PARTING COMPANY

The Newsletter of People Against Rio Tinto Zinc and Subsidiaries

SHELL BOYCOTT

March saw the launch of a boycott of all Shell products, until it disinvests from South Africa. This is part of international pressure to get Shell to stop supplying oil for the South African war machine – the campaign was launched in The Hague in January. South Africa is rich in mineral resources but has little oil. Local authorities are being asked not to renew oil supply contracts with Shell and pickets of Shell petrol stations are being organised to put the case to the ordinary motorist (On Yer Bike!) (continued on page three)

Partizans picket RTZ

As part of the month of action against companies still operating and supporting the racist government in South Africa, Partizans organised a picket of RTZ. RTZ's major investment in South Africa is the Palabora copper mine. In Namibia, still effectively under SA control, RTZ has the very profitable Rossing uranium mine. The picket aimed to contact workers as they went to work and invite them to a lunchtime meeting to discuss RTZ's involvement in Apartheid. (continued on page three)

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Parting Company
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Parting Company is the newsletter of Partizans. It is published six times a year. Subscription £4 a year, which includes information about Partizans activities.

Contributors to this edition Carmel, Chris, Ian, Paul, Roger
Copy deadline for next issue of PC is 2nd May 1987
Partizans Picket St James Square (continued from page one)
The picket attracted rather a negative attitude from the company; they informed the police that they did not want their employees picketed. Presumably they did not want them informed either. Due to building work the front entrance was not in use and so we picketed the back entrance and the headquarters of Pillar, RTZ's UK engineering subsidiary, also in St James Square. A piece of graffiti informing all of St James Square about RTZ's involvement with Apartheid had been hastily painted over — surely the company is not sensitive about its image regarding South Africa?!
The lunchtime meeting took place at the Royal Over-seas League, a private club nearby. Four interested people came from the company including John Hughes the head of public relations. In a long and interesting discussion, he basically justified his position by saying RTZ was in it for the money.

Members of Partizans at the lunchtime meeting expressing their views on...? (or just imitating RTZ directors?)

Shell Boycott (continued from page one)
The AAM said "this was the year of Shell, last year being the year of Barclays" Shell has condemned apartheid, but tried to defend its record. The company say that a withdrawal would mean little more than selling the title to the assets — implying that it would still sell oil to South Africa despite the United Nations embargo. However the company is clearly uncomfortable about its position.

In The Hague, The Shipping Research Breau said that more than 35 cargoes of crude oil have reached South Africa from Brunei since 1982. Brunei Shell Petroleum Company, half owned by Royal Dutch Shell, has sold 56 cargoes to intermediaries who shipped them to South Africa. If each tanker delivered a full load this would have supplied 6% of South Africa's crude oil needs during the period.
The ups and downs of Broken Hill - Productivity before safety!!

PRESSURE from the mining companies has finally brought about an agreement with the unions at Broken Hill, New South Wales. (See the January issue of Parting Company for the background to the industrial troubles at these large lead and zinc mines operated by North Broken Hill and CRA.)

Last month, Mr Justice Cahill of the New South Wales Industrial Commission backed the mining companies' demands for numerous changes in safety codes and work practices. This decision was rejected by the unions.

The judge then proposed that the unions' demands for an upgraded pension and severance scheme should be kept distinct from the work practice issue. This was accepted by the miners at mass meetings held last weekend.

Among the changes that the companies will implement are a doubling of the shifts worked per week and the firing of explosives within shifts as well as between shifts. Mineworkers will also return to work within 30 minutes of a firing, instead of one hour.

This represents a setback for the miners fighting to avoid surrendering rights and working conditions bitterly fought for over three generations at Broken Hill, which produces 4% of the world's zinc and 6% of its lead.

Further rationalisations are expected by the company, but with the pension fund issue still to be settled and the three-year industrial agreement due to expire in May, more labour problems seem inevitable.

(Financial Times 17/2/87, & article by Carmel)

Australian Bi-Centenary 1988 - Aboriginal "Year of Mourning"

Britain will be participating in Australia's 'celebration' of 200 years of colonisation. The celebrations planned for 1988 and the events leading up to them in 1987 only serve to highlight the oppression of aborigines and the racism in Australian society. Britain has important historical links with Australia. For these reasons 1988 should be a year of protest. The theme of the celebrations is 'Living Together' which tends to ignore the reality of continual Aboriginal resistance to the colonisation of their lands and the oppression of their cultures.

