fifty three years the Council of Ireland has been a footnote in the history books.

Whitelaw's Green Paper of October 1972, now sinking slowly into oblivion, resurrected the Council of Ireland, but it was a cloud no bigger than a man's hand: 'If the Republic of Ireland is prepared to recognise its role in the matter joint negotiations should be commenced to establish a new Council of Ireland as a consultative and deliberative body, charged with the task of exploring areas of mutual co-operation for the benefit of all who live in Ireland.'

But in the White Paper (March 1973) the cloud had begun to take on significant dimensions.

'Accordingly, following the elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Government will invite the Government of the Republic of Ireland, and the leaders of the elected representatives of Northern Ireland opinion to participate with them in a conference to discuss how the three objectives set out in the Paper for Discussion may best be pursued, that is:

'a) the acceptance of the present status of Northern Ireland, and of the possibility - which would have to be compatible with the principle of consent of subsequent change in that status.

'(b) effective consultation and co-operation in Ireland for the benefit of North and South alike; and

'(c) the provision of a firm basis for concerted governmental and community action against terrorist organisations.'

NEW POLICY

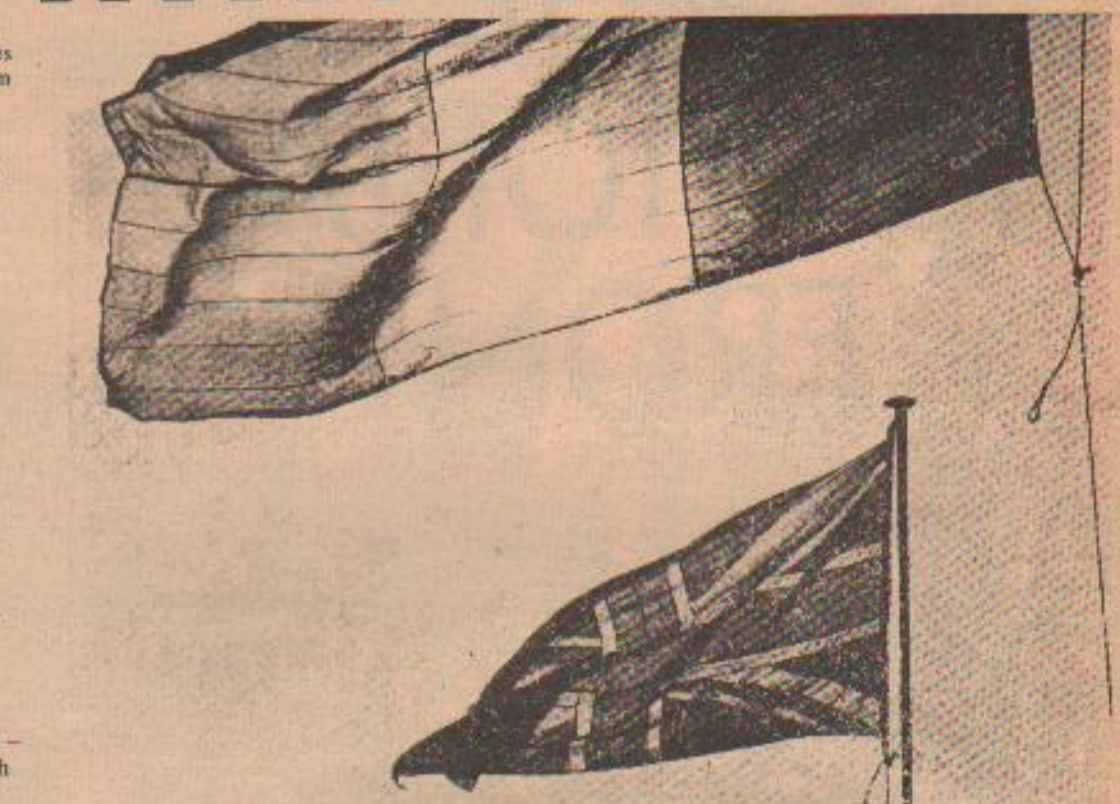
In working out a new policy the British government has fairly limited options. Not only has it failed to quell the Catholic revolt, it has failed to hold together the Unionist Party as a reserve force to safeguard British interests. This was the inevitable result of Direct Rule, which created a contradiction between the two main elements of Unionism - the Protestant ascendancy and the union with Britain.

The Assembly was designed to piece together a viable fragment of the Unionist Party which, led by Faulkner, would preserve the Union and salvage some shreds of the Ascendancy. But the split has gone too far: the decision of the 'unpledged' Unionists to form an alliance with Paisley and Craig has scuppered Faulkner's hopes of winning over enough of the 'unpledged' bloc to form a stable Executive with the SDLP. Indeed, the most probable result of a Faulkner SDLP Executive would be to create a split in the Faulkner camp itself.

With the demise of the Unionist Party, British imperialism has to decide whether or not to accept that the Unionists have been irretrievably swept aside, and that the Protestant Ascendancy must go with them into oblivion. The message of Casement Aerodrome is that British Imperialism will now turn towards the last remaining bastion of bourgeois order in Ireland - the Coalition Government in the South. This implies a policy of British disengagement from Ireland.

INTEGRATION

It is true that there is another alternative -



and Heath posed it in his press conference immediately after the talks - the integration of Northern Ireland into Britain. However he pulled this kite down very quickly when it became clear that neither the British Labour Party, nor the Dublin government would go along with it.

There is an outside chance that the Tories could go for integration - it would fit in most easily with traditional Conservative thinking on the Irish question. Such a course would mean an immense stepping up of military repression against the Catholic minority, and it should be prepared for. But the implications of such a move would be very serious. It would mean that the bi-partisan policy with the Labour Party would be broken, and there would be a rift with the Southern bourgeoisie. It is unlikely that the Conservative government would be prepared to accept such consequences.

ALL-IRELAND CRISIS

A Council of Ireland therefore emerges as the most probable means of effecting British disengagement, and a shift towards reliance on the Southern ruling class. But such a shift in policy

is not a solution to the Irish crisis - merely the possible policy with the least drastic connotations.

This re-orientation will not be implemented immediately. Such is the complexity of the present situation that the Tories can only move slowly and carefully towards disengagement. They will have to confront a fiercer Protestant resistance than they have yet faced and it will take a long and painful period of strife before the Protestant workers accept the final demise of the Ascendancy.

In the longer term the consequences are more serious still, since disengagement implies an unproved assumption - namely that the Southern ruling class can do the job. In fact, the likely result of a policy of British disengagement would be to turn the crisis in the North into an all-Ireland crisis, combining the contradictions of the Northern and Southern states and creating an all-Ireland struggle in which the fight to overthrow the last vestige of British domination of Ireland would be the central element.

BOB PURDIE

CRISIS IN THE CAR INDUSTRY

The threat this week by Chrysler U.K. to sack 8,000 workers if the strike by 156 electricians at Coventry does not end, is the climax of the hot autumn in the car industry brought about by the Tory pay laws.

Under the pressure of pay restraint, car workers are sick of lay-offs and loss of wages. Most groups of car workers have an agreement whereby lay-off money is paid in the case of external disputes. Managements therefore provoke internal disputes so as to avoid paying. The Vauxhall workers on Merseyside have replied to provocations by demanding 70% lay-off pay in disputes involving other unions in the combine. Future lay-offs will be met with occupation of the plant, say the stewards.

Occupation is precisely what happened at Ford's last week. A black worker was sacked after hitting a foreman; 250 men in his section stopped work, and 4,000 body plant men faced lay-off. Immediately a militant group of 600 workers stormed the plant, closing it down and demanding a guaranteed weekly wage irrespective of the cause of stoppage.

