MAY DAY IN LISBON

BY MARTIN THOMAS

Wilson and Foot have not dared to "tamper with" the Tory law. Even when they restored the £10 million tax concessions to the unions (and why shouldn't they do the same with the NICB fines?) they felt compelled to justify it by saying that they were only carrying out what the Tories had intended: it was all right, they said, because the Tories hadn't really meant the unions to lose those tax concessions.

It is just the same with the work of the capitalist state, because it fears an outcry from Tories and Liberals about Labour not respecting the "rule of law".

And not just that. They themselves regard the capitalist state as sacred and think its laws must never be broken. When Mick McGahy called on troops not to strikebreak, Labour leaders cried out in horror. For the troops to side with the bosses - that was normal, that was the rule of law. For the troops to side with the working class - that would be an outrage.

BY BAS HARDY

Failing to defeat the British working class, the Tory government drew some confidence from the way Chile's ruling class dealt with its workers. After the coup last September, the Torries were prominent amongst those western governments who sent the aid to the aid of the murderous military regime in Chile.

The last two months of Tory rule saw their final act of solidarity with the junta, an act which has up to now gone unreported in the British millionaire press.

In January and February, two consignments of Hawker Hunter military jets were smuggled out of Britain behind the backs of the Mensey-based dockers, who were boycotting arms deliveries to Chile. The Torries had "invited" six Chilean pilots to fly the jets to Santiago. The first delivery was on January 26th and was marked by the presence of Gustavo Leigh Guzman (a member of the four-man junta) who flew one of the jets out personally, which is an indication of the importance for the junta. In fact, since their deployment in last September's coup, when they bombed Allende and his supporters in the Moneda Palace, Hawker Hunters have been priority weapons needed for the bolstering of the arsenal of repression in Chile.

Today, the Labour government continues this Tory policy of supplying arms to the junta. Rank and file members of the Labour movement have expressed strong opposition to this policy, which aids the junta's plans to keep the Chilean workers under the dictatorship for many years to come.

The repression which has accompanied the lives of over 30,000 trade unionists and socialists in Chile has not ended. Every day, 'terrorists' are shot, suspected before "disappear", trade union leaders are imprisoned for 'crimes against national reconstruction', and officials suspected of sympathy with the Popular Unity coalition of Allende suddenly die of 'heart failure'.

Attacks on the working class are confined to arrests, torture and murder. The living standards of the working masses in Chile have been savaged, too.

Wages in Chile have been frozen and in some cases cut since the coup. But it is inflation which is really eating away the real wages of the masses. The price of such basic commodities as milk, bread and cigarettes have gone up by anything from 50% to 75%. The extent of inflation was shown recently by a special offer in a Santiago steak house: "Eat now and pay 30 days later."

Unemployment has also increased massively. It stands at 20% since the generals' takeover, with Allende supporters being 'first out, last in'.

Continued inside.

EITHER you think the Industrial Relations Act is right, or you think it is wrong. The Government think it is wrong. They said so when they were in opposition, often enough, and now they have started the process of repealing the Act.

Meanwhile, the courts and the bailiffs are carrying on. On Friday 3rd May the National Industrial Relations Court is scheduled to hear the latest in the Amalgamated Union of Equine Workers (AUW) case.

The NUW is fighting a long battle for recognition of the AUW. Workers in Con-Mech have not only won the recognition, but have carried the ball into the meatworks. But the National Executive Committee of the NUW has decided to abandon its principled stand of defending the AUW.

Similarly, the NUW has bowed to pressure from employers and has averted a ballot on the recognition of the National Health and Safety Conference on health and safety issues.

The Government have no respect for the rights of workers. Nor do they respect the rights of the Opposition. They have already moved to undermine the authority of the Labour movement, and now they are moving against the rights of the workers.
A MAN OF SMILES AND BLOOD

THE COUP in Portugal last week followed by the disbandment of the army office introduced new opportunities for any country which was in the grip of a dictatorship since 1928.

If anyone can say exactly what the consequences of the situation will be in Portugal, it is General Spinola, the top military man and head of the new junta. General Spinola is a controversial figure, but in Portugal he is a legendary hero, the man who kicked out the Portuguese army once and for all.

The army, discredited since the liberation of the African colonies, now has a new leader. The new junta, General Spinola, is no revolutionary figure. He is not even a liberal associated with the moderate opposition groups. Rather, he has been described as a "hardliner," honest, thorough and determined.

So when it is that Spinola, who was brought up on the side of Franco during the Spanish Civil War and whose father was a financial advisor to the Nationalists in 1974, such as a coup -- a coup which in itself will not despairs of the dictatorship, allows freedom of the press, suppresses the national liberation movement, and the imprisonment of intellectuals, labor leaders and the opposition. It seems as if there is a real hope for a new government.

Certainly it is true that the Portuguese are more free than before. But the process of political and economic reform has not yet begun. And the new government will face many challenges, including the need to rebuild the economy and address the issues of unemployment and poverty.

In conclusion, the Portuguese people have taken a significant step towards freedom and democracy. However, there is still much work to be done to ensure a stable and prosperous future for the country.
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In the maturation of its ideological network, the army must be in a position to "glorify" the "revolution" and to "disseminate" it. It must be able to assume the "leading role" in the revolution and to "support" the "work" of the workers' parties. But it cannot be allowed to take sides with the workers' parties, for this would mean a "sacrifice" of the army's "revolutionary role.

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THE official labour movement on Teesside continues to behave as if the issue of jobs proposed for the steel industry were not of any importance.

The only initiative has come from Newcastle NUM, which has published a pamphlet on the steel and the Newcastle branch of the Steelworkers Union. However, the British Metal Trades Union has not been heard from.

A Government inquiry into the steel industry has now been announced, and the general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers, Mr. Michael Foot, has written to the chairman inviting him to make a submission. However, the steel companies and the Ministry of Labour have neither been invited to make a submission nor been informed of the inquiry.

The situation is that the steel industry is in a state of crisis, with unemployment rising, and yet the Government does not even seem to be aware of it. This is an insult to the workers and their families. The steel companies have been given a blank cheque by the Government to continue their policies of closures and redundancies, without any consideration of the effects on the workers and their families.

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500 MARCH IN SUPPORT OF HUNGER STRIKERS

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'HOTROPS' OUT CAMPAIGN FORMED ON TEESIDE

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PUPILS, parents, and teachers will be demonstrating this morning at comprehensive school, Manorhamilton. The pupils have not received an increase in their lunch money since April 1979. The school has been unable to allocate funds for the purchase of new furniture. The pupils are now forced to bring their own food from home, which is causing them discomfort. The situation is that the steel industry is in a state of crisis, with unemployment rising, and yet the Government does not even seem to be aware of it. This is an insult to the workers and their families. The steel companies have been given a blank cheque by the Government to continue their policies of closures and redundancies, without any consideration of the effects on the workers and their families.

DOROTHY McCOGLAN

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NURSES' PAY: STRIKE 'STABE'

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Real Steel News

Meeting to discuss the fight against the redundancies.

Speaker Tony Duffy. Programme to be announced. Visit the offices of the Steelworkers Union in Middlesbrough to find out more.