In May 1987 there is to be an Arts Festival in Portsmouth, and on May 13 the tall ships will leave Portsmouth, recreating the scene 200 years ago. There should be some scope for action here. Prior to this the tall ships will be in London in April, probably at St Katherine's Dock: a counter-demo/leafletting action may take place. For information on all events contact the Aboriginal Land Rights Support Group, 19c Lancaster Place, London W11 1QL.
In late 1985, Alistair Frame - chair of Rio Tinto - invited Partizans to "call in to see me to discuss the various differences of opinion between your group and RTZ as to the conduct of our operations". This offer followed correspondence between Partizans and Frame over the convening of a public meeting, to debate issues raised at successive AGM's. When it became clear that the RTZ chair was not prepared to consider a truly open forum, under an independent chair, our general feeling was that we should reject all other "offers" of that ilk. However, there was a two-edged sword here: turn down all such approaches from the company, and we'd be characterised as "unreasonable" - accept them too readily, and we could be ensnared into "negotiating" the un-negotiable. After much debate, we decided to meet Frame on April 21st, last year - but only to hear what he had to say: there would be no discussion. We emerged from that meeting with a catalogue of rebuttals made by the company against allegations contained in the 1985 alternative report. We promised the company that we'd look at their case closely and answer it - admitting faults where appropriate. Alistair Frame's clear undertaking given to us at that meeting (and recorded on tape) was that he would be prepared to discuss any genuine criticisms of RTZ's operations: he even envisaged a meeting "like this one" in the near future.

Two months later - and Frame was rejecting such a meeting ("for the time being at least") in a curt letter to Partizans. Just what had happened to that affable, even ingratiating, manner of his in the meantime? First, there had been an AGM - and one he'd had to peremptorily call to a halt, if only to protect Roderick Carnegie from further embarrassment. Second, Partizans had prepared - and presented to Frame - a sentence-by-sentence rebuttal of the April 21st portfolio. It is quite clear that the company cannot answer this "rebuttal of the rebuttals". Instead of admitting this, they resort to verbal fudge ("...I do not feel any useful purpose will be served by our commenting on your answers to our rebuttals" - Frame to Roger Moody, June 11th 1986). Indeed, when confronted by Roger Moody at the March 9th meeting (see pps.1 and 3, this issue of PC) RTZ's p.r. man, John Hughes, had to resort to shabby argumentation to cover for his cowardly chairperson: "We didn't see any point in answering you" said Hughes "because you had nothing new to say". In this comment, he also included virtually all the material in our 1986 alternative report, Dirty Bizness.

Those sceptics who saw no point in our meeting with RTZ can claim to be vindicated: there is no point, so long as the chair or his underlings alter the rules of the game, as they go along. Frame's shrewd attempt to take the heat off the AGM and divert our energies into useless paper exercises nearly succeeded - but ultimately was bound to fail, so long as we had the lion's share of the arguments and the facts to back them.

What this diversion has (valuably) shown is that the AGM and public confrontation remain the only sure forum where we can get our views across in company with "the company"
Violence forces Dutch firm out of South Africa

The Dutch trading company SHV Holding NV announced in January that it is pulling out of South Africa. The decision was made after Commercial Union cancelled insurance cover for its Makro stores and the Dutch government refused to intervene. There have been three fires at Makro wholesale stores in the last 15 months; one store was completely destroyed. The attacks were claimed to be carried out by Revolutionary Anti-Racism Action. The company is facing acute lack of insurance cover for its Makro stores and was unable to get cover for new businesses.

Sanctions exclude vital minerals

The US has decided to exclude ten minerals including platinum, chromium, antimony and cobalt from South African sanctions. This is due to the awakening of the vital interest SA plays in the western economies; the effect will be to boost SA revenue by 1.95 billion dollars.

Mining Chief resigns

Mr Gordon Waddel has resigned as chairman of Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Co. Ltd, a major SA mining house. This came as rather a surprise to the industry though Mr Waddel made no secret of his growing pessimism over the future of South Africa. In his chairmans statement last year he said there would be no end to the growing violence in SA until the country enjoyed a government more representative of the majority of its people. His resignation could cause quite a stir in the industry as he was tipped to become the chairman of Anglo American.
Secret study of anti-apartheid violence risks

A SECRET syndicate of UK companies with South African links has been set up by Control Risks, a top British security consultancy, to investigate the 'potential violent threat' from the anti-apartheid movement.

The company's director list and advisory council includes Sir Robert Mark, a former Metropolitan police Commissioner, Lord Soames, a former Governor-General of Rhodesia and ex-Leader of the House of Lords, and Sir Clive Rose, a former deputy secretary in the Cabinet Office.

Major British companies linked with South Africa have formed the group at a cost of £1,500 and number of places in the syndicate, whose existence must remain highly confidential, will be limited to no more than ten,' says the Control Risks prospectus.