This was the result of a decision by Shop Stewards to resist the next lay-off, following a victory two weeks earlier, when a night-shift had blockaded the management offices. They forced the payment, for the first time ever, of a day's pay for a lay-off caused by an internal dispute.

CHRYSLER

The Chrysler dispute has different origins, but the Pay Laws have turned it into a national set-

piece battle, with the reputations of Jones and Scanlon as 'left' trade union leaders a step nearer the grave.

The Chrysler management agreed last year that electricians at Coventry should be transferred to staff status, which would mean an extra £250 a year. The Freeze prevented payment, and electricians are now demanding that the transfer should take place this year, as part of the 1973 pay deal now being negotiated with Chrysler production workers. Under this the rise would be backdated to July 1st.

But Chrysler are using the Pay Laws to refuse the electricians their transfer to staff status. They will pay the electricians the Phase 2 limit on their earnings - £190 a year - as part of a normal annual settlement, but will not transfer. Although the EPTU is prepared to accept the Pay Laws, the £60 would have to be paid at a later date, backdated to July 1; and would thus serve as a guide for the demands of the other Chrysler workers, currently in negotiation.

The EPTU officials have claimed that it is not a strike against the Pay Board. Frank Chapple said at Blackpool: 'We will not take action against the Government if the Pay Board vetoes any "above norm rises" that Chrysler concedes.' It was not a dispute with the Government, but an attempt to get Chrysler to honour a long-standing agreement. Initially misled by their leaders into believing that the £250 was within the legal maximum, the electricians have not strongly enough challenged this approach of the EPTU leaders and changed the politics of the dispute.

TRADE UNION PRINCIPLES

Other groups of car industry workers have faced a similar situation, with companies rattling on deals under cover of the Pay Board. At Dunlop, the 3,300 maintenance engineers have been on strike, trying to get the company to agree that the £1.95 stopped by the Pay Board should be paid when the law allows, and that it be backdated to April 1973. One steward said: 'It is better to have a direct dispute with the company, because if it is against the government, then our people would say that we have no chance.' Although few groups of workers will consciously meet the Pay Board head on, Chapple was wrong to tell his members that they could win a moral victory on their own; they need the support of other workers.

At Coventry there was support, on the basis of trade union principle, when Millwrights (one of whom was assaulted by strikebreakers during the 'shoddy work' dispute) refused to cross the EPTU picket lines. At Ryton and Stoke, engineers refused to work machines repaired by blacklegs and many T&G internal lorry drivers refused to cross the picket lines. Finally, the 7,000 Linwood workers struck in solidarity with the electricians. But there was not time to develop political support for a fight with the Pay Board, in the interests of all workers.

The AUEW and T&G bureaucrats made sure that the workers were not given the necessary time. Under cover of Chapple's statements about not fighting the Pay Board, Jones ordered the internal lorry drivers to cross the picket lines. Under the agreement, only action

by drivers qualifies production workers for lay-off pay. Later, instructions were given to production workers to work machines repaired by scab supervisors and electricians. Far from turning the strike into a fight against the Pay Board, and building a political unity of the workers, Scanlon and Jones set about sabotaging even the most elementary trade union solidarity and principles.

TURN THE TIDE

Only at Linwood did the production workers disobey the EC's instructions and continued to black the machines. After the temporary return to work at Linwood this week, Chrysler have made sacking threats, determined to smash the electricians into submission. But it is not too late for the workers to go on the counter-offensive. At British Leyland, Longbridge, 9,000 workers have been striking in protest against the Pay Board's ruling that they can only be awarded £2.42 of a recent agreement. This fight should be linked to the fight at Chrysler.

While the bureaucrats are sharpening their knives with the management, the electricians' stewards should quickly gather all available forces, especially the British Leyland workers, for a drive against the Pay Board. If the car industry is running to a halt, the working class should turn the results of this widespread industrial action to lasting use - turn it into a political initiative against the Pay Board even before the Tories get the chance to impose Phase 3.

DAVE BAILEY

STOP THE NATIONAL FRONT!



National Front boss Martin Webster chats with his natural allies

The immediate prospects for British capitalism are very bleak. At the same time the fighting mood of the working class in the face of spiralling inflation and the Tories' pay laws places massive problems before the Government and the employers. The possibilities for buying time or taking some of the pressure off through a deal with the trade union 'leaders' are virtually non-existent.

Almost the only immediate option for the Tory government is to launch an all-out attack on the working class and build up the power of the state machine in order to push through a solution of the problems of capitalism at the expense of the working class. But the government must first acquire for itself some form of mass support for the coming struggle. The Tories lack this at present. The recent electoral successes by both the Liberals and the National Front show that the Tory government—representative of big capital—has lost the support of many small capitalists and members of the petty bourgeoisie.

One means of winning back the support of such groups, and at the same time sowing divisions within the working class, will be the use of racism by the ruling class. Recent actions and statements by the Tory government and the agents of the capitalist state—the 'retrospective' interpretation of the Immigration Act, the witch-hunt for 'illegal' immigrants (complete with fanfare from the capitalist press), the stepping up of police attacks against blacks, the Pakistan Act—makes it clear that such a move is well under way.

It is in such an atmosphere that fascist groupings can begin to gather support. By playing on racist ideas and laying all the problems felt by the middle layers and the working class at the door of the black people in this country, they can gather around them an initial striking force. They will put forward apparently 'radical' policies and adopt militant methods in order to pose as a real alternative to the increasingly bankrupt courses of the major political parties.

They are, however, nothing more than the spearhead of the ruling class offensive. Their real role

will be to fight arm-in-arm with the police and other agents of the capitalist state to decisively weaken the organisations of the working class and completely destroy the ability of the working class to resist the imposition of a capitalist solution to the economic crisis.

The recent spate of racist laws and court rulings have given organisations like the National Front a major weapon which they intend to exploit to the fullest in the next few months. It is urgent that the National Front is stopped in its tracks now, before it can grow into a dangerous force with mass influence.

The need for this is already recognised by a section of the trade union movement. The following motion was recently adopted by the London Cab Drivers in the Transport and General Workers' Union, and has since been endorsed by Region 1 of the T&G, and the T&G National Executive:

'That the Cab Trade Committee view the large increase in votes for the National Front Party in the recent GLC and Borough elections with alarm. We call on the TGWU, TUC and Labour Party to mount a campaign exposing the National Front as a fascist organisation who have connections with certain Tory anti-trade unionists in Parliament, pointing out the disastrous effects that fascism and racialism had in the 1930s in Europe, which could be repeated in this country now.

It is important that this awareness is translated into action against the fascist groups. The National Front will be holding their Annual General Meeting on 13 October. This will be an important meeting for them, designed to boost the morale of the members and draw publicity to their cause. It must be an equally important meeting for the working class movement: an occasion to show united opposition to all forms of racism and fascism, and to expose the hollow claims of the National Front to speak for the victims of British capitalism. A mass picket of the conference must be mounted with the broadest participation of the trade union and labour movement. The real alternative to the capitalist crisis is not the National Front and its racist demagoguery but the power of the organised working class.

The revolutionary movement has a long history in the struggle against fascism. Leon Trotsky, the co-leader of the Russian revolution along with Lenin, devoted a major portion of his writings to the struggle against fascism in Germany and in Spain.

The experience of the Socialist Workers Party in combating fascism in the US is also well worth reviewing. The SWP's most extensive activity in this area took place in 1939 and 1946; it also organised a campaign against George Lincoln Rockwell's Nazi group in 1960.

