

NUMBER 25 JUNE

40p  
£1 Solidarity Price

# **VOICER** SOCIALIST

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Britain's Declining Economy

Kinnock's Run To The Right

Historic Opportunity For Trotskyism

In Argentina

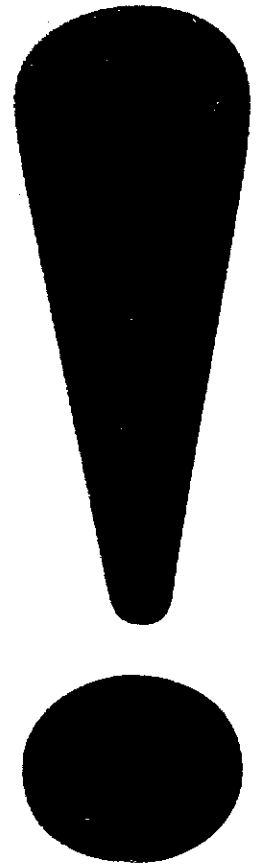
# NO POLL TAX!

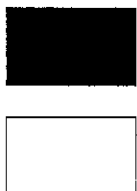
*Can't Pay  
Won't Pay*

*Don't Implement  
Don't Collect*

*No Victimisation*

# NO CUTS





# SOCIALIST VOICE



## UNITE AGAINST THE POLL TAX

Chaos, bill burning, strikes against the Tax and against the cuts have hit the councils since the historic march in London. The numbers not paying range from 20% to 50%, and where the first payments have been made people may not be able to find the subsequent instalments. **Council workers don't want to implement or collect the tax and some are striking against it. Communities are suffering and, up and down the country, campaigns, many successful, are opposing the cuts in jobs and services.**

The great anti-poll tax rally showed the ever growing hatred for Thatcher and the Government is being channelled into the anti-poll tax struggle and the slogan of Can't Pay Won't Pay is a mass slogan. The demonstration brought many sectors together the overwhelming number were young people, but families and individual workers were also on the demonstration.

None of the official leaders of the trade union or labour movement had organised for the event, there were no trade union branches represented on the march. For instance the Yorkshire miners had a placard but there was no branch banner from the miners. Even at shop steward level there was little organised involvement.

The march was one of the largest mobilisations against the Tory Government and such a large mobilisation was possible because of all the movements that had taken place in the world since May 1989. The central factor is that by mobilisations dictators and governments can be brought down; so far the anti-poll tax struggle is the greatest weapon in this process in Britain.

It was not the anti-Poll Tax speakers who stole the show but the speaker from Rumania. This, together with the crowd's targets of shops reserved for the rich and the South African Embassy revealed deep connection with the political revolution and the black revolution.

Many people are now asking when the next mobilisation will be. We say it should be decided by the anti-Poll tax groups and be linked with the council workers and it should be soon.

The anti-Poll Tax conference called by the Federation in Liverpool on the 23rd June should be attended by as many council workers as possible and a programme thrashed out that will defend the communities, services and jobs.

The movement proves that a new leadership must be developed in the working class that will link all sections together and seek to bring Thatcher down.

We think that this is a Government in deep economic crisis which continually produces social and political problems that are now threatening to explode into a challenge to its rule, as did the anti-Poll Tax rally. Even one of the Tory stalwarts, Heseltine, stated that Britain needs a Poll Tax based on the ability to pay and one that does not hit the youth and the old people. Although this statement quickly faded from the British media it reveals the deep crisis that sooner or later will destroy the Thatcher Government. Within the European context it is possible that the Government which has the biggest political and economic crisis is Thatcher's (see the articles on the British economy). It could be brought down within months and certainly within two years. Only the leadership of the

Labour and trade union movement is saving it.

Many council workers know that the struggle to defend services is also the struggle against privatisation. The Poll Tax, by reducing the amount of money for services is accelerating the drive towards privatisation.

But privatisation does not work - for those that depend on professional and efficient services. The steel and coal industries are being hacked to death and thousands of workers and their families are thrown onto the dole and driven into poverty. Education in the past ten years has seen the families of children forced to pay, not only for school meals, but for equipment as well - education for those that pay. Now teachers are being sacked because of government cutbacks.

What is needed, and is now possible, is mass action and mass mobilisation, that involves all sections in the struggle against the Poll Tax.

We cannot wait for a Labour Government. We need a front of struggle, which links all the campaigns, now! It is within this process that a new leadership will emerge that can replace all the Labour and Trade Union leaders who are opposed to mobilisation and the struggle for socialism

**THIS ISSUE WAS  
PRODUCED BY**

**Sue Gwyer  
Cella Jones  
Peter Money  
Martin Ralph  
Peter Windeler**

signed articles do not necessarily  
reflect the views of the  
**INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE**

**I WOULD LIKE TO:**

**\* JOIN THE ISL  
\* SUBSCRIBE TO SOCIALIST VOICE**

**40p + 26p p&p - £3.96 for six issues**

NAME.....  
ADDRESS.....  
.....  
TEL.....

**SEND TO:**  
**ISI PO BOX 9, ECCLES SQ,  
MANCHESTER M30 7FX**

# UNITY IN THE ANTI - POLL TAX FIGHT IN LONDON

ED BARBOUR

In Lambeth at present there are three movements against the Poll Tax; Lambeth Against the Poll Tax, Community Resistance Against the Poll Tax and the Federation of Anti-Poll Tax Unions.

All three have recently been working together on events and are organising a joint conference on 14th July. The groups recently collaborated on a bill burning event which was a great success despite the fact that Lambeth Council's chaos and confusion has resulted in few bills being dispatched. About 200 hundred people turned up and listened to speeches from supportive local councillors, local activists and strikers from Greenwich fighting the direct effects of the tax while registration forms, bills and payment books were burnt. It is events like these which serve to build a truly collective movement with a real feeling of solidarity being forged amongst non-payers.

A survey in the Independent on Sunday, 3rd June, revealed that in the boroughs of Greenwich and Tower Hamlets non-payment is higher than 50%. Hackney has collected only 25% of what it expected and Southwark £1.5 million of the £5.2 million due.

Outside London levels of non-payment have also been high; in Rotherham 40%, Oldham 32%, Rochdale 30%, Gateshead 27% and South Tyneside 33%.

In Sutton only 14% have not paid but this has cost the borough £240,000 in two months. The Poll Tax rates are calculated on 95% collection. In the best of cases council's are achieving 85% collection.

The losses are to be offset in cuts in jobs and services.

If non-payment remains high council workers will lose their jobs and communities their services. If council workers resist attacks all workers will suffer the burden of higher Poll Taxes.

**But it doesn't have to be like this. The answer is to unite the two movements to destroy the Poll Tax. If councils are caught between the two blades of the shears; the communities refusing to pay and the council workers refusing to accept job losses with both fighting the cuts in services the hated tax can be defeated. Thatchers flagship can be scuttled.**

# YOUNG PEOPLE FACING THE BRUNT OF THATCHER'S ATTACKS

STEPH GREEN

The Tories policies are aimed at decimating local government. At the same time their policies affecting young people in particular are equally devastating.

Youth Training is geared to undermining young peoples real educational choices and to developing a tame and flexible new workforce for business.

Young people are being hit particularly hard by the Poll Tax and the reduction in local services. The people with least access to resources and a voice in their communities are facing a disproportionate cut in their services.

Poll Tax and Local Management of Schools is having severe effects on education services in general.

The Youth Service - although a relatively small part of education - is being hit especially hard across the country.