The company is currently completing a secret study on their relationship with terrorist groups and their intentions. The study will establish the types of violence that South African connections can expect to face over the next five years.

'The report will also:

- Assess the chances that other militant or terrorist organisations will exploit the South African issue by penetrating the anti-apartheid movement or by taking violent action in solidarity with it.' and
- Assess the chances that the movement will operate with increasing violence against multinational corporate targets, suggest how and when this violence might manifest itself.

Control Risks' study is due to be completed by 12 January in time for a confidential information exchange seminar arranged for syndicate members.

THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT IN EUROPE
PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED VIOLENCE
A Syndicated Study

The number of places in the syndicate, whose existence must remain highly confidential, will be limited to no more than ten.

Intelligence service: Part of the Control Risks prospectus.

'The Anti-Apartheid Movement in Europe: Prospects for Increased Violence,' to be discussed by syndicate members next month.

Control Risks is best known for its specialist skills in conducting ransom negotiations for kidnap victims, including Jennifer Guinness, seized in Ireland last April.

Its letter to prospective clients explains that the company is concluding, 'after a very successful two years, a highly confidential syndicate which addressed the activities of another action group which attacks business.' The Observer has learned that this concentrated on animal rights activists.

Control Risks, which is now turning to South Africa, says it believes the anti-apartheid movement is likely to resort to violence.

'We will undertake a study of the activities of anti-apartheid groups in Europe,bers in central London 10 days later.

Companies participating have been asked to keep their membership secret. The mining giant, Rio Tinto-Zinc, a big target of the anti-apartheid sanctions campaign, was one of the companies that confirmed to The Observer that it had been approached. 'We are still considering what value the report might have,' said an RITZ spokesman.

The syndicate is being organised by Control Risks Information Services, owned by the Control Risks Group. Although shareholders Barclays de Zoete Wedd have a small stake in the group, a spokesman said yesterday that it had 'nothing to do with the day-to-day management of Control Risks.'

Control Risks Information Services, based in London, is run by Roger Meares, a former officer. Its chief researcher is Dr Peter Janke, a former director of research with the right-wing Institute for the Study of Conflict. His published studies show that he has been sympathetic to white rule in southern Africa.

Control Risks' spokesman Christopher Grose, an ex-SAS major, denied that the company's links with police and government sources involved access to sensitive official information.

'We do not nor do we wish to receive intelligence material,' he said. 'It would be unthinkable that anyone would give it to us. We are an information service, not an intelligence agency.'

Mr Grose said he did not believe Control Risks' research on the anti-apartheid movement and its previous study on animal rights was confidential. 'I do not see it as contentious at all to do a study on those who pose security problems for companies or individuals.'

Anti-Apartheid Movement chairman Bob Hughes, the Labour MP for Aberdeen North, is writing to Home Secretary Douglas Hurd asking for Control Risks' activities to be investigated.

'We are an all-party group seeking in this country to make people aware of the evil nature of apartheid. Any suggestion that we are not an open democratic organisation or that we do not operate wholly within the law is completely wrong,' he said.

Anti-apartheid protests in Britain have been peaceful, but anarchist 'trump' apartheid activists have attacked Shell petrol stations in Holland and Denmark.

Additional reporting by Martin Bailey.

Prince Philip has become embroiled in a controversy over sporting links with South Africa, writes Paul Martin.

He is due to present a trophy at a banquet in London this week to South Africa's top equestrian rider, Barry Taylor. The 25-year-old from Banchory has won a competition organised by the International Equestrian Federation, of which the Prince is president.

'The Anti-Apartheid Movement says it is planning to make urgent representations both to Prince Philip and to Mrs Thatcher. It also intends to demonstrate at the venue, Steddent Hall, on Wednesday night.'
Business As Usual

Very few of the multinational companies which recently "pulled out" of South Africa actually shut down their operations and took their products off the South African market. In most cases the South African subsidiary has been sold to its local management in a management buyout. These "new" companies then continue to import parts and technologies from their former parent companies. In some cases they are required to sell themselves back to the multinational organisation whenever it decides that the political and investment climate has improved.

While these changes in ownership have some value in advertising the growing unpopularity of South African investments, they can actually work to the advantage of the South African economy. Where US based companies had been avoiding new investment in their South African operations and remitting the local profits back to head office, local management have seen their companies stagnate. Often the South African managers themselves have pressed for a management buyout deal.