The 1939 anti-fascist campaign of the SWP was carried out in close collaboration with Trotsky, who was living in Mexico at that time. Although small fascist groups existed in the US throughout the 1930s, the continued deepening of the social crisis and the growth of fascism in Europe, especially with Franco's victory in Spain, resulted in a rapid expansion of these groups in 1939.

THE 'RADIO PRIEST'

By the middle of 1939 there were nearly 800 fascist or near-fascist organisations in the US. The most significant of these was the movement organised by Father Charles Coughlin, the Radio Priest. Coughlin's weekly magazine, *Social Justice*, claimed a circulation of hundreds of thousands. His speeches were carried regularly over 48 radio stations, reaching an audience of millions.

Coughlin mixed the crudest anti-Semitism, race-baiting, anti-communism, and anti-trade unionism with radical-sounding rhetoric, promising peace, social justice, and even revolution. His movement attracted tens of thousands of unemployed workers and young people driven to despair by the depression and the coming war.

Like fascist demagogues the world over, Coughlin attempted to divert the bitterness and anger of the masses away from capitalism, which was responsible for their situation, towards scapegoats such as radicals, Jews, and the union movement.

But the Coughlinites didn't stop with hate campaigns. Emulating Hitler's Brown Shirts, they went out into the streets, beating Jews and attacking meetings and headquarters of working class organisations.

While Coughlin was openly aided by the apparatus of the Catholic Church, which refused to disavow his activities, fascism began to assume a more peculiarly American form as well. In Jersey City, Mayor Frank Hague gained nationwide notoriety through his use of the police and non-uniformed gangs of thugs. Hague was a machine politician who decided he could build his political future on attacks against the union movement and radicals. Union picket lines were attacked, as were meetings of socialists and even of the American Civil Liberties Union. This was the alternative the capitalist class in the US held in reserve in the event that it became unable to stem the rising labour radicalisation of the 1930s through other means.

CLASS-COLLABORATION

But the Communist Party and the Socialist Party were unable to explain this simple truth to the working class. They were both supporting Franklin Roosevelt, and they counselled workers to rely on the government to fight the fascist menace, both at home and abroad. This policy of class collaboration, instead of the self-reliance of the working class, was opposed by the SWP.

When the German-American Bund called for a mass rally at New York's Madison Square Garden in February 1939, the SWP took the initiative in rousing the workers in their own defence. The Socialist Party of Norman Thomas and the Communist Party not only refused to join with the SWP in a united front action against the fascists; they even refused to print a word about the demonstration. Three of New York's major Jewish newspapers joined with Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia's deputy, Newbold Morris, to urge people to boycott the anti-fascist demonstration.

However, through a fortunate coincidence, the attempts to sabotage the demonstration failed, and the fascists were not allowed to meet unopposed. The *Daily News*, a reactionary daily with a circulation in the millions, took the opportunity of the demonstration called by the SWP to take its distance from Coughlin. It reprinted the leaflet for the anti-fascist rally, and gave it additional coverage. Fifty thousand people turned out at the demonstration, refusing to disband in the face of repeated police attacks.

The 24 February, 1939, issue of the *Socialist Appeal* (the paper of the SWP at that time) reported that 'as the militants disbanded,

As the social crisis of capitalism... long history of fighting fascism... 'The Militant' we look at the



An armed squad of the Chilean fascists. 'The

AMERICA

along about midnight, the Tuesday edition of the *Daily Worker* appeared on the street. Unbelievable as it sounds, while the Stalinist sheet had a report of what went on inside the Garden at the Nazi meeting, it did not even mention the fact that there had been tens of thousands of workers gathered near the Garden in a stormy, anti-Nazi protest meeting! (Emphasis in original).

THE CP 'EXPLAINS'

The anti-fascist demonstration had been too big for the CP to get away with ignoring it, however. In the 3 March, 1939, *Daily Worker*, V.J. Jerome finally tried to explain the CP's refusal to act against the fascists. He asked: '... what would have been the result of an attempt to "stop the meeting" after the progressive LaGuardia Administration had granted permission for it to be held? One could certainly have differed with the LaGuardia Administration for granting permission... But certainly the Communists could not undertake to forcibly prevent such a meeting once the City Administration had allowed it.

'In the given circumstances, such a course would have played directly into the hands of the Nazi conspirators themselves; it would have incited a direct collision not only with the Bund but with the city administration and the police who were present to enforce the decision of the city administration...'

The essence of this argument is that it is necessary to rely upon the capitalist government to fight fascism. The CP opposed the independent mobilisation of the masses against the fascist menace because they feared that such mobilisations would endanger its alliance with the 'progressive' capitalist politicians.

That the fascist threat was real was shown both by the fact that 18,000-20,000 people turned out for the Nazi meeting, and by the massive response to the SWP's call for action. The workers saw the danger and were ready to fight against it. What they needed was leadership.

UNITED FRONT

The SWP had no illusions of being able to take on the fascist organisations on its own; it was a very small group. It was necessary to unite the working class organisations, regardless of their differences on other matters, in a common struggle to root out the fascist menace. A united front was needed.

This task was made very difficult by the refusal of the CP and Socialist Party to join in common action against the fascists. These were the largest left-wing organisations in the country. The CP had tens of thousands of members; it circulated a daily newspaper

ism deepens it spawns fascist groupings like the National Front here in Britain. The workers' movement has a lesson. The lessons of this must be learnt by the left today. In this article from the American revolutionary paper we describe the important experience of the American workers' movement during the 30's.



played an important part, alongside the military, in overthrowing the Allende regime and unleashing a wave of terror against the workers' organisations.

AMERICAN WORKERS FIGHT FASCISM

throughout the country, and it held leadership positions in a number of major trade unions.

But the SWP campaign for united labour action against the fascist menace corresponded to the interests and feelings of the masses of workers. Two days after the 20 February action of 50,000 in New York, 5,000 people turned out on one day's notice against a meeting of the German-American Bund in Los Angeles. As in New York, the demonstration was boycotted by the CP. In this case, however, the SWP was successful in gaining the endorsement of the International Ladies' Garment

Workers' Union and the United Electrical and Radio Workers Union for the action. Many rank-and-file CP members attended these demonstrations, and the Stalinist leadership began to be put into the position of arguing against actions that its membership saw as reasonable and necessary.

WORKERS DEFENCE GUARDS

Appeals to the political organisations of the working class, however, although necessary, were not sufficient. The big majority of the working class was not in any workers party. It was the trade unions, themselves threatened by the growth of a fascist movement, that had to serve as the arena for organising the working class against fascism.

In keeping with Trotsky's insistence in *The Transitional Programme* that 'the struggle against fascism does not start in the liberal editorial office but in the factory,' the SWP advocated the formation of workers defence guards by the trade unions as the way that the working class could defend itself.

The resolution on the workers defence guard adopted by the SWP convention held in July 1939 emphasised that it was the job of the workers defence guard to defend the rights of the labour movement as a whole, and indeed of all groups, individuals, organisations, racial minorities, etc., threatened or attacked by the fascists, vigilantes or other reactionaries.

ACTION AND EXAMPLE

Of course the SWP was not in favour of passively waiting for the unions to build such workers defence guards. Part of the job of campaigning for the unions to take action against the fascists was demonstrations such as those held in New York and Los Angeles.