Youth workers are opposing the Poll Tax cuts in Wigan as yet again the unemployed and young people will be amongst the hardest hit from the devastation of Poll Tax capping.

The Government wants another £10 million cuts from Wigan. The Labour Council has offered to make a £6.6 million cut but in fact is reported as planning to make a £10 million cut in order to have some money in hand for next year!

There has been no opposition from the local authority to the cuts the Government is demanding. The education budget is to be cut by about 10%. Part of the education budget is the Youth Service, which is threatened with a massive budget cut of at least 22%.

Wigan Council threatened to make a cut of between 25% to 100% in the Youth Service. The workers think this was a softening up ploy to prepare for a 25% cut, something along the lines, "we won't cut off your head we're only going to take an arm." Already the service is run on a shoe string and now many things will have to go with these cuts.

Part time workers are to lose 1,000 sessions. There are over 200 employed by the authority and they already have poor conditions at work and the lowest rates of pay in the North West. They are not paid for their own training, for transport costs or for attending meetings. Two full time and three part time posts have already been lost. Buildings and

Youth service vehicles are to be cut back, in the case of transport by 50%. There will be less money for training and less money to employ creche workers.

The Youth Services work is mainly with unemployed young people, particularly young women, and concentrated in the areas of most need - the council estates. The service is geared to; helping young people in crisis situations such as homelessness or young women being battered by men that they live with, providing information about rights and benefits to young people, supporting young people in taking an active part in their communities and fighting for opportunities and facilities both individually and collectively.

The young people who use the Youth service are the people already affected most by the Governments continued attacks on rights and living standards. These same young people - particularly the young women - are going to be hit hardest of all by the cuts to local services, not just the cuts to the Youth Service, while being expected to pay massive Poll Tax bills into the bargain.

The fight against the Poll Tax is being taken up by groups of unemployed young people utilising the resources of the Youth Service. In one young womens "Out Reach" base on a housing estate a poster saying "No Poll Tax Here" was displayed in a window. A local councillor threatened to sack the Youth Worker in charge if the poster was not taken down. Clearly some councillors would like to see the back of services that challenge the way they govern the borough.

The Community and Youth Workers Union is opposing the cuts and attempting to build joint union action against them. They have already held successful meetings for youth workers, creche workers, clerical staff, caretakers and other support staff.

The details of these proposed cuts are important and Socialist Voice thinks that people who use the council services, the anti-Poll Tax unions and council workers should seek out the facts about the cuts. All councils, whether controlled by a Labour or a Tory administration, are keeping the figures under wraps. Area by area we should build up a picture of the extent of the cuts in order to mobilise a campaign to stop them and defend our services.

All unions should support those who are fighting. Unite against the Poll Tax.

# MERSEY TURBULANCE AS LEFT ARE WITCH-HUNTED

JOSEPH McBANE

At the Liverpool Council Meeting that set the Poll Tax, seventeen Labour Councillors broke the whip, thereby keeping to District Labour Party Policy, and voted to oppose the Poll Tax. Fifteen of them were later suspended by the NEC and now cannot even attend the ward meetings in the areas that elected them.

Recently, when the Right broke the whip in Liverpool no action was taken against them and, on the Wirral, one Labour Councillor has consistently broke the whip and voted with the Tories and Liberals and no action has been taken against him.

These suspensions, as well as enabling the Right to gain control of the Labour Group and hence Council policy, which the NEC and Right knew they must do, also seem to be a prelude to the expulsions of some of the councillors. If the 15 had not been suspended, with the support of a small centre-left group which includes Keva Coombes (ex-Leader) and Keith Hackett (ex-Chair of Finance and Strategy), the Broad Left would have been in a very slight majority. Subsequently, the Centre-Left lost their positions as they were seen as having been too close and supportive of the Broad Left in the preceding months.

The unions now fear large cuts in jobs and services and council tenants, for the first time in seven years - since the Militant led council took control - could well face rent rises. Also, the new leadership is now looking to stop the previous 'support' for the Merseyside Fed-



Liverpool Council Leaders refuse to mobilise against Thatcher as workers did in 1984

eration of Anti-Poll Tax Unions which had received free use of school halls, rent free use of a city centre office and support for a major concert in Liverpool. Harry Rimmer, the new Leader, commented "I am sure we would want to continue to help genuine protest" - so long as they refrain from organising we understand.

While Rimmer leads the Right in attacks on job and services, threatens rent rises and tries

to halt mass organised opposition to the Poll Tax, well known local activists, such as Richard Knights and Tommy Carroll, both in Terry Field's Broadgreen Constituency both face possible expulsion from the Party - following intervention from the NEC in London.

'Over the Water' in Wallasey, the possibility of other expulsions from the Labour Party are not unforeseen. As part of the NEC's "Inquiry" into the de-selection of Frank Fields in Birkenhead, they are now also investigating Socialist Organiser. Top of their list is Lol Duffy, who, last election, with the support of a major campaign lost to Lynda Chalker by only 276 votes despite a major media campaign against him. With a similarly well organised campaign next time round he should be odds on to win the seat - something, it appears, that the Labour Party NEC would dislike even more than the Tories.

**Restore local democracy - support the 15 Labour Councillors who voted against the POLL-TAX. Support the following petition. Statement by Labour activists;**

We, the undersigned, express our total opposition to the implementation of the Poll-Tax and fully support the campaign to defeat the Tory government and return Labour to power at the next general election. We fully support those councillors who voted against the Poll-Tax in the Liverpool City Council and condemn the decision of the NEC of the Labour Party and the Labour Group in Liverpool in carrying out these suspensions.

We believe that this is a gross interference with their democratic rights and we call for their reinstatement forthwith so that they can once again represent the people who elected them.

The suspended councillors are: **DANNY BIRMINGHAM, MICK BOLLAND, JOHN BRADY, BARNEY BURKE, HARRY CHASE, HANNAH FOLAN, GEORGE KNIBB, STEVE LEDWICH, LESLIE MAHMOOD, JUDY NELSON, FRANK O'DONOGHUE, SYLVIA SHARPEY-SHAFFER, JACKIE SMITH, IAN TEMPLEMAN, FRANK VAUDREY.**

# PRIVATISATION - THE GRIM REALITY

PETER WINDELER Reports on the privatisation of Stockport's  
refuse collection service

The Spanish multi-national Focsa, with effect from 1st July, has been given the contract to empty the dustbins by Stockport Council resulting in the redundancy of 200 men.

The men in question hope to be taken on, albeit under worse working conditions, by Focsa. All the men are members of NUPE and over the years have built up a reputation as one of the most efficient refuse collection departments in the country. Focsa says it will only be taking on 150 of the 200 redundant staff.

Socialist Voice spoke to some of the workers involved. One explained that to keep the contract in-house the Council had asked the men to take a £40 per week cut in wages and to reduce manning. Under this arrangement, whenever a crew member was ill, there would be no cover, the men would just have to cope. A mass vote of the men called for a tender to be submitted at the same rates of pay and conditions as the present contract, but a tender was submitted at lower rates - behind the men's backs. This tender would have involved the sacking of all men over 50.

**The men were angry that very little had been heard from their union and nothing at all from the Councils' Labour Group - the Labour group leader, Ann Coffey, called for 'counselling' for the men who would now face a bleak future.**

One of their weaknesses, the men explained, was that there had been no solidarity when it came to putting up opposition to the privatisation scheme. The union had not developed a campaign, stating that there was nothing that could be done as tendering for council services was now law.

