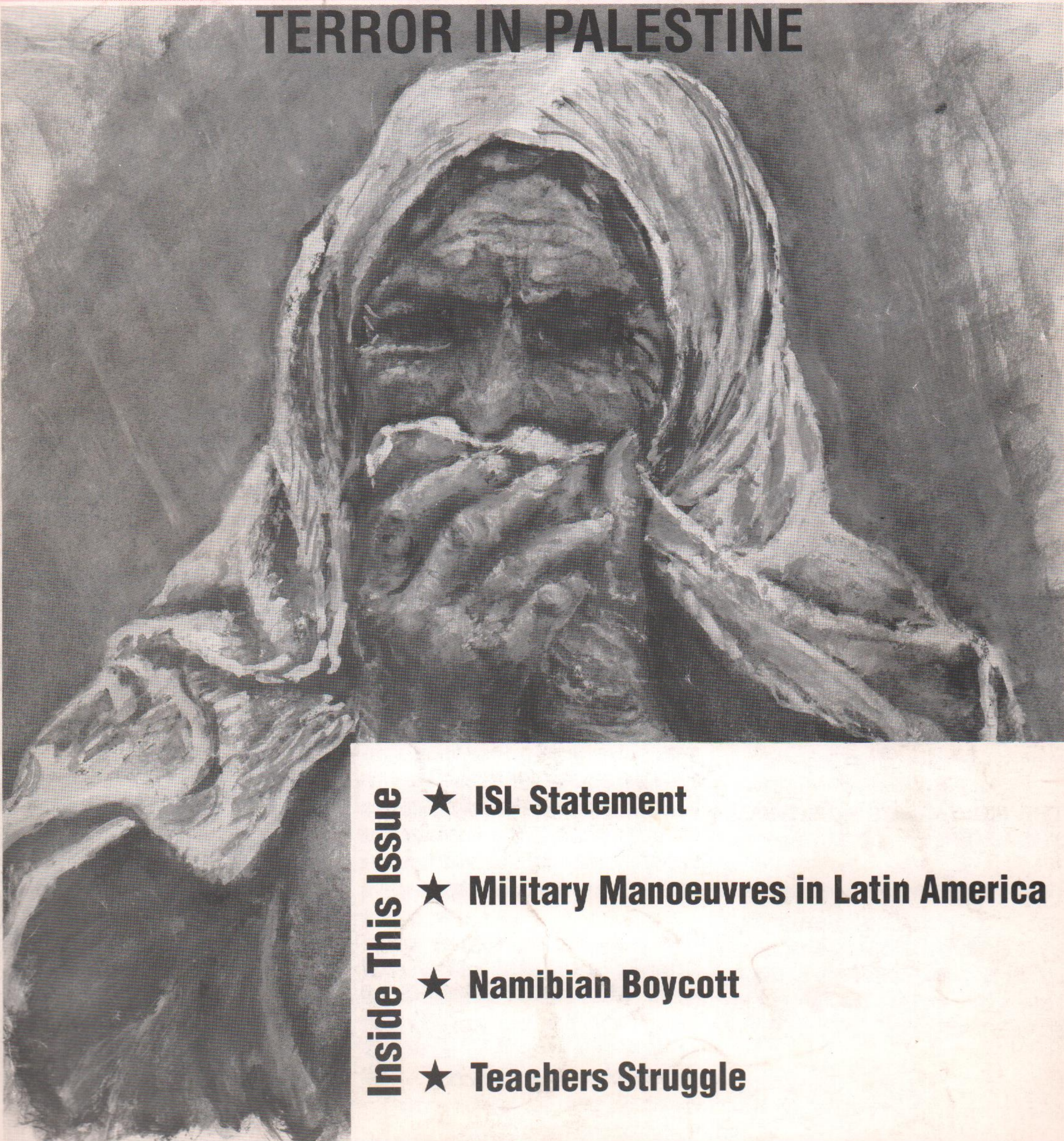


SOCIALIST VOICE

JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE
BRITISH SECTION OF THE IWL (FI) LIT

TERROR IN PALESTINE



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STATEMENT OF THE

On February 23rd, 1988, the International Socialist League was formed from members of a tendency (the Bolshevik Tendency), which had been fighting for internationalism and seeking to change the political course of the majority leadership of the Workers Revolutionary Party ("Workers Press"). The International Socialist League decided to become a section of the International Workers League (Fourth International), generally known as the L.I.T. from the initials of its name in Spanish.

The question of internationalism is vital, not just for the small groups of trotskysts who were involved in this struggle in the W.R.P. It is vital for the whole of the working class.

One of the major crimes of stalinism has been the undermining of the internationalism of the working class. In 1923, Stalin discovered the theory of 'Socialism in One Country' as a weapon against Trotsky and his internationalism. Since then, what has been consistent in all the turns of stalinist policy has been its opposition to a struggle for a real internationalist policy for the working class.

Today, the working class has no international organisation with mass sections. Yet it is today more evident than ever, that world relations dominate working class lives.

THE MULTI-NATIONALS ROAM THE GLOBE

The multi-national or trans-national firms scour the globe for profits. These conglomerates of financial and industrial capital operate on a global scale irrespective of frontiers and national boundaries. They dominate governments.

In the last decades their interests have driven them to enormously expand their

power and the concentration of their capital. The old traditional industries have declined in Europe and North America; mass unemployment, particularly of youth has soared; The trans-national firms have increased exploitation in the former colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Not the least of their aims was to destroy the organisation and militancy of the workers in the former heartlands of capitalism. However, the result has been to bring millions of new workers and exploited peoples into struggle in South and Central America, in Korea, in the Phillipines, in South Africa, and elsewhere - particularly as the struggle for markets has sharpened in the last decades.

Any perspective for the building of a revolutionary party in Britain must be firmly based on two fundamentals. One, the internationalism of marxist-leninist-trotskyism. In this epoch, internationalism means nothing unless it means the following: that the programme of revolutionaries is based on world economic and political development and that revolutionaries are part of a world organisation, and that they struggle to develop a world leadership.

The second fundamental, is profound consciousness of the nature of the revolutionary period since the end of the war, in which masses throughout the world have again and again hammered at imperialism. This period brings out again the truth of Trotsky's statement about: "the instinctive and elemental drive of the proletariat to reconstruct society on communist beginnings".

There is a relationship of forces and an underlying consciousness we can see in Britain which makes it impossible for the imperialists to continue their attacks upon the working class without tremendous class explosions. That is very clear in the present developments in Britain in relation to the National Health Service.

THE WORKING CLASS PUSHES FORWARD. THEIR LEADERS RETREAT.

The Tory offensive and the struggle by the trans-nationals, such as Fords, to break workers' strength, is driven by powerful forces of international competition. Capitalism can only fulfill its necessities if it can completely and utterly smash and crush this working class.

The great thing is that the British working class is proving once again that it is an intractable obstacle. In their steps on the way to the consciousness of a struggle for power, the working class can condition and check that offensive, knock it back and win victories.

It is on this that we base our confidence, that out of the working class there can be built an international leadership as an alternative to the old bureaucracies who are afraid of the workers' struggle, seek to inhibit them, and capitulate in front of the imperialists and their governments.

It is not sufficient to say that the trade union and labour leaders in Britain have retreated steadily in face of the state attacks on the unions, the local councils and the communities. The fact is that they are driven to attack the rights of their membership, as shown by the leaders of the E.E.P.T.U., the A.E.U. reorganisation and the National Union of Teachers restructuring. The union leadership are aiding, more and more, the aims and the interests of the Tory Government.

