

# CUTLASS

BULLETIN OF CARIBBEAN LABOUR SOLIDARITY

NO. 1 FEBRUARY 1976

## JAMAICA ; THE TERROR STARTS ...

JAMAICAN WEEKLY CUTLASS (J.M.) WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1976.

### U.S. Investors told 'Beware Jamaica'

Star Correspondent  
NEW YORK:  
A CONFIDENTIAL REPORT on Jamaica, from the President of the R. and M. Associates (International

In any dealings, you must get your orders in writing, since the court will not honour verbal business contracts and the debtors will say "Yes" to anything unless

The organised shootings, burnings and bombings in Jamaica during January took the lives of five people and wounded many more. Gunmen used threats and violence to drive people from their homes in a predominantly PNP (Peoples National Party) supporting ward of a JLP (Jamaica Labour Party) supporting constituency. Homes and a shop were burned to the ground and barricades were built in the street to prevent the fire brigade and police from reaching the scene. The office of the South West St. Andrew Citizens Association, the North St Mary office of the PNP and the Port Maria office of the Housing Ministry, identified with the radical housing minister Spalding, were all burned in other attacks.

The terror was obviously organised and timed to coincide with the International Monetary Fund meeting in Kingston, where the world press was present; its intention was to show that Manley's "democratic socialism" had led to a collapse of law and order, thereby discrediting Jamaica internationally. American public opinion, at least, will have been further influenced by the shooting of two special Constables on duty outside the American Embassy Visa Office. The foreign press responded exactly as the organisers of the violence had intended.

Who stands to gain from discrediting the progressive movement in Jamaica? The JLP and the people they represent - Jamaica's big capitalists and landowners and U.S. big business. These exploiters of the Jamaican people have resisted every modest reform favoured by the democratic elements in the Government - just as have the big capitalists in the ruling Peoples National Party.

They oppose the higher taxes on the U.S. and Canadian exploiters of Jamaican bauxite. They oppose the Crash Programme of public works designed to help the jobless. They oppose the Minimum Wage Law. They oppose the Sugar Workers Co-operative Farms. They oppose the control of rents and prices by the Peoples Community Councils.

They oppose every Government measure intended to help the poor working class people of town and country.

The reforms have increased the support of the mass of the people for Manley and the anti-capitalist democrats. The by elections show this. The JLP and their allies are frightened by the increasing speed of reform and the growing consciousness of the working people. And so they use new methods to put the clock back: terror and the creation of chaos.

The Jamaican and foreign capitalists assist them by refusing to invest capital. They lay off thousand of bauxite, hotel and other workers to increase discontent. they provoke strikes to frighten the middle class. And who pays the gunmen? In the light of recent evidence about CIA activities, we can only ask how much further foreign involvement has already gone.

CARIBBEAN LABOUR SOLIDARITY calls on all democrats to be on their guard and ready to show their solidarity with the progressive forces in Jamaica when the Capitalists and Imperialists make their next move, as they surely will.

### MANLEY'S WARNING...

#### Calm, alert

"While I am away on this mission speaking of you and for you, please, all of you, for our country's sake be calm and alert. Allow no one and nothing to confuse you and, then, take your reaction to magnify it and then invent shadows and bodies where nothing in fact exists.

"Let no one destroy or weaken your faith in this country. Rest assured that your Government is committed to seek a new social order of justice, equality and freedom for all of our people. We shall pursue these ideals with order and discipline by increasing the reality and depth of our democracy.

"So all of you. Be disciplined! Be vigilant! Keep the faith in your country and yourself! Keep alert, and, until I return, keep your eyes wide open."

gleaner  
2.5.11.75

# DESMOND TROTTER 'IN HELL...'



Do you know Ras Zaigi? Well, perhaps not. But he is a very important person to the Dominican freedom fighter whose name, at least, is well known far and wide.

Like Desmond Trotter, Ras Zaigi is in jail. There is, however, a significant difference between the two. The former is sentenced to death, the latter is serving seven years imprisonment. But what is more significant, according to a letter of greetings from brotherman Trotter to friends, this man who faces death is engaged in a struggle with the prison authorities, demanding humanitarian treatment for his comparatively better-off neighbour.

According to Trotter's account, Ras Zaigi is a victim of "Babylon's brutality...viciously beaten and stamped upon", writes Trotter, "never received any proper medical treatment", although "he has been vomiting blood..."

Viewed critically, the letter explains eloquently why the ruling clique in Dominica is so anxious to extinguish Desmond Trotter's life. The humanity and revolutionary sensitivity of the young dreadman Trotter is too great a challenge for those who seek his life. It is obvious that people like the prime messenger of imperialism in Dominica and his fascist minded law makers are afraid of revolutionary democrats who are inspired by high motives.