Recently, in Blackpool, where Focsa has the council contract, they locked out the workforce for five weeks and had to bus scabs in from Preston. The company also have the contract to collect the refuse in Brighton. Focsa has an anti-union policy, they say, with more than a smirk; *"We have nothing against unions... but we don't recognise them!"*. From what little information the men have received so far it looks like the company will not provide sick pay and there will no longer be a bonus scheme. The company has already issued a statement saying they will not be taking on any men over fifty.

Focsa will be using all the councils' trucks, depots and other

equipment, in fact they will be leasing all the refuse trucks off the council. The men will be retained for nine weeks after the company has taken over the contract, so in fact the men will be showing Focsa how to do the work. What is particularly irritating for the men is that the council is now falling over themselves to be helpful to Focsa and the fact that the council has handed over the contract to an anti-union firm riding rough shod over the interests of the workers.

The men earn a basic wage now of £98 and Focsa has under-cut the councils in-house tender by £1.2m so it is obvious that the men are going to be paid less for more work. Focsa will be running the contract, which lasts for three years, at a loss (this apparently led to the sudden departure from the company of the person who negotiated the contract). **The men now work a 39 hour week, the one's taken on by Focsa will have to work a 48 hour week and for that they will be paid £20 less than the council workers get paid.**

Unions should organise at a shop steward level to oppose the privatisation of council services, which will encompass the majority of council services if this process is not stopped. They should demand local union leaders fight or step down for ones that will. The national unions should be made to support the struggle of council workers, but this will only be achieved by council workers beginning their own struggles.

What the case of the Stockport refuse collectors also illustrates is the need for strong links throughout Europe at a grass roots level between workers who increasingly find they are employed and exploited by the same bosses.

# "LOOKING TO THE FUTURE"

The present Labour leadership is demanding that no member of the Labour Party should have anything to do with the anti-Poll Tax Federation (the organisation that is leading the non-payment campaign).

Only weeks before they stated that teachers striking to defend their jobs would be acting illegally, not only under the Tories but also under a future Labour Government.

Through Tony Blair, commenting on Labour's new policy document "Looking to the Future" they say that there will be no mass picketing and no secondary picketing under a Labour Government.

A witch hunt is developing against those in the Labour Party who want to fight the Government over the Poll Tax, against the cuts and against privatisations.

Labour members have the right to decide how they will fight this government, yet Kinnock wants to dictate to them.

What really upsets the Labour leaders is the mass outrage expressed in the London demonstration against the Poll Tax. These leaders want to do everything they can to stop any repeat of that great demonstration.

Labour's election policy is based on a perspective of regularising capitalist Britain after Thatcher is gone. It seeks to shore up a decaying system. These leaders and the majority of their trade union counterparts hate the idea of a workers' solution to the crisis. That workers discuss and take decisions on their struggles, decide who should work in a factory by union membership, or plan how to organise the defence and offense against attacks by bosses makes them tremble with fear.

*"Today the Party leadership has virtually turned its back on its basic supporters, accepting what are, in reality, Tory arguments about the unions." ...*

*"The facts are that this latest document has been accepted by the overwhelming majority of the NEC and by the whole Shadow Cabinet, but without any real discussion in the Party, certainly without consultation of the membership (not even the Parliamentary Labour Party), although some trade union leaders appear to have been privately consulted, again however without reference to their membership." - Eric Heffer commenting in the Independent, 28th May.*

This Labour leadership prepare for attacks on the whole working class through the attack on their membership.



What Kinnock is doing should be opposed by the rank and file and by the unions. No leader has the right to decide what policy to follow outside of deep discussion with their members.

**Yet they are preparing for office by instructing Labour authorities to implement the Poll Tax, by suspending Labour Party members who oppose them over the Poll Tax and by demanding all should obey Tory Law.**

Labour do not intend to re-nationalise the Gas industry as promised and promise re-nationalise the electricity grid but not the 12 area electricity boards. With British Telecom they plan to increase the share of the shares to 51%, not re-nationalise as previously stated. **In their new policy document they endorse the permanence of private ownership, distribution and exchange. They endorse the dominance of the multi-nationals.** They seek to support the ideological offense of capitalism and they believe that socialism is finished. The last vestiges of socialist language are being stripped by Kinnock and Co. from the Labour Party manifesto.

**The Labour leadership is now stressing how they can be an aid to industry not, according to Gordon Brown, Labour's industry spokesman, a burden, "on their backs" - the Guardian, 23rd May.**

The leadership of the unions have fallen into line with Labour's proposal almost without a whimper, they will seek discussion on how they can implement these proposals. Much as Labour council's have implemented the Poll Tax. Roy Grantham, chairman of the TUC's employment committee, said; *"It is ridiculous to suggest that anybody would want to go back to the 70's when it was assumed that before the Government made a decision, it had to consult the unions, as if by right."*

They are demanding more and more obedience to the Kinnock line.

Many sections of workers have recently experienced the extent to which the Labour and trade union leadership is prepared to go to stop struggles; the Ambulance crews, the council workers and those in the Labour Party fighting the Poll Tax.

For workers, on the election of a Labour Government, it would be a case of how they could force Labour leaders to repeal the Poll Tax, allow unions to struggle and in general improve their lives. It is in this way that the struggle for real socialism develops, which promises not to be a long evolutionary one, but one that proceeds by revolutionary explosions against those that try to maintain what Thatcher has brought in.

# THATCHER'S DECLINING ECONOMY



**Question:** "When the economy is in crisis how do the Tories try to get out of it?"

**Answer:** "They try to make ordinary men, women and their families pay."

A cursory glance at the financial press over the past few weeks will reveal how the government intends to cure the British economy of its high inflation. "The government needs a sharp rise in unemployment for its anti-inflationary strategy to work" - Financial Times, 10th May, and again the same paper, two days later, talking about inflation; "The only obvious cure for this is unemployment..."

To tackle inflation big business has to pay workers less so that the value of money is not under the dual pressure of wages for workers and profits for the boss. A sober and probably objective forecast of the likely rates for inflation and unemployment has come from the Industrial Bank of Japan, in its latest forecast for the British economy, in which it predicts inflation of 11% in August and unemployment rising to 2,000,000 by the middle of next year from its present level of 1,606,000. These are of course Government unemployment statistics, which do not reflect the true level of joblessness.

Aside from inflation the overall economy is in dire trouble and has been since 1988 when Britain's economic miracle started to fall apart, plagued by the unsuspected pace of demand and a huge current account deficit. The prospects for the future are for stagflation and a stubborn balance of payments deficit for several years to come. Wynne Godley, of Cambridge University, states that this will mean that the economy will deflate over a long time and as the country becomes a debtor nation we will have to struggle continually to export more than we import. The IMF recently stated that Britain will have the slowest growth of any of the major industrial countries over the next two years

and its inflation will be the highest.

The overall gloom is reflected in a recent survey by the Confederation of British Industry, the CBI, which noted that the confidence of businessmen was declining, worried by what they see as rising pay demands, high interest rates and the effects of the uniform business rate (the Companies' Poll Tax). Property companies and house builders are going bust on an almost daily basis leaving half finished office blocks throughout the land.

With the trade deficit for the first quarter of the year at £5.6 bn, up 25%, the government appears to be losing time with the General Election in the next two years. A possible saviour for the Tories is perceived as entry into the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM). This could bring down inflation in the short term but would create an even bigger slump in the UK as it would be unable to compete in the world market with an exchange rate which was fixed and unable to fall.

A certain slump in industry could be said to be already here. Ravenscraig, the steel works in Strathclyde, is to close in 1991 with the loss of 770 jobs and a knock on effect of 5000 job losses. Tony Brennan, the shop stewards convener said in the Guardian on the 17th May: "By common consent we've broken every record in the steel industry and they treat us like this."