They have stood by and even assisted criminally the development of a situation where the youth face a future without hope. They have put up no struggle for real training for youth; have agreed to the wholesale destruction of industries and have assisted the government in its schemes to turn the youth into a super exploited cheap labour.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE

They desperately wish to work with the Japanese, American and British trans-national firms, to make their "sweetheart deals", and be given some crumbs from the finance capitalists in return for regulating the labour force.

THE NEED FOR PROGRAMMES OF ACTION

The International Socialist League seeks to convince the widest layer of workers of the urgent need to unite around a programme of action to break the workers' organisations from collaboration with the state and the employers; to resist anti-union and anti-militant legislation; to fight for union democracy; to resist youth slavery. There is a need to build a movement on class struggle lines that can carry out the task of removing the present leadership of the unions which capitulates to the state and the trans-nationals.

The central question is to develop the international tasks in all working class struggle. And the alternative leadership which must be built in the British working class must be internationalist.

We are a tendency who believe that none of



the fundamental problems which face the mass of the working men and women and the youth in this or any other country can be resolved until the workers take power and control, and end frontiers and exploitation.

We will ceaselessly continue to propagate that. However, we do not pose agreement with the entire programme of trotskyism as the essential basis for a united struggle for breaking the organisations of the working class from the disastrous course of class collaboration now being pursued by the labour and trade union bureaucracy.

GENUINE INTERNATIONALISM IS MORE THAN WORDS

There exist in the world three major international organisations that call themselves trotskyists. There is the "Fourth International" with its United Secretariat, an organisation generally known as Usec. There is the "Fourth International (I.C.R.)" whose leader is Pierre Lambert. There is, finally, the "International Workers' League (L.I.T.) - Fourth International".

The first two are revisionist. The "Fourth International (I.C.R.)" has made adaptations to social democracy in its policies over a period. The Usec international in turn has capitulated, not only to stalinism, but to petty bourgeois nationalism.

As against these two, the International Workers League has fought for trotskyist principles. In words and deeds they have stood for internationalism and have also made decisive breaks from circle existence in many countries, and in two countries, Brazil and Argentina, have dug deep roots into the working class.

WE WILL BUILD A MASS FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

We ask those who see the urgent need for a world party and the way that Trotsky saw it

as resolving the crisis of humanity through resolving the question of working class leadership, to study the documents and programme of the I.S.L. and of the L.I.T., and join with us in forging an international leadership of the world struggle for socialism.

As the International Workers' League (Fourth International) - the L.I.T. says in its statutes:

"The purpose of the International Workers' League -I.W.L. (F.I.)- is to overcome the crisis of leadership of the workers' movement and build a Fourth International with mass influence. Only by solving the crisis of proletarian leadership will the permanent mobilisation of the workers and exploited in the world against imperialism and the bourgeoisie finally culminate in the victory of the international socialist revolution and the establishment of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

"The I.W.L.(F.I.) does not claim to be the revolutionary leadership of the world proletariat, nor does its existence imply the overcoming of the present crisis of the Fourth International. However, at present, it constitutes the only democratically centralised world organisation struggling for these aims.

"The I.W.L.(F.I.) reaffirms that the crisis of revolutionary leadership shall be solved in the course of mobilising the masses by means of agreements and fusions with the other tendencies and organisations which, given by the upheaval of the masses, may become committed in the struggle against the counter-revolutionary apparatuses of the Stalinists, Social Democrats and the Labour union bureaucracy and the nationalist, opportunist, petty-bourgeois streams as well as against revisionism which claims to be trotskyist but capitulates to them."

LEFT LEADERS CHALLENGE KINNOCK



At the beginning of March, the campaign group of MP's announced that Tony Benn and Eric Heffer would be standing for the leadership of the Labour Party.

The political journalists set about explaining it in personal terms. The hacks among them, again following Kinnock, declared that it was a divisive tactic and anti-democratic.

Such comments are completely superficial. The decision of the Campaign Group to put up candidates has very little to do with the nature of individuals. It has more to do with the movements among the working class - even if many who supported the decision are not aware of them.

There is a steady class polarisation in Britain. It was clear at the General Election when those areas which had suffered most under the Tories class policies made gains for the Labour Party.

This year has seen the growing struggle in defence of the NHS, new militancy in the car industry and clear signs that the miners remain undefeated. At the other pole, the Tories and multi-nationals have continued their offensive till large sections of workers see the Government as creating a rich

person's paradise while millions now know their rights are being taken away, state benefits are being pegged at starvation level.

The Labour and trade union bureaucracy fear the mobilisation of struggle against the Tories more than the devil fears holy water. It is because of these forces that the left-wing MPs move.

The British working class is now beginning a movement to fight back and a movement towards the revolutionary conclusions that are not alien to its history, despite what reformists have said.

They are entering a period of a more stringent test on leaderships, searching for the correct organisation and leadership to fight their problems through. We are certainly willing and anxious to enter that experience with them. We welcome the decision of the Campaign Committee because - whatever the various participants may want, it must raise more sharply within the working class the questions of programmes and policies for struggle in Britain.

The lesson of the seventies when the left wing appeared to be controlling MPs, moving forward to control electoral policies etc. is evident. The council struggle, the miners strike and the relentless progress of the Tory class policies on the unions showed that woolly leadership and confusion purpose can only lead to defeat and capitulation.

In the eighties the right wing led by former left Kinnock has consolidated in the Party. The union leaders have assisted the Tories attack on the unions - both in regard to the youth and in regard to trade union rights.



In the Labour Party and the trade unions there are a great number of workers, some just beginning to move into struggle, who have a growing hatred of the Tories but distrust the Kinnock leadership and the leadership of the trade unions. They will support the move of the Campaign Committee.

The weakness of the Campaign Committee is very clear. They have not got a clear alternative programme to pose against Kinnock. They still proceed under a diffuse banner of general "left wing".

There is a minimum basis for the movement against Kinnock and the right wing bureaucracy. That is clear policies of internationalism and the independence of the working class, and its organisations.

That means the defence of all national liberation and revolutionary movements against British and American Imperialism including those in Latin America and nearer at home - in Ireland.

It means building in the unions a left wing unconditionally against all legal chains on the unions. The policy must be to break the unions from the state and the multi-nationals.

BUREAUCRACY CRAWLS TO FORD

Leaders of Britain's trade unions are preparing a further capitulation to the powerful and wealthy multi-nationals. They advocate the "new realism" for trade unions. Two leaders of the AEU were engaged in secret negotiation with Ford last September at the time of the TUC which set up an inquiry into single-union deals.

"NEW REALISM" IS OLD SELL-OUT

The "new realism" of Stalinist James Airlie and other trade union bureaucrats means that the trade union leaders must assist the multi-nationals in reducing wages, worsening conditions and the organisation of the British working class.

It has been the rank and file of the workers who have continually, ever since Ford came to Britain broken up these leaders' plans for cowardly arrangements with this company.

BUREAUCRATS WILL DESTROY WORKERS ACHIEVEMENTS

In all these struggles what was achieved by Ford workers was achieved against the trade union bureaucracy. Now this bureaucracy will destroy it all. What they are saying is that British workers must accept the lower conditions and pay which multi-nationals give elsewhere. If, the role of trade unions is to assist the multi-nationals to increase exploitation all over the globe, then trade unionism is finished.

Every trade unionist must face the truth. This leadership - stalinist and reformist - will hand the British trade unions over to the multinationals and the Tory Government just as their

German counterparts were prepared to hand German trade unions over to Hitler.

