

CUTLASS

BULLETIN OF CARIBBEAN LABOUR SOLIDARITY
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LONDON N15

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PUT THEM
UNDER
MANNERS



Metal Box (Jamaica) Limited, a subsidiary of the giant, British-based Metal Box Limited, which also has formidable interests in South Africa, dominates the production of tin cans and other items of packaging in Jamaica. It supplies them to companies like Grace Food Processors, National Food Packers Ltd and Robert's Food Products Ltd. Metal Box is a UK-owned monopoly capitalist company. Its interests, therefore, are opposed to those of the Jamaican working people who at December's election resolved to end subordination to imperialism, especially the big US and British multinational corporations like Metal Box.

The reply of the corporations to the people's demand for change is subversion. They sack workers in Jamaica at will. They press the Government to cut back its reforms; to defencelessly bow down to the US dominated International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Jamaica's vigilant workers call for these corporations to be put under heavy manners. We in CLS support this demand and are prepared to help

put the UK-based corporations which exploit Jamaica under manners. We start with Metal Box, who's head office is here in Reading, because the jobs of 400 workers at its Spanish Town Road plant in Kingston are at stake.

Their jobs are being threatened by a management which was described last year by Government enquirer Prof. Rex Nettleford (after a month-long management-provoked strike) as "intransigent". Even a writer in the pro-imperialist Gleaner accused them of "holding up a settlement" (Sunday Gleaner 27.6.76). Subversion of the Jamaican economy is nothing new for Metal Box; nor is their exploitation of British workers!

CLS is already planning its campaign to assist the workers in their fight against lay-offs and imperialist subversion. Sackings will hit hundreds of workers at factories supplied by Metal Box, not to forget the small farmers who grow the food which goes into the cans, nuts, citrus, beans, carrots, etc.

Let there be no doubt that workers of Caribbean origin here, together with other fraternal ranks of the labour and Trade Union movement will respond when called to solidarity action in support of their fellow workers in Jamaica. For the workers struggle against the monopolies in indivisibly multi-national.

FREE ARNOLD RAMPERSAUD - NO 3rd TRIAL!

In Cutlass 6 + 7 we called on Guyana's Prime Minister Forbes Burnham to intervene to free PPP member Arnold Rampersaud who, at that time in April, was enduring a second trial for murder. He had already suffered 2½ years imprisonment and mal-treatment there.

It is clear from reports of the trial that in the circumstances Rampersaud could not have had a fair hearing, and even so, the jury at the second trial, as at the first, failed to agree. It is now ordered that there be a third trial.

With others, CLS calls for the dropping of all charges against Arnold Rampersaud, and his immediate release. "The Liberation Committee for the Defence of Arnold Rampersaud" has been set up, bringing together with Liberation, the PPP(UK) Branch, CLS, the Afro-Caribbean Association, the British Council of Churches, the Haldane Society, the Iraqi CP and the London District of the CP.

A petition campaign has been launched and fact sheets and petition forms are available from the above committee at 313 Caledonian Road N7

CLS MEETING
JULY 3rd 11am

West Indian Centre
1 Collingham Gardens
London SW5

West Indian Standing Conference + CRC
2 DAY SEMINAR FOR W. I.
Youths, Parents, Teachers
and Youth Leaders.
West Indian Centre, Collingham
London SW5. 11-12 JUNE '77
Further info - ring 969-9707/373-8338

Bored with the Queen? visit
THE PEOPLES JUBILEE

Alexandra Palace
Wood Green, or bus
W3 from Finsbury Park.
19 JUNE 11am-11 30pm
Exhibitions, events,
Art MUSIC. Books....

CLS STALL ★ ASWAD ★ ORGANISED BY CPGB

"VOICE OF THE UNIONS"

the paper that fights for
WORKERS' CONTROL
and opposes racialism.
June issue

Ken Biggs report on:
"Caribbean Challenge"
10p per copy plus postage;
postfree for 6 copies up-
wards:

38 Corbyn St, London, N4

Unconditional Amnesty for Puerto Rican Political Prisoners

The longest held political prisoners in the western hemisphere are Puerto Rican patriots imprisoned and ill-treated in US jails: Oscar Collazo held for 27 years; Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel, Irvin Flore and Andres Figueroa for 23 years. They are the last of the Nationalists in jail as a result of the harsh repression of the independendistas during the 1950s.

For decades the US succeeded in isolating the national liberation struggle from international opinion. In the fifties, at the height of the mass nationalist movement led by the National Party, the US and their colonial servants violently repressed the nationalist movement. They killed hundreds of people, thousands were arrested and thousands more confined to house arrest. At the same time, at the UN the US forced its position that Puerto Rico was not a colony and in the Organisation of American States its contrary position that Puerto Rico was not to be included as an American Republic.

The Puerto Ricans were desperate to break the US imposed isolation and make their case heard internationally. In 1950 Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola rushed the Blair House - temporary home of the president. Torresola was killed and Collazo wounded and captured.

In 1954, Lolita Lebron led 3 other patriots living in New York City to the visitors gallery of the US Congress. When Congress was discussing the "problem" of immigrant labourers, she held up the Puerto Rican flag in one hand, a gun in the other and fired, yelling "VIVE PUERTO RICO LIBRE!" The other patriots followed suit. No one was killed by those shots, but Lolita received a 50 year sentence and the other nationalists 75 years each.

As a result of the pressure of public opinion in Puerto Rico, the last of the Nationalists in jails in Puerto Rico were released by Colonial Governor Ferre in 1972, but despite many national and international appeals and petitions, the 5 nationalists in US jails are still imprisoned.

The campaign in Puerto Rico has grown so broad as to produce resolutions for UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY from both houses of the Puerto Rican Congress, from the Episcopal Church of Puerto Rico, from the Puerto Rican Lawyers Bar, from the Teachers Federation of Puerto Rico and many other organisations including the World Council of Churches, the Bertrand Russell Tribunal on repression in Latin America and, in England, from Liberation.

Send letters demanding the UNCONDITIONAL AMNESTY of the 5 Puerto Rican Nationalist prisoners to President Carter, The White House, Pennsylvania Avenue., Washington DC, USA and a copy to COMITE NACIONAL PROLIBERTAD DE LOS PRESOS NACIONALISTAS, Apartado Postal 20247, Rio Piedras Station, Puerto Rico 00928.

CLS IN ACTION

Jamaican Information and Culture Minister Arnold Bertram found time during his May 2nd London visit to congratulate Cutlass on its political orientation and role. 2,000 copies of the May issue went out.

CLS has sent £14 to the Islington 18 Defence Committee in response to Lionel Jeffrey's call.

London Poly students have written "to re-affirm the Afro-Caribbean Society's support for CLS."

CLS is calling for a big campaign by members and supporters around the Rampersaud and Cottle petitions. 300 copies of each have gone out to members and friends.

At our May Day meeting nearly 50 people heard Dick Hart on the Jamaican Government's Emergency Package.

GRANADA

It was good to see Jamaican Prime Minister Manley receiving a delegation from anti-imperial organisation - New Jewel Movement, part of the 'Peoples Alliance' which made wide spread gains in last December's election in Grenada. The delegation's tour of a number of Caribbean countries enabled them to expose Gairy for what he is, ally of US imperialists, collaborator with the Chilean dictatorship, and South Korea's US puppet regime partner of US Mafia gambling interests and oppressor of Grenada's working people.

Good also to see Bernard Coard in New Jewel delegation, at the election he won the town of St. George Constituency for the People's Alliance. West Indian parents will remember his work as an educationist in London and his pioneering book: How the West Indian child is made educationally sub-normal in the British School system. (1971)