Ravenscraig makes a profit and has smashed production targets for the last three years. Brymbo steelworks in Wrexham is to close with the loss of 1,100 jobs. Brymbo has been making a profit for two years.

But in both cases the making of profit is not the decisive factor, the question is, could a bigger profit be made elsewhere? In this case by concentrating production.

10,000 miners jobs are threatened because of the lack of investment in the coalfields. At

the same time deep water ports are being developed to allow a possible 15 million tonnes of foreign coal a year for key power stations in the East Midlands and Yorkshire area.

British Telecom, as part of reconstruction, is to shed 5,000 management jobs with a further possible 5,000 staff jobs. The Guardian on the 11th May stated: "The management cut at BT, higher than earlier estimates, is part of a restructuring of the company, but the city is expecting 30,000 jobs, 12% of the workforce to be shed by BT over the next three years." Last year BT made large profits.

Imperial Tobacco is to close two plants with the loss of 1,200 jobs. Staffing at Imperial Tobacco has been halved in the last five years. Two factories are to close in Glasgow and Ipswich.

We are witnessing the chronic decline of British capitalism as part of the overall world economic crisis. Growth in industrial production in the 13 largest capitalist countries has fallen on average from 5% to 1.3% in the last year. Some countries are faring worse than others, for example Japan, whose industrial production fell from 10.1% to 0.2% in the same period, Sweden: 9.0% to 0% and the USA: 4.1% to 0.1%. To add to this inflation has increased to 6.5% from 5.7% on average and interest rates are being forced higher worldwide by the effects of German re-unification. This latter event, like the rising inflation, is the result of the pressure of the masses, east and west, and militates against any possibility of a period of stability for the capitalists. All of this adds up to a continuing crisis for Thatcher and a golden opportunity for workers to throw her out of office.

# WHICH SIDE

**SUE GWYER**

The great movement of the Argentine people for a decent life without the worry of hunger, misery and dictatorships expressed itself without reservation in the 100,000 plus May Day rally outside the government house in Plaza De Mayo, Buenos Aires.

It was a rally of the "NO's" against the policies of the Menem Government. It was a rally in opposition to Argentina treading the same path as "Thatcher's liberal democracy in Britain" - as Menem likes to call it.

The people who marched in the streets and filled May Square to overflowing came to show their anger at the Government's priva-

tisation plans, the inflation, the sackings and lay-offs, the amnesty to the Generals and the surrender of the Malvinas.

The mobilisation was not just another commemorative May Day rally but a direct political confrontation to the Peronist Government's policies and rule.

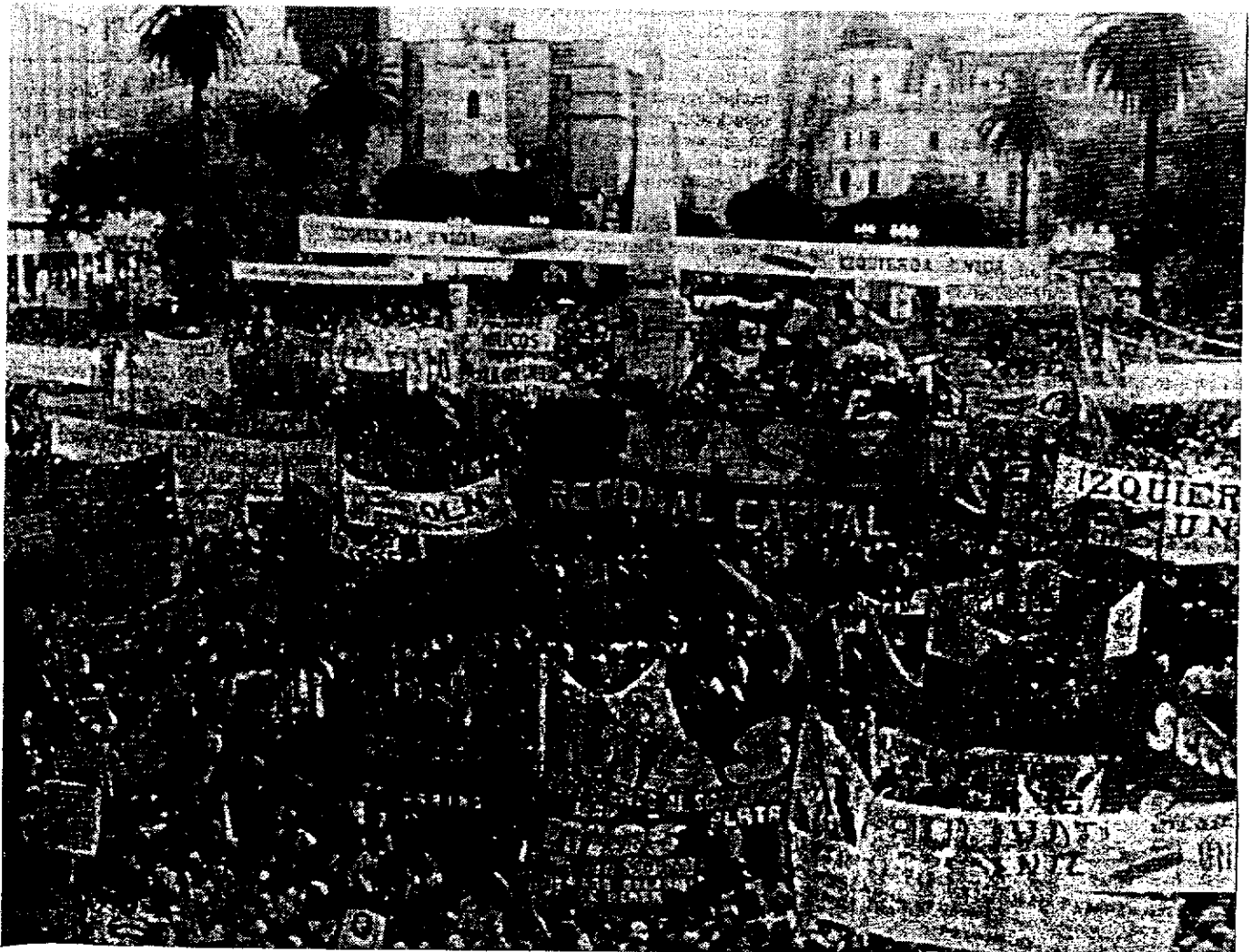
Just three weeks earlier there had been a demonstration in the very same place, called by the spokesmen of the right, in support of Menem's economic plans.

At that time Menem said that the 60,000 who came to his rally showed that the majority of the population were on his side of the street and supported his plans. This rally was made up of bankers and businessmen, of speculators and entrepreneurs - of all those who voted to the right of Peronism in the last election. They now rush to his support be-

cause they all fear what may come after him.

May Day was a clear demonstration of the strength of the movement in opposition to Menem's plans. It showed beyond all doubt that the majority of the Argentine population are uniting on the opposite side of the street to Menem.

In the wake of the demonstration the key representatives of world capitalism, stalinist bureaucracy, the church and the monarchy have visited or announced their intention to visit Argentina. There are many countries in South America which are in revolutionary situations but at this point Bush - US President, Yang Shankung - Chinese Premier and butcher of Tiananmen, Robert Runcie - head of the protestant church and the richest woman in the world, the British Queen, who owns a





# ARE YOU ON?



*Zamora and Vicente*

great deal of land in Argentina.

The photograph shows the unmistakable authority of the MAS in the rally, which was called by the United Left; the electoral coalition of the MAS the Communist Party and other small left forces such as IDEPO, Democratic Popular Left. The United Left brought 50% of the people to the demonstration, the MAS 30% of that number.