A CLASS QUESTION

Trade unionism is not about "what's in it for me", it's about what's in it for my class, nationally and internationally. If the multi-nationals like Ford are using their command of the globe to use one section of workers against another then British trade unionists must have a programme of struggle internationally to unite these workers.

Tory Ministers, anti-working class journalists and trade union bureaucrats are pouring out propaganda meant to convince trade unionists that they cannot resist the plans of the multi-nationals and that only criminals will seek to defend trade union principles at Dundee or elsewhere.

British trade unionists must repudiate this unholy and festering alliance. They must declare war on leaders who start with their own narrow interests as bureaucrats, and see membership in terms of their own jobs and income. They must challenge the multi-nationals and seek a unity with workers in other areas and other countries who are struggling against the same enemies.

PERUVIAN SEAMEN ON STRIKE IN LIVERPOOL DOCKS

Seamen on the Peruvian ship "Presidente Jose Pardo" have been stranded in Liverpool docks since October 23rd. The ship was impounded because of a debt of \$1,460,000 which the owners of the ship -Compania Peruana de Vapores- owe for docking charges in various European ports.

The Peruvian seaman earns 7,000,000 Soles (£50) per month, while the average of other workers in Peru is 15,000,000 Soles (£100). To cover the minimum needs of a Peruvian couple with two children at least 20,000,000 Soles is needed.

On the 2nd of February the 16 seamen of the "Presidente Jose Pardo" went on strike with 150 seamen of six ships belonging to the same company. They demanded an increase in their salaries.

They wanted the payment of the "prestamo escolar" (that is an amount of money that the company gives to the seamen before school begins in Peru, so they can buy books, uniforms, etc, for their children).

They demanded a pledge from the company that they would not take reprisals against the seamen when they returned home to Peru. Finally, the seamen reclaimed the payment of a debt of £250 that the company has owed them since July of 1986.

After one and a half months of striking, the Company offered only £2 a month increase. It began a campaign against the seamen, declaring they were bringing discredit on Peru because of the bad image they were showing all over the world.

The seamen continued the strike. They have found support from the local Labour Movement on Merseyside and Kirkby.

LIVERPOOL DOCKERS REFUSE TO LIFT BLACKING OF NAMIBIAN URANIUM.

By Greg Dropkin Namibia Support Committee



RTZ Offices, Bristol 1985

"Operational difficulties". That's how the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company explained the four containers of uranium hexafluoride which lay on the quay at Liverpool docks in late February. Other people might call it "Workers Sanctions".

In a major escalation of their blockade of Namibian and South African uranium, T&GWU portworkers held the containers for nine days, demanding proof that the uranium did not originate from Southern Africa. Their stance, in solidarity with the SWAPO against the South African military occupation of Namibia, has hardened since June '87.

BNFL TURNS ON THE HEAT

British Nuclear Fuel Ltd (BNFL) offered no evidence. In fact, they confessed in the "Financial Times" that 80% of their raw material comes from Namibia. Top BNFL management rushed to Liverpool, preceded by the BNFL Springfields T&GWU plant convenor, who warned dockers their action would merely provoke the company to shift exports to Felixtowe. BNFL told the T&G the 80% was exaggerated. The real amount was only 65% Namibian, they explained.

Meanwhile, Japanese electricity companies contacted BNFL via a news agency. On 26 February they were told the problem had been resolved. The material would be exported on the next ship, the "Atlantic Conveyor". On 2nd March the dock company moved the boxes up to the gantry crane, only to discover the blockade still solid. The "conveyor" sailed, while BNFL had the uranium hauled back to Springfields.

UNION E.C. ENDORSES BAN

The next week, the newly elected T&G General Executive Council endorsed a remit from the Docks National Committee for a complete handling ban of Namibian uranium by all port membership, and authorised Ron Todd to convene a meeting of the docks, road transport and BNFL membership on the issue. The GEC also decided to organise a speaking tour, in conjunction with the Namibia Support Committee, of all relevant ports and depots.

Before the tour gets started, port workers are already confronting the threat to shift trade. On 14 March, BNFL told the "East Anglia Daily Times" that they had re-routed the four containers through Felixtowe and would be using

that port more often in future. The T&G in Liverpool contacted the dock convenor in Felixtowe.

Stewards in Felixtowe are now telling the men not to handle the uranium, in accordance with union policy. But now, we can expect BNFL to counter-attack, perhaps issuing a writ in an attempt to force dockers to break international law and violate a U.N. Decree.

THE TASK FOR INTERNATIONALISTS

We can also expect BNFL membership to argue their jobs are at risk since customers like the Japanese will threaten to shift their nuclear processing out of Britain. With the U.S. Anti-Apartheid Act and Canadian Government policy both excluding imports of Namibian uranium, the only real alternative to BNFL is Comurhex, at Malvesi, in southern France. Meanwhile, the Japanese nuclear industry stands exposed as a major collaborator in the purchase of Namibian uranium through U.K. mining multinational, Rio Tinto Zinc. Another task for internationalists, is to deepen conflict for the Japanese government, which claims to support international law and U.N. decrees.

For far too long, the left in Britain has ignored the whole question of Namibia. With an industrial situation developing among transport workers, the time is long overdue for activists to get involved.

Contact: Namibia Support Committee. PO Box 16, London NWS 2LW. Telephone: 01-267-1941/2. Messages of support to J. Symes, T&GWU, 37 Islington, Liverpool 3.

LABOUR PARTY RIGHT WING PURGE KIRKBY

For the past two years, the Labour Party right wing leadership has been engaged in a witch-hunt and in the reorganisation of several Merseyside constituency parties and the Liverpool City Labour party. One of the constituency parties is Knowsley North.

The fight to rid themselves of their sitting MP - Kilroy Silk - resulted in his resignation, alleging "intimidation" by Militant "extremists".

This was a complete fabrication. There was no intimidation; all the "dirty tricks" were on the side of Kilroy Silk and his right wing friends, such as leaders of the EEPTU. He was heartily detested among active Labour party members as a self seeking careerist. Militant supporters were never more than a handful in the constituency.

RIGHT WING IMPOSED CANDIDATE

Kinnock and the right wing leaders of the Labour Party were prepared to back Kilroy Silk but he went off to a well paid job in television. George Howarth, put forward by the General and Municipal Workers Union and the

Labour bureaucracy, was imposed on the Constituency, and the Party was suspended.

The activists were grouped around the Kirkby Unemployed Centre which has a tremendous record of campaigning in the area and has an average of a hundred people a day coming in for advice on Welfare Rights.

As part of the right wing offensive the labour council cut its grants to the Unemployed Centres by 50%. The campaign of the Kirkby centre against this intensified the right wing witch hunt.

EXPULSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS

Eleven left wing activists have been summoned before the National Constitutional Committee which was set up by the Labour Party right wing to witch hunt opponents.

So far, two of the Kirkby left wingers have been expelled. Jim McGinley a member of the National Union of Teachers and, chairman of the constituency, was expelled for being a

supporter of "Militant". Jim Bradshaw was expelled in his absence, without any hearing.

Tony Boyle, secretary of a Transport and General Workers' Union branch, was suspended from membership of the Labour Party for three years.

Councillor Alan Kelly was barred from holding office in the Labour Party for two years. As he said: "They produced "evidence" on the charge of being a member of a Militant group which I refuted. So they introduced another charge - one of "caucusing". As they did not produce any evidence on this charge there was nothing to refute so I got two years suspension".

