

No 2: WHAT ARE WE CAMPAIGNING ON AT PRESENT?

1. SUPPORT FOR THE SEAMEN'S BOYCOTT

In September this year, the national executive council of the National Union of Seamen voted to instruct union members not to sail on British ships sailing to or from Chile. As almost half of all the trade between Britain and Chile is carried in British ships, the potential effect of this boycott is very great. Support from other trade unionists will help to make this boycott more effective, and to remove the burden of economic effects from the seamen's shoulders.

2. STOP THE SUBMARINES AND AERO ENGINES

Two new Oberon class submarines have been built for the Chilean Navy at Greenock. They are completed, but have been delayed because of wiring faults. Many trade unions, and the Labour Party National Executive Committee, have told the Government that irrespective of whether the Chileans yet own them, or whether they have paid for them, these weapons must not be handed over to the Chilean Junta, and the training of their crews by the British Navy must cease.

A number of Rolls Royce jet engines were sent to Britain for repair by the Chilean Air Force. The engines come from the Hawker Hunter jets which were used by the Junta to bomb the presidential palace and working-class housing estates on the day of the coup. AUEW workers at East Kilbryde, and now T&GWU transport and warehouse workers have refused to handle them. The Junta is threatening to sue Rolls Royce to get its engines back. These are weapons which were used to kill Chilean workers --they must not be allowed to fall into the Junta's hands. Thanks to the sustained action by British trade unionists, most of the Junta's Hawker Hunter jets are now grounded. They should stay that way.

Two Chilean destroyers are refitting on Tyneside. They should not be allowed to leave.

3. SANCTIONS ON CHILE AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Last year Britain's representatives at the United Nations presented various amendments to resolutions of condemnation of the military junta. The amendments watered down the resolutions, to the delight of the Junta. Since then, the Junta has completely ignored the UN Resolution No 3219 of last year (which was unanimously supported last January by the TUC General Council) which demanded that all political detainees be released or brought to trial. It also refused to permit an on-the-spot investigation by the United Nations Human Rights Commission. This year, at the General Assembly, Britain must support resolutions condemning the Junta, and imposing economic sanctions and a ban on all arms sales to Chile by member nations of the UN.

4. THE DEBT

Britain refused this year to renegotiate the Junta's debts. In other words we refused the Junta's pleas for more time to pay off its debts to British exporters, so that it could finance its massive arms sales and expenditure on repression. The Junta retaliated by not paying anything at all. Our government must demand immediate payment, and if it is not forthcoming, seize all Chilean assets in Britain.



5. CUT THE JUNTA'S LIFE-LINES --TRADE AND INVESTMENT

The Junta in Chile will only survive with the support of foreign bankers and investors. Most of the funds come from the United States, but Britain too plays its part, with financiers like Lord Aldenham, a prominent figure at diplomatic receptions given by the Junta Embassy in London. The Junta can only finance its massive defence expenditure (tripled since the coup) by selling goods abroad to obtain foreign exchange. The most important Chilean export product is copper, which constitutes 80% of all export earnings. At present there is a glut of copper on the world markets. If Britain ceased to buy Chilean copper, we would have no difficulty obtaining supplies elsewhere.

CUT, the Chilean TUC, and Madame Allende, President Allende's widow, have both called for a complete trade boycott on Chile. They stress that this will not cause increased suffering for the Chilean people, since all of the benefit from foreign trade goes into the pockets of the Junta and a tiny band of Chilean and foreign financiers who support it. But such a boycott would help substantially to bring the Junta to its knees, and thus bring to an end the repression and starvation which the Chilean people is suffering today.

6. SUPPORT THE SHIP OF SOLIDARITY

The Workers' Group at the 1975 ILO Conference decided to send a "Ship of Solidarity" loaded with food, medicine, clothing and toys for the children of Chile. The ship will sail from Le Havre at the beginning of December, and all consignments must reach there by November 20th. The TUC decided to support this measure through the ICFTU.

7. PRESS FOR THE RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS

The Junta continues with mass arbitrary detentions. It has still not explained what has happened to 119 persons whose arrests were witnessed, but who have simply disappeared (these are only the best documented cases. There are thousands more Chileans who have disappeared).

Luis Corvalan, General Secretary of the Chilean Communist Party, Anibal Palma, of the Radical Party (sister party to the Labour Party) and former Minister of Education, and other leading Popular Unity politicians are apparently being tried in secret at this moment. Almost 100 Chilean Naval officers and ratings are being detained and tortured and tormented for their loyalty to constitutional government. Hundreds of trade unionists are still detained, and new ones are arrested daily, often for the 'crime' of holding trade union meetings.

The best way to help is by getting trade union and other organisations to adopt a Chilean prisoner. Letters and telegrams can be written on his or her behalf. In some cases it is possible to write to the prisoner's family and even send money. This is coordinated by the Chile Committee for Human Rights, 95 St. Paul's Road, London N.1 Tel: 01-226-1545.

8. HELP CHILEAN REFUGEES IN BRITAIN

Refugees need housing, English classes, clothing, jobs, trade union membership, friendship, opportunities to speak at meetings and explain what is happening in their country. This work is coordinated by the Joint Working Group for Chilean Refugees in Great Britain, 446 Uxbridge Road, London W.12 01-749-5851.

9. SUPPORT THE CHILE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN FINANCIALLY.

*Chile Solidarity Campaign, 129 Seven Sisters Road, London N7 7QG. 01-272-4298*