The May Day rally proved that the MAS and the United Left was beginning to appear as the alternative leadership to wide layers of the masses in Argentina. Half of the demonstrators were rank and file Peronists, disaffected Radicals, specifically youth, Intransigent Party members and independents. It was in this sense a historic leap for the MAS, the International Workers League and for Trotskyism. It was made possible by the worldwide upsurge, especially the events in Eastern Europe.

Today on a world scale there are clearly two pavements, two sides of the street and an increasing polarisation of the classes to these two sides. The MAS and increasingly the Argentine masses are with the Eastern European workers against stalinist bureaucratic repression. They are for socialism with democracy. They are with the black South African freedom fighters and the Palestine

Intifada against apartheid and zionist oppression. They are with the heroic Nicaraguan working class and the rank and file sandanista fighters against Chamorro and US imperialism. They are with the Panamanian workers and against the Yankee invasion force. They are with the British working class against Thatcher and her hated Poll Tax.

The day after the May Day rally in Buenos Aires many workers thanked the MAS comrades for organising the event and challenging the Menem Government. The central plank of the MAS programme, which Socialist Voice has carried in previous issues, is the demand for the Constituent Assembly and for workers' control. This programme is now being taken up by the Argentine masses as the only way out of the crisis.

Workers are turning towards the MAS and Zamora, the MAS' parliamentary deputy, the only force providing solutions to the situation facing them.

In the development towards a workers' revolution and socialism in Argentina the MAS have built the largest Trotskyist party the world has seen. They are firmly on and are building the workers and popular masses side of the street in Argentina and, through the International Workers' League, on a world scale. They are faced with the question of taking power in the second biggest country in South America and face the direct military aggression of the pillar of imperialism. The US have recently deployed green berets to Argentine soil and are discussing with Britain over joint military bases in the Malvinas and the South Atlantic. They have naval fleets in the Caribbean and are preparing aggression on Cuba. They have an invasion force in Panama, and troops throughout Central America.

They fear a continental revolutionary upsurge and know that there are revolutionary parties with mass influence to lead revolutions to success in the South Cone. South America and Eastern Europe are the axis of the world socialist revolution today. The counter revolutionary front of the capitalists, the bureaucrats, the church and the monarchy know it and are uniting to try and stop an

explosion.

The left in Britain must unite in their efforts to lend all the support possible to these revolutionary movements and to help in the building of genuine workers' democratic and revolutionary parties like the MAS in South America. We must show which side we are on.

## WORKERS' VIDEO

The International Socialist League presents a unique opportunity to see the May Day demonstration called by the United Left in Argentina, of which our sister party, the MAS, is a major part.

The demonstration united all those saying "No" to President Menem's policies of sackings and privatisations, "No" to the payment of the external debt and for workers' control of industry, banks and the transport system, "No" to the amnesty to the military and the sell out on the Malvinas.

Over 100,000 people took over the Plaza De Mayo, the traditional rallying point of the ruling Peronist Party. It surpassed the government's demonstration held three weeks earlier, which, despite the peronists laying on free transport and food only attracted 60,000, the vast majority of whom voted to the right of Menem in the last elections, just six months ago.

It was the largest demonstration called by the left in Argentine history and the capitalists and bureaucrats worldwide are well aware of it.

We think the demonstration marks an historic change in the relation of class forces in Argentina and proves that the majority of the Argentine people are on the opposite side of the street to Menem. If you are on our side of the street then you should watch this video - if your not sure then maybe it will help you cross!

# SUPPORT THE JUST STRUGGLE OF THE LITHUANIAN PEOPLE FOR THEIR INDEPENDENCE

---

## STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL WORKERS' LEAGUE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL APRIL 19th 1990

---

The Soviet Bureaucracy, with Gorbachev at its head, is committing a new crime against the rights of an oppressed nationality and against international solidarity among workers. Yesterday night, the supply of oil and gas from the Soviet Union to the Republic of Lithuania was stopped. This is the first step in an economic blockade which wants to paralyse the economy and the life of Lithuania, in an attempt to break the strong determination of the people of that republic, which on 11th March declared its independence.

Confronted with the evidence that the military provocations it staged during the last month (sending of troops, persecution of Lithuanian citizens and military occupation of the government and Communist Party buildings), and the ultimatum given by Gorbachev could not deviate Lithuania from its decision to be an independent nation, it decided to take a new and very serious step.

Nobody who calls themselves a socialist, a revolutionary, a democrat or a supporter of the self-determination of all nations can be indifferent to this aggression! This economic blockade is as criminal and repugnant as the one American imperialism imposed on Cuba thirty years ago! We must unite our efforts as we did then, to make this attempt to surrender a people by starvation fail!

The action of the Kremlin bureaucracy is to be repudiated for three main reasons.

Firstly, because it treads on the right to self-determination of a small nation which fifty years ago was annexed to the USSR through a military occupation, and which today is fighting for its independence.

Secondly, because once again the principles on which the Soviet Union was founded are being violated. Lenin said once and again that the nationalities had the right to their self-determination and stated quite clearly what that right consists of: *"by self-determination of the nationalities we understand the separation of their state from the collectivity of another nation. We understand the forma-*

*tion of an independent national state."* Soviet Russia recognised the independence of Finland, Poland, Lithuania itself and other oppressed nations on the basis of the respect to this right.

Thirdly, because it violates the Constitution of the USSR, which consecrates the right of each one of the republics to leave the Union. Adding insult to injury, the bureaucrats headed by Gorbachev have just passed a law which, under the pretence of regulating that right, make it impossible to use it.

The aggression of the oppressing bureaucracy against the Lithuanian people wants to find a justification in inconsistent and reactionary arguments. Thus, it denies the Lithuanians the right to their independence on the pretext that capitalist constitutions do not recognise the right to secession. They use the national oppression exerted by the capitalists as a justification for the national oppression of the bureaucrats!

They also say that both, from the political and the military point of view it is important to maintain the unity of the soviet republics. This cannot be denied. But this unity will only be such if it is based on the free will of the people. Any attempt to maintain it by force is a criminal attempt against that very unity, since the force that is exerted against the people will make any idea of union hateful to them and will make their future integration in a free federation more difficult.

The perpetuation of oppression will only poison the relations among the oppressed nations and the Russian people, through the accumulation of ill feelings.

The aggression of the Moscow bureaucrats against Lithuania is also being used as a warning to the rest of the oppressed nationalities, from the neighbouring Estonia and Latvia to the republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia. The bureaucracy is mortally afraid of the struggle of the nationalities and above all it fears that it may be united to the struggle of the Russian workers to recover workers' democracy and wipe out all privileges.

At the head of the mobilisation of the Lithuanian people there is a nationalist leadership which wants to take the country along the false path of capitalist restoration. This is what makes the criminal attitude of the Soviet bureaucracy even more serious. On denying the Lithuanian masses their national right, it is throwing them into the arms of these nationalist leaders who want to pass as the

crusaders of their independence!

The IWL-FI is categorically in favour of Lithuanian independence and the complete respect for the will of the Lithuanian people.

It denounces and repudiates the military measures and the economic blockade that want to prevent the national self-determination of the Lithuanian people, threaten it with great sufferings, disrupt the fraternal unity of the peoples of the Soviet Union and defame the name of socialism in falsely involving it in a cowardly aggression against a small nation without armed forces.

It calls the workers and the peoples of the whole world, and especially the Russian masses, the defenders of socialism and those who fight for the right to national self-determination to repudiate Gorbachev and his bureaucratic caste's measures and to back the Lithuanian right to independence.