In localities where it is at present impossible to enlist the established unions in the task of building the Guard, the SWP resolution continued, 'it is now necessary, in addition to constant agitation for union initiative, to take concrete steps in the formation of the Guard

with what forces are available. Where such forces are meagre it would be an error to regard that group that can be formed as a Workers Defence Guard in the full sense; rather, since the genuine Guard can be built only by enlisting the masses, are such groups skeletons or embryos of the Guard. They cannot substitute their action for that of the masses but must aim to win the masses especially in the trade unions to the task of building the Guard, by adding on however a modest scale, the lesson of action and example to that of agitation.'

The SWP moved to implement the ideas in this resolution in a number of ways. It carried out an extensive educational campaign in the pages of the *Socialist Appeal* to explain the need for workers defence guards and to agitate for their formation. It produced a pamphlet explaining the nature of the Coughlin movement and its danger to workers, Jews, Blacks, and others. SWP members in New York sold 8,500 of these pamphlets during a sales campaign of only three weeks in the summer of 1939.

In addition, the SWP held numerous street meetings to promote its campaign against the fascists, while continuing to call for united-front demonstrations at fascist meetings. These street meetings and demonstrations were resolutely defended against fascist goons. This was no mean feat in view of the fact that in June 1939, a meeting of 18,000 Jehovah's Witnesses was broken up by the fascists in New York.

A 'CRAZY IDEA'?

Finally, the SWP campaigned within the trade union movement for the formation of workers defence guards. The effect of this campaign is indicated by the fact that in July of 1939 Coughlin used an entire radio broadcast to attack a member of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union for having proposed that the union form a workers defence guard. Two days later, David Dubinsky, the head of the ILGWU, rushed into print to disavow any intention of forming such a defence guard, denouncing it as a 'crazy idea'.

But the best example of the effect of the SWP's campaign and the validity of its programme for fighting the fascist menace came in August 1939. On 9 August the Coughlinite organisations in New York called for a fascist mobilisation under the guise of an 'anti-Communist parade.' They announced that on 19 August they would march from Columbus Circle to Union Square, known as the centre of the American labour movement of that time.

The SWP answered this provocation with a call

for a united counter-demonstration. It appealed to the CP, the SP, and major Jewish organisations, as well as other groups, to join in the action. In the meantime, 200,000 leaflets were printed and street meetings and rallies were organised throughout the city in order to build the counter-demonstration.

NO RELIANCE ON GOVERNMENT

The SWP's call for a counter-demonstration, along with the rest of its activity against the fascists, was based on the concept that only the workers themselves, relying on their own organisations and their own strength, could defeat the fascist threat. In its appeal to the CP to join in a united front against the fascists, the SWP argued, 'We cannot depend on Mayor LaGuardia to protect the labour movement from Coughlin's storm troop "Christian Front." LaGuardia's cops are themselves sympathetic to Coughlin. They arrest salesmen of anti-Coughlin literature. They assist Coughlin salesmen.'

Coughlin himself boasted that 5,000 New York cops were members of his movement. Nevertheless, instead of joining together to mobilise the workers in their own defence, the CP appealed to LaGuardia to ban the fascist demonstration. An editorial in the 15 August, 1939, *Socialist Appeal* pointed out that 'these delegations (to LaGuardia) are repeating the experience of similar delegations which attempted to get Mayor LaGuardia to prevent the fascist mobilisation at Madison Square Garden on 20 February.'

'Far from stopping the fascists, LaGuardia provided them on 20 February with the protection of the largest police concentration in the history of the city. In the name of civil liberties, LaGuardia's police spent the night plunging their horses into the 50,000 anti-fascist pickets in the neighbourhood.'

CITY ORDINANCES

While the CP participated in delegations asking LaGuardia to ban the fascist action, its candidate for the New York city council from the Bronx proposed his solution in the 13 August, 1939, *Daily Worker*: 'A city ordinance forbidding the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda and outlawing anti-Semitic organisations is possible and necessary.'

'What good are city ordinances against fascist hooligans and clubs, knives and blackjacks?' responded the *Socialist Appeal* of 18 August.

'There is only one way to fight the fascists. That is to ORGANISE the anti-fascists into WORKERS DEFENCE GUARDS, ready and trained to defend union halls and unionists, Jewish and Gentile anti-fascists, against the

fascist gangsters.

In practice, laws ostensibly directed against the fascist gangs are more often than not used against the working class and its organisations. This was the experience in the US with the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), supporters of which originally argued that it would be used against the fascists. In France, the law that was used to ban the Communist League was supposedly directed against the fascist groups that grew up there in the 1930s.

INDEPENDENT STRUGGLE

The whole experience of the workers movement shows that the struggle against fascism can only be carried out independently of the capitalist government. Requests for the banning of fascist groups or meetings only cut across the mobilisation of the workers, giving them the illusion that action on their part is unnecessary, while giving the government a handle to use against the left.

In the case of the Coughlinite march, the refusal of the SWP to rely on LaGuardia to deal with the fascists soon paid off. Preparations for the counter-demonstration met with such a powerful response that Coughlin was forced to back down. Less than two days before the scheduled fascist march, Coughlin made a long-distance phone call to cancel the demonstration.

Only one month after this incident, World War II began in Europe. As Roosevelt stepped up preparations for US entry into the war, the capitalists found they were able to line up the trade union movement behind their war policies with little problem, thanks to the union bureaucracy.

In this situation, the continued activity of fascist groups known for their sympathy with Hitler and Mussolini could only be a source of embarrassment for the government. Furthermore, the war resulted in the disappearance of the unemployment that the fascist movement had fed upon. Together, these factors caused a rapid decline in the fascist movement.

But the forces that produced the crisis of the 1930s continue to operate, as is indicated by the growing political and economic problems of American capitalism. The methods of struggle against fascism worked out and set forth by Leon Trotsky, which the SWP applied in the late 1930s, in 1946, and again in 1960, can serve to fight fascism whenever and wherever it appears.

Dave Frankel

Black and White, by James Walvin
(Allen Lane, £3.95p)
Black British, White British,
by Dilip Hiro (Pelican, 60p)
Steve Cohen

Perhaps one of the last major growth points under capitalism is the production of books on racism. The vast majority are purely factual studies of racist ideas, their effects and growth, with little analysis of how and why such ideas developed or the economic and social reasons for the racist consciousness of the British working-class. However much of the factual information they provide is useful for the development of a class analysis of racism.

Walvin's book is the more important because of its scope. He attempts a history of black people in Britain from 1555 to 1945 and the racist ideology which was developed as a justification for their brutal ill-treatment under conditions of slavery. He destroys the commonly held belief, even on the left, that racism developed only with the flowering of 'high' imperialism at the end of the 19th century. 'Scientific' treatises were published about the sexual super-abilities of black men and women, almost before the slaves had touched our shores; and re-patriation is not a new concept either - Elizabeth I issued a decree for this in 1596, on the grounds that the country was over-populated!