Brotherman Trotter was convicted of a murder, but anyone who reads an account of the trial\* will be convinced it was a frame up. Desmond Trotter's real crime in the eyes of the ruling clique in Dominica, was to be a "Dread", a Rastafarian, wearing his hair in long locks, and to be a member of the "Movement for a New Dominica". This freedom movement took and cultivated fertile land which the big landowners leave idle while Dominican people are unemployed, landless and starving. This movement created hysterical fear and hatred among the big landowners who want to kill this freedom loving Brother.

The framing of brotherman Trotter, a leading youth in the M.N.D. and the editor of their paper "Twavay", is just part of brutal Babylonian repression in Dominica today.

The now notorious, fascist "Prohibited and Unlawful Societies and Associations Act 1974" made it legal to "kill or injure any member of an association or society designated unlawful who shall be found at any time of day or night in a dwelling house". Only the Dreads were named in the Act. To wear locks or a tam means you could be shot on sight.

Desmond's case is at present up for appeal before the British Privy Council, but meanwhile a slow death sentence is being meted out to him.

His last letter from prison was addressed from "In Hell", and he writes "These months within these barracoons have been real hell for I and I, never has the repression been so great ...."

←  
A full account of the trial can be found in a pamphlet "The Queen v. Desmond Trotter", by Tony Gilbert, which is available from Liberation, Caledonian Road, London N.1. (01-607-0465) 10p + 6½p postage.

## CARIBBEAN LABOUR SOLIDARITY

This is the first bulletin of Caribbean Labour Solidarity - a group originally formed last year, as the Jamaica Trade Union Solidarity Committee, after groups in Jamaica had requested support in opposing the passage of anti-Trades-Union legislation in that country. Our work on that campaign made us realise that when the interests of the workers in one Caribbean island are threatened, many people in Britain will support their struggle, regardless of where in the Caribbean their own origins or connections lie. British working-class and student organisations are also ready to give fraternal solidarity in the fight against such injustice.

There already exist many organisations in this country which struggle for the rights of black workers here, or for the working class as a whole, and may be active also in the interests of workers in the Caribbean. The Caribbean People's Solidarity Campaign for example is fighting for the freedom of Desmond Trotter in Dominica. Caribbean Labour Solidarity wholeheartedly supports this campaign by the C. P. S. C.

We felt there was a role for a group which would not only support campaigns initiated by such groups which concerned workers in the Caribbean, but would try to co-ordinate the efforts of the many different organisations so as to increase the impact of the campaign around particular issues; and which would also where necessary initiate campaigns upon issues which called for action, such as those in Jamaica referred to in this Bulletin.

## NEWS

### CUBA, BARBADOS, TRIN

C. L. S. has protested to the Gov their refusal to allow Cuban tra military aid and reinforcements has contrasted with Guyana's wl MPLA's People's Republic and

### ST VINCENT

Following the strikes of teacher charge leading militants with "s Already over a hundred workers venom of the neo-colonial court Caspar Browne and those who s unions.

Physically, Man & Man are weakened due largely to lack of essential vitamins, protein & minerals coupled with a total lack of light. Man & Man's menu is basically dasheen & root food like potatoes - total starch Ed. and no attempt is made by the authorities to obtain any variety of ground provisions or vegetables. Occasionally peas is issued. Man and man eat no flesh and it is only for . . . (words could not be read Ed.) and small other "itals" (potatoes, pumpkin leaves and small herbs) which help the meal. Breakfast and supper is never a certainty. Man and man eat no processed foods or chemicals and Babylon is seeking to break any attempt to supply any itals (fruits etc.). This deficiency has caused man and man to be very prone to troublesome diseases and with the swine like conditions under which man and man live. i.e. skin are greatly affected, worse yet, our blood. Imagine having to smell shit whole day and night getting no sunlight and nutriment - less food, how ones body will become. Small itals forwarded by brethren on the outside help Man & Man to live on."

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Patrick John, premier of Dominica, and the philistines who compose his little regime of terror must be told bluntly to release Desmond Trotter.

James Callaghan must not be allowed to plead helpless. Every day we hear about Britain's role in the world. The Government of Great Britain can use its influence to rescue brotherman Desmond Trotter from the dungeon of shit in the British Associated State of Dominica.

If the British Government came out as strongly as the death sentence on Desmond as it did over the recent death sentences passed on the Basque nationalists in Spain, his life would be saved.