It demands that all governments who say they respect the right to national self-determination to immediately recognise the Lithuanian Republic and its authorities elected last February.

**LONG LIVE INDEPENDENT  
LITHUANIA!**

**SOVIET TROOPS OUT OF  
LITHUANIAN TERRITORY!**

**FOR THE IMMEDIATE  
LIFTING OF THE ECONOMIC  
BLOCKADE!**

**FOR A FREE AND  
VOLUNTARY FEDERATION OF  
ALL COUNTRIES WHERE THE  
CAPITALISTS AND THE  
LANDOWNERS HAVE BEEN**

# BUREAUCRACY ON ITS KNEES WEST GETS WORRIED

The Soviet bureaucracy arose from Stalin's policy of "socialism in one country". This policy purported that it was not necessary for revolutions to overthrow capitalism elsewhere and meant that the Kremlin developed a cosy relationship with the imperialist nations behind the backs of the international working class.

Now, the bureaucracy, with Gorbachev at the helm is on its knees and the West is getting worried about the consequences of the movement which caused this. On May 24th the International Institute of Strategic Studies said that the Soviet Union was "sliding into chaos" and that this is creating an unstable climate in Europe.

Despite being the doyen of the Western media the feelings of ordinary Soviets to the current regime could be seen on May Day in Moscow when hostile crowds forced Gorbachev to leave Lenin's mausoleum overlooking the parade. Loyal trade unionists demanded that a national referendum be held on the plan to switch to a market economy. At the same time nationalists in the crowd demanded independence for republics wishing to secede.

Moscow now has very little influence on what goes on throughout the Soviet Union. This extends from individual republics, to regions, cities, enterprises and workers organisations. In Azerbaijan railway workers have continued the blockade on neighbouring Armenia despite a law prohibiting any strike action on the railways and other essential services. The autonomous republic of Komi has never put into effect restrictions on cooperative businesses whilst other regions are refusing to register any cooperatives at all.

Furthermore, and despite the legislation which sought to outlaw strikes in a range of key industries, the average number of workers on strike each day this year has reached 130,000 compared with 100,000 last year. And miners in the Donetsk coal basin are now threatening to call a general strike in protest at measures to implement massive price rises on a host of basic products. The rises are part of the attempt to create a market for goods and services in the Soviet Union. This means that on July 1st the price of bread will triple.

The bureaucracy is ham strung, as Nikolai Ryzhrov told the Supreme Soviet; the government is bankrupt and has had to spend an extra Rbs3bn (£3bn) on importing an addi-

tional 27m tonnes of grain in the past 4 months, and now has no available money for further imports. Just recently Japan has stopped exports of steel piping to the Soviet Union as it was not getting paid.

They have no alternative but to try to reduce workers standards of living even further and to attack the democratic rights of the

nationalities but every time they do, it only intensifies and the unites the opposition to its rule. The bureaucracy is becoming more and more isolated day by day and its hold on power is becoming increasingly fragile. The overthrow of Soviet bureaucracy would be the biggest victory for the world socialist movement since the Russian revolution.

## USSR: CHALLENGE TO STATE UNIONS

The first Soviet congress of independent trade unions has voted to form a council to unite the country's unofficial workers' groups in a challenge to the state labour movement.

*"The aim is to unite all forces and to guarantee the rights of working people in this difficult situation"* said a spokesman in Novokuznetsk, the western Siberian city in which the meeting was held.

The congress expressed support for the breakaway republic of Lithuania and agreed to form an organisation to defend the rights of rural work-

ers. A resolution condemning the Soviet leadership for taking the economy to the brink of collapse was also approved.

(Reuter report from Moscow - FT 3/5/90).

The conference was undecided whether or not to proceed with the formation of a new party. A delegate to the conference who was the chairman of the political club of Gorky won loud applause for saying *"the Communist Party cannot be considered the party of the working class."*

LATEST EDITION

NOW OUT

### International COURIER

The latest issue contains articles on Nicaragua, Panama and Poland.

It is mainly devoted however to the historic explosion of stalinism and its consequences for the workers of the world.

The International Courier is the journal of our international party, the International Workers League.

It is now being produced in four languages: Spanish, Portuguese, Greek and English.

Price: £2.00 + 26p P&P  
Back issues obtainable from:  
ISL, PO BOX 9, Eccles SO,  
M30 7FX.

# INTIFADA REIGNITED BREAKS ISRAELI BORDERS

MARTIN RALPH

The Intifada has replied with such verocity to the genocidal killing of seven Palestinians that it has moved inside Israel and created upsurges of support throughout the Middle East.

These killings are no accident, even the place was symbolic. Known as the "slave market" in Rishon Lezion, it serves as a place to hire day labourers from the occupied territories. The whole event is a microcosm of zionism.

It comes from the expansionist policy of the zionist state, which would prefer to see every Palestinian dead rather than seek any negotiated policy. In this process they are supported to the hilt by the American and Western Governments.

The recent increase in immigrants of 150,000 from the Soviet Union has been encouraged by the Americans and they are now in the process of arranging loans of \$400 million for the cost of settling the newcomers. Another aspect of America's "peace process" is the Star's Wars programme. The US has given Israel technology and \$150 million since 1988 in order to develop the Hetz anti-missile missile. These weapons are part of the arsenal for mass destruction, they are for destroying retaliatory action after the use of nuclear weapons.

That a 21 year old, Ami Popper, takes his brother's army uniform and his M-16 assault rifle and kills innocent people which the Israeli state needs for the building sites and factories is part of the crazed situation in Israel.

The British media had, as usual, very selected reporting of the events surrounding the cold blooded murder.

Statements made by other Palestinians who were near indicated that many Israeli cars passed the dead and injured without stopping. One driver stopped to say; "only seven?". (Middle East International, 25th May)



An angry mother in Gaza protests the arrest of her son

The initial media coverage was not in fact one of horror but one even extended to outright glee. Only sometime later did it change, but the popular reaction to the act itself has

## FACTS OF GENOCIDE

159 children under the age of 16 were killed by gunfire, beating or tear gas in the first two years of the Palestinian uprising. Between 50,000 to 63,000 children have been treated for injuries including 6,500 wounded.

In total 830 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli army since the Intifada began.

shown a profound change is taking place in Israel and throughout the Middle East.

Inside the Jewish community hospitals reported hundreds of volunteers offering blood donations. Peace groups responded swiftly and rapid protests such as the hundreds who picketed Shamir's home and other central locations in Israeli cities were widespread. But this was not all.

Immediately, as we saw on British TV, Palestinian workers went on strike. Convoys of cars returned to the West Bank and Gaza Strip, spontaneous demonstrations broke out against every visible Israeli military presence, in the fighting seven more were killed and 500 wounded. Palestinian leaders called for a three day strike and a seven day boycott of work in Israel.

Israel's Arab population joined the protests by declaring a strike on 21 May and three days of violence broke out in Israel itself with stone throwing, tyre burning and petrol bombs being hurled, even in some bedouin communities in the South. The most violent incidents were in Nazareth, Israel's biggest Arab town, where a local bank was burned and the tax office was stoned but the protests occurred also in Haifa, Tayyiba and other towns.

The zionists have long dreaded this extension of the Palestinian uprising. According to Newsweek of 4th June, the extension of the hostilities into Israel "will make the intifada appear like child's play by comparison." So the unthinkable has happened and its development has been prepared by the Israelis. The last person to be charged with murdering an Arab shop keeper - Rabbi Moshe Levinger only got five months, many get away without punishment, at least from the authorities. Another Rabbi, Zvi Naria, was quoted by the Middle East International as saying "now is not the time for words; now is a time to shoot right and left."