RIGHT WING ON THEIR KNEES BEFORE TORIES

Mike Malone, secretary of the constituency party has been barred from holding office for three years. He was charged with "swearing" and "intimidating behavior" at a lobby of a meeting. Those in the Labour Movement who have personal knowledge of this comrade will know, from this verdict, the cynical and fraudulent nature of the proceedings in Knowsley North.

Mike said "the charge, especially against Tony Boyle, shows how the leadership is attacking the left and the trade unionists in every way possible. They aim to brake any dependence on trade unionists and are looking to European Social Democracy as their model."

These left wingers feel that the attacks on them take place because the right wing in the council and in the leadership of the Labour Party have only policies of capitulation before the Tory Government's cuts and privatisation plans.



Background to Kirby: factory after factory has closed

TRADE UNION AND POLITICAL LEADERS KILLED IN COLOMBIA

To be a working class politician or a trade union militant in Colombia means to face a very real threat of assassination. A wave of killings in this country has shaken Latin America.

Early last year, the President of the "Patriotic Union", Jaime Pardo Leal, was assassinated. The "Patriotic Union" is a political front in which the main force is the Colombian Communist Party.

The assassination sparked off a mass reaction. By October the central leadership of the Trade Unions, the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores (C.U.T.) was able to call a successful general strike and large demonstration in Bogota against the killings.

The recently created C.U.T. has for the first time unified in one national organization the vast majority of the Colombian working class.

Death threats have been made against the members of the Executive Committee of C.U.T.

On March 13th, voting took place in Colombia for mayors and local councillors. Six hundred members of the Patriotic Union, the main opposition movement, were killed in the run-up to the election. Seventeen of its candidates for mayor were murdered.

The Colombian Solidarity Committee, Priory House, London NW6, is asking British workers organizations to send resolutions to the Government of Colombia condemning the killings and disappearances of trade unionists, peasants and political activists.

IMPERIALISM

MILITARY MANOEUVRES IN HONDURAS, PANAMA AND MALVINAS

The U.S. and Britain are engaged in military manoeuvres in different parts of Latin America.

Ten years ago, most of the Latin American countries were under pro-imperialist dictatorships which defended the interests of the multi-nationals

But many things have changed since then. A revolutionary upsurge is growing all over Latin America, and it has had many successes. First, the overthrow of Somoza in Nicaragua and after that, the overthrow of the dictatorships in Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, Brazil and Haiti. Further there is the growing weakness of Pinochet and Stroessner in Chile and Paraguay.

This situation is dangerous for the imperialist multi-nationals. That is why U.S. and Britain are reinforcing their military positions in Latin America and making their demonstrations of power.

Reagan and Thatcher are defending the incomes that the multi-nationals obtain from the super-exploitation of the Latin American workers.

The Governments of U.S. and Britain are wasting millions of dollars in these military manoeuvres at the same time as they are attacking their own working classes.

The working class must fight in unity against these attacks. They must develop a programme of common struggle.

Reagan must be forced to pull out of Panama, Honduras and Nicaragua. It is the Panamanian people and the Nicaraguan people who will decide what to do with the governments in their own countries.

We call on the Labour and trade union movement to build an effective international campaign. Its aim must be the removal of the British armed forces from the Malvinas and the American forces from Latin America.

U.S. ARMY, OUT OF HONDURAS AND NICARAGUA !!!

U.S. ARMY, OUT OF PANAMA !!!

BRITISH NAVY, OUT OF MALVINAS !!!



Nicaraguan Trotskyist militant ready to fight in Nicaragua
P.R.T. is the Nicaraguan Party of the L.I.T.

ATTACKS LATIN AMERICA

ARGENTINA -

AN IMPERIALIST PROVOCATION

British naval manoeuvres around the Malvinas are a deliberate provocation. It would be wrong to think that British imperialism is now a toothless old lion and hangs on to the Malvinas because of nostalgia for past imperialist greatness of Tory politicians like Thatcher.

Decisions to wage the Malvinas war and hold them as a colonial possession, were made by hard headed imperialists. They were born from considerations of the possible exploitation of the Antarctic and for strategical reasons - both of a military character, and to counter revolution in Latin America.

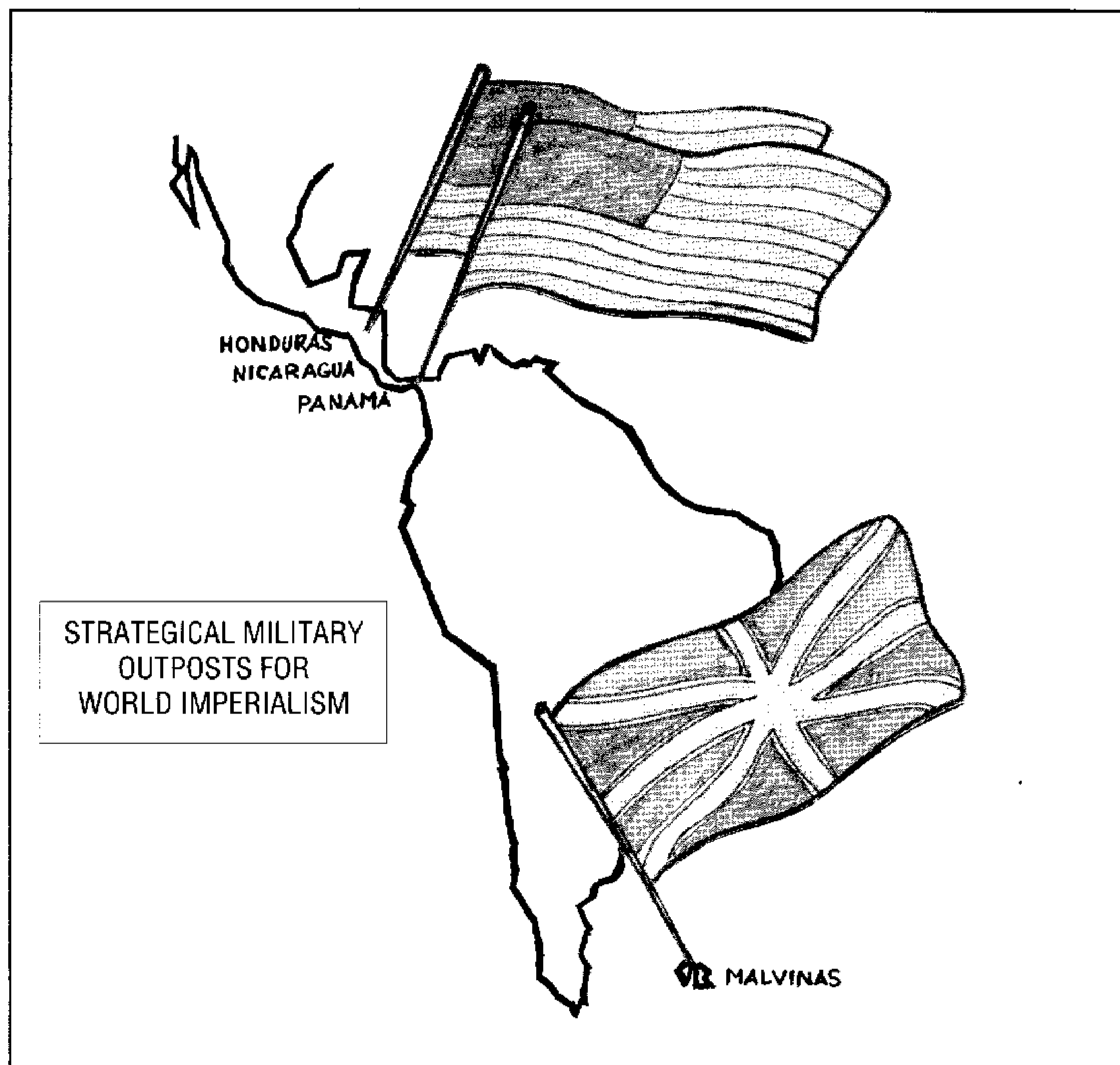
LABOUR LEADERS' CHAUVINISM

It was the nationalism, in which Labour and trade union leaders love to wallow ("I would die for my country" said Kinnock at the last Labour Party Conference), which gave the Tories an electoral victory. The Labour leaders, as usual, offered no class alternative to Thatcher and made no real opposition to her imperial posturing.