We must condemn the "swine like conditions" in which our brothers are condemned to exist, and we urge you to act immediately;

- By writing, and getting your friends and members of any organisation you belong to to write a letter of protest to Premier Patrick John, Roseau, Dominica, demanding that Desmond Trotter be freed.
- By writing a similar letter to the Foreign Secretary, James Callaghan, pointing out that Britain is still constitutionally responsible for what is taking place.
- By doing what you can financially to help the Defence Fund and the campaign to free Desmond Trotter.
- By letting the Secretary of the Free Desmond Trotter Campaign at 37 Tollington Park, London N4, have a copy of your protest.

# IN BRIEF

## GUYANA SUGAR WORKERS OUST COMPANY UNION IN POLL

### TRINIDAD, GUYANA

Governments of Barbados and Trinidad about transport planes en route to Angola with to refuel on their soil. Their attitude those Government has recognised the offered refuelling facilities if required.

In a poll conducted on December 31st 1975 to determine representational rights, following a six weeks long strike by sugar workers in Guyana, the Guyana Agricultural and General Workers Union (GAWU) has convincingly ousted the rival Man Power Citizens Association (MPCA) long supported by the employers. Out of a possible total of 25,956 the GAWU got 21,487 or 83%. The Unions percentage of those actually turning out to vote was 98% !

Doctors, nurses and maids, the Government plans to "editious and undesirable publication". Those have been brought before courts, but the full rights will be reserved for militants like ought to organise agricultural workers into

Thanks to the employers support, the MPCA has been able, for many years, to maintain a false position in the Guyana T. U. C. As the supposedly largest union it provided 25% of the delegates at the T. U. C.'s biannual Congresses.

## HAITI

Student demonstrations erupted in Brussels on January 16th when the Haitian Ambassador held a reception at the Cercle des Nations International Club. The protests were aimed at the Haitian dictatorship and led to many injuries among demonstrators and police

# C L S CALL

## RELEASE TRINIDAD FREEDOM FIGHTERS

The following statement was sent to the High Commissioner of Trinidad for transmission to the Trinidad Government.

25th December 1975

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago proposes to execute two young people who have been convicted of killing a policeman and sentenced to death. The Government is hoping to obtain sentences of death against a further seven young persons now in custody awaiting trial on various charges. There are, in addition, fifteen young persons, three of them in custody, awaiting trial on charges which carry a prison sentence.

These young men and women are the survivors of what can only be described as a massacre of members of an organisation known as the "National United Freedom Fighters". Since that organisation announced its intention of resorting to guerrilla warfare in 1971, thirteen of its members, including two young women, have been shot dead by members of the Armed Forces. These shootings occurred between July 1972 and December 1975 in eight different parts of the island of Trinidad. If the Government pursues its present course, nine more may lose their lives through the judicial process and fifteen others may be deprived of their liberty.

Many, perhaps most, progressive minded persons are likely to take the view that guerrilla warfare is not the form of struggle appropriate to the present situation. But few will doubt the sincerity and idealism of these young people. And few will dispute the fact that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago headed by Dr Eric Williams, with its policy of repression and its failure to tackle the country's chronic unemployment or solve its economic problems, has driven many workers and unemployed youths to desperation.

It is against this background that Caribbean Labour Solidarity:

- protests to Prime Minister Eric Williams and his government against its proposed further executions of members of the National United Freedom Fighters.
- urges that an amnesty be now proclaimed for those who have been convicted or against whom charges are pending.

## news in brief

### JAMAICA

A new alliance of 'left' groups and organisations in Jamaica is taking shape, following a conference in Kingston at the end of November. Among the 14 organisations and groups participating were: The Peoples National Party Youth Section, the Ja-Union of Democratic Youth, the Workers Liberation League, the Communist Party of Jamaica, Youth Force for National Liberation, the Rastafarian Movement Association, the Union of Democratic Students, the South West St. Andrew Citizens Association, the Revolutionary Marxist League and the Movement for Social and Political Consciousness.

Due to the existence of so many organisations of the left, it has not been possible for the left to reap the maximum benefit from the growing awareness and militancy of the workers. But progress has been achieved in the form of unity in action on a number of projects. The recent conference has been a big step forward.

Read  
**BLACK VOICE**  
organ of the  
BLACK UNITY AND  
FREEDOM PARTY,  
83 Astbury Road  
London S W 2

This is the first Caribbean Labour Solidarity bulletin - anything printed here may be reproduced with or without acknowledgement. We welcome news and correspondence on events effecting Caribbean workers and hope other organisations will use this medium to publicise events they may be organising.

C. L. S. can be contacted at 10 Leigh Road, London, N. 5.