The Palestine Liberation Organisation is calling for a peace keeping force from the United Nations to go in. But what the Arab movement is demanding on its banners is that

the Arab nations deal directly with the problem, they are demanding economic and military support from the Arab countries. But for years the Arab Governments have only agreed in words. The Intifada wants immediate assistance.

One account of the uprising inside Jordan, where the armed forces had to kill Palestinians to keep control of the situation shows the general feeling.

*"The attempt of 1000's of demonstrators to advance to the bridge (that connects the East and West banks of the river Jordan), despite pleas by the organisers not to cross an agreed forward limit (about a mile from the border) and the subsequent use of tear gas by Jordanian security forces, were indicators of the radical mood. Furthermore the demonstrators songs and chants were unequivocally in favour of the revival of armed struggle and scathingly critical of Arab states for failure to counter Israel and financially back the Intifada 'No to Arab Silence, No to Arab Oppression' chanted the angry crowd."*

- Middle East International.

Many banners proclaimed *"The intifada is Jordan's front line"*.

These demands of the Arab masses are international demands, they are demanding international organisation to aid the Intifada. It is in this struggle that the forces will develop for an international revolutionary front against zionism and the Imperialist Governments whose creation zionism is.

\* Destroy The Zionist State

\* For a Democratic and Secular State of Palestine



*The uprising moves closer to home: Israeli Arabs battle police in Galilee*

# CIA INVOLVEMENT IN INDONESIAN MASSACRE UNCOVERED

CELIA JONES

The Washington Post of 22nd May confirmed that American diplomats and intelligence agents helped the Indonesian army carry out one of the bloodiest massacres this century, giving right wing death squads the names of thousands of Indonesian leftists.

Former staff at the US embassy in Jakarta were quoted as saying they gave the government lists of leading Communists and checked to see whether they had been killed.

The paper quoted Howard Federspiel, then Indonesia expert at the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, as saying: *"No one cared so long as they were Communists, that they were being butchered."*

The CIA estimated in 1968 that the regime killed 250,000 people.

An article in the Guardian, 15th May, develops the information. The idea of having a hit list came from William Colby, who took over the CIA East Division in 1962. Authority came from the then ambassador Marshall Green. Kathy Kadane, a former congressional investigator, has produced numerous lengthy tape recordings with the Americans concerned. One person, Robert Marten, a former political officer at the American Embassy, is quoted as saying:

*"I probably have a lot of blood on my hands but that's not all bad. There's a time when you have to strike hard at a decisive moment."*

The hit list contained the names of PKI (Communist Party) leaders, including those of provincial cities, regional committee members and heads of Labour, women's and youth groups.

Joseph Lazarsky, CIA Deputy, admitted passing on names and is quoted as saying:

*"They didn't have enough goon squads to zap them all and some individuals were valuable for interrogation and were kept in detention centres. (But) the PKI infrastructure was*

*zapped almost immediately. As the army reported the murders a tick was placed by their name on the list. In 1966 there was so many names ticked off that a analyst in Washington concluded the PKI leadership had been destroyed."*

It would be wrong to think that this method of dealing with opponents by the CIA has disappeared forever or is still not being used in a number of countries in the world today. Dictatorships have fallen but they have not vanished from the planet and neither has this aspect of American foreign policy.

As Harold Pinter wrote in an interesting article concerned mainly with Nicaragua in The Independent on Sunday, 27th May:

*"So in this little region of Central America nearly 300,000 people have been killed in the name of freedom and democracy over the last 20 years. Now let's be quite clear about why they were killed - they were killed because they were a nuisance. They were killed because they believed in a better life for all. That belief immediately qualified them as communists. It's very odd and terribly ironic that while the communist system in Eastern Europe has been collapsing and everyone's been saying that communism is dead, the Americans remain unconvinced. In Washington they still take the view that there are plenty of communists left in Latin America and they consider that they don't deserve to live."*

The working class should be on their guard against what the Americans and the British call counter insurgency, because if they can the CIA and friends will attempt to use the same methods in the East and the West. All the experience they have gained will be used in the developing revolutionary situations throughout the world, including in the advanced capitalist countries unless the masses take bold measures to prevent them.

# ANC BACKS THE SENDING

Socialist Voice condemns the decision of the ANC leadership to support the sending of South African Defence Force troops, including Portuguese mercenaries, to Natal.

PETER MONEY

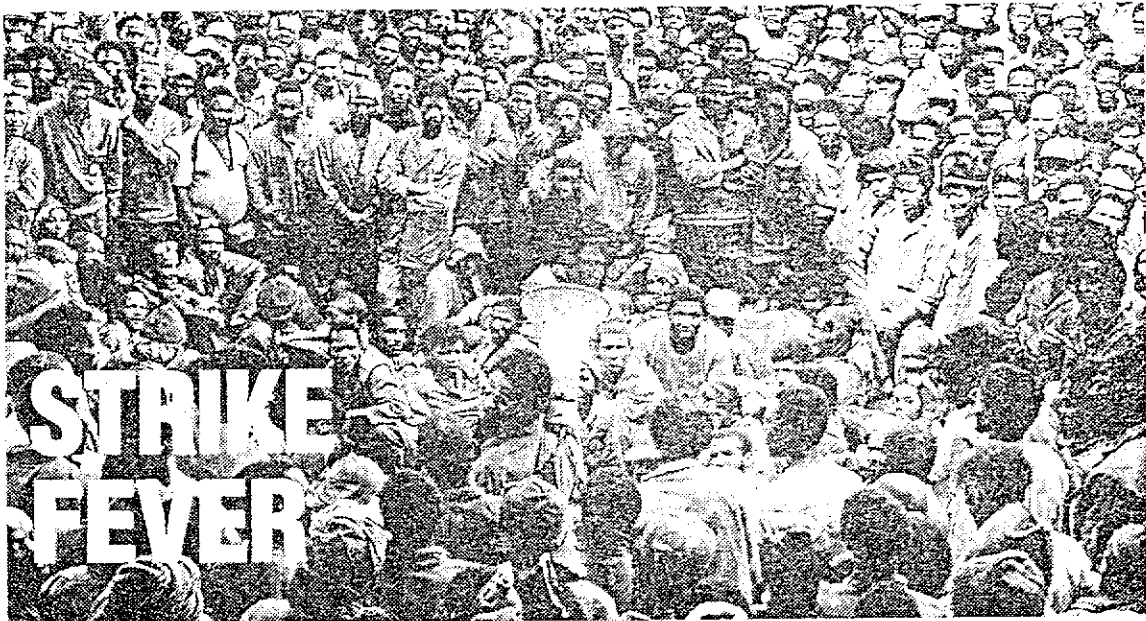
We see this action as a betrayal not only of the workers and black masses of Natal but of the black masses of the whole of South Africa and beyond. It provides a life line for a regime that has been on the run ever since its military defeat in Angola and its enforced withdrawal from Namibia and provides an opening for the extreme right wing who have been calling for open civil war against the blacks.

Since 1985 the people of Natal have been

a product of the increased isolation and weakness of the stooge black leaders, like Buthelezi, whose influence has deteriorated enormously with the growing confidence and strength of the black revolution and enormous gains of recent months. Since the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC there has been a huge increase in the prestige of all organisations that have fought against apartheid and a big upsurge in the struggle of black workers and the

the 21 day and 90 day time limits for disputes and the section which makes unions responsible for "Wildcat" strikes. There has also been a gigantic leap forward in the struggle against the Bantustans which has been led by the trade unions.