Tony Benn attacked Kinnock recently for his policy in the Malvinas war. But it must be said that the left Labour MPs themselves had no anti-chauvinist, internationalist policy.

Michael Foot, who was Labour leader at the time of the Malvinas war, issued a reply to Benn, saying that the policy in the Malvinas war was agreed unanimously by the Labour Party National Executive Committee, of which Tony Benn was a member.

But why does Benn now have to attack the policy during the Malvinas war? It is a reflection of the feelings among the working class who, at the least, see



enormous amount of money which is now being spent on maintaining the Malvinas as a base for British imperialism.

WE STOOD FOR INTERNATIONALISM

The International Socialist League is proud of the fact that members can point to their stand on the Malvinas war, when they gave unconditional support to the Argentine demand for an end to an imperialist conquest - which is what the British occupation of the Malvinas represented.

Members of the "Broad Left" told us that Argentina was a "fascist" country and therefore we could not support it. We replied that the demand for the Malvinas was a just national demand, supported throughout Latin America

and that the regime had been forced to fight for it precisely because it was in crisis.

We said that we were for the defeat of British Imperialism. What thinking British socialist can deny that, for the struggle in Britain, it would have been the most favourable outcome of the war? Instead of chauvinistic confidence, there would have been chauvinism in crisis.

Not only would there have been no Thatcher Government but, of basic importance, a blow at imperialism on the international arena would have been a blow at the attacks upon the British working class, including the miners, which were speeded up after the Malvinas war. And the Argentinians would certainly have swept away, the already crumbling military dictatorship.

IMPERIALISM ATTACKS LATIN AMERICA

NICARAGUA: BULLDOZERS FROM HONDURAS

On March 12th the U.S. escalated its threats to Nicaragua by landing troops in Honduras. Its aim was to assist the Contras to force its policies on the Nicaraguan Government. It is the result of an inconsistent policy of the Nicaraguan Sandinist Government, that permits the counter-revolutionary opposition to still operate against the Nicaraguan Revolution.

The Esquipulas 2 agreement, signed by the Presidents of Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Costa Rica and El Salvador established that the Sandinistas must negotiate with the right opposition and give the counter-revolutionaries full political freedom. In exchange for this, the Sandinist government received vague promises from the US that it would stop assisting the Contras.

But this agreement did not include even a promise on the part of imperialism to withdraw the American troops stationed in Honduras, Panama and El Salvador.

The Esquipulas 2 is an agreement that puts the future of Nicaraguan Independence in danger, because Nicaragua has submitted its political regime to an international agreement with the pro-imperialist governments of Central America.

Since the agreement was signed Nicaragua has been more and more under attack and the Nicaraguan government is moving back while the counter-revolution in Nicaragua itself has been strengthened.

We are unconditional supporters of Nicaragua. And we agree with

organisations like the Merseyside Unemployed Centre, that has organised a Building Brigade for Nicaragua. But we disagree with the Sandinist's policy and with the left parties that pray for the success of the Esquipulas II agreement and thus repudiate the struggle for an independent development of the Nicaraguan revolution.

A revolutionary process cannot be stopped, it advances or goes back to a counter-revolutionary defeat. The overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship in 1979, was the first step of the socialist revolution in Nicaragua. Now, the Nicaraguans must go on with their revolution, by expropriating the bourgeoisie, arming the popular militia to crush the contras and must apply a policy independent of the US, and other pro - imperialist governments of Central America.

PANAMA: THE U.S. AGRESSION CONTINUES

The US is attacking Panama's sovereignty and interfering in its internal affairs.

First the U.S. tried to overthrow the General Manuel Noriega, by using President Eric del Valle. Noriega answered by putting in a new President, Mr. Solis Palma.

This provoked an institutional crisis in Panama and a confrontation with the U.S. Government, which, has initiated an economic blockade, and supported a local bourgeoisie general strike (lock out) against Noriega's Government.

Reagan now has found out that Noriega is a dictator, a drug trafficker, and is corrupt. For his part Reagan declares

he is supporting the Panamanian people and is defending democracy.

Of course, Reagan and the US government are no friends of democracy in Latin America. The U.S. supported every dictatorship, even the most corrupt, like Marcos in the Phillipines and Duvalier in Haiti.

What the US ruling class really wants is to maintain their military bases in Panama and to control all of Central and South America.

In 1977, the U.S. and Panama Governments signed an agreement that meant the return of the Canal to Panama in a few years. Ten years later, the U.S. has realized that it needs to have a force of 10,000 in Panama, to

maintain its domination in Latin America.

So now, Reagan wants an obedient Government in Panama to sign a new agreement to maintain the bases for a long time.

Internationalist revolutionary socialists, of course, do not support Noriega's government in Panama. But it is the Panamanian people, and not the imperialists who have to decide how to deal with Noriega. We must support the Panama people against this new imperialist aggression. They have certainly no desire to hand that task over to US Imperialism which they want out of their country.

SOVIET BUREAUCRACY ATTACKS NATIONALITIES

"Comrades" boasted Gorbachev, in his speech on the seventieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, "we have every right to say that the national question has been resolved in our country" (Soviet News 4.11.87).

Six months later millions living in the Soviet Union have demonstrated demanding an end to national oppression. They have begun an open and mass fight against the great Russian chauvinism of the bureaucracy.

Those demanding equal rights under Soviet law also include large numbers from the three Baltic Republics.

Far from solving the national question Glasnost and Perestroika has and will mean continuing and deepening attacks on the right of nationalities.

LENIN'S POLICY

Lenin paid the closest attention to the rights of the smaller countries that in 1922 were being drawn into the union of republics.

The "out-and-out Great Russian nationalistic campaign" of Stalin, in his handling of Georgia was condemned by Lenin.

It was a crime against the working class and Bolshevism and it has been continued to the present.