RACIST IDEAS

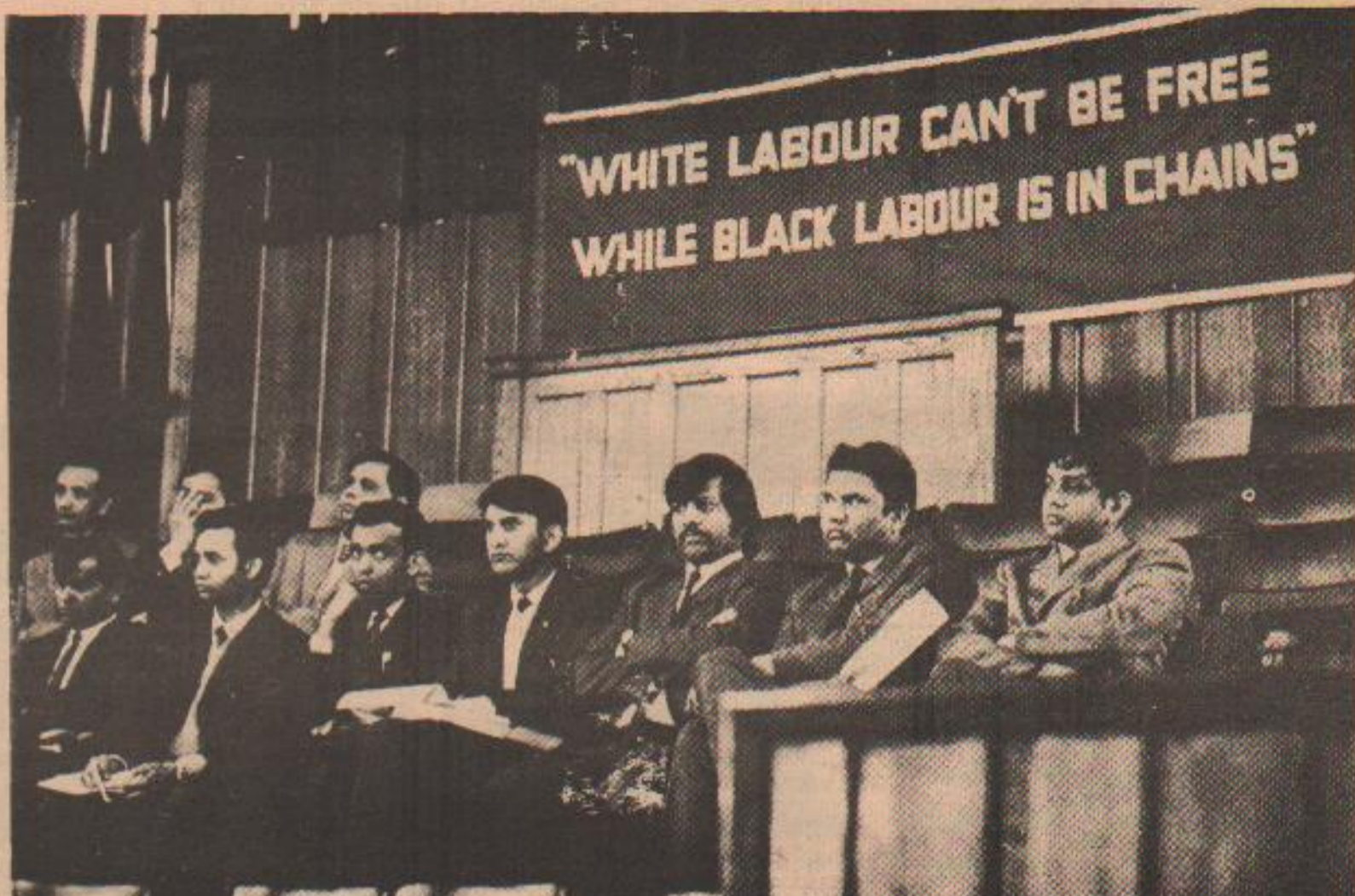
It was, however, in the 17th and 18th centuries that many of the mystifying ideas of racism were developed by the ruling-class, to justify their exploitation of blacks on the colonial plantations. But of course they rebounded equally savagely onto those blacks (slaves, escaped slaves and 'free men') living in the heartland of England itself. One 'positive' argument used for slavery was the 'natural laziness' of blacks and another their supposed stupidity - this latter being propagated by the 'enlightened' liberal philosopher, David Hume, who even claimed that blacks had no art or culture of their own.

One strong racist influence was the church, which, especially in its evangelical period, taught blacks that they should be grateful for their enslavement: 'O Lord, I thank thee for sending big ship to my country, and wicked men to steal me and bring me here that I might know and love thee' ran one 18th century prayer for slaves.

A recurrent theme is the way in which the present racist anti-immigration arguments have been presented in various forms over the centuries. For example, in the 18th century the slave-lobby argued that freed slaves would be a burden on the rates - thus foreshadowing by 200 years the lie that all blacks live on the dole.

The book destroys the myth that blacks have always accepted their subjugation passively. Equiano and Cuguano, two freed slaves who lived in Britain in the 18th century, toured the country fighting for total abolition of slavery, and for the rights of blacks living in misery in the ghettos of the large towns. Cuguano even showed himself to be a conscious internationalist, in that he opposed the oppression of black people not just in Britain, but everywhere in the world.

Much important information is included about the development of racism in Britain in the early years of this century, after the post-war demobilisation and settlement of black ex-soldiers. At this time racism began seriously



The strike committee of Mansfield Hosiery Mills, pictured at the Racism & The Trade Unions Conference held earlier this year. In their recent struggle for parity with white workers in that mill, they collided with the deeply entrenched racism which infects the British labour movement. Their trade union leadership actually sided with the management in an attempt to defeat the strike!

(PHOTO: Chris Davies, Report)

to divide the working-class, with dockers at Tilbury striking over the employment of black labour. In 1919 race-riots in Liverpool and Cardiff resulted in victimisation of black workers in the courts, and there was a successful call for 'voluntary re-patriation' in 1921, which involved 627 blacks.

LABOUR'S RACISM

Although Dilip Hiro's book is a more modest affair, one can begin to glean from it some understanding of the relationship of imperialism to the British working-class movement, and the subsequent acceptance and development of racist ideology.

He shows clearly how racism is the accepted philosophy of many members of the Labour Party. For example in 1958, after the infamous attacks against blacks in Notting Hill, the local Labour MP, George Rogers, demanded legislation 'to end the tremendous influx of coloured immigrants.' In 1965, the leader of the local Labour group in Lambeth is quoted as saying that 'blacks had made the housing problem a damned sight worse'.

The racism of the Labour Party is not just founded on the subjective beliefs of some of its members - it is based on the nationalistic, pro-imperialist, pro-capitalist politics of that party. Racism, as a component of the ideas which have justified imperialism over the centuries, comes easily to it. James Callaghan argued in 1946, that immigration was justified to increase the work-force (i.e. when it benefits capitalism). Small surprise that in the 1960's he was one of the main architects of the racist laws to keep blacks out, when there was a surplus of labour. So much for international working-class solidarity.

STOCKHOLM FROM HOME

The decision by the Social-Democratic Government in Sweden to permit five British Army deserters to stay, and thus avoid service in the North of Ireland has caused headaches in Whitehall. Although the permission was granted for 'personal reasons', and not because they were deserters, a precedent has been created for British deserters to receive similar treatment to soldiers who have opted out of the American war in Indo-China.

For some time the British Deserters Support Group in Stockholm has been trying to 'open up' Sweden to British deserters. The Group consists of Swedish-radicals, and American deserters who have taken out Swedish citizenship. Prior to this latest decision they had helped to get asylum for a handful of British soldiers in the country. During the summer a representative of the Group visited Britain, to pass on information about the facilities available to British servicemen who wanted to go to Sweden.

The seriousness with which the British Government treats this situation can be judged from the witch hunt which has been launched against groups in Britain who have been distributing a leaflet informing British soldiers about the steps necessary to settle in Sweden. Most newspapers have carried a story which states that the Special Branch is trying to discover the 'source' of the leaflets. This despite the fact that they bear the imprint of the British Withdrawal from Northern Ireland Campaign, and that on September 14th Pat Arrowsmith was acquitted of 'abusive behaviour' after distributing them at Colchester Military Tattoo.