Obviously foreign companies are anxious to play down suggestions that a management buyout has been agreed as a means of ensuring continued revenue flows from South Africa. But is it interesting to contrast the other option available to a "departing" foreign company: selling to a South African conglomerate. In this case, the new company will obviously continue to buy from the former parent in the short term, but there is no guarantee that other sources of supply won't be sought out before long! Furthermore, South African companies, which are prevented from investing overseas, are notably reluctant to sell any of their assets even if they are performing poorly. Thus a US group might have to pay through the nose to regain control of its former subsidiary. To avoid this, IBM and General Motors have themselves provided the money for their South African management to buy the local shop.

It is not only the parent company and local management that have insisted on business as usual. The banks financing these buyouts want the implicit security of close links with the former parent. Likewise, if the new company is to maintain its share of the market, its customers, too, need assurance that the same goods and service facilities will remain available under the new ownership. With the increasing exodus of foreign companies, customers place great value on being able to deal with the same people in the "new" company. Thus licensing agreements are made which bind the new owners to the former parent company.

So while public announcements of divestiture are made in the US, as little as possible changes in South Africa.
Aborigines say NO to new mine

In the last issue of PC we broke the news of a new uranium project, started by CRA (RTZ:49%) in the Rudall River National Park, Western Australia. As this issue of PC went to press, we received new information from the Western Desert (Aboriginal) Land Council - 250 of whose people are on the land now being test-drilled or infringed by CRA - and from the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF), the country's most respected environmental protection body. This new information makes it clear that CRA is envisaging another mine similar to the BP/WMC Roxby Downs project: a "multi-mineral" prospect (thereby seeking to escape the ban on new uranium mines) giving an entrée into what could be a huge mineral province, the size of Mount Isa. CRA already has a 1.5 km. airstrip and 42 personnel in the area, using a permanent campsite. Aerial photos show the landscape already scarred - as it was in the early days of the Argyle diamond mine.

The Western Desert Land Council is in no doubt that it doesn't want the mine. In documentation sent to England it points out that Aboriginal people have been custodians of this unique ecosystem for thousands of years. Although removed into "settlements" in the 1960's, many of them have been returning to reclaim their land. Both the outstation communities of Punnu, on the edge of Lake Dora, and Pangurr, will be irrevocably affected if mining takes place. At a meeting of the Council's executive held in February, the peoples view was expressed in no uncertain terms: "Uranium is a poison. When the river flows, it will bring the poison with it. Dust with the poison in it will blow over the country. Whitemens greed!"

For its part, the ACF points out that Rudall River is unique in the variety and extent of its fauna and flora; some species of which have not even yet been identified. "That (CRA) are exploring for uranium inside a National Park illustrates the company's total lack of commitment to the environment. CRA's track record in this regard is particularly bad." Needless to say, CRA has not asked any Aboriginal people for permission to encroach on their land: the reactivatory ALP state government is only too happy for them to explore, and is preparing legislation which could permit full mining to proceed.

While Rudall River might not, in the end, be as significant a find as Roxby, the impact on the Aboriginal people will be at least as severe - and the destruction of the environment possibly even greater. Asks the Western Desert Land Council: "Will the policy of forced assimilation that the government pursued, and eventually abandoned, be realized once again by the activities of mining operations that respect neither the National Park nor its lawful inhabitants?"
Namibia: TORTURE TO TRIUMPH

On the day in September 1977 that Steve Biko died in South African police custody, Ben Uulenga began his 15-year prison sentence on Robben Island. 'Very soon you get used to it,' he says, 'but when we got there there were no beds. We had to sleep on the floor, the food was terrible and the medical care was very weak.' But for the 25-year-old guerrilla of the South-West African People's Organisation (Swapo) even the island was better than what had gone before. In London for the past two weeks to meet trade union leaders, Uulenga, now general secretary of the fledgling Mineworkers' Union of Namibia, recalled his torture and interrogation at the hands of the South African security police and military intelligence. Shot in an arm and leg in a skirmish with South African forces, he was taken to a military camp in northern Namibia. 'On and off for two weeks I was given electric shocks on my fingers and behind my ears and repeatedly beaten. The needles they used for giving me injections for my injuries were inserted under my fingernails just to cause pain.' At his trial, the judge ignored his lawyer's allegations of mistreatment. Released in late 1983 and adjusting to the changes in Namibia, with the South Africans pressing ahead with its interim government and modest relaxation of apartheid laws, he decided to get involved with labour. 'That seemed the most important thing to do.' And the most important sector, with about 15,000 workers, was the mines – all foreign owned – which contributed about a quarter of the country's GNP. The main ones were Consolidated Diamond Mines (CDM), owned by the South African Oppenheimer family through De Beers; the Rossing uranium mine, owned by Britain's RTZ; and the base metal mines of the Tsumeb Corporations, controlled by Gold Fields of South Africa which, in turn, is 48 per cent owned by Consolidated Gold Fields in London. Unions in Namibia had been more or less dormant ever since the Swapo related National Union of Namibia Workers (NUNW) had been forced underground in 1980 by South Africa's client regime. But in 1986, NUNW re-emerged from the shadows and began to reorganise local works committees. Uulenga was elected chief organiser of the field workers. The first break-through came in September with the formation of the Namibian Food and Allied Workers. The miners came together in November. Rossing has recognised them and negotiations are going on at Tsumeb. Although both Rossing and CDM, and to a lesser extent Tsumeb, have provided basic housing for some of their African workers, many are still migrants living in single-sex hostels on an average wage of 300 rand a month. At the copper mine of Klein Aub, until recently owned by the South African mining house Gencor, the families of the workers live in what is reckoned to be the worst shanty town in Namibia. 'Unlike South Africa,' says Uulenga, 'there is no job reservation for whites on the mines but only a few blacks have been given supervisory positions.' Today he is due to meet Arthur Scargill in Sheffield, perhaps to exchange some lessons on solidarity.