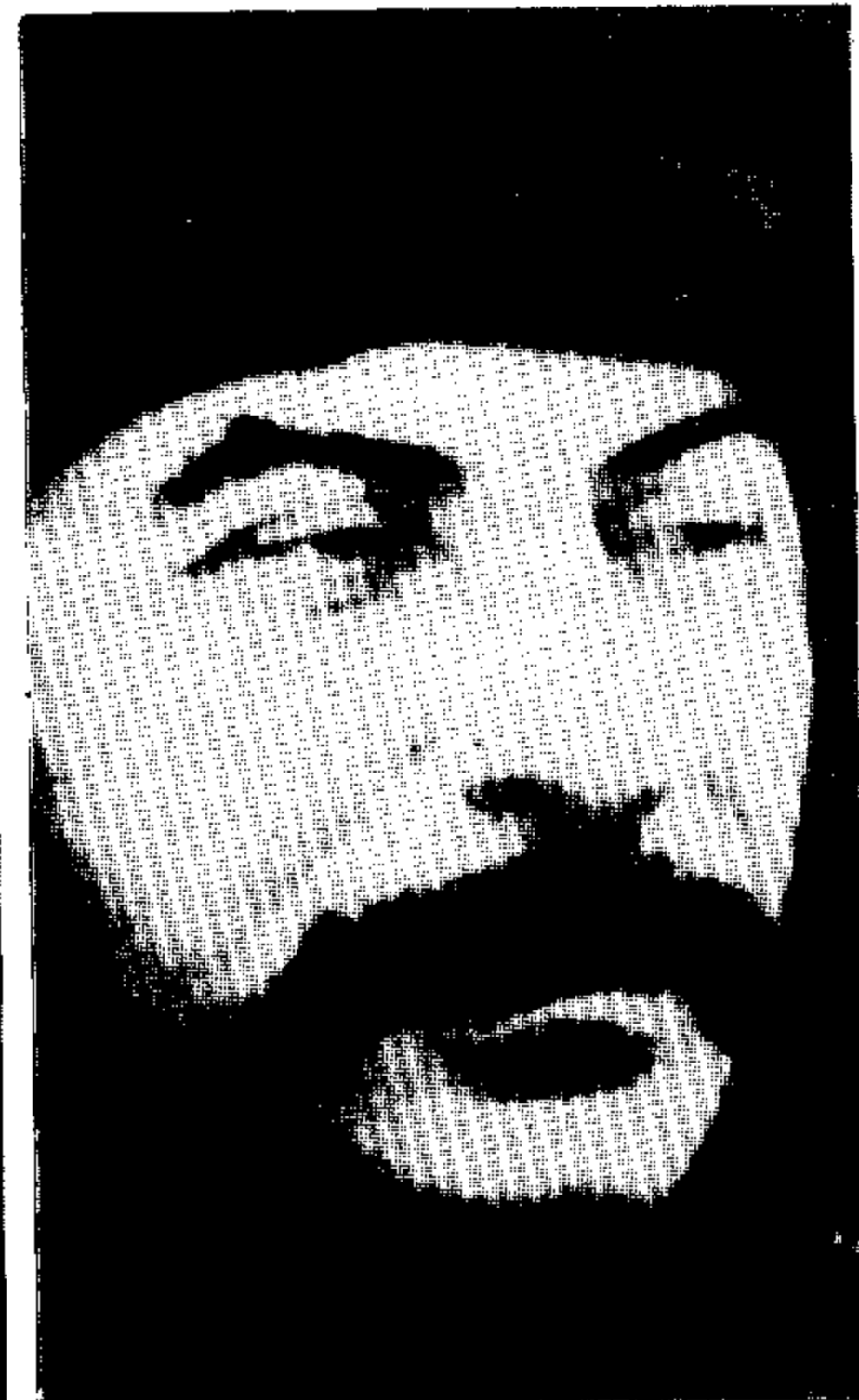
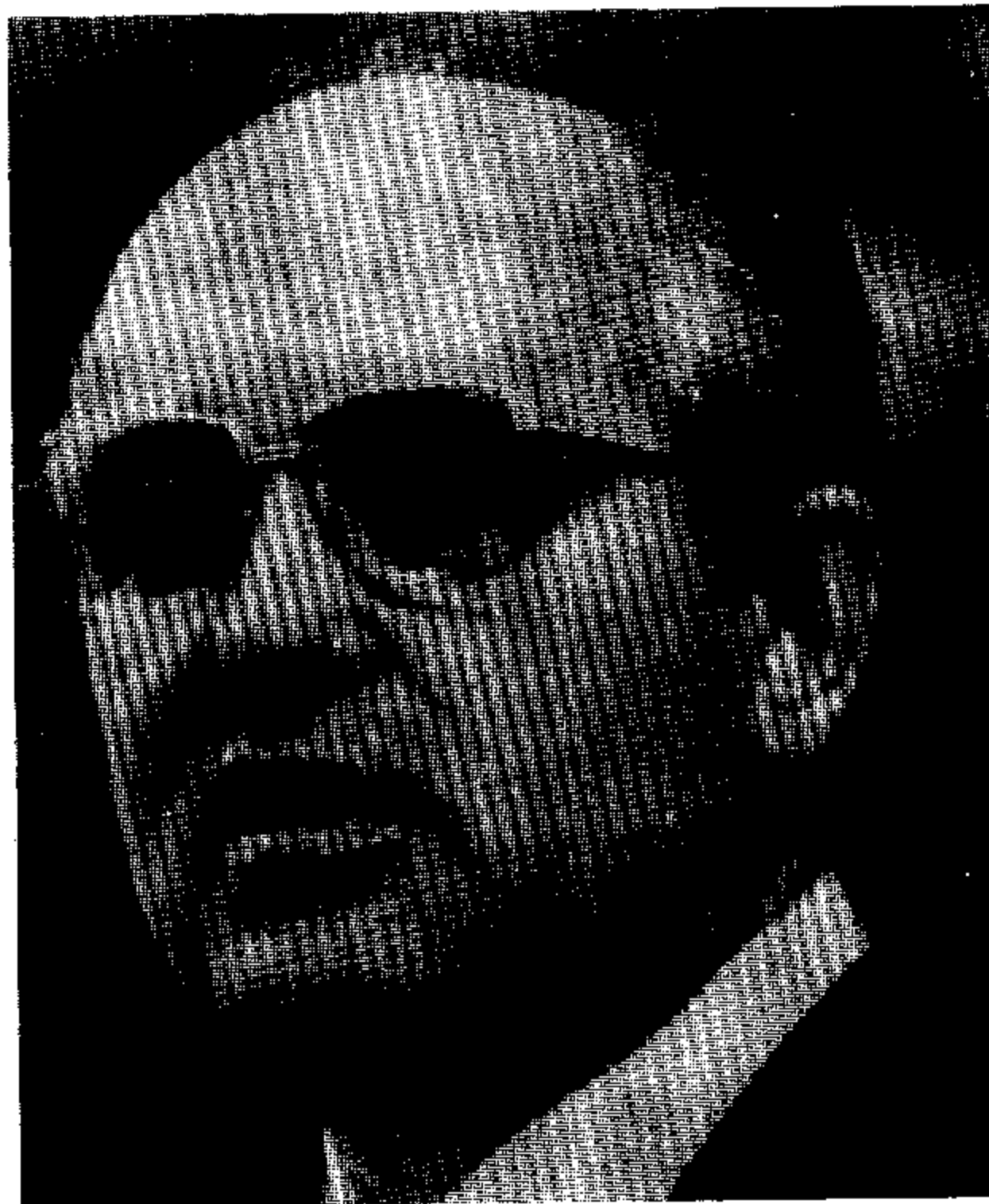
Lenin found complete agreement with Trotsky and formed a bloc with the Georgian Bolsheviks, who had been attacked by Stalin. What has been established then, and is more true today is that the Soviet Union can only strengthen itself and the International working class by the closest attention to national feelings, history and language.

The working class will, in overthrowing the bureaucracy, tear out of the Soviets the slightest Russian abuse.

"It is a question", Trotsky wrote in *Revolution Betrayed* "not of the oppression of one nationality over another in the proper sense of the word, but of oppression by the centralised police apparatus over the cultural development of all the nations, starting with the Great Russian".

quirements of bureaucratic planning. The process of Perestroika has shown to the world the problem confronting millions of workers in their desire to live in harmony in the Soviet Union but not as second class or oppressed minorities.