GLASGOW RAID

On Saturday September 22nd, Police raided the headquarters of the Omega Peace Centre in Glasgow, and took away copies of the leaflet, and a rubber stamp which had been used to overprint them with the Omega Centre's address. They also seized copies of the *Catholic Worker*, an American radical pacifist paper, and the *Catholic Observer* a right wing journal. Following this raid Hugh Clarke was charged under the Incitement to Disaffection Act with 'possession of' leaflets with 'malicious intent' to distribute them to servicemen.

The Police have referred the case to the Procurator Fiscal (prosecutor), who will decide whether to proceed with the charge. Technically there is no reason why a Scottish court could not try Clarke on this charge, despite the fact that the DPP in England did not proceed with charges under the Disaffection Act in the case of Pat Arrowsmith. The Scottish legal system is independent of the English, and there is a possibility that this independence might be asserted at Hugh Clarke's expense.

We can expect further Police activity as a result of the Swedish decision. And also after the initiative by a number of pacifist groups to set up an advice centre for soldiers. The centre, to be called 'At Ease', will give information about the legal procedures through which soldiers can buy themselves out, and how to form organisations in their units. Indeed Pat Arrowsmith has been arrested a second time for distributing the leaflet. She is due to appear at Warminster magistrates court on November 13th, on exactly the same charge which was dismissed at Colchester.

COMPROMISE

The failure of the Social Democrats to obtain an overall majority in the Swedish Riksdag (Parliament) should not affect the treatment of deserters. The Social Democrats hold 175 seats, and an equal number are held by the other parties, but of these, the Communist Party holds 19. The Prime Minister Olaf Palme has however stated that his government will have to 'compromise'.

In recent years the Swedish Government has distinguished itself by its 'anti-imperialist' gestures. It has recognised the Provisional Revolutionary Government in Vietnam, it has given shelter to large numbers of American deserters and has issued reams of radical statements about the evils of imperialism. None of this however has prevented it from harassing the revolutionary left, and Sweden has provided the model for successive British governments, with its long established legislation to tie the Trade Unions to the State, and shackle rank-and-file militancy.

GAVIN ROBINSON

HISTORY WORKSHOP IN LONDON

Sat Oct 20 - Sun Oct 21
Old Theatre, London School of Economics

family-work-home

Papers include: Catherine Hall 'History of the Housewife'; Delia Davini 'Women in the Chinese Revolution'; Tim Mason 'Women in Nazi Germany'; Aubrey Crowe 'Black Country Chainmakers'; Marion Covak 'Factory Girls in the First World War'; Anna Davin 'Cult of Motherhood'; Video tape of the Half Moon History Workshop play about children's strikes in 1911. Open session on Marxism, Feminism, and Social History. Tickets (limited to 500) £1 from: Sarah and Sid Wills, 48 Ender Avenue, N8.

RED WEEKLY READERS WELCOME

THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM THE DECLARATION OF THE UNITED SECRETARIAT OF THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL ON CHILE



For three years Communist and Socialist parties all over the world have held up the Chilean example as proof of the correctness of their theories on the way to establish socialism. The tragic end of the Popular Unity experience brings with it a series of vital lessons. These lessons were already evident in numerous experiences from the past, especially in Latin America, from the overthrow of the Arbenz regime in Guatemala by a mercenary army, to the coup supported by the imperialists and the Brazilian militarists which installed Banzer in power in Bolivia in 1971.

The Chilean events of the past three years show how illusory is the perspective of a democratic, anti-oligarchic, anti-imperialist 'stage' in which the national bourgeoisie will participate, both from the standpoint of objective basis and of political possibilities. No bourgeoisie can go beyond very limited reforms without encroaching on the fundamental interests of imperialism. No bourgeoisie is prepared to put itself in this position unless it is guaranteed strict control over the whole process and is in a position to stifle any moves toward autonomous action by the masses. The Peruvian military regime is a classical example of this.

BLIND ALLEY OF REFORMISM

The Chilean events show that even under favourable conditions reformism leads rapidly into a blind alley. If they are not generalised, those reforms which are won become threatened and increasingly meaningless in practice. But such a process of generalisation leads inevitably towards the threshold which cannot be crossed without smashing the mechanisms of the capitalist system. Partial measures, which only encroach on various established interests without destroying them, will touch off an inevitable reaction by forces which still have at their disposal powerful resources and allies. Once again it has been proved that the petty bourgeoisie cannot be won over by simply adopting a conciliatory attitude: they must be given an anti-capitalist perspective in order to

decisively resist the manoeuvres of the ruling classes.

The Chilean case exposes the absurdity of any attempt to move towards socialism without having first destroyed the capitalist state machine in its totality. This machine has been built and designed by the ruling class in order to ensure the most efficient defence possible of their system of exploitation and oppression. We are not rejecting all tactical use of legal possibilities or refusing to take advantage of exceptional circumstances, such as those created by the Chilean elections of 4 September. But it is necessary to understand the urgent and absolute need, in a situation of rising mass struggle, to build revolutionary organs of proletarian democracy, elements of dual power. These instruments of the struggle for the seizure of power will at the same time be the embryo of the totally new structures of the workers' state which will come out of the revolution.

SUICIDAL ILLUSIONS

The Chilean reformists systematically denied this necessity, and limited themselves to promoting bodies with strictly limited functions and with no real autonomy from the 'constitutional' structures of the state. Under the impetus of dramatic events, the workers, particularly over the past year, have rediscovered these fundamental requirements and created bodies rich in revolutionary potential, such as the industrial cordons. But their initiatives came late and were often not generalised; more seriously, such initiatives were often deprived of much of their practical significance by the manoeuvres of the bureaucracy. The bureaucrats were determined to prevent the cordons becoming Chilean soviets and sought, after having deprived them of their autonomy, to integrate these bodies into a reformist and constitutional strategy.

Finally, the Chilean experience has once again shown that the theory that it is possible to overthrow capitalist power without revolution-

ary violence is the most shameful of deceptions and the most suicidal of illusions. It is a vital necessity to understand that when one reaches the crucial moment in the struggle for power, armed struggle—in some form—is inevitable in all cases. In the words of Lenin, 'the military question is the central political question.'

REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

The Chilean reformists challenged these elementary truths. The fact that many of them have since inscribed their names on the long list of martyrs of the workers' movement neither wipes out nor lessens their crushing responsibility. The absence of a revolutionary party capable of playing a leading role among the masses has once again proved to be the decisive factor for the proletariat.