Reprinted from the Guardian 27 Feb 87
INTERNATIONAL MEETING

Saturday 11 April 1987

Here is your change to catch up on all that RTZ and PARTIZANS have been doing over the last year. You can find out what people at the sharp end of RTZ operations think are the major issues.

It will take place at the Peace Pledge Union, 6 Endsleigh Street, London WC1 from 10am. The nearest tubes are Kings Cross and Euston; buses 68, 73, 188, 30 and others run nearby.

The format of the meeting will approximate as follows:
- Introductions, refreshments and bookstall from 1030am
- Morning session will be a briefing session based on material gathered from overseas. We will probably have small group discussions.
- Afternoon session will be devoted to discussing planning for the AGM (inside, outside, publications etc)
- In the evening there will be some food/social event, videos/drink. We can chat further about....
- We will finish about 10pm

Plans have left deliberately vague at this stage to accommodate ideas as they come from overseas. Due to lack of major funding this year we are unable to produce a full scale alternative report, so will be aiming to produce single page 'fact sheets' which can be used at the AGM. We decided to have a meeting in London as about half of our supporters are in the London area and accommodation can be provided for others (please ring the office). This should enable us to have a full days discussion, and avoid those infuriating last minute panics over 'what if?....

At the meeting on the 11th we also will try and have a role play AGM for those who are unfamiliar to speaking at formal meetings - it should also prove entertaining for all.

LOLLY

Here's where we hold our stockholders meeting, Junior.

THUG IS THE SPEAKERS STAND. THIS BABY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HERE.

YOU'LL FIND IT PERFECT FOR DECKING BEHIND.
Some comments we have received on Parting Company...

"I must say that the January edition of PC was the best line seen yet for layout, much easier to read" Phil King

"PC must have graphics - lost cartoons don't break up the dense words quite enough!" Karen George

"I'm glad to see PC used both sides of the paper, but is it recycled? Timber is our second biggest import..."

The editor says: the paper has not always been recycled due to problems with our photocopier. Recently we managed to "salvage" a large amount of apparently unwanted paper & some office supplies left behind by a well-known multinational. Also paper is sometimes donated. We have tried to add extra graphics to this issue and we would appreciate contributions from readers! However it all takes time and effort and with limited resources (two to four people over two days to produce the entire PC) we feel that our effort is best put into producing well written and researched articles with a clear easy-to-read presentation. This is much more difficult to achieve quickly with a varied format. Please continue to let us have your comments about PC.

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Many thanks to all the people who responded generously to our recent appeals. Needless to say our expenditure, office telephone, photocopier, campaigning etc etc are continuous; so should our income be! If you haven't given anything or could spare a few more pounds that would be most appreciated. One person was so moved by our appeal that they sent their entire weeks' social security; which prompted the following remark:

Who said

"Mrs Thatcher was right; the bastards get too much!"?

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The AGM of Anti-Fascist Action, to which Partizans affiliates, is on March 28 in Bradford. We can send five delegates - contact the office if you want to go. They also meet on Mondays nights at Hackney Town Hall (7.30pm) to leaflet.

Third World First

The London office of 3WL has moved to 9 Poland Street, London W1. Their latest Links magazine is concerned with Women and Educational Alternatives Worldwide. It has a wide range of informed and stimulating articles. Free subscription to Links (quarterly) when you join 3WL campaign against poverty, "Anti-Poverty Action". Altered Images is the title of their annual conference on April 10-12th in London. Details of all these things from Third World First, 232 Cowley Road, Oxford OX4 1UH.