The South African working class is amongst the most politically conscience and combative in the world. "Leaving aside ideological frills, the average worker and youth militant



Strike fever at a Volkswagen plant - there has been a huge increase in the struggle since Mandela's release of which the war in Natal is a part.

defending themselves in an undeclared war against the Inkatha warlords and the police.

Full scale civil war broke out in March this year when on the 27th Inkatha gangs launched mass attacks on areas around Pietermaritzburg. One attack on Caluza involved between 2,500 and 3,000 armed men.

Hundreds of homes were destroyed and, by April 9th, it was estimated that there were 40,000 refugees from townships around Durban, Hammarsdale as well as Pietermaritzburg.

Since then the war has spread to new areas of Natal, particularly the rural areas and in KwaMakutha and Umlazi there have been a number of mass protest marches against the Kwazulu police who the people say are worse than Inkatha.

The huge increase in violence in Natal is

masses of South Africa. But it is the trade unions that have made the greatest leap forward in recent months and that has made their leaders a particular target in the war in Natal.

The trade unions have experienced a big increase in membership as previously unorganised sectors like the agricultural workers have joined the struggle. There has been a big increase in militancy amongst the public sector workers and some of the biggest strikes ever in that sector, of workers which are amongst the most strategically significant within the South African economy, against privatisation and for wage increases. Significant successes have been achieved with workers receiving pay rises and with some privatisations being pushed back.

The employers have been forced to accept the scrapping of some of the worst parts of the Labour Relations Act such as

in our country has perhaps a more profound grasp of the utility of a socialist future than many a Marxist scholar", Joe Slovo of the SACP. Today the South African working class is uniting like never before all sections of the class and the black masses behind its banner and the South African ruling class is weaker than it has ever been as sections of white workers are joining the militant black trade unions. De Klerk was forced to release Mandela by the action of the black masses of South Africa. However, he always hoped to find in Mandela and the rest of the ANC leadership people who would support his plans for a "pacifist" solution to the political crisis in South Africa.

However, it is not the ANC who is really in charge in South Africa. New leaderships are being borne in the heat of the struggle, par-

# OF SADF TROOPS TO NATAL

*The people of Natal are involved in a war.*

ticularly within COSATU, for a Black government and for socialism. Mandela has already had a hard time selling his "negotiations" plans, particularly to the youth, who consider that negotiations mean betrayal. Similarly, he has been having trouble with the dropping of nationalisation from the programme of any future black government with the trade unions, despite the assistance of the SACP who, whilst they are calling for opening of the Communist Party to the working class, are saying that "nationalisation" can be an "obstacle to socialism".

The youth and the working class will not accept sending support troops to Natal.

It is in the hands of these new leaderships that the fate of the South African revolution rests.

**WITHDRAW THE TROOPS  
NOW!**

**FORWARD TO A BLACK  
GOVERNMENT AND A  
SOCIALIST SOUTH AFRICA!**



*Township resident defends his home with  
homemade weapons*

## **VIVA NAMIBIA TOUR**

**7.30PM MONDAY 25TH JUNE  
MECHANICS' INSTITUTE**

**PRINCESS STREET MANCHESTER**

Namibia gained political independence on 21st March 1990. But South Africa remains in control of Walvis Bay, the country has been devastated by years of apartheid occupation and workers still face multi-national employers used to having a free hand to exploit their workforce.

The two speakers on 25th June represent important aspects of the struggle against Apartheid and are connected with the major campaigns for a decent living wage in Namibia and for the return of Walvis Bay.

They are here to build international solidarity at all levels of the trade union movement.

The speakers are:

**ROSALA SHIPIKI**, National Namibian Students Organisation.

She was imprisoned for her part in the schools boycott in Walvis Bay and only released in February this year.

**SANDI SIJAKE**, Head of the National Union of Namibian Workers Media Unit.

He was imprisoned for fifteen years on Robben Island for his political activities. He will speak on the struggle against Apartheid, the role of the unions after Independence and their fight for recognition, Health and Safety and wage increases.

Future events of the tour:

Trade Union day School - London - 30th June

Women's day school - venue to be confirmed - 7th July

For further information contact Manchester Namibian support Group.

The tour itself cost a lot of money; donations to help towards the finance please send to: NSC, PO BOX 16, LONDON NW5 2LW.

# Young workers fight POLL TAX CUTS

SARAH RASHID

Chair: YTS Shop Stewards Committee, Transport and General Workers' Union. Manchester.

Trainees on Manchester City Councils' youth scheme are fighting Poll Tax cuts that will turn the scheme into little more than cheap labour. The labour controlled council have scrapped the £11 per week top up for new starters in the workshops. Now, they want to close down two of them; Swan St and Moss Side, and move the trainees across the city to an old school in Ardwick. Those already on the scheme will not even get this years rise in top-up. Colleges where YTS workers get off-the-job training are threatened with closure and some courses will be scrapped altogether. The city council are making some of the most disadvantaged people in Manchester suffer to help them collect the Tory Poll Tax. Nearly all the trainees are in the TGWU but the council haven't even told the YTS shop stewards what's going on.

Dian Gregory, second year mechanic and YTS convener, said, "Shutting the workshops shows the councils contempt for the inner city youth. And stopping the top up for work shop trainees and not others contradicts their own Equal Opportunities Policy."

The shop stewards committee got their branch (6/159) to support a campaign against the councils' plans of cuts (the resolution was reported in the last Socialist Voice) and has

also linked up other campaigns, fighting to keep the colleges open and reverse the cuts.

Stewards have spoke at union and campaign meetings and handed out leaflets and petitions trying to get support from as many people as possible. Lobbies and pickets of council meetings have shown the scheme workers' total opposition to the local authorities' vicious attacks.

Sharon Dion summed up the councils tactics: "They haven't got the bottle to take on Thatcher, so they expect us to carry the can. They have been hawking their cuts around each department. When workers took them on they have ran off looking for somewhere else. They thought we would be an easy target but we are proving them wrong!!!"

The members have had some success in their demands for: top up for all, a yearly increase, no workshops or colleges shut and no courses scrapped. Wythenshawe college was threatened with closure. A campaign by lecturers, staff, students, YTS workers and local people mobilised hundreds, who told the education committee what they thought of their cuts. Faced with such strong opposition, they turned tail.

All over the country councils are making cuts in jobs and services to balance their

## INVESTIGATE THE POLICE - NOT THE VICTIMS

A support group has been formed for those arrested at Trafalgar Square on the anti - Poll Tax demonstration.

It is now holding weekly public meetings. The group aims to:

- \* Give unconditional support to all those arrested.
- \* Provide legal support.
- \* Counter State and media hysteria about the riot.
- \* Be run by and accountable to those arrested.

TRAFALGAR SQUARE  
DEFENDENTS' CAMPAIGN.  
c/o HALDANE SOCIETY OF  
SOCIALIST LAWYERS,  
ROOM 205, PANTHER HOUSE,  
38 MOUNT PLEASANT,  
LONDON WC1.  
TEL: 071 833 8958

budgets because of the Poll Tax. So called left wing councils like Manchester are making the people they are supposed to represent suffer... Councillors who have voted against cuts are being hounded by leaders of the Labour Party and threatened with expulsion if they vote against the Poll Tax cuts. As a trainee lobbying the council meeting said "It's no use them saying they'll make the cuts when there's a Labour Government - we will be long off the schemes by then - are we supposed to live now."

As her placard said... Kinnock's Party - cheap labour.

Published and Printed by  
PO Box 9, Eccles SO 40 1TF