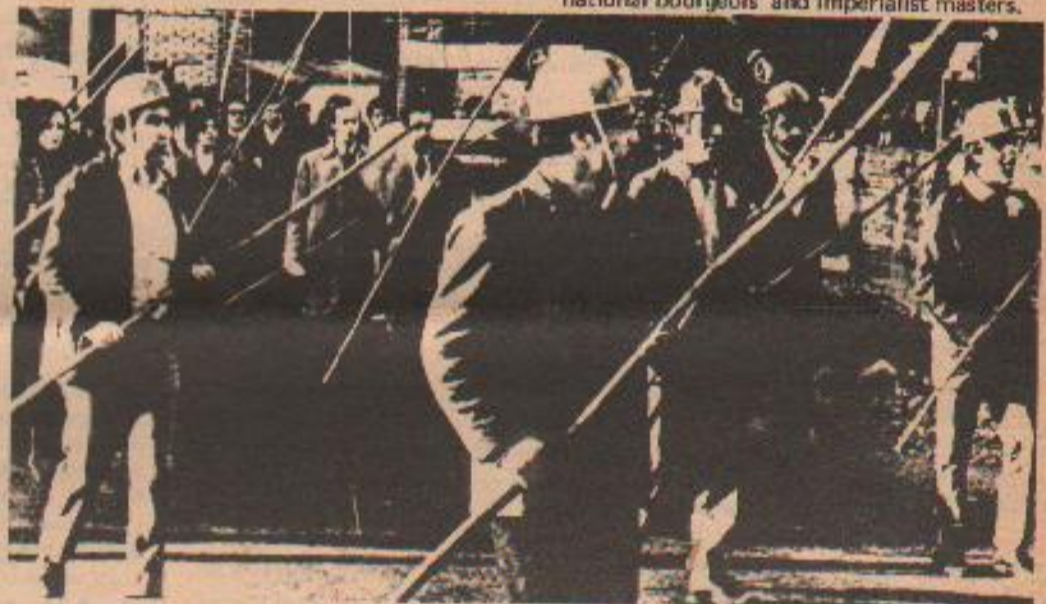
'Chile will not be an historical exception', stated the declaration of the United Secretariat of December 1971:

'The overthrow of the capitalist regime cannot take place without the decisive intervention of a revolutionary party, the conscious vanguard of the masses. The tasks which fall to such a party cannot be delegated to the Communist Party or the Socialist Party... In any event, we must reject all ideas which claim that the proletariat can come to power despite the absence of a revolutionary party, relying only on the dynamism of the revolutionary process and the power of the mass movement, the weakening of the bourgeoisie and its probable, eventual splitting, and conditions under which imperialism will be inclined to reject military intervention. We must equally reject the other version of these ideas according to which some substitute for a revolutionary party will be sufficient, such as a common front within which all revolutionaries are united or a united body of all the different organisations of the extreme left.'

A military coup d'état occurring in a situation like that in which Chile has been for the last few months cannot establish itself in a straight-forward fashion or through limited repression only. Everything supported the expectation of a courageous and stubborn resistance by the proletariat; it was not excluded that sections of the army—made up, at the base, of the sons of workers and peasants undergoing military service—might revolt against the orders of reactionary officers, unleashing a process leading towards civil war. In the event, resistance has developed heroically and has not been completely crushed. The second eventuality has not occurred, or at least not in such a way as to lay the basis for an immediate civil war.

The problem of the armed struggle against the military dictatorship is on the order of the day. The revolutionary vanguard must carry out the necessary strategic turn as quickly as possible. The problem of the armed struggle no longer presents itself in the same terms as that of the period following on September 1970. The previous orientation would remain fundamentally valid in the eventuality of a civil war accompanied by the occupation of regions of the country by forces of the workers and peasants. In this eventuality revolutionaries will launch the call, on a world scale, for the formation of international brigades. It is necessary to push forward throughout the entire world a campaign of active solidarity, taking up the best traditions of the mobilisations for Vietnam.

The Chilean workers must be defended against the barbarity of the Generals and their 'national bourgeois' and imperialist masters.



Before the coup: Thousands of workers demonstrate against the right-wing threat.

CHILE: Eye-witness Reports

'People were dying all around us, and we were convinced that we were going to be shot as well. For several days, armed guards forced us to lie with our faces on the ground and our hands behind our head. We were regularly beaten, while others were taken outside and executed. Many were tortured throughout the night. I remember in particular an Argentinian... they beat this Argentinian, who was obviously bewildered, with special severity. Eventually, he was unable to stand up. He obviously had broken ribs. The night before he was shot they dragged a corpse in front of him. They said to him, "Look, see how we deal with dirty foreigners like you!". After this the Argentinian was taken out into the corridor where he was shot. He was screaming.'

This is an eyewitness account by two Swedish citizens — an engineer and an economist — of the reign of terror the Chilean Generals have unleashed in the wake of their successful coup against the Popular Unity government.

Thousands of militants died resisting the coup. Among those reported killed are the General Secretary of the Socialist Party, Carlos Altamirano (rumoured to have died fighting alongside the workers of the Sumar textile factory), and the General Secretary of the Communist Party, Luis Corvalán. Recent information makes it clear that President Allende himself was murdered, and did not commit suicide as

the junta has claimed.

Some 7,000 political prisoners fill the makeshift 'prisons' that have been set up in the football stadium and the National Stadium in the capital city of Santiago.

A British lecturer, Richard Barber-Might, visiting Chile to carry out research, has also given an eye-witness account of events in the football stadium. Arrested without reason, he was detained and interrogated for two days before being released, and reports having seen regular and brutal beatings of his fellow prisoners.

A young American couple, held in the National Stadium, report having seen the execution of four to five hundred prisoners, in groups of 30 to 40. They were themselves beaten and threatened with death, as were many of their fellow prisoners.

This figure of four to five hundred executions is supported by the testimony of a professor from the Dominican Republic who has just returned to that country from Chile.

When questioned recently by journalists concerning allegations of mass executions, spokesmen for the ruling junta have refused to deny the charge. They have simply stated that if such executions have taken place they have been for good reasons!

LIP MARCH GOES ON: SUPPORT SNOWBALLS

Despite the hesitation, and even outright hostility, of the reformist bureaucracies, the planned 'March on Besançon' in solidarity with the Lip watch factory workers' fight against redundancies is going ahead for 29 September.

The Socialist Party mayor of Besançon, had originally come out against the proposed demonstration. He has since withdrawn his opposition, after having received assurances from the trade union federations — the CGT and the CFDT — that the whole affair would be under 'strict trade union control', and that there was no question of a 'march on Besançon'.

Such assurances are of little significance, however, since the planning of the march is safely out of the hands of the trade union bureaucrats. Originally called by the Lip workers themselves, the demonstration is co-ordinated by the Lip workers' own organisations (their union branches and the Lip Action Committee) and is being built across the country by 'grass-roots committees' (comités de base) set up by the various groups of the revolutionary left.

Already plans have been made for three trains and a cavalcade of cars to take demonstrators from Paris to Besançon for the 29th.

The Lip workers have launched a massive publicity campaign for the march that includes the publishing of two special numbers of their bulletin, 'Lip Unite', the distribution of a film

about the occupation, a gramophone record of songs of struggle and sessions of the Lip workers general assembly, a tape cassette record of major events in the struggle, a printed dossier of information, and special stickers and postcards.

In many areas local workers support committees have sprung up, often around the showing of the film or a collective session listening to the tape cassette record.

Special committees have been established by the Lip workers to arrange for food, accommodation and entertainment for their visitors. The restaurant committee has already arranged to lay on 100,000 meals for the 29th. An invitation has been sent out made to singers, artists and actors to turn up and provide entertainment for the evening.

Arrangements are also being made for discussion sessions to take place around specific topics and between particular groups of workers, so that they can look at their mutual experiences and problems and debate way of linking up their struggles.

It is clear that the 'March on Besançon' will be not only a big boost to the workers at Lip but a major event in the life of the French working class militants. If the French government thinks it has headaches now, wait until the day after Besançon!

David Tettadoro

SHREWSBURY: HAMMER IT HOME

Nearly 900 delegates attended the Liverpool Trades Council Conference on the trial of the Shrewsbury 24 last Saturday. The main resolution was a step forward in the fight for the unconditional release of the Shrewsbury workers, but there are many problems still to be solved if the campaign is to grow.

By Paul Smith

The speech by Eddie Lloyd at the start, stressed the question of 'unity'. No-one can oppose unity but delegate after delegate failed to answer two basic questions. First, what conclusions do we draw from the non-support and sabotage of this campaign by the trade union leadership? Second, how do we organise now to hammer home the lessons of the Shrewsbury conspiracy trial?