Democratic rights of women are also further undermined as the struggle against the working class deepens. Gorbachev in March outlined the "so-



Gorbachev continues Stalin's Policies

Fraternal relations will be built by the Soviet working class in the common struggle against Stalinism and Imperialism. The present leaders of the Soviets can only undermine the national relations. Gorbachev's policy is not Lenin's. Gorbachev should have said we are introducing the "efficiency factor" into our national relations.

The Eastern bloc has been brought to the point of disintegration by the rule of the bureaucracy. National antagonisms are growing because of the uneven development dominated by the re-

lution" to the anticipated explosion in unemployment of at least 16 million. He said women should return to their traditional womenly roles in the house. By this alone he shows how the bureaucracy is driven to undermine the gains of the October Revolution.

The national question and democratic rights are integral parts of the political revolution. The working class internationally has the responsibility to burn out of the Soviets and leaderships any conciliation to chauvinism or to the dismissal of democratic rights.

STATE TERROR IN PALESTINE

The Israeli Troops have gunned down hundreds of unarmed Palestinians under the banner of "peace and democracy". A few weeks ago a Palestinian youth took a gun and shot an Israeli soldier. The force that sped the bullet into that soldier of the occupation force came out of millions of oppressed Palestinians and years of subjection when they were deprived of their homeland, herded in misery into insanitary refugee camps.

The answer of the Israeli Zionist oppressor to the shooting of a soldier is to increase the terror. Under the banner of defending their "freedom", they threaten more horrifying reprisals against those who dare to take up arms.

Television viewers, a few days later, see a van loaded with Israeli settlers reverse back into a peaceful demonstration of Palestinian women and knock one old lady down! Unlike the youth in Belfast the women can do nothing immediately but make their angry verbal protests.

RESISTANCE WILL ESCALATE

But make no mistake! Not one, but many settlers and Israeli soldiers will die or be mutilated in the future. It may be a Palestinian who pulls the trigger but the killers will be the settlers who drove into the women's demonstrations, the soldiers who broke the arms of Palestinian youth, the Zionists who preached their racial doctrines against Palestinians and who humiliated them and took their land, and the American and British Imperialists whose interests in the

There is a world wide imperialist terrorist front. There is no difference in principle, only in degree of operation, between the death squads of Colombia and El Salvador, the South african sponsored MNR terrorists with their hideous crimes and the SAS and CIA.

WORLD WIDE TERRORIST FRONT

The gang of men and women who are a front for the most extensive murder squads in the World set themselves up as denouncers of terrorism - by which they mean the struggle of the national liberation movements.

The speeches of Thatcher and other Tory politicians on the deaths in Belfast and Gibraltar are deeply hypocritical. They were compelled to make some signs of sympathy at the time of the bombing of mourners at the funeral of the IRA members gunned down in Gibraltar. Press and politicians, however, as quickly as possible, pushed that massacre into the background, concentrating in their tirades on "foul murders~ of the two corporals"

But it is not just a question of hypocrisy. It is calculated, ruthless and sinister propaganda meant to in-

flame the tension necessary for the very real terrorist alliance of capitalist states to carry out its anti-worker and anti-liberation policies.

This is the real terrorist organisation that has to be smashed - a counter-revolutionary terrorist front, with enormous resources of science and technology turned to the barbarous uses of torture and destruction. This is the violence of the oppressors, and the violence of those being oppressed is in answer to this.

Here, on this page, is only a small part of the activities of these state terrorists. The task of "Socialist Voice", and of all principled internationalists, must be to expose and denounce unceasingly all the lies and propaganda which it cynically manipulates.



Protecting children from the savagery of the soldiers in Palestine

IRELAND: CHAUVINISTIC HYPOCRISY

The gunning down of the three Irish republicans in Gibraltar and the subsequent events brought into sharp relief, imperialist savagery and the chauvinistic hypocrisy that surrounds us.

Under the banner of "peace" and "anti-terrorism" the atmosphere of civil war is prepared.

An Ulster gunman fires into a catholic crowd at a funeral. A pregnant

woman is hit and Ulster politicians remark; "What is a pregnant woman doing at a funeral anyway?"

Then British soldiers drive ("We don't know why" says the army and Ministers!) alongside another funeral in Belfast!

The Belfast youth, who are incensed at the indications of another attack on a funeral and another man waving a pistol, seek to protect the mourners. Two men die. That is denounced by the press as mob violence and "foul murder" and the politicians of all parties hold up their hands.

However, the cold blooded execution by the SAS of the two unarmed men and a girl in Gibraltar is, on the contrary, a courageous blow for the peace and freedom of the british citizen!

The state sponsored death squad which was sent to Gibraltar had the full co-operation of the Socialist Government of Gonzalez. The "shoot to kill" policy has now been exported.

Ireland has an inalienable right to nationhood, and to end the centuries of British occupation.

Workers in Britain have a duty, as a precondition of their own emancipation to unconditionally support the struggle of Irish people for an independent nation by whatever means they see fit to choose.

Slaveholders everywhere and at all times in history have always sought to destroy the revolt of their slaves and maintain their own morale by ruthless terror and propaganda.



The result of the real terrorists

MNR TERROR

The MNR has slaughtered thousands upon thousands of men, women and children, brought millions to the brink of starvation and all but destroyed the economy of Mozambique.

Paulo Olivera was the spokesman of the MNR in Lisbon until 1986, when he defected after the death of the President of Mozambique in a plane accident. Olivera said in a recent press conference that he was alerted by a telephone call from the South African military that the MNR might have to claim the responsibility for the action against President Samora Machel.

He said that the South African logistical support has continued until the present. Brigadier Van Niekerk, Brigadier Van Tonder and Colonel Groebler carried out the main liaison work between South African military intelligence and the MNR.

He said that South African aims were to "create massive confusion and difficulties for the Mozambican Government". He added that "hundreds of Mozambicans" have been sent to Israel for military training.

TORIES CUT SOCIAL SECURITY

D-Day for the introduction of the Tories new Social Security legislation is April 11th. Far reaching reforms are set to hammer the poorest people in society and hit the under 25's particularly.

Income Support will replace supplementary Benefit. If you are 18 to 25, single and without children, unemployed and a householder, i.e. renting or buying any form of accommodation; the new system will mean less money for you. After April 11th new claimants will receive just £26.05 per week, a cut of over 14%. This will affect about 100,000 young people.

On top of this people living in their own place will have to pay 20% of their general rates and all of their water rates. If you are under 18 and living independently, whether you are single or a couple, you will lose even more money. If you have no children you could lose up to £11.30 per week. If you have children you will lose at least £5.70 per week.

NO APPEAL

In April all the one-off payments will end. This will be replaced by a discretionary loans system operating from a "Social Fund" with no right of

appeal if you are turned down. Loans will have to be repaid from benefit. Income support also means the end of weekly additions for heating, laundry, special diet, baths and domestic help which the basic level of benefit has never covered.

The Government is forcing young people to be dependent on their parents for money and a place to live. More young women will be forced into having children as the only means of achieving an independent life. The Tories have cut £8 billion off benefits since 1979 and yet £13.6 billion has been handed out in tax cuts to the rich.

UNIONS MUST CEASE COLLABORATION WITH SLAVE LABOUR.

"WORKFARE" is a work for benefits scheme operating in certain states in the USA upon which Norman Fowler has pioneered his "NEW UNIFIED TRAINING SCHEME" (NUTS).