Brother Nolan, a shop steward from the Liverpool docks, was right to urge caution on the many Communist Party speakers, who were tripping over themselves to pledge support. He pointed out that 3 October (the date the trial opens) was too early for massive industrial

action to be organised. He also pointed out that despite the hot air, there had not been one pledge of industrial action from any speaker. In this vital sense, the campaign has not yet got off the ground.

Bill Hunter, a delegate from the AUEW, raised the role of the trade union leadership, but drew no conclusions. It has only been the rank and file - through the building unions, and the defence committees - which has responded to the call with activity. We cannot rely on the bureaucrats. Despite the 'militancy', most delegates failed to take up this point. Kevin Halpin pledged that the Liaison Committee for the Defence of Trade Unions conference on 30 October, would put Shrewsbury top of the agenda. But the real test will be whether the LCDTU limits itself to trying to change the minds of the bureaucrats through

protest action, or whether it is prepared to organise the campaign on the basis of this independent activity.

And nobody pointed out (except a delegate from Firth Brown), that there will be further police attacks as sections of workers move into action against the Government pay policy. One of the main lessons of Shrewsbury is the need to defend pickets in action, not 7 months after in the Court.

But these lessons were not driven home, perhaps because none of the delegates from the 24 local defence committees were allowed to speak. The building of defence committees can only go forward, if we learn from their experiences so far.

Support must now be won from the miners and the engineers. Defence of pickets is a key issue for them. And the defence of the Shrewsbury 24 must go over to an offensive against the employers, the Tory Government, the state and its special police. These were the issues posed in Liverpool. All the 'unity' in the world is useless if it avoids them.

The following is the resolution adopted by the conference:

This national conference calls on workers to support with all means at their disposal the campaign of the Shrewsbury 24 Committee to have the charges under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act withdrawn.

1. A campaign throughout the country in support of the policy of the Shrewsbury 24 Committee.
2. Urge conference to set up action committees in every area possible.
3. A mass demonstration in support of the Shrewsbury 24 in Shrewsbury on the day of the hearing.
4. A mass demonstration and day of industrial action on October 3rd.
5. Fighting Fund to be set up to carry out the campaign.

The defence fund, for which over £1,000 was collected, received £5 from the interns of Long Kesh. An IMG member moved a motion that conference send a telegram of thanks and solidarity to Long Kesh. The motion was passed by acclaim.



Delegates at Saturday's Conference in Defence of the Shrewsbury 24

Photo: Chris Davies (Report)

SHOWDOWN AT FOOTPRINT

The strike by 100 AUEW members at Footprint Tools, Sheffield, is now in its 14th week. The strikers are demanding the reinstatement of Pete Wilson, an AUEW shop steward who was sacked for calling a meeting on the shop floor.

TERRY CRAWFORD

There is no question about the determination of the strikers to win this struggle, but unfortunately they will not stop production, so long as about 100 G&M workers continue to scab.

The obvious ineffectiveness of simple picketing has led to frustration and opposition to the District Committee which has refused to go beyond calling the occasional mass picket. The idea of occupation has been floated, but the strike committee has so far been reluctant to make an open plea to the DC, which has advised against such a move.

POLICE INTERVENTION

Events took a new turn last week. After a call by representatives of shop stewards committees for a rally outside Footprints on Friday afternoon, about 400 people responded. Three hundred police also turned up. The demonstrators surged forward as

the scabs who were protected by the police came out of work. It was during the scuffle that the first two arrests were made, Pete Wilson, the sacked shop steward, and George Caborn, the District Secretary of the AUEW. Six arrests followed during a rally and demonstration held outside the police station. Apart from the usual harassment, the police had previously made no attempt to have a direct confrontation with the pickets. The arrest of Caborn and Wilson was clearly provocation to the pickets, intended to demonstrate that they were incapable of defending their own leaders, let alone defeating Footprints or the scabs. The arrest will also create a new issue which might divert the movement away from the struggle to reinstate Pete Wilson.

After the storm, the question was being asked, which way forward? Last Monday, there was a meeting of shop stewards from 25 different firms in Sheffield to discuss how the struggle could be advanced. Unfortunately, nothing new came from the District Committee, except a proposal for yet another mass picket on the Thursday morning. However, a number of speakers demanded a district strike. This perspective must be agita-

ted for throughout the engineering industry in Sheffield, such action will create the forces necessary to stop the scabs despite their police protection.

A DISTRICT STRIKE

Members of the District Committee feel the pressure from militants for this kind of action and are beginning to speak of the need to build up to such a strike. There is a real possibility that the District Committee will be forced to call an aggregate meeting of the shop stewards, to discuss the organisation of a district strike.

The Police attack at Footprints fits into a pattern. The state is attempting to weaken working class ability to struggle in anticipation of the wage claims of the engineers and miners. It is vital that the Police challenge at Footprints is met by a massive show of force, a victorious outcome is vital for the coming struggles over the national Engineering wage claim.

The events at Footprint also have great significance for the organisation of resistance to state intervention against working class militancy; of which the campaign to defend the Shrewsbury 24 must be the national focus.

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WHAT'S ON

NEWCASTLE PUBLIC MEETING: Defend the Shrewsbury 24, heads off pickets! Tuesday, 9 October, 8pm. See also Jim Kemp, 11 London Joint Sites Committee. Chairman: Jim Murray (Chairman, Vickers-Newcastle Shop Stewards Committee). At Newcastle Labour Club, 45 Lower Park Road. Meeting sponsored by Gateshead UCATT No.2 branch, Vickers-Elswick Works Committee, etc.

NOTTINGHAM RED CIRCLES: with ongoing series of discussions based on the politics of the Fourth International. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday in the month, 8pm in the Lion Hotel, Chamber Street.

LEEDS RED CIRCLE: 'China - Peaceful Coexistence or World Revolution?' Wednesday, 3 October, 8pm. Trades Club, Upper Fountains Street.

INDOCHINA SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE: public meeting: Laos and the significance of the Recent Agreements. See also: Andrew Tuxton (Association of Radical East Asian Studies), Monday, 3 October, 7.30pm. London School of Economics, Houghton Street, St. Clements Building, Room 5075.

CENTRAL LONDON AIL FORUM: John Grey (Former AIL organiser) and Gery Lawless on 'The Conspiracy Trial and the Problems of the Solidarity Movement'. General Picton, Caledonian Road, (nearest tube, Kings Cross). Friday, 28 September, 8pm.

WORKERS' FIGHT: public meeting 'Narbonne and Terram', speaker: Sarah Matgamne, Golden Lion, King's Cross Road, 7.1. Sunday, 30 September, 8pm.

MERSEYSIDE IMG DISCUSSION GROUP: A series of introductory discussions organised by Merseyside IMG on the politics of the Fourth International. Starts Monday, 8 October. For details, phone John, 051-638 8081, or write to MDG, 52 Cullen Street, Liverpool 8.

PHOENIX CLUB: First series of meetings on Ireland and the EEC (27 September); Orangeism (11 October); Ireland and the Permanent Revolution (25 October); Ireland and the British Left (8 November); Revolutionary perspectives for Ireland (22 November). Thursdays at the General Picton, Caledonian Road, at 8.00 p.m. Further information from Workers Fight, 98 Gifford Street, London N.1.

BIRMINGHAM IMG STUDY CLASSES: introductory series of lectures on the politics of the IMG. Every Wednesday, 7.30 p.m. at the Wellington pub, Bristol Road.