The NUTS will bring together all existing Manpower Services Commission (MSC) schemes for the over 18's, principally the Job Training Scheme (JTS) and the Community Programme (CP) into one scheme which will begin to operate from September 1st 1988.

NUTS will pay benefit plus £10 for 40 hours work per week and will be made compulsory for 18 to 50 year olds.

Participants on NUTS will be trainees not employees and as such will not be covered by the Health & Safety, Equal opportunities and Race & Sex Discrimination Acts that protect workers in real jobs.

DOLE WILL BE LOST

People entering the scheme will never again go back onto the unemployment register. If trainees do not have a job to go to on finishing their maximum of 12 months they will either join a jobclub, enter the Enterprise Allowance Scheme or some other form of MSC scheme, go into full-time education or take voluntary work in the local community until they get a job. If you refuse a place on the NUTS you will lose your dole for six months or 40% of your Social Security for the same period. Alongside the Restart interviews the Government have introduced stringent new regulations which are a throwback to the "not genuinely seeking work" legislation which disqualified thousands from benefit.

The objective of the compulsory work for benefit schemes is to institute a low wage economy and create a potential

pool of cheap scab labour which will give the green light to any employer to sack a whole workforce and introduce NUTS workers in their place.

150 scheme workers lobbied the March meeting of the General Executive of the Transport & General Workers Union (T&G) to fight for their union to take a position of total opposition to the introduction of the NUTS, which is in any case T&G conference policy. Ron Todd, General Secretary of the T&G asked that the executive defer a decision on whether the T&G should support NUTS. He was overturned by the new executive and instructed to go into the TUC with a position of complete opposition to NUTS.

There must be a campaign launched to fight against the scheme. The unions must cease their collaboration with the administration of slave labour and pull out of the MSC

SPAIN, ITALY, ARGENTINA AND BRITAIN - TEACHERS IN STRUGGLE

In the middle of March, the majority of Spain's 270,000 teachers held the second of their two day strike this year for higher pay. In Italy, the unofficial movement of teachers continues. Last year it led a demonstration of 60,000 teachers in Rome.

Argentine teachers also took action last month. At the start of a new school term in March they refused to take classes.

Argentine teachers' wages are among the lowest in the public service. And between the various provinces there

are wide differentials in teachers' wages.

The teachers are demanding a wage increase and a national minimum wage. The government have offered a minimum that is lower than teachers in some provinces are already being paid.

The trade union bureaucracy reluctantly called the strike after agitation in the rank of the unions.

Teachers in the majority union, who support the M.A.S. (Movement toward Socialism) -the trotskyist party in Ar-

gentina, which is the leading workers socialist party- publish a paper titled "Teachers Alternative". A recent national conference called by the paper in Buenos Aires was attended by 400 teachers, many of whom were representing other teachers in their areas.

M.A.S. FIGHTS FOR MILITANT POLICY

In February "Teachers Alternative" launched a referendum of all teachers which its supporters carried out, school by school, throughout Argentina. Teachers were asked if they agreed with one basic rate for the whole country and with an increase in the funds going to education.

The referendum then asked the teachers if they were in favour of striking if the government did not give the demands.

The Argentine Government has introduced a programme of austerity to meet the demands of international bankers. It has already pledged to the International Monetary Fund that it will reduce the national fiscal deficit to less than 3%.

With the increasing economic problems for the imperialist system, health and education of the poorer classes is the first to suffer. The offensive against these is world wide. That is why the struggle of teachers and of hospital workers are an international phenomenon.

NUT ELECTION NEWS

Socialist Voice interviewed Andy Dixon, a newly elected member of the national executive of the National Union of Teachers.

SV "Why did you win in Greater Manchester when the right wing have dominated for so long?"

AD "I think we won because we had a political campaign that was very well organised. In fact both members of the national executive from Greater Manchester have been voted out of office.

The campaign was based on issues that are important for the members of the union. It was a positive campaign with positive policies.

At no time did we make our opposition to the existing members into personal issues."

SV "What are the main issues facing teachers now?"

AD "An important question is the pay and conditions the union has to campaign nationally. We could be witnessing the break up of the national union into regional sectors. The NUT leadership must insist on national negotiations otherwise we will get regional conditions and rates of pay."

SV "What is your attitude to the proposed restructuring of the union?"

AD "The executive has had to back off due to the pressure from the membership but there are still great dangers. For instance the subscriptions are to be collected centrally and the local subscription will be paid from national headquarters."

NHS AND TRADE UNION LEADERS

What ever noises the trade union bureaucrats may utter from time to time expressing sympathy for patients, for nurses and other hospital workers, their actions show something else. Nothing was clearer in the demonstration they called on March 5th than their philistinism and complacency in face of the feelings of the rank and file.

What an indictment of their leadership! First, the widespread anger at the callous refusal of the government to fund the Health Service compelled the T.U.C. to reluctantly call a demonstration. It suited them that at the same time there were two other demonstrations taking place in major British cities. They made no campaign and no publicity for the London demonstration. And despite their lack of enthusiasm, and, indeed, their complete hostility to any struggle over the Health Service, 100,000 people turned up to demonstrate.

RUNNING SCARED

It frightened them to death. It was clear at the end of the march they had decided that no breath of the real feeling over the attacks on the health service would get anywhere near an expression from the platform. Nurses and hospital workers were deliberately excluded.

Speakers appealed on behalf of leaders who are now doing their utmost to disperse all the various actions in defence of working class health, and are absolutely terrified of uniting all the different actions into one big movement.

That Willis was not able to speak and had to be escorted away by police, through an incensed audience, sums up the state of British trade union

leadership today.

We did not get our health service through spineless activity such as this. And such cowardice will not keep it.

HYMN SINGING TO THE TORIES

The National Health Service was introduced after the war because of the upsurge of working men and women in the forces, in the communities and in the workplaces who were determined not to return to the conditions of the thirties. They established the right to a National Health Service. Inadequate though the N.H.S. was, it was an advance, and the way we got it shows the way to prevent its destruction. That way is the strength and unity of working men and women.

The way of these trade union leaders is to confine the "action" to protest songs and appeals to the Thatcher government. Their answer to the demands for a general stoppage on Budget Day was to plead with the Tory Government to please! give us something.

Those who crawl on their knees get a kick in the teeth, and Thatcher was quick with her reply. The same afternoon she said contemptuously that the budget is about taking away, not about giving. And of course, that is what it means to the poorest majority of the population.

Do the trade union bureaucrats really believe that the Tory Government will be compelled to make a "U-turn" with sweet words of pleading, even if they do have their source above the clerical collar of Trevor Huddlestone (together with an attack on those disrupting "unity")?

BUILD A NEW LEADERSHIP

These type of leaders are the biggest obstacle standing between the working class and settling with the Thatcher government and the multi-nationals. On every major issue they fear a mobilisation of the strength of the movement and for that they try to substitute protests and pleas.

There is the lesson of South African sanctions. The trade union leadership will appeal anywhere -to Thatcher, to the United Nations, to Commonwealth Ministers: "Please, somebody else, you should put sanctions on".

They will do anything but express real internationalism in relation to our fellow black workers, answer with deeds the appeals of black trade unionists, and consciously struggle to use the might of the organisations they lead to bring workers' action in their support.

South African workers and British nurses are treated the same: Sympathy in words; opposition in deeds.

INTERNATIONAL SOCIALIST LEAGUE

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Name

Address

Send To : I.S.L. P.O. Box 18
STOCKPORT SK6 4DH

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